



Reno-Tahoe
Airport
Authority

Reno-Tahoe International Airport Saves the Ramp

ACI Awards - November 8, 2019

SAVE THE RAMP

The "Brilliant" Plan of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)

- \$3 billion freeway reconstruction called the **Spaghetti Bowl Project**
 - Remove freeway access ramps to and from the 66th busiest commercial airport in the U.S.
 - ✓ Airport grew by 1.8 million passengers in the last two years
 - ✓ \$3.1 billion in economic impact
 - RNO is located alongside the freeway



SAVE THE RAMP

Existing Conditions – Airport Access Ramps

- Provides direct airport access for 4.3 million annual passengers
- Provides direct highway access for 2,500 employees that work at airport
- Provides access to Nevada Air National Guard base



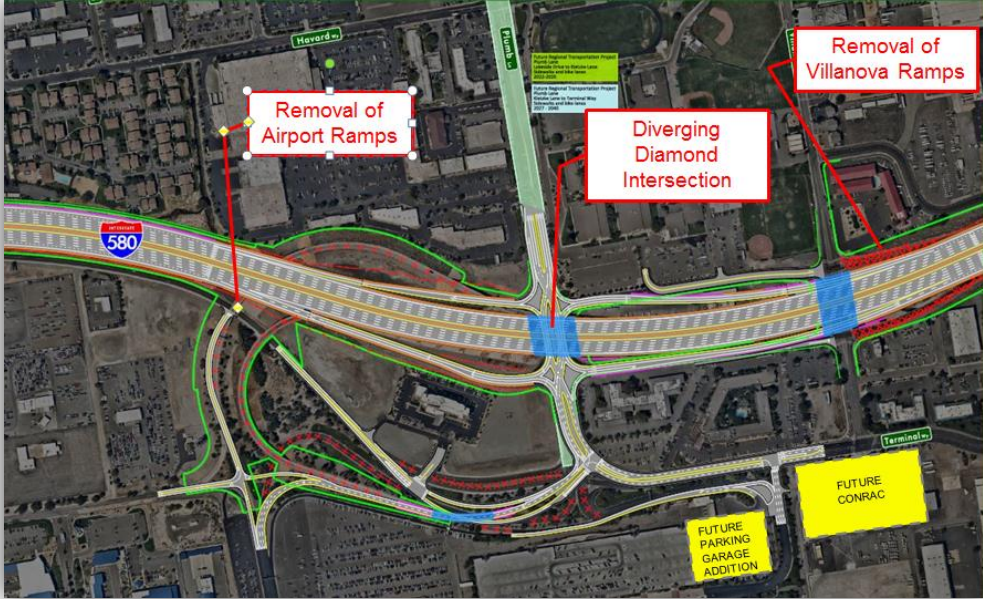
SAVE THE RAMP

NDOT Preferred Plan

- Force all arriving and departing traffic into overcrowded surface streets
- Force all vehicles into one airport entrance/exit
 - Taxis, Uber, Lyft, hotel shuttles, busses, rental cars, cargo trucks and passenger cars
- Gridlock!
 - In the event of a mass casualty crisis, only ONE entrance for emergency vehicles and first responders

SAVE THE RAMP

NDOT Preferred Plan



SAVE THE RAMP

NDOT Response

- Warned not to oppose project
- Lame-duck Governor:
 - Wanted project approved before leaving office (legacy project)
 - RNO's political supporters could not risk opposing the popular Governor
 - Politicians shied away from the fight so their projects would not be jeopardized
- Political suicide to delay approval of the environmental assessment (EA)

SAVE THE RAMP

RTAA Response

- Tried negotiations
 - NDOT scoffed
- Sitting Governor was termed out and a new one elected
- Six weeks prior to EA public hearings, we had to fight
- November 14, 2018 through January 6, 2019 holiday period, we went on the offensive

SAVE THE RAMP

RTAA Plan

- Started a grassroots community support campaign
 - “SAVE THE RAMP”

Current Spaghetti Bowl plan will harm region's growth



Your Turn
Bob Cashell
Guest columnist

Serving as the mayor of Reno for 12 years was one of the greatest honors of my life. My wife, Nancy, and I have raised our family here, and we deeply care about the future of the city we call home.

For this reason, I'd like to share my opinion regarding the proposal to remove Reno-Tahoe International Airport's southbound freeway access ramp, which I believe would be a step backward for our region.

The Nevada Department of Transportation's plan to remove the southbound access ramp from I-580 into RNO, while eliminating the Villanova

NDOT should be making it easier, not harder, to enter and exit our airport.

exit, will force all airport traffic into one highly congested intersection at Plumb Lane. This will force vehicles that don't mix, like cargo semi-trailer trucks, buses and shuttles, into an already busy intersection near a high school. Accidents are certain to occur, which will block the entrance to the airport.

At a time of record growth for our community and RNO, we should never even consider a plan that reduces access to an airport that brings \$3.1 billion per year in economic impact to the re-

gion.

NDOT should be making it easier, not harder, to enter and exit our airport. When the ramps were built in 1990, we had less passengers and businesses at RNO. Today, the airport serves 4 million passengers per year and has 4,000 employees. If we needed the ramp in 1990, we certainly need it even more today.

Previous attempts to fix the Spaghetti Bowl have failed. NDOT and our community will be facing another failed attempt to fix the road network if we harm the airport in the long term by removing freeway access. A \$2 billion road project should facilitate, not inhibit, tourism and the ability of business travelers to come and go from around the world.

I urge the Nevada Department of Transportation to reconsider the plan and include the I-580 southbound en-



The new Spaghetti Bowl under NDOT's preferred alternative plan. NDOT

trance ramp into RNO in the federal environmental impact statement for the Spaghetti Bowl as part of the preferred alternative.

Robert A. Cashell was Reno mayor from 2002 to 2014.

SAVE THE RAMP

3 Strategies

- MEDIA RELATIONS
 - In person meetings with three network TV affiliates and Univision
 - Reno Gazette Journal Editorial Board
 - Brought maps and facts

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Eliminating southbound offramp at airport would be a mistake

The travel experience in and out of the Reno-Tahoe International Airport is one of our best assets for attracting and retaining businesses in our region. The ease of access, the Tahoe look and feel, the customer service and the 23 destinations provided by 10 airlines are truly impressive.

However, the Nevada Department of Transportation's plan to eliminate the southbound airport access ramp from I-580 is a threat to our business community and the \$3.1 billion contributed each year by the airport to our local economy.

Clients of existing businesses and companies considering relocation often praise the ease of access in and out of Reno-Tahoe Airport and all of us who travel for business or pleasure ap-

preciate its convenience and accessibility.

NDOT's plan negates one of our region's best features. Replacing fast, efficient freeway access and reducing three existing entrances into one congested intersection make little or no business sense.

A recent survey indicated that business travelers are 45 percent of the passengers in and out of our airport, an increase of 5 percent since 2015. As our region and business community continue to grow, NDOT should be working to enhance airport access, not reduce and complicate it.

The Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce urges NDOT to include the southbound off ramp from I-580 as a preferred alternative in the federal environmental study for the Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction.

Ann Silver, Reno

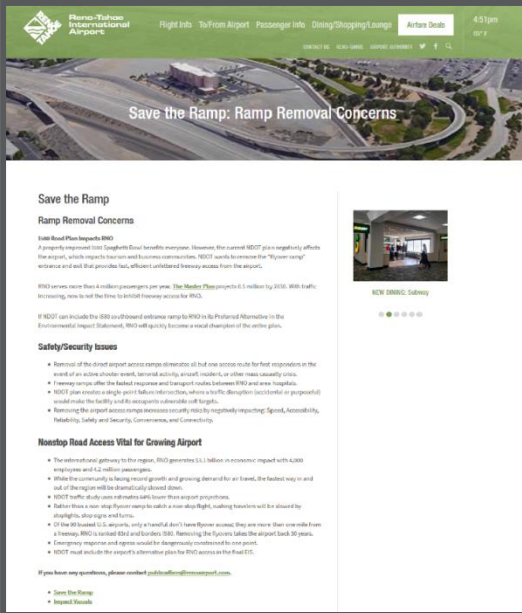
SAVE THE RAMP

3 Strategies

- COMMUNITY OUTREACH
 - Developed a microsite within RNO website called SAVE THE RAMP
 - Ground zero for public battle
 - ✓ Hot button on Home Page
 - ✓ Detailed description of issues, maps
 - ✓ Important call to action
 - ✓ Sample emails and letters
 - Internal meetings with airlines, tenants, employees
 - ✓ 3,500 airport employees – ALL VOTERS

SAVE THE RAMP

Microsite within RNO website called SAVE THE RAMP



Reno-Tahoe International Airport Right Info To/From Airport Passenger Info Dining/Shopping/Lounge Airfare Deals 4:31pm 10/17

Save the Ramp: Ramp Removal Concerns

Save the Ramp

Ramp Removal Concerns

Table Board Plan Impacts RNO
A properly implemented Table Board Plan (TBP) benefits everyone. However, the current RNO TBP negatively affects the airport, which impacts the region and business communities. RNO will increase the "Ramp wing" entrance and exit that provides fast, efficient, unobstructed freeway access from the airport.

RNO serves more than 4 million passengers per year. The **Table Board Plan** projects 0.5 million by 2030. With traffic increasing, we're in real time for RNO freeway access for RNO.

If RNO can include the RNO southbound on-ramp to RNO in its Preferred Alternative in the Environmental Impact Statement, RNO will quickly become a major champion of the entire plan.

Safety/Security Issues

- Removal of the airport access ramps eliminates all but one access route for first responders in the event of an active shooter event, terrorist activity, aircraft incident, or other mass casualty crisis.
- Freeway ramps offer the fastest response and transport routes between RNO and area hospitals.
- RNO TBP plan creates a single point failure in critical care, where a traffic disruption (accident or gaspocket) could isolate the facility and its occupants vulnerable to traffic.
- Removing the airport access ramps increases security risk by negatively impacting Speed, Accessibility, Reliability, Safety and Security, Convenience, and Connectivity.

Noestop Road Access Vital for Growing Airport

- The international gateway to the region, RNO generates \$3.1 billion in economic impact with 4,000 employees and 4.2 million passengers.
- While the community is being reimagined and growing demand for air travel, the fastest way in and out of the region will be dramatically slowed down.
- RNO TBP study uses unrealistic safety cover than airport operations.
- Rather than a non-stop RNO ramp to catch a non-stop flight, making travelers will be delayed by 45 minutes, slow signs and turn.
- Of the 10 fastest U.S. airports, only 4 have RNO access. They are more than one mile from a freeway, RNO is ranked 3rd and borders I-580. Removing the Freeway takes the airport back 30 years.
- Emergency response and egress would be dangerously compromised by one point.
- RNO TBP would include the airport's alternative plan for RNO access on the Freeway.

If you have any questions, please contact pubaffairs@renoairport.com.

- Save the Ramp
- Report Issues


NEW DRIVING SIMULY

SAVE THE RAMP

Microsite within RNO website called SAVE THE RAMP

Save the Ramp


Impact Visuals



Current Flyovers
(click map for larger image)

NDOT's Proposed Changes
(click map for larger image)

These graphics depict the current airport ramp access and road network (left), and the NDOT plan to remove the freeway access ramps and leave the airport with one very congested entrance/exit (right).



Impact Visuals

Save the Ramp

Sample Letters

Please help RNO keep its southbound freeway entrance ramp. You can use one of the two sample emails below that we have provided for you, or write your own email asking NDOT to "include the southbound freeway access ramp into the airport in the preferred alternative of the Spaghetti Bowl Environmental Impact Statement." Any comment received before Jan. 15 will be included in the public hearing process.

- [Sample Email #1 to Dale Keller](#) (email content is in the link)
- [Sample Email #2 to Dale Keller](#) (email content is in the link)

Please be sure to copy publicaffairs@renoairport.com on any email sent to Mr. Keller. Thank you.

If you have any questions, please contact publicaffairs@renoairport.com.

- [Save the Ramp](#)
- [Ramp Removal Concerns](#)
- [Impact Visuals](#)

Sample Letters

SAVE THE RAMP

Airline Support

- Southwest Airlines
 - Controls 40% of airline traffic at RNO
 - Flew lobbyist from Dallas headquarters to Nevada State Capitol to hand deliver letter to the Governor opposing NDOT's plan



SAVE THE RAMP

3 Strategies

- POLITICAL FIGHT
 - Numerous meetings with political leaders on both sides of the aisle
 - ✓ New Governor
 - ✓ Mayor of Reno
 - ✓ Senators and House Representatives
 - Chamber of Commerce joined the fight

SAVE THE RAMP

Production

- Microsite and maps designed by in-house graphic artist
- Letters to 2,500 employees done in-house
- E-blast to 8,000 travelers in database
- \$30,000 in staff time to fight a ramp closure that would cost \$23 million to rebuild

SAVE THE RAMP

Sample Letters



Reno-Tahoe International Airport

P.O. Box 12490 • Reno, NV 89510-2490 • (775) 328-6400 • (775) 328-6510

Sample Emails

Dear Mr. Keller,

Please include the southbound ramp from I580 into the Reno-Tahoe International Airport in the federal environment impact statement for the Spaghetti Bowl Project as part of the preferred alternative. The airport is a vital asset to our growing region and its freeway access should be enhanced, not reduced.

Thank you.

Dear Mr. Keller,

Please include the southbound ramp from I580 into the Reno-Tahoe International Airport in the federal environmental impact statement for the Spaghetti Bowl Project as part of the preferred alternative. Forcing all types of airport ground traffic into one entrance with numerous starts and stops is a safety and security risk that should not be imposed upon our growing airport.

Thank you

Email Templates



Reno-Tahoe International Airport

P.O. Box 12490 • Reno, NV 89510-2490 • (775) 328-6400 • (775) 328-6510

Sample Letters

Dear Governor,

The I-580 ramps that serve Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RTO) are vital transportation connections that help link our region to the world. Please do not allow the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to remove the southbound ramp and impede traffic into the rapidly growing airport.

The Spaghetti Bowl Project is an important improvement to the region's growing road network. But if the goal is to enhance transportation, NDOT should not be allowed to forward a plan that negatively impacts a transportation entry route for 4.2 million customers who bring \$3.1 billion in economic impact to the region each year.

Governor, please require NDOT to include an I580 southbound airport off-ramp into the preferred alternative in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is being completed this winter. If NDOT does not include the plan in the EIS, it would eventually fall to taxpayers from Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, or the airport itself, to fund access to RTO that was taken away by NDOT despite airport objections.

Our region is experiencing incredible economic growth. Maintaining easy access to an airport that is expected to add another 2 million passengers over the next 20 years is essential to driving more economic impact. A properly designed Spaghetti Bowl project should enhance airport growth, not hinder it.

Governor, please use your considerable influence and love for the great State of Nevada to ensure the design for a southbound ramp from I-580 to the airport is definitely included in the final preferred alternative of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Spaghetti Bowl Project. Thank you.

Dear Public Officials,

The safety, security and customer service of the Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RTO) are jeopardized by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) plan to remove the fast, efficient freeway access ramps connecting I-580 and the 5th busiest airport in the nation.

NDOT's Spaghetti Bowl plan will leave the airport by reducing access to only one entrance and cut the 4.2 million passengers, emergency vehicles, charter, buses, vans, Uber, Lyft, taxis and cargo trucks. NDOT's plan will add several stop lights and turns, congesting traffic and increasing the likelihood of accidents.

An accident or intentional act of terror, at the single entrance, would restrict the ability of emergency vehicles to respond to the demand that will serve 6.3 million passengers by 2036. Unlike NDOT's ill-considered single entrance plan, a simple accident or 5 min. on an average business day could cause several thousand people to wait four days. Removing the freeway access ramps also means First Responders lose the quickest road route from the airport to the nearest emergency rooms.

Please use your considerable influence to persuade NDOT to put safety first and include the southbound off-ramp in the preferred alternative of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Spaghetti Bowl Project.

Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority
Reno-Tahoe International Airport • Reno Stead Airport

Letter Templates

SAVE THE RAMP

Evaluation

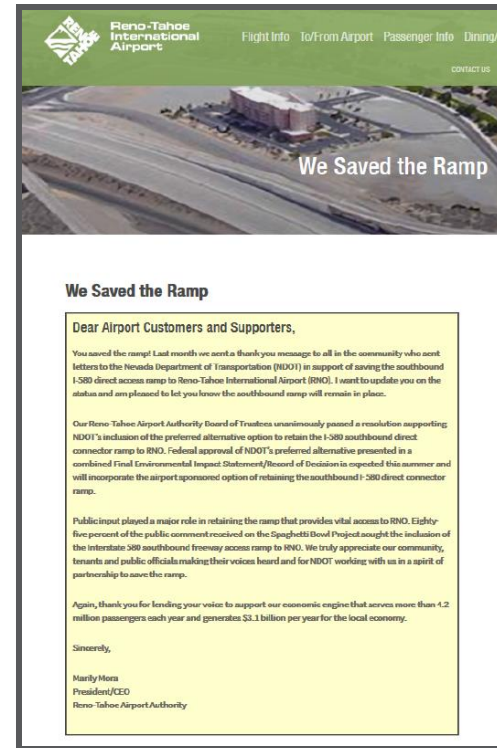
- Hundreds of letters and emails flooded NDOT
- Public hearings dominated by Save the Ramp public comment
 - 85% was solely on the project
- Media supported RNO



SAVE THE RAMP

Evaluation

- WE WON!
 - NDOT developed a new plan that saved the ramp
 - New Governor fired NDOT Director and Assistant Director



The screenshot shows the Reno-Tahoe International Airport website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Flight Info', 'To/From Airport', 'Passenger Info', and 'Dining/S'. Below the navigation bar is a large aerial photograph of the airport terminal and surrounding roads. Overlaid on the bottom right of the photo is the text 'We Saved the Ramp'. Below the photo is a yellow box containing a letter from Marilyn Mesa, President/CEO of the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority. The letter is addressed to 'Dear Airport Customers and Supporters' and expresses gratitude for the community's support in retaining the southbound I-580 direct access ramp. It mentions that the Board of Trustees passed a resolution supporting NDOT's preferred alternative and that public input played a major role in retaining the ramp. The letter concludes with a thank you for supporting the airport as an economic engine and is signed by Marilyn Mesa.

We Saved the Ramp

Dear Airport Customers and Supporters,

You saved the ramp! Last month we sent a thank you message to all in the community who sent letters to the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) in support of saving the southbound I-580 direct access ramp to Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO). I want to update you on the status and am pleased to let you know the southbound ramp will remain in place.

Our Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority Board of Trustees unanimously passed a resolution supporting NDOT's inclusion of the preferred alternative option to retain the I-580 southbound direct connector ramp to RNO. Federal approval of NDOT's preferred alternative presented in a combined Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision is expected this summer and will incorporate the airport sponsored option of retaining the southbound I-580 direct connector ramp.

Public input played a major role in retaining the ramp that provides vital access to RNO. Eighty-five percent of the public comment received on the Spaghetti Bowl Project sought the inclusion of the Interstate 580 southbound freeway access ramp to RNO. We truly appreciate our community, tenants and public officials making their voices heard and for NDOT working with us in a spirit of partnership to save the ramp.

Again, thank you for lending your voice to support our economic engine that serves more than 4.2 million passengers each year and generates \$3.1 billion per year for the local economy.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Mesa
President/CEO
Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority

Questions?
