

*City of Alexandria, Virginia***MEMORANDUM**

DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*

SUBJECT: DIRECT ACCESS RAMP ALTERNATIVES FOR BRAC-133 IJR STUDY

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**ISSUE:** To review the seven direct access ramp alternatives being considered by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for their Interchange Justification Report (IJR).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) hear public testimony on the seven direct access ramp alternatives being considered by VDOT for their IJR analysis;
- (2) request the Transportation Commission to hold a second public hearing on this matter on December 2; and
- (3) schedule this item for a final Council public hearing and consideration on Saturday, December 12.

**BACKGROUND:** The City approved the Mark Center final phase of development in 2004 with the approval of the Mark Center Special Use Permit (SUP). The Mark Center site was selected by the Army in 2008 to accommodate the administrative offices for units, agencies, and activities categorized under BRAC 133 as part of the Fort Belvoir BRAC initiative. Under this plan, Mark Center will serve as a workplace for 6,400 Washington Headquarter Service (WHS) employees.

On June 23, 2009, the City Council directed the City Manager to undertake a transportation analysis of: 1) the potential impact of the provision of a direct access ramp from I-395 onto the Mark Center site; and 2) the impact of not building and completing the Seminary and Beauregard local road improvements by September 2011. This study found that a direct access ramp from I-395 onto Mark Center is necessary to accommodate all of the future traffic generated by the BRAC 133 relocation onto the site.

The Federal Highway Administration must approve the construction of any new access points to the interstate highway system. The first step in the approval process is to

complete an Interchange Justification Report (IJR). VDOT is in the process of developing an IJR for the direct access ramp. As part of this process, VDOT has developed seven alternative ramp configurations. Due to the scope of the study and detailed required, only two alternatives will be evaluated in the IJR. VDOT has asked the City to review the seven proposed alternatives and provide them with the two City preferred alternatives.

Drawings of the seven direct access ramp alternatives are attached. A brief summary of each alternative follows:

**Alternative “A1”** provides access to the Army garage only from the I-395 SB on-ramp and would be restricted to cars destined for the garage only. This ramp starts at the intersection of Seminary Road and the I-395 SB on ramp. The actual ramp begins in the left lane of the on ramp and then elevates up and over the on ramp to connect to the Army garage on the P5 floor level. This ramp configuration will allow traffic to both enter and exit the garage.

**Alternative “A2”** provides access to the Army garage only from the I-395 SB on-ramp and would be restricted to cars destined for the garage only. This ramp configuration begins on grade off of the I-395 SB on-ramp midway between Seminary Road and I-395 and connects directly to the Army garage. This configuration will require the elimination of the free right turn from eastbound Seminary Road onto the I-395 SB on-ramp. These right turns would then need to turn in two lanes at the existing traffic signal. This ramp configuration will allow traffic to both enter and exit the garage.

**Alternative “B1”** provides access to Mark Center from the I-395 SB on-ramp and would be open to the public. This ramp configuration begins on grade off of the I-395 SB on-ramp and then travels along the Winkler Preserve and touches down on the Mark Center private street network. This ramp will be one-way and will only allow traffic onto the site.

**Alternative “B2”** provides access to Mark Center from the I-395 SB on-ramp and would be open to the public. This ramp configuration begins on grade off of the I-395 SB on-ramp and then travels along the preserve and touches down at Mark Center Drive a public road in Mark Center. This ramp will be one-way and only allow traffic onto the site.

**Alternative “C”** provides access to the Army garage only from the I-395 SB on-ramp and the NB I-395 general purpose lanes and would be restricted to cars destined for the garage only. This ramp configuration will allow traffic to both enter and exit the site.

**Alternative “D”** provides access to Mark Center from the I-395 HOV lanes and would be open to the public. This ramp configuration begins from the HOV lanes just south of the Seminary Road interchange and travels over the SB general purpose lanes and then travels along the Winkler Preserve and touches down at Mark Center Drive a public road in Mark Center. This configuration will provide a reversible flow ramp which will allow traffic to enter the site only in the morning and exit only in the afternoons.

**Alternative “E”** is similar to alternative “D” but also provides a second access to the Army garage. This configuration will provide a two-way ramp which will allow traffic to enter the site only in the morning and exit only in the afternoons.

**ATTACHMENT:** Direct Access Ramp Alternatives

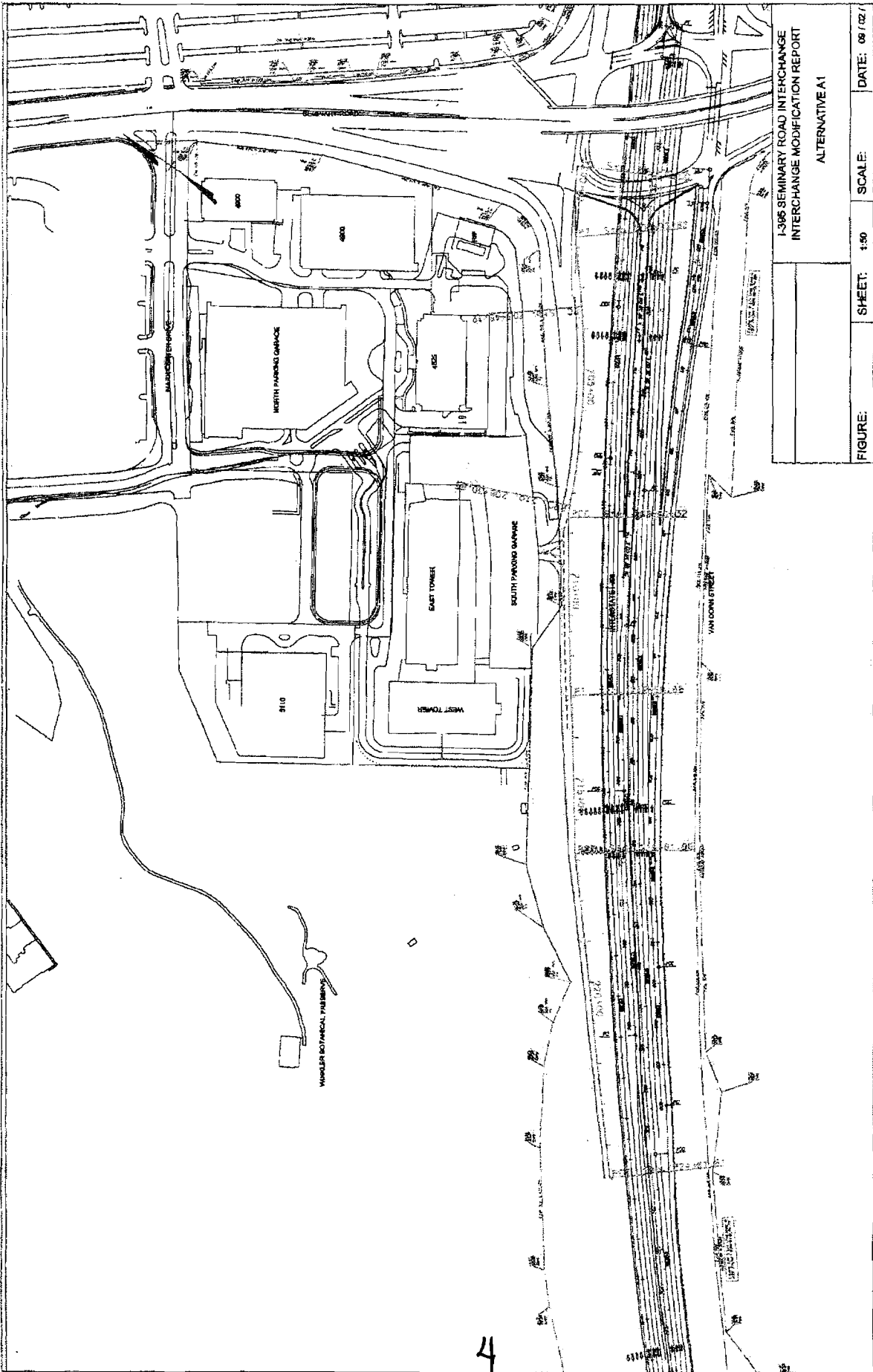
**STAFF:**

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Richard Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Patricia Escher, Principal Planner, Planning and Zoning

Bob Garbacz, Division Chief, Transportation and Environmental Services

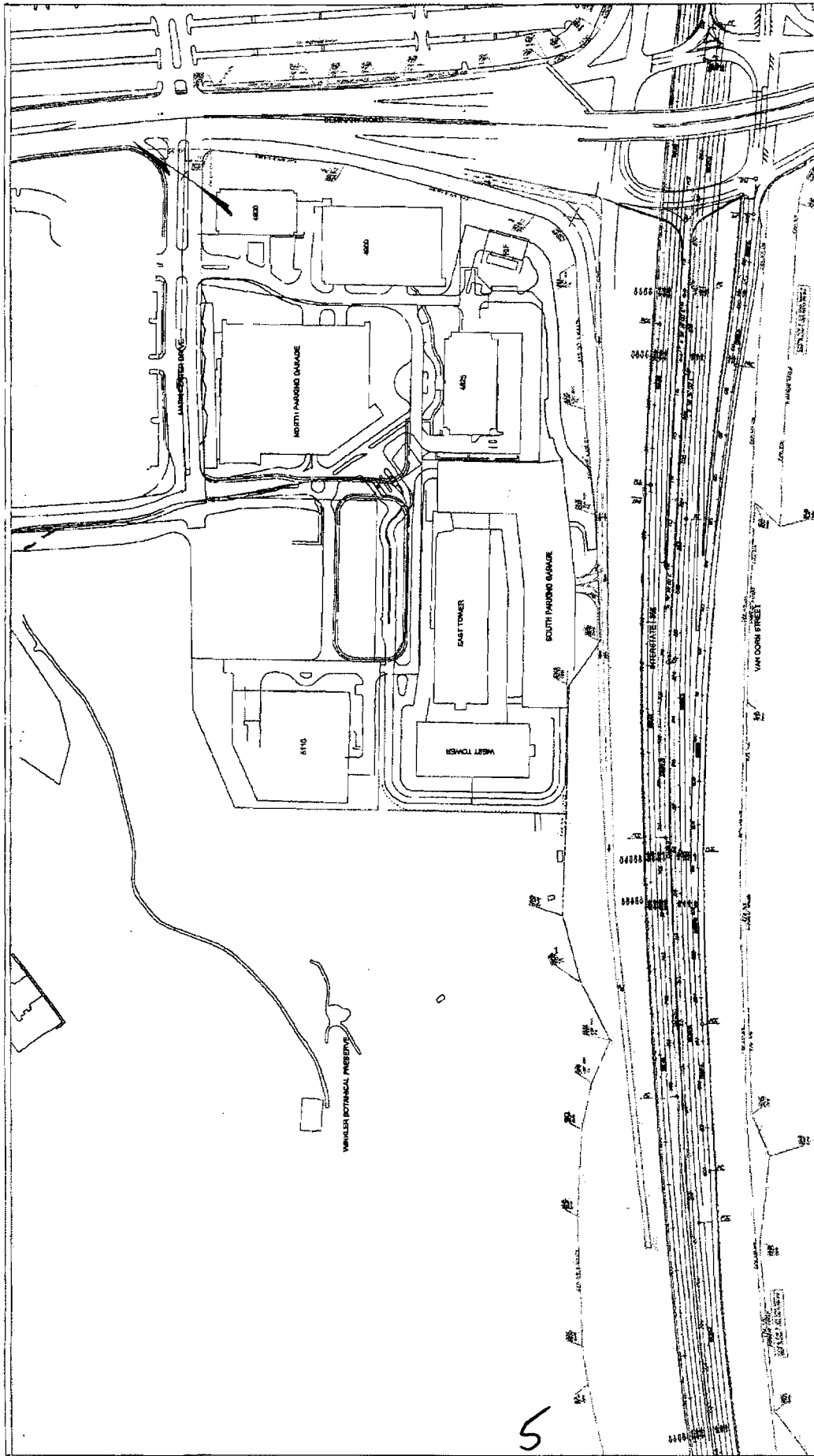


I-396 SEMINARY ROAD INTERCHANGE  
 INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION REPORT  
 ALTERNATIVE A1

FIGURE: SHEET: 150 SCALE: DATE: 08/02/07

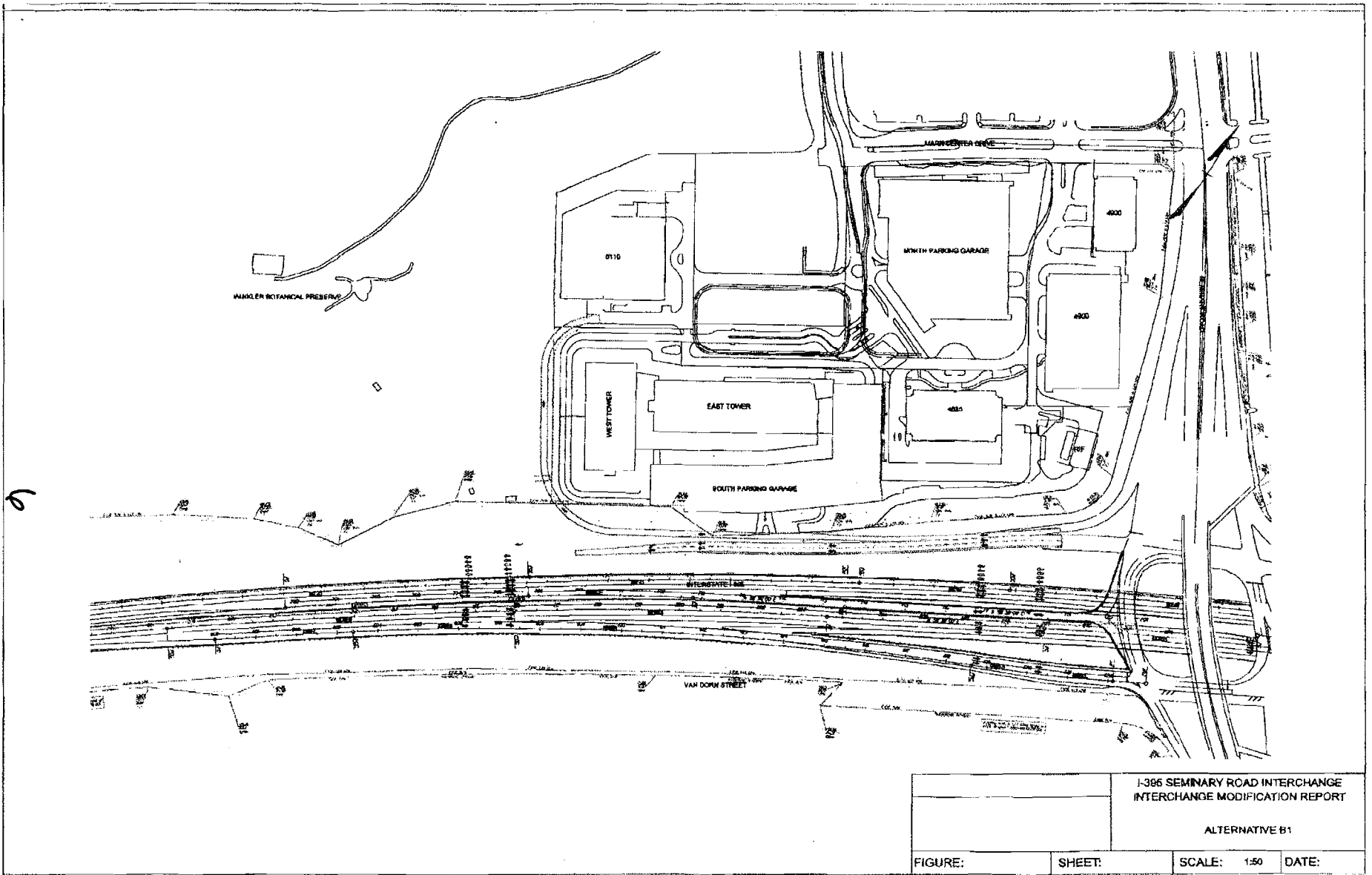
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ALTERNATIVE A1



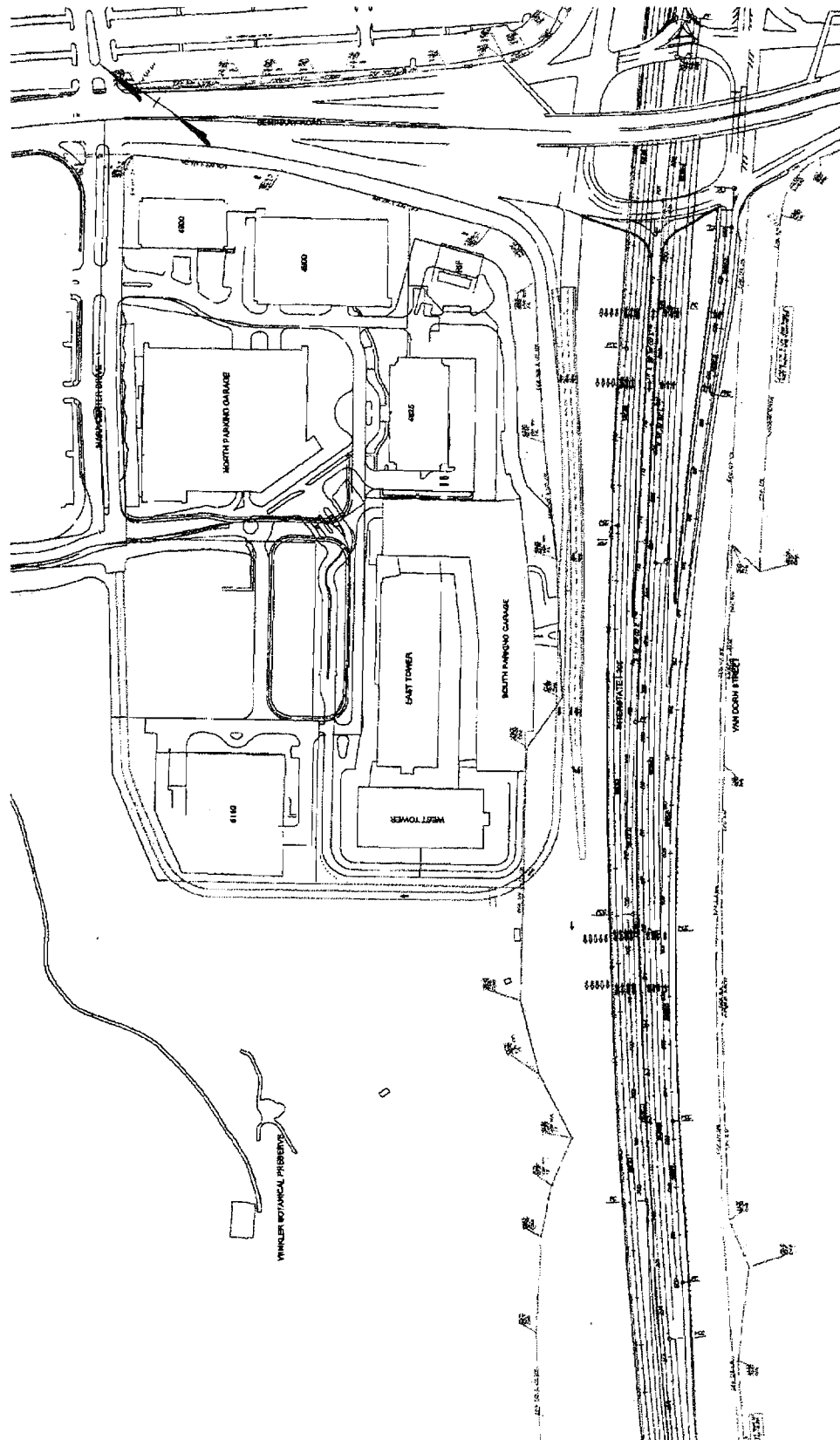
I-395 SEMINARY ROAD INTERCHANGE INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION REPORT		FIGURE:	SHEET: 1200	SCALE:	DATE: 10/01/
ALTERNATIVE A2					

ALTERNATIVE A2



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### ALTERNATIVE B1



I-395 SEMINARY ROAD INTERCHANGE  
INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION REPORT

ALTERNATIVE B2

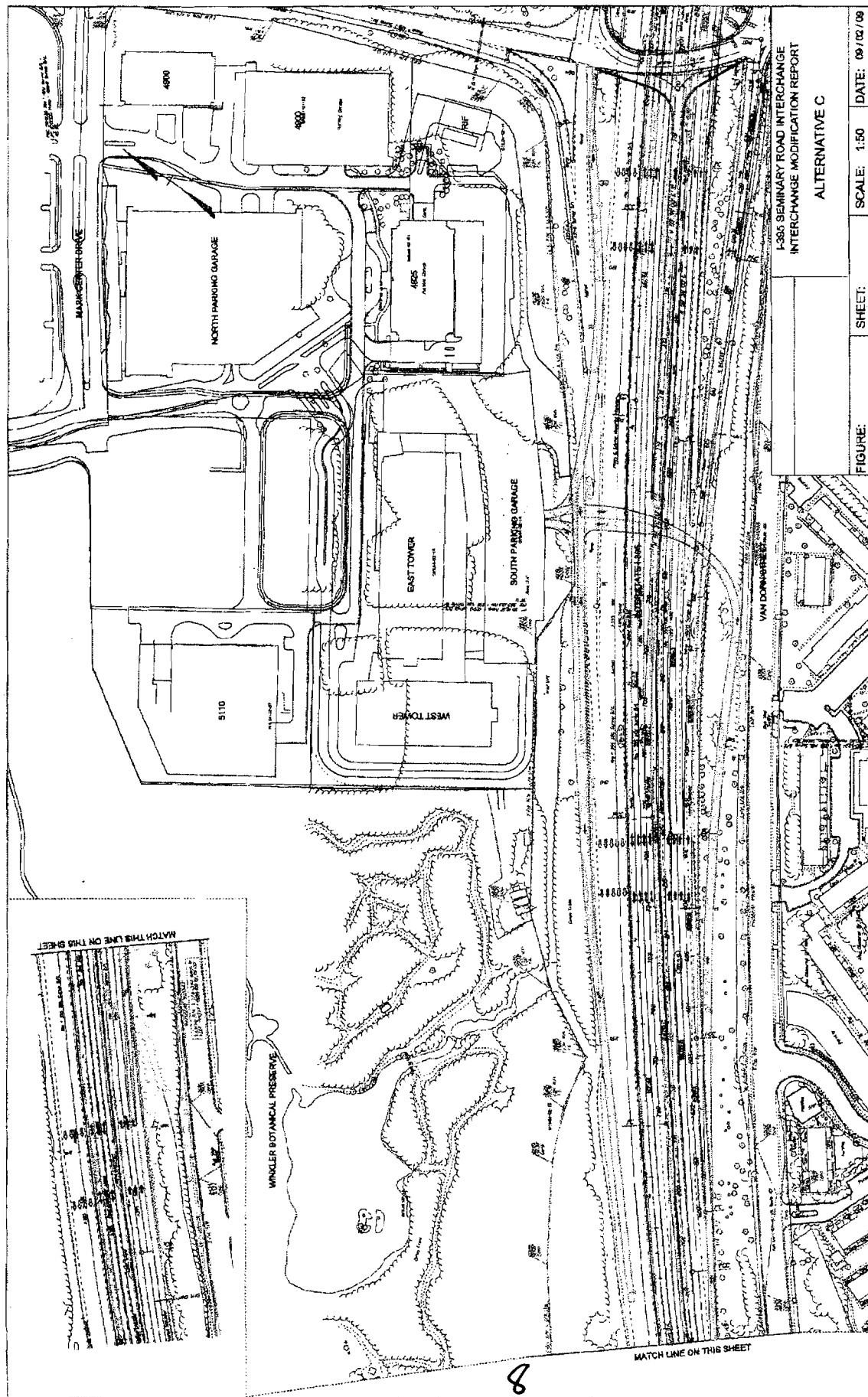
FIGURE:

SHEET:

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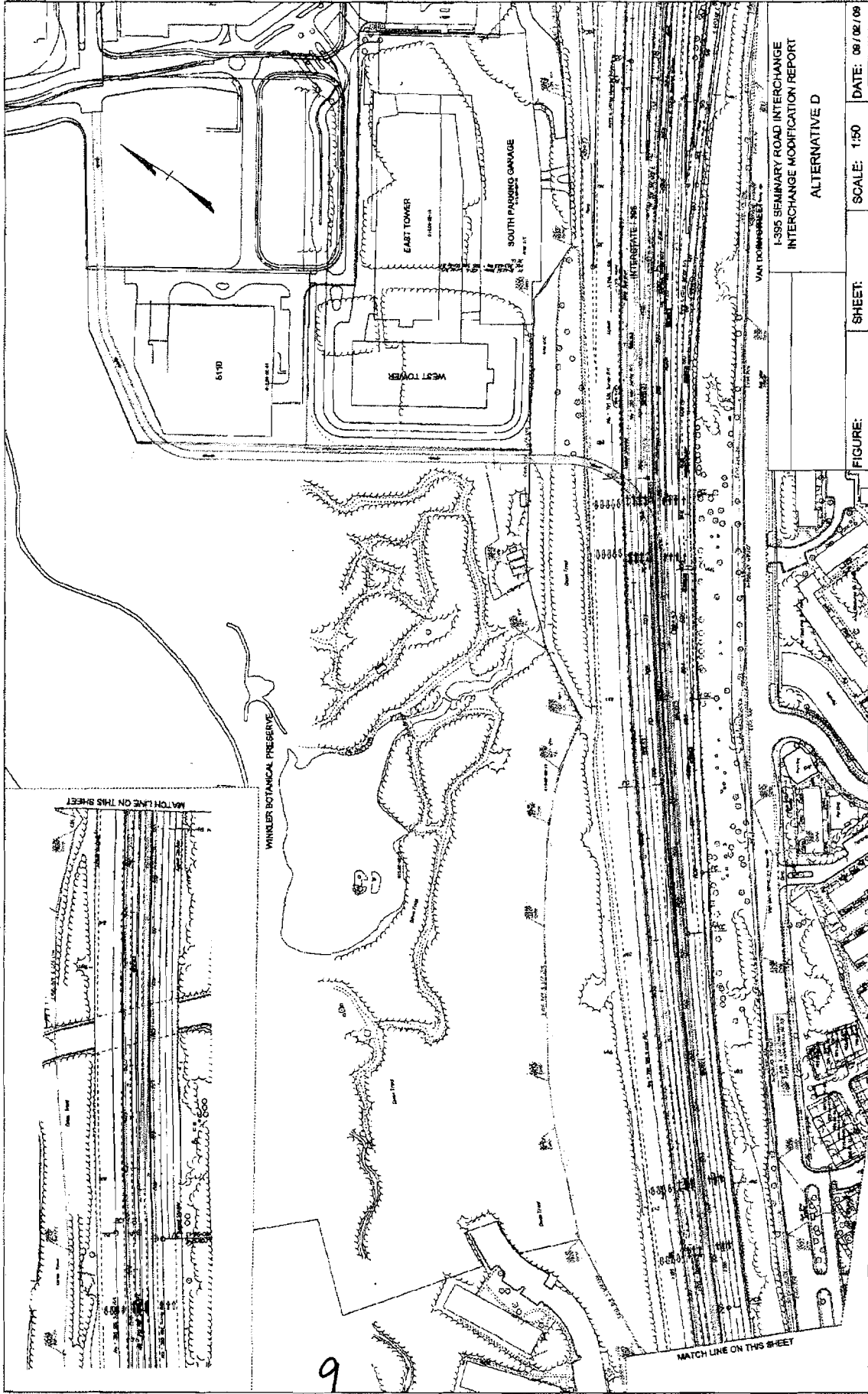
DATE: 09/02/09

ALTERNATIVE B2



ALTERNATIVE C

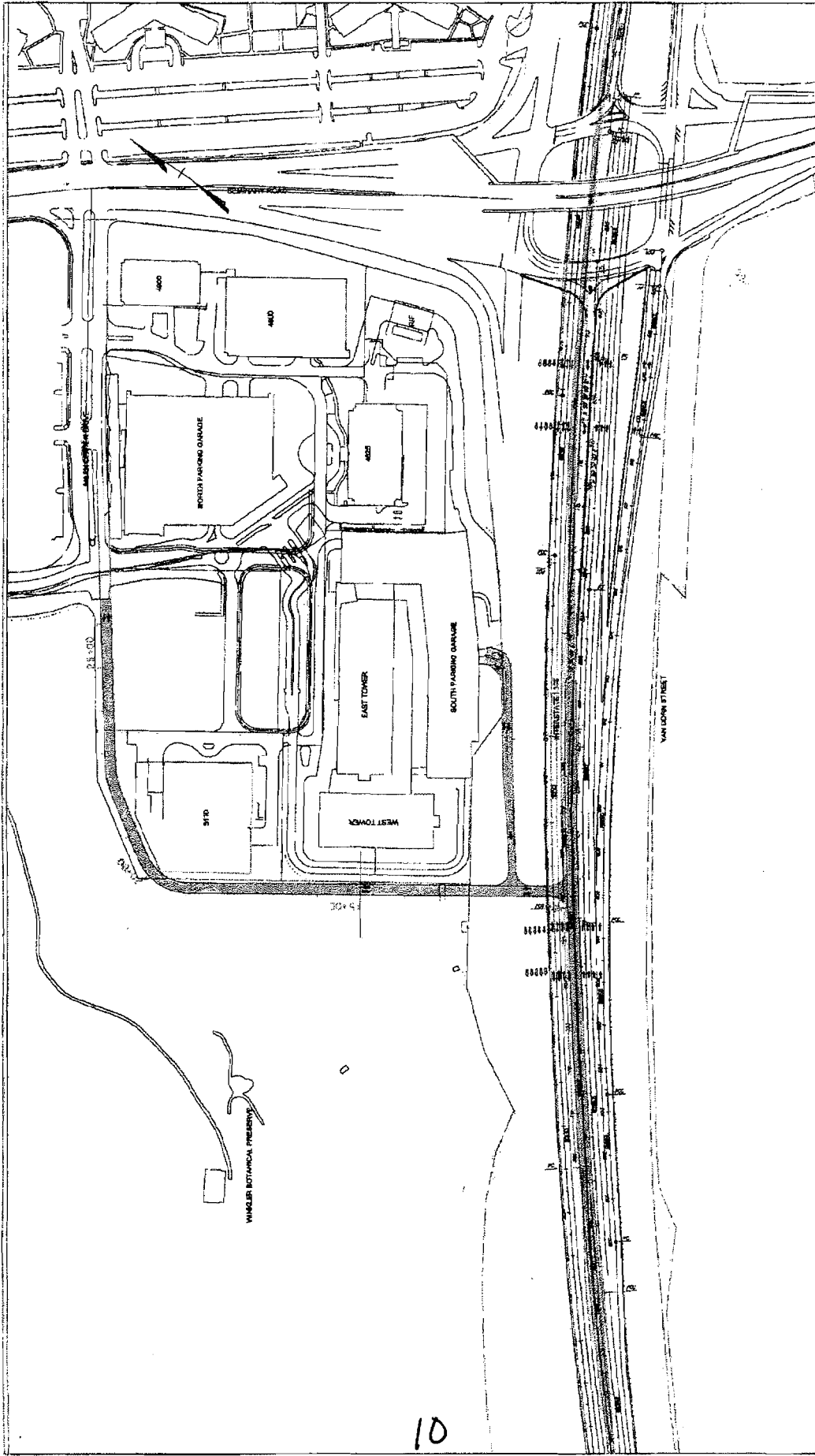




I-395 SECONDARY ROAD INTERCHANGE  
 INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION REPORT  
 ALTERNATIVE D

FIGURE: SHEET: SCALE: 1:50 DATE: 08/02/09

ALTERNATIVE D



I-385 SEMINARY ROAD INTERCHANGE INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION REPORT		FIGURE:	SHEET:	SCALE:	DATE: 10/01/
ALTERNATIVE E					

ALTERNATIVE E