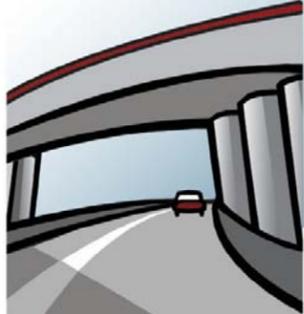


US 6/Wadsworth



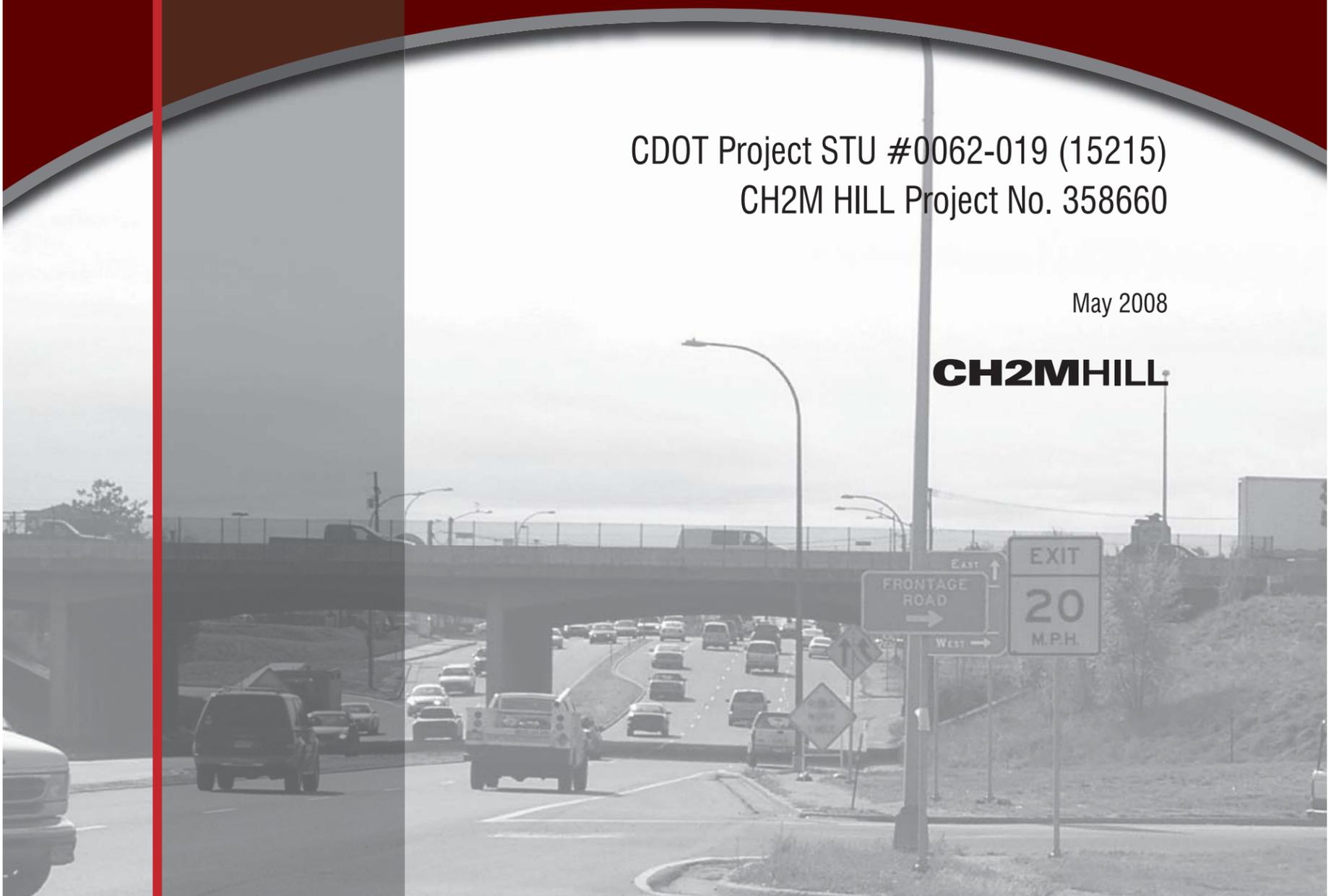
**Environmental
Assessment**

Open House #3 Summary Report

CDOT Project STU #0062-019 (15215)
CH2M HILL Project No. 358660

May 2008

CH2MHILL





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Open House #3 Summary Report

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
EA	Environmental Assessment
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
RTD	Regional Transportation District
SPUI	Single-Point Urban Interchange



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Open House #3 Summary Report

1.0 Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) to study transportation improvements at the interchange of US 6 (also designated as 6th Avenue) and Wadsworth Boulevard (also designated as Colorado State Highway 121), including improvements along Wadsworth Boulevard from approximately 4th Avenue to 14th Avenue in Lakewood, Colorado. The EA was initiated in April 2007, and public scoping, which included an Open House and numerous small group meetings, was conducted between May and August 2007. A second Open House was held on February 12, 2008, and during this meeting, the process and results of the Level 1 screening of design concepts was discussed.

Since the end of the Open House #2, CDOT has:

- Conducted a Level 2 evaluation of the interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard design concepts;
- Identified a Preferred Alternative; and
- Made preliminary estimates of environmental, transportation, and property impacts that could result from each of the design concepts.

CDOT held Open House #3 on April 29, 2008 and May 21, 2008 to present information developed since Open House #2.

This Open House #3 Summary Report summarizes the notification methods and comments received at Open House #3 conducted in support of the US 6/Wadsworth Boulevard EA.



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Open House #3 Summary Report

2.0 Notification of Open House #3

Multiple methods of communication were used to notify the public of Open House #3: newsletters; a press release; advertisements in local newspapers; flyers posted in schools, churches, and other public locations; and notifications in other media. This section describes the meeting notification and outreach process in greater detail.

2.1 Newsletters

The April 2008 newsletter was mailed on April 9, 2008, to the project mailing list. A large number of newsletters were not delivered due to problems with printing and distribution. The newsletter was sent to the mailing list again on May 8, 2008 with an invitation to a second open house on May 21, 2008, for citizens who were unaware of the original meeting. The newsletter consisted of four pages of text explaining the project, progress to date, and alternatives development and screening process, and invited citizens to the upcoming open house.

The mailing list consisted of approximately 800 business and property owners adjacent to Wadsworth Boulevard and the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange, as well as other members of the public who requested to be included on the project mailing list. Approximately 40 members of the mailing list provided email addresses in prior correspondence and received the newsletter via email rather than the U. S. Postal Service. The newsletter was produced in two versions, English and Spanish. Both versions were mailed to the entire mailing list. See Appendix A for a copy of both versions of the newsletter.

2.2 Press Releases

A press release (see Appendix A) was distributed by CDOT to the CDOT Region 6 media distribution list, which includes over 90 media outlets in the Denver metropolitan area.

2.3 Newspaper Advertisements

Advertisements announcing Open House #3 ran in the *Lakewood Sentinel* weekly newspaper on April 17, 2008 and April 24, 2008, and in the *Denver Post* on April 29, 2008. See Appendix A for a copy of the advertisement.



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2.4 Flyers

A public notice flyer was developed and mailed to the churches listed in Exhibit 1 on April 17, 2008. The public notice flyers were hand delivered to the Lakewood community locations, listed in Exhibit 1, on April 21, 2008 to advertise Open House #3. See Appendix A for a copy of the flyer.

EXHIBIT 1

Locations for Flyers Advertising Open House #3

Category	Location
Churches (mailed)	Bethel Christian Fellowship
	Calvary Baptist Church
	Child Evangelism Fellowship Greater Denver Chapter
	Christ Chapel of the Rockies
	Church of Christ at Jay Street
	Church of Christ Scientist
	First Baptist Church of Lakewood
	First Presbyterian Church of Lakewood
	Grace Fellowship of Lakewood
	Lakewood Church of the Nazarene
	Lakewood United Church of Christ
	Lakewood United Methodist Church
	Light and Life Community Church
	Mountair Christian Church
	New Life Center
	Rock Creek Church
	Seventh Day Baptist Church of Denver
St. Bernadette Catholic Church	
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	
St. Paul's Lutheran Church	
Lakewood Community Locations (hand delivered)	Belmar Library
	Clements Community Center
	Denver Indian Center
	Heritage Center Farmers Market and Visitors Center
	Market at Belmar (information center on Teller St.)
	Super Wal-Mart (at Colfax and Wadsworth Boulevard)
	Wal-Mart (at 3rd Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard)
	Whole Foods Customer Service
	King Soopers at Allison and Alameda

Source: CH2M HILL, 2008



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2.5 Other Notification Media

Three other notification methods were used to advertise Open House #3: television, Web sites, and neighborhood groups.

2.1.1 Television

Notice of the meeting ran on the City of Lakewood Public Access Television Channel 8.

2.1.2 Web sites

The City of Lakewood Web site advertised the meeting on its home page and transportation planning page, and the meeting was also advertised on the project Web site at www.US6Wadsworth.com, which is linked to the main CDOT website.

Several local neighborhood and business groups also advertised the meeting on their group Web sites: Alameda Gateway Community Association, Mid Lakewood Civic Association, Morse Park Neighborhood Association, and MyLakewood.com, a site devoted to supporting local businesses in Lakewood.

2.1.3 Neighborhood Groups

Open House #3 was advertised in newsletters and at monthly meetings for several neighborhood groups. The meeting was advertised in the O'Kane Park and Eiber Neighborhood Association newsletters. Project staff gave presentations about the US 6/Wadsworth study to the following groups, and announced Open House #3 during those presentations: Eiber Neighborhood Association, Two Creeks Neighborhood Organization, and West Alameda Kiwanis Club.



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3.0 Open House #3

This section summarizes the venue for Open House #3 and presents the meeting format and materials used for exhibits and handouts to the public.

3.1 Location and Attendance

Open House #3 was held at the Lakewood Cultural Center in Lakewood, Colorado, on Tuesday, April 29, 2008, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. and on Wednesday May 21, 2008 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The meetings were attended by members of the public, City of Lakewood staff, CDOT representatives, local business owners, property owners, and members of the Lakewood City Council and Planning Commission. Approximately 91 people, not including CDOT, the consultant, or Lakewood staff, attended the April 29th meeting, and approximately 36 people attended the May 21st meeting. Appendix B includes a copy of the meeting rosters, listing the attendees at both meetings.

3.2 Meeting Format and Content

Open House #3 was conducted in a mixed open house and presentation format. For the Open House portion of the meeting, information stations were set up to cover the following topics:

- project purpose and need, and study schedule;
- design concepts and screening results;
- traffic;
- environmental resources and water quality treatment options;
- reference materials and handouts; and
- CDOT's right-of-way procedures.

CDOT and consultant staff were available at the stations and talked with meeting participants about the information provided. Both verbal and written comments were received by staff during the open house portion of the meeting, and a comment box was provided to collect written comment forms. Public comments received by CDOT during the Open House are summarized in Section 4.0 of this report.

A power point presentation was given at 5:00 p.m. on April 29 and 6:00 p.m. on May 21. The same presentation was presented at both meetings.. Appendix C includes a copy of the Open House #3 meeting presentation. Meeting minutes for the April 29th and May 21st meetings are provided in Appendix D.



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A Spanish translator was available, but no Spanish-only speakers were present at either meeting. An unsupervised children's area was available, and one family took advantage of this service during the April 29, 2008 meeting. No one took advantage of this service during the May 21, 2008 meeting.

3.3 Display Boards and Handouts

Display boards used at Open House #3 provided information on the project purpose and need and schedule; design concepts and screening results; traffic; and environmental resources and water quality treatment options. Display boards illustrated the following topics (see Appendix E for illustrations):

- Project purpose and need
- Key decision milestones
- Vicinity map
- Tight Diamond with Loop - Preferred Alternative
- Tight Diamond design concept
- Single Point Urban Interchange design concept
- Partial Cloverleaf design concept
- Interchange impact by design concept
- Lakewood vision for interchange aesthetics
- Lakewood vision for Wadsworth Boulevard aesthetics
- Wadsworth Boulevard Preferred Alternative, plan view
- Wadsworth Boulevard Preferred Alternative, cross section
- Historic properties
- Year 2007 existing traffic levels of service
- Year 2035 No Action traffic levels of service
- Level of service explanation board
- Year 2035 Action levels of service on Wadsworth
- Year 2035 Action levels of service at Interchange
- Water quality treatment options

Handouts were available to provide more detailed information on some aspects of the study (see Appendix F). Handouts provided information on the following topics:

- Agenda
- Project purpose and need
- EA process
- Noise information
- US 6/ Wadsworth frequently asked questions
- Level 2 evaluation, US 6/Wadsworth interchange
- Level 2 evaluation, Wadsworth Boulevard



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- Open House #3 comment form

Copies of the January 2008 and April 2008 newsletters were also available. Detailed Level 2 evaluation matrices for the interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard were available by request. Reference-only copies of Lakewood's *Wadsworth Boulevard Strategic Plan* and *Wadsworth Station Area Implementation Plan* were also available at the resources table.



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4.0 Open House #3 Comments

Members of the public provided verbal comments through discussions with project staff during the meetings and through written comment forms submitted during and after the meetings. The sections below summarize the comments received at the meetings. Comments received verbally by project staff during Open House #3 are detailed in Section 4.1 below. Written comments are summarized in Section 4.2 below and included in their entirety in Appendix G.

4.1 Summary of Verbal Comments

The topics receiving the most verbal comments at Open House #3 were access and traffic issues and frontage road operations. Other topics of interest included noise, pedestrian and bicycle access, interchange concepts, and drainage and water quality. In general, meeting attendees supported the identification of the Tight Diamond with Loop as the preferred alternative for the interchange and a six-lane section with raised median and detached sidewalk as the preferred alternative for Wadsworth Boulevard.

Access and Traffic Issues

- Close access to Highland Drive from Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Preference for three-quarter access at Highland Drive with the U-turn option at 9th Avenue. Current configuration makes left turn from Highland Drive onto southbound Wadsworth nearly impossible; currently have to turn right first and then make a U-turn at 10th Avenue or drive to Sheridan Boulevard.
- Preference for full movement at the Highland Drive/Wadsworth Boulevard intersection. The U-turn option at 9th Avenue is not a safer option.
- Support access control along Wadsworth Boulevard and at the interchange.
- Support for adequate room for U-turns, especially at 9th Avenue.
- Allow for opportunities to safely make left turns along Wadsworth Boulevard, both north and south.
- Support for traffic calming within the neighborhood streets, such as speed bumps and policing speeds.
- Consider neighborhood traffic management during construction.



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- Post a better yield sign for the eastbound US 6 ramp to southbound Wadsworth right turn. Flashing yield signal may be a good short term improvement.
- Stop building lanes and spending money for low levels of service.

Frontage Road Operations

- Support for two-way frontage road on the northeast side of the interchange to provide access to the tennis courts and the school closer to Sheridan.
- Do not connect Broadview Drive to the frontage road; prefer the dead end.
- Realign the northwest frontage road to follow the drainage way and tie into 8th Avenue then tie into Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Consider a different configuration of frontage roads, including dead end or even eliminating Broadview Drive.
- Move frontage road and ramp closer to the freeway to avoid property acquisition in the northeast quadrant.
- Maintain current frontage road connection in northeast quadrant of interchange.
- Combine frontage road and north ramp intersection at a single signal.

Noise

- There is concern that changes in the interchange might affect the ability of the noise walls to mitigate noise in the southwest quadrant.
- There is concern about a decrease in property values for properties affected by noise.
- Noise may extend farther into the neighborhoods if walls are put up next to US 6.
- Put noise barriers west of the interchange all the way to Garrison Street.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

- Provide pedestrian crossing at drainage underpass at 8th Avenue.
- Continue and/or expand trail opportunities in the northwest quadrant of the interchange, as many neighbors like to walk along the drainage.
- Provide better pedestrian access.
- East/west crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists are important, as well as improvements to the multiuse trail north/south along Wadsworth Boulevard through the interchange.



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- The existing pedestrian/bike crossings under US 6 are unsafe.
- Please encourage pedestrian activity; do not just accommodate it.

Interchange Concepts

- Reconfigure southbound Wadsworth Boulevard to eastbound US 6 ramp to avoid property acquisition.
- Maintain the Carr Street exit from US 6.
- Keep the slip ramps at Carr Street in the southwest and northwest quadrants.

Drainage and Water Quality

- Support for drainage improvements to improve floodplain conditions.
- What are sand filter water quality features, and where are examples located in Lakewood?
- Consider fixing the drainage problems of McIntyre Gulch beyond what is needed for the bridge.
- Stabilize McIntyre Gulch
- Improve drainage along with the roadway improvements
- Reduce 100-year flood plain.

Miscellaneous

- Currently, there is a homeless population living in the South Lakewood Gulch drainage.
- Concern about attracting homeless people to the improved drainage area, needing better visibility and police access to monitor.
- The McDonald's on Wadsworth Boulevard is an important community resource.
- Consider adding bus pullouts so that automobiles are not caught behind buses, especially as RTD increases bus service along Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Improved Wadsworth Boulevard mobility should reduce neighborhood and driveway cut-through traffic.
- Public meetings have not been inclusive enough, and people have not been informed.
- When will CDOT begin contacting property owners individually to discuss impacts and the right-of-way acquisition process?



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- Consider moving or removing the 10th Avenue bus pull-out west of Wadsworth Boulevard so that the Eiber neighborhood sign located in the median can be improved.
- On the display board presenting Lakewood’s vision for the interchange, the gateway aesthetics presented are too expensive.
- The real congestion is farther east on US 6 at Sheridan, Federal, and Interstate-25.

4.2 Summary of Written Comments

Approximately 7 comment forms were handed in at the Open House #3 April 29, 2008 meeting. Two additional comment forms were mailed to the project team after the open house. Approximately 7 comment forms were handed in at the May 21, 2008 meeting. These written comments were entered into the comment database, which records all individual public comments received during the course of the study. The completed forms are compiled in Appendix G.

The comment form asked the following questions:

1. Do you support the identification of the Tight Diamond with Loop as the Preferred Alternative for the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange? Comments?
2. Do you support the identification of six lanes with a raised median and sidewalks as the Preferred Alternative on Wadsworth Boulevard? Comments?
3. Please provide any additional comments.

Exhibit 2 documents the responses to Questions 1 and 2.

EXHIBIT 2

Open House #3 Comment Form Questions 1 and 2 Responses – Level 2 Screening Results

Question	“Yes” Responses	“No” Responses	No Answer
1. Do you support the identification of the Tight Diamond Loop as the Preferred Alternative for the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange?	11	0	3
2. Do you support the identification of six lanes with a raised median and sidewalks as the Preferred Alternative on Wadsworth Boulevard?	12	0	3

Source: CH2M HILL, 2008.

There was one response that partially agreed and partially disagreed with the Preferred Alternative for the interchange. The reason for disagreeing is the following:

- Highland Drive should be closed to access from Wadsworth Boulevard.



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There were no responses that disagreed with the Preferred Alternative for Wadsworth Boulevard.

Additional comments provided in response to all questions focused on design concepts, noise, pedestrian and bicycle access, and access and traffic. Other topics of interest included safety and drainage.

Access and Traffic

- Close Highland Drive at Wadsworth Boulevard
- Cut-through traffic will be hazardous to the children and elderly populations in the neighborhoods.
- Maintain the Garrison Street exit from US 6.
- Exiting the neighborhood from the east on Highland Drive and trying to make a left turn onto southbound Wadsworth Boulevard or a right turn onto northbound Wadsworth Boulevard is a near-death experience.
- Close access to Broadview Drive from proposed frontage road to avoid cut-through traffic through the neighborhood.
- U-turns at 9th Avenue should not be allowed unless a traffic light is installed.
- Cars exit the Carr Street on-ramp illegally.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

- Provide opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle crossing between US 6 and 10th Avenue.
- Provide pedestrian refuge for crossing at 12th Avenue and other mid-block locations.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian access underneath US 6 overpass.
- Work with RTD to ensure future transit plans considered.

Miscellaneous

- Preference for improving Wadsworth Boulevard before US 6 interchange, if budgetary constraints exist.
- Landscaping in the proposed Wadsworth Boulevard median should remain low-growing so that visibility is not blocked by growth.
- A raised median will provide safety.
- Concerns about the right-of-way acquisition process.
- Concern about increasing noise levels along Wadsworth Boulevard as the number of travel lanes increase.



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