



FORT HALL INTERCHANGE



May 2018 Open House | Fort Hall Interchange Replacement Project

The Idaho Transportation Department hosted a community open house on May 10, 2018 to gather comments on preliminary design plans for the I-15, Fort Hall Interchange (Exit 80). ITD is in the process of redesigning and replacing the interchange, which is the primary exit for the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. The department is working closely with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to design an interchange that will fit the needs of the traveling public and the local community for years to come.

Purpose of the open house

The open house gave the community an opportunity to:

- Review and provide input on preliminary design plans and potential aesthetic features.
- Speak with ITD and Tribal staff.
- Identify key issues and concerns.
- Learn how to stay involved throughout the project.

The event was held from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Dome Room of the Fort Hall Tribal Business Center. Approximately 60 people attended.



Meeting notification

ITD and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes worked together to notify the community of the opportunity to participate. Notification methods included:

- An **invitation postcard** was mailed to the project area, including all post office boxes at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.
- **Posters and display** boards were posted throughout the Fort Hall community.
- **Web** and **Facebook** stories were posted on the ITD and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes websites.
- An **email bulletin** was sent to the I-15 construction database.
- A **media release** was sent to local news outlets. News stories about the open house were printed or aired in the Blackfoot Morning News, Sho-Ban News, Post Register, Idaho State Journal and KPVI.

- A **display advertisement** was placed in the Sho-Ban News, Blackfoot Morning News and Idaho State Journal.

Meeting format and displays

Display boards about the project were arranged in several stations around the room:

Station 1: About this project

- Welcome
- About this project

Station 2: Community Involvement

- Community partnership
- Community survey results

Station 3: Interchange design

This station included two six-foot roll-plot maps of the preliminary design for Simplot Road and the entire interchange.

Stations 4 & 5: Visualization and Art Contest

This station showed a visualization of the interchange (developed by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes). The visualization played on a screen in a continuous loop.

Representatives from the Tribes were on hand to answer questions about the call to artists.

Station 6: Next steps

- How to stay involved
- Community survey #2
- Next steps

Comment sheets

Attendees had the opportunity to record written input on a comment sheet. The comment sheet included four questions:

1. What is important for ITD to consider in the design of the Fort Hall Interchange (Exit 80)?
2. Do you have any safety concerns with the existing interchange that you would like ITD to address?
3. Do you have any comments or questions about the preliminary design plans?
4. Is there anything you believe is missing or that ITD should analyze and modify in the design?

Fourteen attendees completed a comment sheet. Transcriptions are included in an appendix to this document. A summary of key themes and responses to each question begins on page 3.

Key themes

A few themes were consistent throughout the comment sheets.

- The majority of respondents expressed enthusiastic support for potential artistic elements and/or Tribal signage. Several suggested additional ideas for artistic elements.
- Many community members asked ITD to consider the needs of local residents, especially guardrails and/or noise barriers.
- Common safety concerns included the need for sidewalks and improved visibility.

Responses to each question

1. What is important for ITD to consider in the design of the Fort Hall Interchange (Exit 80)?

The most repeated responses to this question included:

- Artistic elements are important. Participants supported the proposed artwork and also suggested rock murals, Old Man Smoke, Golden Eagle, welcome signage and the “Purple Heart Reservation” designation.
- Please minimize impacts to the landowners and homeowners near the interchange, including noise, safety and acquisition of right-of-way.

Other responses included:

- Plan for future growth and safety for all users and all directions of travel.
- Fix existing visibility issues on the westbound off-ramp.
- Consider maintenance and upkeep of vegetation.

2. Do you have any safety concerns with the existing interchange that you would like ITD to address?

The most repeated response to this question was:

- Sidewalks and crosswalks are needed, especially on the overpass.

Other responses included:

- Add proper lighting, signage and/or caution signals.
- Improve visibility for cars exiting I-15.
- Build longer on-ramps.
- Fix potholes on the bridge.
- Add a barrier or guardrail to protect nearby houses from collisions.
- Add emergency parking.
- Address traffic congestion to prevent collisions.
- Consider safety for bicyclists.

3. Do you have any comments or questions about the preliminary design plans?

ITD received a variety of responses to this question, including:

- This will improve the transportation needs for this area.
- I wish the designs showed future growth.
- I wish the design included pictures of signs and other things the tribe can add later on.
- When is the anticipated implementation planned?
- How will the new Chubbuck/Siphon interchange affect things?
- The trees served as a natural barrier for residents. Will ITD place a barrier or guardrail for residents?
- I hope there will be no extra land taken to expand into my property.
- Please make the road sound enough so big rigs don't shake our house as they go over the cattle guards.

4. Is there anything you believe is missing or that ITD should analyze and modify in the design?

The most repeated response to this question was:

- Please build a sound barrier and/or safety guardrail on the residential side.

Other responses included:

- Street lamps should be solar powered and casino lights should be LED lights.
- Where would traffic lights go in the future?
- Please provide information detailing expected traffic patterns and flow.
- Include artistic aspects such as murals and statues such as a traditional dancer or majestic elk.
- Please do not use native designs on the design concept; use a mountain range or floral.
- Great job, ITD and SBITD!
- Get it done ASAP!