

US 6/Wadsworth



**Environmental
Assessment**

Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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

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CH2MHILL





Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

Contents

Section	Page
Acronyms and Abbreviations	iii
1.0 Introduction.....	1-1
2.0 Notification of Noise Assessment Meeting.....	2-1
2.1 Newspaper Advertisements	2-1
2.2 Flyers	2-1
2.3 Postcards.....	2-1
2.4 Other Notification Media	2-1
3.0 Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting.....	3-1
3.1 Location and Attendance	3-1
3.2 Meeting Format and Content.....	3-1
3.3 Display Boards and Handouts	3-2
4.0 Noise Assessment Meeting Comments.....	4-1
4.1 Summary of Verbal Comments	4-1
4.2 Summary of Written Comments	4-3

Appendixes

- A Notices and Advertisements
- B Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Roster
- C Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Presentation
- D Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Minutes
- E Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Display Boards
- F Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Handouts
- G Written Comments

Exhibits

- 1 Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Comment Form Question 1 Responses



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting 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 to present information gathered from the Level 1 screening of design concepts, and a third Open House was held on April 29, 2008 and May 21, 2008 to present the Level 2 screening of design concepts for the US 6 interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard; the Preferred Alternative; and the preliminary estimates of environmental, transportation, and property impacts. Since presenting the Preferred Alternative, CDOT has:

- Conducted noise analysis on existing and future noise levels, and
- Considered locations for the proposed and reconstructed noise barriers.

CDOT held the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 to present information developed since the Open House #3.

This Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report summarizes the notification methods and comments received at the meeting conducted in support of the US 6/Wadsworth Boulevard EA.



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

2.0 Notification of Noise Assessment Meeting

Multiple methods of communication were used to notify the public of the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting: advertisements in local newspapers; flyers distributed; and postcards mailed. This section describes the meeting notification and outreach process in greater detail.

2.1 Newspaper Advertisements

An advertisement announcing the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting ran in the *Lakewood Sentinel* weekly newspaper on May 29, 2008. See Appendix A for a copy of the advertisement.

2.2 Flyers

A public notice flyer was developed and distributed at the May 21, 2008 Open House #3 to advertise the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting. See Appendix A for a copy of the flyer.

2.3 Postcards

On May 26, 2008, postcards were mailed to the project mailing list advertising the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting. The mailing list consisted of 1733 property and business owners within the geographic boundaries of 3rd Avenue to 9th Avenue and Garrison Street to Saulsbury Street, as well as other members of the public who requested to be included on the project mailing list. See Appendix A for a copy of the postcard.

2.4 Other Notification Media

The meeting was advertised on the project Web site at www.US6Wadsworth.com, which is linked to the main CDOT website.



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

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Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

3.0 Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting

This section summarizes the venue for the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting and presents the meeting format and materials used for exhibits and handouts to the public.

3.1 Location and Attendance

The Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting was held at the Lakewood Cultural Center Community Room in Lakewood, Colorado, on Wednesday, June 4, 2008, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. The meeting was 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 64 people, not including CDOT, the consultant, or Lakewood staff, attended the meeting. Appendix B includes a copy of the meeting roster, listing the attendees at the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting. Public comments are summarized in Section 4.0 of this report.

3.2 Meeting Format and Content

The Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting 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;
- noise information; and,
- reference materials and handouts.

CDOT and consultant staff were available at the stations and talked with meeting participants about the information provided. A Powerpoint presentation was given at 6:00 p.m. Appendix C includes a copy of the Noise Assessment and Mitigation meeting presentation.

Both written and verbal comments were received by staff during the open house portion of the meeting, and a comment box was provided to collect comment forms. Meeting minutes are provided in Appendix D. A Spanish translator was available, but no Spanish-only speakers were present at the meeting. An unsupervised children's area was available, and one family took advantage of this service.



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

3.3 Display Boards and Handouts

Display boards used at the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting provided information on the project purpose and need and schedule; CDOT's noise analysis procedure; existing and future noise conditions; proposed locations for noise barriers; and noise barrier aesthetics. Display boards illustrated the following topics (see Appendix E for illustrations):

- Project purpose and need
- Key milestones schedule
- Sound pressure levels by decibel
- CDOT noise analysis flow chart
- Noise level contours and measurement locations
- Proposed locations of noise barriers
- Noise mitigation approach
- Noise mitigation effectiveness
- Noise barrier aesthetics

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

- Agenda
- Project purpose and need
- Environmental Assessment process
- Noise information
- Noise frequently asked questions
- US 6/Wadsworth frequently asked questions
- CDOT brochure: *Establishing Realistic Speed Limit*
- CDOT brochure: *Highway Traffic Noise: Assessment and Abatement*
- CDOT brochure: *Highway Traffic Noise: Effect of Pavement Types*
- Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting comment form



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

4.0 Noise Assessment Meeting Comments

Members of the public provided comments through discussions with project staff during the meeting and through written comment forms submitted during and after the meeting. The sections below summarize the comments received at the meeting. Comments received verbally by project staff during the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting 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 comments at the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting were noise levels and frontage road changes. Other topics of interest included vehicle access, sight visibility, and maintenance and aesthetics.

Noise Walls

- Most meeting attendees were strongly in favor of noise walls along US 6 between Wadsworth Boulevard and Garrison Street.
- There is concern that the noise barriers will negatively affect air quality for the homeowners adjacent to the highway by concentrating pollution.
- There is a desire to construct walls where graffiti is easily removed.
- Several property owners fear that the walls will simply reflect the noise farther back into the neighborhoods if the walls are not absorptive.
- The length and height of the sound walls might limit sight distance along the frontage road, especially at on-ramps.
- There is concern that the proposed noise barriers will block business visibility from US 6.
- How far back were noise levels measured? Despite being farther away from the highway, residences that are elevated from the highway experience high noise levels.
- Several residents commented that noise levels increased when noise walls were constructed. There is concern that the proposed walls will worsen noise levels once constructed.
- Is it possible to measure before and after noise levels when the noise walls are constructed?



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

- Shadows from the sound walls on the north side of US 6 will create ice patches during the winter.
- Because US 6 is elevated at Garrison Street, one resident would like the sound walls to extend farther west than proposed to block visibility to US 6.
- The City of Lakewood wants to be involved in the discussion about the proposed sound barrier along the northeast quadrant's frontage road because of aesthetics. Lakewood also noted that noise barriers are permitted only along US 6 and US 285 in the City.

Frontage Road

- Headlights intruding into homes along the proposed frontage road will not be welcomed.
- There is concern about cut-through traffic on Vance Street and Broadview once the frontage road is constructed.
- Two-way traffic is a good idea for frontage road.
- The frontage road needs to be sloped well so that when ice melts in the winter, it drains properly.
- There is concern about truck traffic being able to negotiate tight curves along the northeast quadrant frontage road.
- There are several questions about where property owners will have access to a public street once the frontage road is constructed.
- Perhaps a wider sidewalk could be constructed closer to the frontage road in the northeast quadrant.

Vehicular Movements

- Several comments have been made asking to install a light at the intersection of Highland Drive and Wadsworth Boulevard so that vehicles exiting the neighborhood from the east can make a left turn onto Wadsworth.
- When US 6 is backed up traveling eastbound, vehicles illegally exit the highway via the Carr Street on-ramp. A resident asked that CDOT install a longer barrier between US 6 and the frontage road to restrict this movement.

Miscellaneous

- Have rising gas prices been considered when making traffic projections?
- Trucks and motorcycles generate extremely loud noise levels from the highway.



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

- Where will the CDOT plows put the snow from US 6, as it is currently plowed onto the frontage road? Snow is then plowed from the frontage road onto residents' driveways, left for them to clear, and CDOT plows often hit mailboxes when clearing snow.
- Has CDOT considered implementing tire regulations that could lessen the noise levels?
- Where will the ditch on the southern side of US 6 be relocated when the frontage road is constructed? Would the relocation of the ditch make accessing properties more difficult?
- How much do alternatives cost? What percentage of funding is federal versus state?
- Are emergency services being consulted about the design concepts?

4.2 Summary of Written Comments

Approximately 12 comment forms were completed and returned during or after the Noise Assessment and Mitigation 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 construction of noise walls along US 6 as part of improvements to the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange- yes or no? Comments?
2. Do you have any comments about the aesthetics/appearance of noise walls along US 6?
3. Please provide any additional comments.

Exhibit 1 documents the responses to Question 1.

EXHIBIT 1

Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Comment Form Question 1 Responses – noise wall preference

Question	"Yes" Responses	"No" Responses	No Answer
1. Do you support the construction of noise walls along US 6 as part of improvements to the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange?	9	2	1

Source: CH2M HILL, 2008.

The responses that disagreed with constructing noise barriers cited the following reasons for disagreement:

- The commercial enterprise depended upon exposure from US 6, and the proposed noise barriers would block that view.
- On the south side of US 6, there is already a problem of snow and ice build-up after every snow storm.



Noise Assessment and Mitigation Meeting Summary Report

- The sound walls make the sound louder because they reflect sound, especially to properties elevated higher than US 6.

Additional comments provided in response to questions focused on the construction and aesthetics of the noise walls. Other topics of interest included safety and drainage.

Noise Barriers

- More absorptive and less reflective materials should be used for the sound walls.
- Long term maintenance, including graffiti removal, and aesthetics should be considered.
- Noise walls should extend farther west than currently proposed over the Garrison overpass.
- A business owner does not want the sound walls because they will block visibility to US 6 that benefits the business.
- Use shrubbery to help block the noise.
- Driving down US 6 adjacent to the existing noise walls is like driving through a tunnel and is an ugly view.

Vehicle Movements

- A light should be added at the intersection of Highland with Wadsworth in order to make a left turn onto southbound Wadsworth.
- Vehicles exit the Carr Street on-ramp illegally when US 6 is congested with traffic.

Miscellaneous

- Snow removal will be an issue when the sound walls are constructed on the south side of US 6.
- Motorcycles continue to generate high noise levels on US 6.
- If the timing for construction overlaps with the RTD Light Rail construction, it will be a nightmare for people trying to travel north-south.
- Return the speed limit to 55 miles per hour, as this is a residential neighborhood.