

# Comments from ETA Open Houses

## What Else?

What is the sufficiency rating for the Castle Creek Bridge? Will the State add on to the bridge? Do you want the entrance to Aspen to be Power Plant Rd while the Castle Creek Bridge is rebuilt for a couple of years?

Restricting access (any 2 lane option between 4 lane Main St. and 4 lane beyond Buttermilk) reminds me of the war on drugs. Trying to limit supply while incapable of reducing demand, and will no doubt be just as ineffective. Results of both merely effect the price to be paid and by whom. Currently downvalley workers are paying the highest rates. Excellent work on preparing the open house presentation!

Suggest (no matter what ETA is chosen in the end) that van shuttles traverse the town like butterflies – with not longer than 5 minute wait ever to be picked up. Until then busy worker bees (and others) will continue to use vehicles in town no matter what the ETA situation.

Marolt open space is not sacred.

Your stated objectives are: safety, clean air, the visitors' experience, and residents' quality of life. Great! Now, what about the workers? This is a STATE highway after all. 4 lanes for cars will NOT lead to a need for 8. That's a myth. The solution is to fix the road.

## **What will it take for this community to make a decision that “sticks”?**

Give and take and prioritize lowest emissions alternative.

Strong political leadership.

Have a solution that addresses the need for 2 lanes in and 2 lanes out. Cars are not just cars – they are an annex to the office, tool carriers, trucks bringing needed supplies. These are needed to go to the job locations if we have 4 lanes we won't need extra lanes for busses having 2 lanes in and 2 lanes out is the immediate need.

I agree with the statement above.

Nuke Aspen (when I am out of town) then I will come back and fix it.

## **What do you need to know to make an informed decision?**

Expectations for traffic growth into Aspen with:

- Four lanes (e.g. when would we need 8 lanes)
- Light Rail (e.g. will it prevent needing 8 lanes)
- Bus Lanes (e.g. will it prevent needing 8 lanes)

Difference between construction cost of LRT and dedicated bus lanes: how much LRT cost is reduced when no/less money is spent on dedicated bus lanes. Difference between cost of yearly operation of LRT verses dedicated bus lanes.

Clarity on how the issue currently stands: What is currently approved and for what use (transit mode). Before you take the public into the next “what if”, make clear what is approved now and what can be done.

Cost of preferred alternatives

Advantages of cut-n-cover

Costs of cut-n-cover

Every funding option possible

Solution that will be a long-term solution and won't then need more lanes

What solution is best for the environment?

So – how do you set people to trade cars for transit? Very reasonable park and ride rates as little time and trouble as possible to make the physical change from car to the transit terminal. How much faster will this system bring a person from airport to heart of Aspen? What will pollution levels change to? If you stay in your car, how much time will airport to midtown Aspen take? Compare with current time?

We need a solution that can actually be implemented and funded, not ideas that may be solutions, but will never be funded. This situation cannot be resolved without state, federal participation, so their participation and requirements must be accepted.

What is the parking capacity of town? My reason for asking is to address the concern of those people who believe that if we provide 4 lanes, more people will come to town. If instead we can say that parking will be a limiting factor, then 4 lanes “shorten” travel time, not allows more people to come than already come.

## **What is your idea for a solution to the entrance to Aspen?**

4 lanes cars - one way couplets (west via “s” curves, east new alignment and mass transit (light rail/monorail)

Focus on light rail and other ways of making it easy to get into and around Aspen without a car.

Second that.

Third that

Finding common ground for elected officials to make decision

“Greengoat” u.p. rail car – hybrid engine. GWS to Aspen – what a concept.

BRT to start, so pollution and global warming will be minimized

To clean up our environment and reduce single occupancy ??? SUV;s. We need to follow what they do in London, England. Set up a toll booth at Buttermilk and charge \$5 to enter Aspen by Highway 82. Also \$5 to exit Aspen by 82.

Michael Fuller’s design! Was better for all

Yes

If condemnation of south side of S curve trees 20’, 30’ of property does not provide necessary transit lanes, provides 3 lanes into town. During high commuter times and 3 lanes out of town during high commuter times

Traffic will always be slow, either with a light and direct alignment, so the widening of S curves with transit lane should be attempted first.

I agree wholeheartedly with the above idea! The widening of the S curves should be fully explored prior to addressing any “straight shot” approach!!

Any solution will or should require many components – improved infrastructure for autos (most likely straight/modified alignment), improved mass transit, demand management (auto disincentives) and improved non-motorized access – ped and bikes. Rail will never make any sense financially, so give up on it. Entering Aspen via a tunnel is unattractive – tunnel should be shortened to an “over-pass”. School related traffic should be carefully analyzed – auto trips should be disincentive and mass transit (buses) for school kids should be dramatically improved. The school district should receive significant support from CDOT, RFTA, County and City to address these needs. Bike and ped access across Castle Creek should be improved. More can be done to reasonably manage construction related traffic. Some sort of a toll, might make some sense, perhaps with some system

where by area residents and visitors get \$ or X tokens per visit by the year or month once they have made their quota of trips, each incremental trip is charged.

We should not be held hostage to downvalley commuter traffic. Seven out of 10 vehicles are construction. Building more direct lanes, making it faster and easier to come into Aspen, only increases the traffic problem. We should not be taking valuable open space (modified direct route) to solve the problem. The way to solve the problem: use existing S curve alignment, but condemn (20' south side) of curves to create wide 4 to 5 lanes. (Newer trees will have to be removed) Older trees on (north side will remain). This should provide an extra transit bus lane up and down valley. We should encourage fast transit lane with worker bees, coming into town and visitor skiers to take public transportation on (bus lanes). Main Street is wide enough to accommodate this.

Find a way to fund the preferred alternative. Light Rail. NO BUSES even as interim for pollution reasons. Light Rail is the responsible approach.

Double the length of the “cover” at “cut and cover” and leave more of the open space look of Marolt. If needed, find a way to vent the tunnel.

Get rid of hour glass syndrome. Need 2<sup>nd</sup> bridge for disaster egress (?)  
Not bad – smaller bridge for ER only and potential future light rail

No matter what you do, you're just moving where the bottleneck will be.  
I agree!

Install intercept lots to pick up “service” cars when arriving in town.

4 lanes is the current effective solution otherwise you must ration access or penalize it. If we had 4 lanes we could then work together for attractive mass transit alternatives.

4 lanes for cars – 2 for going west one way through “s” curves; two going east over Marolt. “Congestion charge” for all but residents of Aspen (+ environs) (+ possible permit for service construction cars with paid permit) per in Europe.

Checkout architect Michael Fuller's design. If it must be, this is beautiful compromise that incorporates the elements European towns (who have dealt with these issues centuries longer than we have) have used.

# MEMO

**PROJECT:** Entrance to Aspen

**FROM:** Michael Fuller

**DATE:** December 7, 2006

**RE:** Alternative to "S" Curve and Straight Shot Proposals

This is an unsolicited proposal, made solely in the interest of offering an alternate solution to the Entrance to Aspen debate other than the current alternatives of a 4-Lane "S" Curve and a 4-Lane Straight Shot:

The concept is to bring two lanes of traffic into town and two lanes out of town by way of a new Round-a-Bout at Cemetery Lane.

1. Replace the traffic light at Cemetery Lane with a new Round-a-Bout. This eliminates the traffic light and the resulting stop-and-go situation. This would include bringing 2 lanes of Aspen bound traffic into the new Round-a-Bout from the existing Round-a-Bout and two lanes of downvalley traffic from the new Round-a-Bout to the existing Round-a-Bout. Both Round-a-Bouts would need to be engineered to keep 2 lanes of traffic flowing in both directions.
2. The Round-a-Bouts keep traffic moving, but would also have a calming effect on incoming vehicles.
3. Extend 2 lanes from the new Round-a-Bout at Cemetery Lane, one-way into Aspen to link up with Main Street with a new bridge across Castle Creek. This brings only two lanes of traffic through the neighborhood west of 7<sup>th</sup> and Main St.
4. Make the existing "S" Curves 2 lanes, one-way out of town. The traffic no longer has to funnel down to a single lane, and the Castle Creek bridge could remain as it is.
5. The net result is that there are 2 lanes going into town and 2 lanes going out of town.
6. With this alignment a minimum amount of open space would be disturbed.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Fuller

## Entrance to Aspen

An opinion  
To Mayor Helen Klanderud  
From Rick Heede  
1 December 2006

Honorable Mayor Klanderud:

In the spirit of giving the community something to chew on — as opposed to everyone chewing on you — I offer a few thoughts for your consideration.

I concur with CDOT's conclusion that the pressures on traffic through the Entrance to Aspen will only grow more intense. The "drivers" are reasonably well known, even if it remains difficult to forecast the growth in vehicle traffic and human behavior. In my recent review of the many forecasts and principal growth drivers I developed a "business-as-usual" baseline scenario of future emissions of carbon dioxide from traffic through the Entrance to Aspen to 2030. I reproduce the chart showing the "BAU" scenario, CDOT's recent forecast, and two emissions reduction scenarios — based on CDOT's early assessment of the required level of Transportation Management — for your information, since the purpose of this memorandum diverges from this work, I won't discuss it further.

Figure 1. Four Scenarios for Reduced CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions to 2030

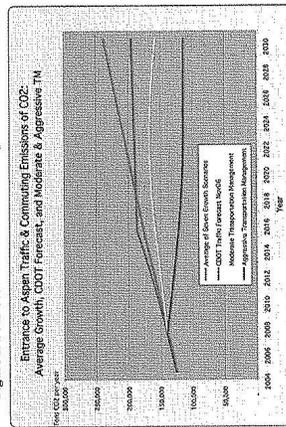


Figure 2 in Heede (2006) Traffic Scenarios for Entrance Aspen and Commuting Emissions to 2030, p. 7.

Solving the Entrance infrastructure problem without concomitantly resolving parking and/or traffic demand management is a dead end. So is 4-laning across Thomas Property.

I recently reviewed CDOT's Entrance EIS, The Corridor Investment Study for RTA, Healthy Mountain Communities's Growth Scenario Project, and a number of supporting publications for Don Richardson and City staff.  
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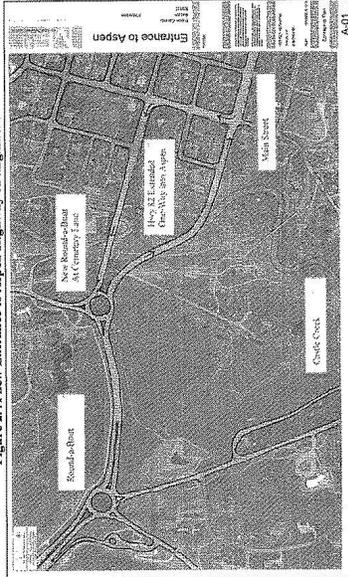
And building parking for every additional vehicle allowed by increasing highway capacity is also a dead end. That leaves demand management.

Reducing the demand for driving personal and commercial vehicles into town means, to me, giving transit options a decided advantage over driving as usual. That means a number of things, but one thing it does not sensibly mean is providing four lanes of vehicular traffic into and out of town. It makes far more sense to provide a pair of dedicated bus lanes (or LRT or Bus Rapid Transit) that would give a clear advantage to using mass transit, most especially in congested periods. Such a system must also provide superior service to tourist and skier destinations. Practicable ways to leave one's personal vehicle somewhere downvalley of the Maroon Creek Bridge must be available.

While we could now discuss technical options, services, parking, etcetera, I will defer these discussions to experts. Permit me to offer a re-alignment option that minimizes its footprint on the Thomas Property, preserves the S-curves to a great extent, does not isolate Cemetery Lane residents, and creates a structural advantage of rapid transit.

I reproduce architect Michael Fuller's sketch showing Hw82 with a round-about at Cemetery Lane and a spur with two new inbound lanes built across the very eastern portion of the Thomas Property and connecting to Main Street across a new Castle Creek Bridge. The existing alignment through the S-curves would be retained for outbound traffic in two lanes. Traffic in both directions would be *one lane for vehicular traffic and one lane dedicated to mass transit*, presumably RTA buses. As I understand it, an LRT or BRT system would be an addition to the lanes sketched here, since RTA would still need a dedicated lane in both directions for off-32 buses serving Highlands, Maroon Bells, AVH, and Cemetery Lane.

Figure 2. A new Entrance to Aspen Highway 92 alignment



Courtesy Michael Fuller Architects, Basalt, 970-927-6620, www.mfullerarchitects.com  
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