

<b>COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>POLICY DIRECTIVE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROCEDURAL DIRECTIVE</b>
Subject		Number
<b>INTERCHANGE APPROVAL PROCESS</b>		<b>1601.0</b>
Effective	Supersedes	Originating Office
<b>12/15/04</b>	<b>10/19/00</b>	<b>Division of Transportation Development</b>

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy directive is to establish fair and consistent procedures regarding the review and evaluation of requests for new interchanges and major improvements to existing interchanges on the state highway system.

### **Authority**

Policy Directive 701; Section 43-1-106, C.R.S., as amended; Powers and Duties of the Commission: Section 43-3-101, C.R.S. Freeway Law, Section 43-2-147 C.R.S. Highway Access Law and the Transportation Commission's Access Code, 2 CCR 601-1.

### **Background**

The Colorado Transportation Commission recognizes that state highways are important to meeting the mobility needs of the public and that it is important to the quality of life and economic health of the state of Colorado for the state highway system to provide safe and efficient interregional and interstate movement of people and goods. To that end, the Commission must manage the location, design, operations and maintenance of interchanges on the state highway system.

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Commission that all requests for new interchanges and major improvements to existing interchanges on the state highway system be reviewed and evaluated in a fair and consistent manner, that sufficient information be available to make an informed decision, and that duplicative analytical, regulatory and procedural requirements be minimized.

Since each request for a new interchange or interchange modification has its own unique circumstances, the Commission will take into account these unique circumstances in judging the relative merits of each request for a new interchange or interchange modification on facilities owned by CDOT. To that end, the Commission recognizes that there must be flexibility to ensure a level of analysis appropriate to the circumstances surrounding each proposal.

In order to ensure consistency with local plans, needs and priorities, and the ability to have the long term contractual relationships that are necessary to maintain the infrastructure of the state highway system, applicants must be local governmental units. CDOT initiated new interchanges or interchange modifications must comply with the same analytical and procedural requirements as local applicants.

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The following general policies will apply to all proposals for new or modified interchanges on the state highway system unless otherwise agreed to by the Transportation Commission:

**Approval of Interchanges and Interchange Modifications:** To balance the need for fair and consistent treatment of all proposals to add a new interchange or modify an existing interchange to the state highway system with the need for flexibility to ensure the level of analysis appropriate to the circumstances surrounding each proposal, the Commission has identified two categories of proposals.

**Type 1:** Proposals for new interchanges on the state highway system with a functional classification of Interstate or Freeway will be submitted to the Transportation Commission for action. The Commission will also take action on other new interchanges or interchange modifications referred to it by the Chief Engineer.

**Type 2:** Proposals for new interchanges not on the interstate or freeway system and modifications to existing interchanges will be submitted to the Chief Engineer for action. The applicant may appeal the Chief Engineer's decision as it relates to policy to the Transportation Commission.

**Cost Sharing:** The state highway system shall be owned by CDOT.

The applicant is responsible for all costs for the development, administration, and evaluation of proposals for new interchanges or modifications to existing interchanges.

The applicant is responsible for all costs including, but not limited to, design, rights of way, construction, maintenance, operations, environmental mitigation and remediation and replacement of structures and ancillary facilities associated with new interchanges in perpetuity.

Responsibility for all costs including, but not limited to, design, rights of way, construction, maintenance, operations, environmental mitigation and remediation and replacement of structures and ancillary facilities owned by CDOT associated with existing interchanges, upgrades of existing intersections on state highways to interchanges, and ancillary facilities on the state highway system will be negotiated through the final Intergovernmental Agreement consistent with the financial plan identified in a Systems Level Analysis.

The Transportation Commission must approve CDOT participation in any cost sharing proposal.

**Connections To The State Highway System:** Interchange connections to the state highway system are intended to improve the operations and safety of the state highway system, serve regional travel purposes or provide access to regional destinations. Therefore interchange connections from state highways must be to regionally significant roadways or regionally significant publicly owned facilities, or result in a significant improvement in the operations and safety of the state highway system.

A regionally significant roadway is defined as a roadway classified as a principal arterial or higher classification in the most recently adopted Metropolitan Planning Organization

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transportation plan in urban areas, or if the roadway has been identified as regionally significant within an adopted Regional Transportation Plan, NEPA/environmental study, feasibility study, corridor optimization plan, or access management plan on which CDOT staff has participated and the Chief Engineer finds acceptable.

Access to local land uses must be provided to the extent reasonable and feasible by the local transportation system.

**Approval Process:** An initial Intergovernmental Agreement must be developed between the applicant and CDOT addressing responsibility for administrative and application costs, analytical procedures and responsibilities, anticipated level of design detail, approval process, anticipated schedule and other necessary issues following a project scoping meeting between the applicant and CDOT.

The Transportation Commission (for Type I proposals) and the Chief Engineer (for Type 2 proposals) shall take action on a Systems Level Study of the impacts of the proposed interchange or interchange modification on the state and local transportation system and surrounding area. The Systems Level Study must include a preliminary financial plan that identifies which parties are responsible for applicable costs.

Following the Systems Level Study approval, the new interchange or interchange modification proposal must be determined consistent with the applicable fiscally constrained regional transportation plan, receive approval of the applicable environmental documents consistent with the CDOT Environmental Stewardship Guide and receive NEPA approval and access approval by FHWA for all Interstate related proposals.

A final Intergovernmental Agreement, consistent with the approved Systems Level Study and approved by the Chief Engineer, that addresses all necessary commitments by the applicant including, but not limited to, construction, mitigation, operations, maintenance, ownership will be negotiated after the system level study is approved and the applicable environmental and design requirements are addressed.

As an incentive to encourage cooperative corridor planning, a full systems analysis is not required when a proposed interchange or interchange modification is consistent with an approved corridor optimization and access control plan. In such cases, the Chief Engineer may define additional information necessary to ensure the proposed interchange meets acceptable design, safety, operational, and other applicable requirements.


The applicants must demonstrate significant progress towards implementation of the project within 3 years of approval of the Systems Level Feasibility Study by the Transportation Commission or Chief Engineer. If the applicant has not made significant progress toward implementation of the interchange project within 3 years of this approval, the applicant may submit a written request to the Chief Engineer for a one year time extension. No more than two one-year extensions may be granted by the Chief Engineer.

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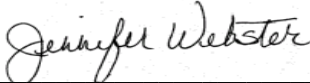
IMPLEMENTATION

This policy shall be implemented by all Regions and Divisions of the Colorado Department of Transportation. A procedural directive shall be developed to provide more specific direction on procedures to implement this policy.

This policy shall be reviewed by November, 2007.

  
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Thomas E. Norton, Executive Director

12/15/04  
Date

  
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Transportation Commission Secretary

12/15/04  
Date