

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY
FOR
STATE HIGHWAY 7 (SH 7)
PLANNING ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGE (PEL) STUDY

CDOT PROJECT NO. STA 007A-012 (16725)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In January and February 2012, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders of the State Highway 7 (SH 7) corridor to understand the goals, issues and desired outcomes for the Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) study. Interviews were conducted by members of the project team from Felsburg Holt and Ullevig (FHU), and CDR Associates (CDR). The input received informed the project team for visioning efforts and the development of the Agency Coordination and Public Outreach Plan.

While individual interview reports have been drafted and are available, this report summarizes the overall findings, themes, input and areas of emphasis from the interviews with representatives of the following entities:

- ▶ Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 4 and Region 6
- ▶ Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)
- ▶ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- ▶ Regional Transportation District (RTD)
- ▶ Adams County
- ▶ Boulder County
- ▶ Weld County
- ▶ City of Boulder
- ▶ City of Brighton
- ▶ City and County of Broomfield
- ▶ Town of Erie
- ▶ City of Lafayette
- ▶ City of Thornton

The input received during the interview process is organized in this report into the following categories:

1.1 *SH 7 PEL Study Area*

Understanding of the Study Area: The SH 7 PEL study corridor extends east-west from the US Highway 85 (US 85)/SH 7 intersection in Brighton to the US Highway 287 (US 287)/SH 7/Arapahoe Road intersection in Lafayette. Segment characteristics vary throughout the SH 7 corridor, as do the land use designations. Corridor land use patterns include downtown, rural, suburban, commercial and sites for future commercial development. Transportation facilities include a two to four-lane roadway between US 85 and US 287 with a variety of bus transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The SH 7 corridor is located in the northern area of the DRCOG region and will have an end-of-line station for the RTD FasTracks North Metro line.

This study should determine whether SH 7 is to become a major east/west regional arterial corridor or if it should primarily focus on providing local service and access. Because it connects major communities (including two of the region's free-standing communities: Boulder and Brighton), the study should identify what will need to be done if it is to become a major regional corridor.

Extending the Study Area to Examine the Entire Travel Corridor: When CDOT developed the Scope of Work for the SH 7 PEL, Boulder County requested that the western boundary of the study area be extended to 75th Street, where the SH 7 (Cherryvale-75th St.) Environmental Assessment (EA)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) ended. There has been agreement that the SH 7 PEL project team will analyze how each alternative for the US 287 to US 85 segment would affect the existing and future transportation system between US 287 and 75th Street and how well each alternative would fit with the vision for this segment.

Expectations and Outcomes of the PEL Study: The SH 7 PEL will be very useful as a reference for understanding the corridor conditions and development plans because there is a need for active management plans throughout the corridor. It will provide clarity about how communities plan to develop and what areas are identified for growth.

This PEL provides the opportunity to conceptualize possible future improvements without committing to any one alternative for implementation. The study should not identify a single proposed action or corridor-wide solution, rather there should be an effort to identify the areas that are developing and what improvements can be made in those areas. Those improvements can then be prioritized, phased and implemented as funding allows.

2.0 VISIONS AND GOALS

This section summarizes the vision and goals of the communities along the SH 7 corridor geographically from east to west, not in any prioritized order of importance.

2.1 *Eastern Segment Communities*

City of Brighton: While the segment of SH 7 going through downtown east of the project study area will continue to be designated for commercial use, the area west of US 85 could go from agriculture use to commercial uses as Brighton's growth boundary goes west to Yosemite Street. The City of Brighton sees the SH 7 corridor becoming more of a commercial corridor that would have the ability to accommodate future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or rail service.

City of Thornton: The City of Thornton supports increasing safety, identifying accesses, improving mobility, providing transit service the length of the corridor and promoting development in the areas of the Interstate 25 (I-25)/SH 7 interchange as well as near the end of line RTD FasTracks North Metro station. The City has developed a proposed access plan for the area in the vicinity of SH 7's reverse curves to improve mobility, increase safety and provide accesses. An evaluation of a diverging diamond interchange design, an RTD park-n-Ride and bicycle/pedestrian facilities should be included when considering improvements for the I25/SH7 interchange. The area around the North Metro station is planned to accommodate mixed use development and access to E-470. The SH 7/Colorado Boulevard intersection has been redesigned and the City has developed a design for the needed railroad, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities for the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) crossing in this area. It is important for CDOT to discuss the classification of the SH 7 with stakeholders. SH 7 is becoming an urban corridor, and a reclassification of the access category should be considered. CDOT can help define the vision by discussing the categorization of the corridor and looking for stakeholder agreement about what that is. If the corridor communities and CDOT can reach consensus on that classification, then it will be helpful for providing guidance to developers.

Adams County: SH 7 is a key east/west connection from I-25 to US 85 and Interstate 76 (I-76). It will be a challenge to balance the needs associated with it serving regional mobility and those associated with it becoming a commercial corridor. Corridor preservation should be a key goal. There should also be a balance in providing benefits to both the segments east and west of I-25. Providing transit service throughout the entire length of the corridor is a priority.

Weld County: The area along SH 7 between I-25 and U.S. 85 is anticipated to experience primarily residential growth. To be more informed for when that happens, this study should identify all the corridor issues so that all the communities have a common understanding of what is being experienced throughout the corridor and begin to problem solve together. The interface and relationship between SH 7 and adjacent regional facilities such as 168th Avenue and the Northwest Parkway should be examined as well as how to establish policies or principles for access control.

2.2 *Mid-Corridor Communities*

City and County of Broomfield: The City and County of Broomfield considers the SH 7 corridor as a key growth corridor and an area where a significant amount of development is planned. Broomfield has done an extensive amount of land use and conceptual planning for its segment of SH 7, especially the area around the I-25/SH 7 interchange. It is an area where Broomfield sees a majority of its population growth taking place, as there are high-density mixed-use development projects already approved along SH 7. This corridor is considered the main transportation corridor connecting the community to I-25 and the RTD FasTracks North Metro line, and Broomfield would like to see the type of multimodal improvements made that will support its plans.

Town of Erie: The Town is promoting development along County Line Road and looking to serve that development with a realigned SH 7. A realignment option is preferred that creates a gateway to Erie, providing opportunities to promote development and access to its airport. Erie would also be looking to improve regional connectivity from Erie to its neighboring communities and to I-25 while minimizing impacts to residential areas and open space.

City of Lafayette: SH 7 traffic impacts in downtown Lafayette are a major issue for the community. The City would like to explore a range of options for realigning SH 7 that are responsive to the shared goals of Lafayette and Erie and that could have additional corridor-wide benefits. Lafayette's goals are to ease the impacts on the old town and residential areas by reducing congestion and the number of trucks that drive through town, increasing safety - especially in front of Pioneer Elementary School and make the downtown more pedestrian friendly. Downtown Lafayette experiences a mix of destination and pass-through traffic and the City is focused on promoting economic development within its downtown core and would like to maintain the 'old town' character and attract visitors from SH 7.

2.3 *West End Communities*

City of Boulder: It is important to address congestion by increasing person carrying capacity and identifying strategic investments that will allow all travel modes to operate within the corridor. The City of Boulder is concerned that by comprehensively widening the corridor and adding more lanes for single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) will result in more vehicles coming into Boulder and creating problems for Boulder's transportation system. The City suggested that identifying improvements to optimize the existing transportation system with minimum investment would be the best value for CDOT. It is important for the PEL to focus on the congested areas of the corridor and safety issues.

Boulder County: Boulder County has made the decision to focus on SH 7 as the main east/west multimodal connection from Boulder to its communities in the eastern part of the county, I-25, and beyond. Transit improvements are a priority in addition to widening the shoulders and looking at Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. It is important to understand how future improvements on both sides of US 287 will work together to serve the entire east-west travel-shed. The County is in favor of future improvements in its segment primarily occurring within the current footprint, rather than through the addition of general purpose lanes or other type of improvement that would require major widening.

2.4 *Government Agencies*

CDOT: CDOT's goal is to maintain SH 7 as a viable east/west corridor for regional mobility from Brighton to Boulder and to develop a plan that is aligned with community goals and responsive to addressing and balancing the different corridor needs. The PEL study will conceptually define where planned development will occur and will serve as an effective tool for permitting access. CDOT also plans to evaluate alternatives for the I-25/SH 7 interchange and determine what option is preferred by the communities if SH 7 is to be realigned between Erie and Lafayette.

FHWA: FHWA supports identifying and defining the goals of each community along the corridor to understand how SH 7 helps meet those goals. It is good to have a conceptual understanding of the corridor conditions and the vision because there is a need for active management plans throughout the corridor. An approach should be taken to understand what the communities envision, what areas are developing and what improvements can be made in those areas. PELs provide the opportunity to conceptualize possible future improvements without committing to any one alternative for implementation. Improvements can then be prioritized, phased and implemented as funding allows.

RTD: The relationship and connectivity of SH 7 to the RTD FasTracks North Metro end of line station is important to RTD as well as how RTD service along SH 7 will integrate with I-25. RTD would like to identify what type of service is needed throughout the corridor and what the potential is for developing capacity improvements and providing service to the eastern segment where it currently does not exist.

DRCOG: DRCOG's current long range regional planning through 2035 will be revised with DRCOG's new 2040 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan (2040 MVRTP) anticipated to be adopted in late 2014. The process of redefining transportation improvements according to available funding for the Fiscally Constrained 2040 Regional Transportation Plan will occur in 2013. Thus, what the local agencies and CDOT recommend and support in the PEL will be input that is considered as the 2040 MVRTP evolves.

3.0 **ISSUES**

3.1 *Regional Mobility and Connectivity*

Regional mobility and connectivity is important to acknowledge within the SH 7 corridor. Throughout the stakeholder interviews comments were made about analyzing and understanding the role of SH 7 and the relationship to other regional facilities. The following points were made about the connectivity to the following facilities:

RTD FasTracks North Metro and Northwest Rail Corridors: The study should consider how SH 7 will integrate with the RTD FasTracks corridors being planned in the region.

- ▶ A significant amount of analysis and planning has been done around the RTD FasTracks North Metro and its end of line station by RTD in the North Metro Corridor EIS and by City of Thornton which has developed concept plans for a combined station with the

proposed Rocky Mountain Rail Authority line. Planning has also been done that defines the planned improvements that will be included with the station build-out, plans for adjacent land use and proposed bus routes that will serve the station.

- ▶ Currently there are decisions being made about the future of the Northwest Rail (NWR) corridor that could impact SH 7. One of the options being considered removes NWR from the FasTracks system, replacing it with expanded BRT service with some routes being proposed along the US 287 and SH 7 corridors (RTD will be making a decision in March 2012 about the delivery of NWR).

Colorado Boulevard: It is anticipated that Colorado Boulevard will become a major north/south corridor. The SH 7 /Colorado Boulevard intersection has been redesigned to realign Colorado Boulevard to the east and Thornton has developed a conceptual design for the needed railroad, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities for the UPRR crossing in this area. DRCOG has designated this area as an urban center to accommodate mixed use development.

Northwest Parkway (E-470): The PEL should explore the relationship between SH 7 and the Northwest Parkway and consider if a future connection could be made; or the impacts upon SH 7 if a future connection is made from the Northwest Parkway to South Boulder Road. Also, from an environmental justice perspective, there needs to be an east/west corridor in the northeast metro region that is an alternative to the tolling on E-470.

168th Avenue: This study should examine the long-term potential of 168th Avenue and the option of it becoming an alternative to SH 7 for regional travel. It presently has an interchange at I-76. Currently, 168th Avenue is not designated or designed to serve that function and is believed to provide more issues and challenges than benefits for diverting traffic off of SH 7. However, it needs to be improved; safety is a concern because of multiple offset intersections. Intersection improvements have been considered in The Crossroads study.

US 85 and I-76: Connections should be analyzed to US 85 and I-76. The City of Brighton has been strongly advocating for future development of a FasTracks (NexTracks) connection along US 85 or some transit service connecting Brighton to the end-of-line North Metro station. The SH 7/I-76 interchange will be redeveloped and CDOT should consider what effect that will have between I-76 and US 85.

Baseline Road and Arapahoe Road in Boulder/Boulder County: The study should evaluate how travelers are using SH 7 in relationship to continuing west on Baseline Road into Boulder and where the vehicles that are using SH 7 (Arapahoe Road) are coming from.

3.2 I-25/SH 7 Interchange

There needs to be a coordinated effort between the SH 7 PEL and the North I-25 PEL to address improvements at this interchange. The project team is aware of the Diverging Diamond Interchange concept that is being proposed by City of Thornton and believes one of the benefits would be the elimination of the left turn lanes. The project team will evaluate the interchange concept in addition to other alternatives. The design provides increased space for transit facilities and for through travel lanes given that it eliminates the need for left turn storage.

Additionally it eliminates the need for the cloverleaf interchange included in the North I-25 EIS and makes land available that would otherwise be used for a loop ramp.

- ▶ The City and County of Broomfield is planning a high-density mixed use development at the I-25/SH 7 interchange. The northeast quadrant will be primarily residential development. There is a planned park-n-Ride included in the long range plan for the I-25/SH 7 interchange, and Broomfield is opposed to surface parking. Broomfield favors structured parking or shared RTD parking with adjacent development.
- ▶ Because the SH 7 PEL will be evaluating what improvements can be made at the I-25/SH 7 interchange, modeling should be combined to understand the interaction between the two facilities and how improvements to SH 7 will affect the I-25 corridor and vice versa.

3.3 SH 7 Alignment

3.3.1 Erie/Lafayette Bypass

The City of Lafayette and Town of Erie are very interested in exploring realignment options for SH 7. It is important to begin the conversation within this study by understanding the goals of the communities involved and then proceeding from there; this is the first time the communities of Erie and Lafayette are coming together to discuss the issue with Boulder County and other stakeholders.

Support was expressed for a realigned SH 7 that operates without the amount of backups, bottlenecks and congestion currently experienced. Most stakeholders commented on this issue and supported a process that would allow Lafayette, Erie and Boulder County to begin discussing what a preferred realignment or bypass option would be through their jurisdictions and then bring that conversation to the Technical Working Group (TWG). There could be solutions which offer the local agencies incentives for taking parts of SH 7 off the CDOT system.

City of Lafayette: The City of Lafayette is willing to consider a range of options for realigning SH 7. The City encouraged bringing together Lafayette, Erie and Boulder County to discuss the issue first and then to have a broader conversation with the rest of the corridor communities. It was suggested that options be developed that are responsive to shared goals of Lafayette and Erie and that could have additional corridor-wide benefits. The traffic impact that SH 7 has had on downtown Lafayette has been an issue for the community. The City of Lafayette Comprehensive Plan recommends the realignment of SH 7 in order to reduce the impacts of traffic through town, especially safety concerns in front of Pioneer Elementary School at Public Rd and Baseline Road. A realignment was also recommended in order to achieve other community goals in the Comprehensive Plan such as making the downtown more pedestrian friendly, reducing the number of trucks in town, increasing safety, reducing congestion and easing the impacts on the old town and residential areas. The City of Lafayette supports a bypass which is not too far east from its downtown and still maintains a connection to SH 7 to attract visitors and pass-through traffic to its downtown core in order to promote economic development. Some natural distribution of traffic is desirable.

Town of Erie: Erie would like to see a realignment option that creates an aesthetically pleasing “front door” to Erie and avoids the wastewater treatment plant. Future development opportunities where intersections can be created are regarded as key drivers for the bypass alignment. A realigned SH 7 should create links to the Erie airport and minimize impacts to Boulder County Open Space.

Open Space Impacts: It will be important to analyze the opportunities and constraints of realigning SH 7 and the impacts that doing so would have upon Boulder County Open Space properties. It is important to identify not only the impacts to Open Space but also what possibilities exist to address those impacts and the potential mobility benefits that improving SH 7 would offer.

3.3.2 SH 7 Re-Designation along 168th Avenue

This study should examine the option of 168th Avenue becoming a bypass of downtown Brighton for regional travel to I-76. The study should evaluate what traffic impacts SH 7 would have through Brighton with the planned interchange at I-76/Bridge Street (formerly SH 7) if SH 7 were to maintain its current alignment or if it were to be aligned north of town along 168th Avenue.

3.3.3 Questions to Consider During the Study

- ▶ What is understood to be the benefits from other realignments and bypasses that have been implemented (as it relates to a potential realignment of SH 7)?
- ▶ What did the Berthoud bypass resolve? Was it worth the financial investment? Were there travel time savings achieved and was the money spent to conduct the study and build the bypass worth the time savings?
- ▶ What would realignments do to future transit routes? Would transit follow the realignments or an adjacent roadway or facility?

3.4 *Multimodal Facilities/Connectivity*

3.4.1 Transit

Multimodal needs will increase as the communities grow. There is a high demand throughout the corridor for transit improvements and establishing corridor wide service because of the connection to I-25 and the impending arrival of the RTD FasTracks North Metro line. The corridor communities support establishing transit service in this corridor to improve east/west mobility. The goal is to get more people through the corridor without increasing congestion or the number of vehicles. All stakeholders expressed a strong desire for the PEL to examine multimodal solutions that prioritize transit elements.

The following bullets reflect the input collected and specific points regarding transit service:

- ▶ When examining the cross sections of the corridor, the TWG should do so with consideration for establishing bus service along the entire length of the corridor and should provide for the types of facilities that can serve multimodal needs, such as a landscaped median that could someday accommodate BRT or bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the sides (10 feet wide).
- ▶ Development around the I-25/SH 7 interchange was planned with the anticipation that there would be BRT service using managed lanes on I-25 and transit service to and from the RTD FasTracks North Metro corridor end-of-line station. Communities are supportive of a park-n-Ride at the I-25/SH 7 interchange to account for the high demand that will exist once North Metro opens.
- ▶ RTD Service Planning will be working with the communities over the next year or two to define transit needs, conduct origin/destination studies, collect data for determining population density and to address infrastructure needs responsive to near-term development. Once RTD collects that data, it will assess what type of service would make most sense, such as an Express route during morning (AM)/evening (PM) peak times only, a one-directional route, or a bi-directional route. In association with this type of service, it will also identify locations for stops and assess the need for park-n-Rides. Once RTD has made these types of decisions, it will most likely be another year or two before actually implementing a route and improvements along SH 7.
- ▶ A branded, high frequency bus service such as the Jump could be successfully extended the length of the corridor.
- ▶ Transit solutions such as bus priority lanes, bus pullouts and queue jumps are important to implement. However, this should be based on information provided by a Level of Service analysis, not by simply adding additional lanes.
- ▶ It would be helpful to implement queue jumps in addition to the type of improvements that could allow for BRT in the future. The SH 7 PEL should coordinate with Boulder County to see what types of improvements are being proposed in its Transportation Master Plan, as well as the other communities along the corridor.
- ▶ The impending decision about how to move forward with the RTD FasTracks Northwest Rail line could have an effect upon the study area because a possible alternative will operate BRT along US 287 and SH7.

3.4.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails and Connections

Broad support was expressed for implementing bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the corridor and looking for ways to link facilities and trails. The following points were made:

- ▶ SH 7 is designated as a regional bicycle corridor in DRCOG's 2035 MVRTP. Currently, there are some missing links between facilities. Communities would like bike lanes, connected bike routes and detached sidewalks throughout the corridor.
- ▶ There is a need for at-grade or grade-separated north/south bicycle and pedestrian trails and connection to be made across SH 7 throughout the entire corridor.

- ▶ There should be solutions to promote east to west bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and make connections to the North Metro station in addition to facilities such as the South Platte River trail systems or residential developments such Todd Creek or others.
- ▶ This year Boulder County will begin master planning for a Boulder-Erie regional trail that will connect to the Rock Creek and Coal Creek regional trails. There is a Rail to Trails project north of SH 7 at the confluence of South Boulder Creek and Boulder Creek that goes east along the railroad. Connections have been contemplated to other trails, but undefined. This project is a high priority for City of Boulder and Boulder County.

3.5 Other Issues

Access Issues: Identifying and defining access throughout the corridor is one of the primary issues to address in the PEL. The following points were made during the discussions:

- ▶ It would be helpful for the PEL to determine the appropriate access category(ies) for the highway.
- ▶ Access throughout the corridor has been done through the permit process. There may be existing accesses that have never been permitted but were probably “grandfathered” in.
- ▶ There have been safety issues throughout the corridor that are related to accesses to residential areas or properties.
- ▶ CDOT needs to understand what off-system/off-highway improvements the local agencies are planning that would intersect with SH 7 and support the mobility function of the highway.
- ▶ The City of Thornton’s has developed an access plan for the area west of SH 7 and York Street (in the vicinity of the reverse curves) to increase safety and provide access to the properties that currently have approximately 11 existing access points. Two additional parcels in the area are currently planned to be developed and will have access to SH 7. Additional work is required between CDOT, Thornton, Adams County, and the affected landowners.
- ▶ Broomfield and Erie have an access control plan that has been accepted by CDOT.

Corridor Cross-Sections: Consistent cross sections should be defined for the corridor, including how transitions will occur from one cross section to another, between jurisdictions or when the land designation goes from rural to urban. An example of a cross-section with different types of improvements that could be applied throughout the corridor could be one that includes two through lanes, center-turn lane, bicycle lanes, detached multi-use trail/walk, improved transit, bus-only auxiliary lanes, and transit priority.

Design Issues: There are issues with design inconsistencies observed throughout SH 7. It will be helpful for the PEL to define design criteria to aid CDOT’s management of the transition areas where differing cross sections adjoin and to also anticipate what design will need to occur

to accommodate both current and future conditions (e.g., designing acceleration/deceleration lanes for future, lower posted speeds that are also safe for current conditions).

Traffic and Congestion: This study should look for solutions to the current traffic impacts throughout the corridor in addition to understanding the origins and destinations of trips being made throughout the corridor. The following points were made:

- ▶ Congestion is currently experienced in downtown Lafayette and is not only an issue for Lafayette but has caused back-ups into the neighboring communities of Erie and Broomfield. The City of Lafayette would like to divert trucks from the east out of the downtown area.
- ▶ Congestion is experienced on parallel roads such as 144th Avenue in Broomfield where east/west travelers are using it to travel between U.S. 36, U.S. 287 and I-25.
- ▶ There should be an understanding of the trips being made throughout the corridor and where the majority of origins and destinations are. It should be understood where east/west traffic is going and what can be done to improve regional mobility through Active Demand Management Strategies, operational improvements or other solutions for getting east/west travelers to destinations in ways to minimize impacts on the corridor communities while still maintaining attraction to commercial cores.

Speed Limits: Concern was expressed about the amount of speeding throughout the corridor. The PEL should address the varying speed limits currently in place through the corridor and look for what can be done to promote greater consistency.

Open Space Impacts: There will be opportunities and constraints of improving SH 7 and the impacts upon Open Space properties. It is important to identify not only the impacts to Open Space but also what possibilities exist to address those impacts and the potential mobility benefits that improving SH 7 would offer. Ownership patterns of Open Space parcels and adjacent properties should be identified to have a clear understanding of what parcels are being impacted and how they are defined as Open Space so that there is a better understanding about how the parcels can be used, for what purpose, and the benefits to mobility that could be realized in exchange to meet any identified Right of Way needs.

Drainage and Flooding: Drainage issues are known to exist along SH 7. The South Platte over-tops SH 7 during flood conditions, and it was indicated that there is a need to provide overflow drainage for Big Dry Creek, as it currently overflows onto SH 7. There are also flooding issues experienced in the northeast quadrant of SH 7 and York St.

3.6 *Public Involvement*

The following input was provided by those interviewed about their involvement and the public process which will involve their respective constituencies. This input has been taken into

consideration and reflected in the development of the Agency Coordination and Public Outreach Plan.

3.6.1 Local Agency Involvement

- ▶ CDOT planning processes that have been successful have been ones where local agencies have been involved early in the process and have confirmed their agreement with recommendations to CDOT about how to move forward. Early engagement and agreement seeking is key to having broad support for the final recommendations of the study.
- ▶ It would be helpful for CDOT to convene small group meetings to work through issues that arise and identify where stakeholders can come together to agree or what issues need additional discussion. Small group meetings between communities or with the SH 7 PEL project team can be very helpful towards reaching consensus on issues where recommendations will have to be made for the study by the TWG. It is believed that the smaller group conversations can be helpful for ensuring greater success when those issues are discussed by the larger group.
- ▶ To ensure valuable use of elected officials' time, provide clear guidance about what specific policy recommendations on which they are expected to provide input and what decisions will need to be made. Local agency staff (TWG members) will provide their respective elected officials with SH 7 PEL updates and coordinate their involvement with the project team.
- ▶ Local Agencies expect to work together with the project team to coordinate outreach activities to small groups as needed. It was requested that an equal number of small group meetings in the project team's scope be allocated among the corridor communities. Also, it would be helpful for the SH 7 PEL project team to be available to attend study sessions or City Council briefings to inform elected officials of the study as needed.
- ▶ TWG members can provide contact lists to be incorporated into the study's contact database.
- ▶ The project team should look for opportunities to coordinate its outreach with Boulder County's outreach for its TMP.

3.6.2 Public Input

The following captures and summarizes what members of the public have expressed to local agency staff or elected officials as concerns:

- ▶ Residents have expressed concerns about travel times and frustration with back-ups from Public Road.
- ▶ The intersection at SH 7 and 120th Street is awful; traffic backs up south on 120th Street and east to County Line Road.
- ▶ Residents would like more bicycle/pedestrian trails and connections.

- ▶ East/west commuters have wanted SH 7 to be widened to four lanes.
- ▶ Adjacent property owners want to be kept informed and have traditionally been interested in what will become of SH 7.
- ▶ Residents along Flagg Drive. have been a very assertive and vocal group that has advocated for keeping traffic down and keeping the area as rural and undeveloped as possible. They have traditionally opposed efforts to strengthen the connection between South Boulder Road and SH 7. It is important to keep them informed of this study and be prepared to manage them as participants.

3.6.3 Resource Agency's Involvement

The proposed level of involvement for resource agencies in this study is appropriate. Because this is a PEL study, the context of what will be carried out should be clearly communicated to the resource agencies interviewed.