

US 6/Wadsworth



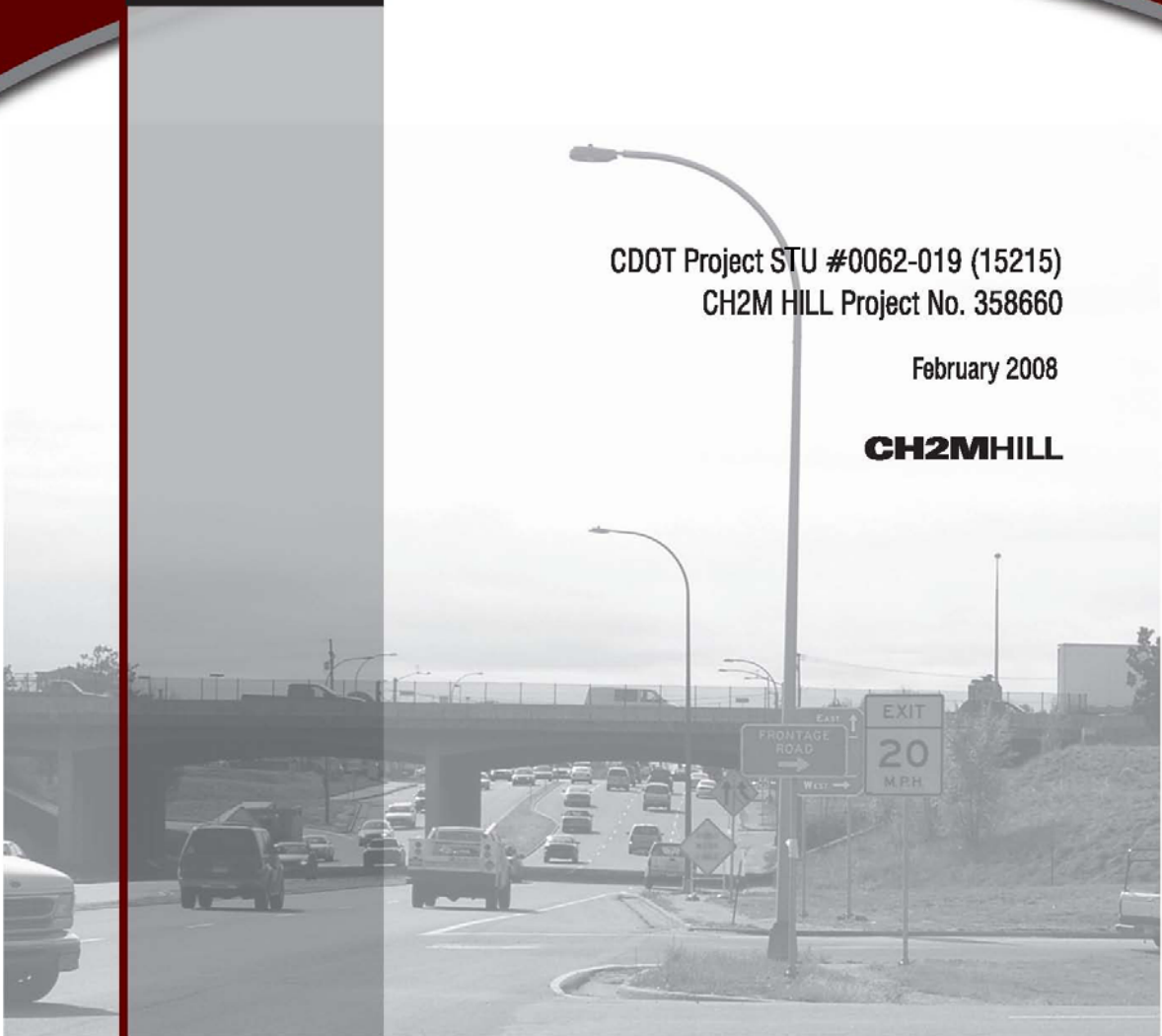
**Environmental
Assessment**

Open House #2 Summary Report

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

February 2008

CH2MHILL





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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
RTD	Regional Transportation District
SPUI	Single-Point Urban Interchange
T-REX	Transportation Expansion Project



Open House #2 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, including an Open House and numerous small group meetings, was conducted between May and August 2007. Since the end of the scoping period, CDOT has:

- Developed criteria to evaluate potential alternatives,
- Developed design concepts for the interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard, and
- Conducted a high-level (Level 1) screening of design concepts to eliminate those with fatal flaws from further study.

CDOT held Open House #2 on February 12, 2008 to present information developed since scoping.

This Open House #2 Summary Report summarizes the notification methods and comments received at Open House #2 conducted in support of the US 6/Wadsworth Boulevard EA.



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2.0 Notification of Open House #2

Multiple methods of communication were used to notify the public of Open House #2: 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 January 2008 newsletter was mailed on January 23, 2008, to the project mailing list. The newsletter consisted of four pages of text explaining the project, progress to date, alternatives development and screening process, and remaining project schedule. The newsletter was produced in two versions, English and Spanish. Both versions were mailed to the entire mailing list. The mailing list consisted of 700 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. 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 #2 ran in the *Lakewood Sentinel* weekly newspaper on February 7, 2008, and in the Sunday edition of the *Denver Post* on February 10, 2008. See Appendix A for a copy of the advertisement.

2.4 Flyers

A public notice flyer was developed and distributed to the locations listed in Exhibit 1 to advertise Open House #2. See Appendix A for a copy of the flyer.



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EXHIBIT 1

Locations for Flyers Advertising Open House #2

Category	Location
Schools	Alameda High School
	Bethlehem Lutheran School
	Creighton Middle School
	Eiber Elementary School
	Jefferson County Open School
	Jefferson High School
	Lakewood United Methodist Parents Day Out Program
	Molholm Elementary School
	New America School
	South Lakewood Elementary School
	St. Bernadette School & Church
	Stein Elementary School
Churches	First Presbyterian Church of Lakewood
	Lakewood United Methodist Church
	St. Bernadette Catholic Church
Lakewood Community Locations	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

2.5 Other Notification Media

Three other notification media were used to advertise Open House #2. Notice of the meeting ran on the City of Lakewood Public Access Television Channel 8. 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.



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3.0 Open House #2

This section summarizes the venue for Open House #2, and presents the meeting format and materials used for exhibits and handouts to the public.

3.1 Location and Attendance

Open House #2 was held at the Lakewood Cultural Center Community Room in Lakewood, Colorado, on Tuesday, February 12, 2008, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by members of the public, City of Lakewood staff, CDOT representatives, local business owners, and members of the Lakewood City Council. Approximately 92 people, not including CDOT, consultant, or Lakewood staff, attended the meeting. People arrived throughout the course of the meeting. Attendance was strong at both presentations, with the 5:00 p.m. presentation more heavily attended. Appendix B includes a copy of the meeting roster, listing the attendees at Open House #2. Public comments are summarized in Section 4.0 of this report.

3.2 Meeting Format and Content

Open House #2 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. A presentation was given from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. and repeated again from 7:00 to 7:45 p.m. Appendix C includes a copy of the Open House #2 meeting presentation.

Comments were taken by staff during the open house portions of the meeting, and a comment box was provided to collect comment forms. Meeting minutes are provided in Appendix F. A Spanish translator was available, but no Spanish-only speakers were present



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at the meeting. An unsupervised children's area was available, and one family took advantage of this service.

3.3 Display Boards and Handouts

Display boards used at Open House #2 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 D for illustrations):

- Project purpose and need
- Key decision milestones
- Vicinity map
- Interchange design concepts retained for evaluation
- Interchange design concepts not recommended for detailed evaluation
- Lakewood vision for interchange aesthetics
- Wadsworth Boulevard alternative elements – travel lanes and sidewalks
- Wadsworth Boulevard alternative elements – medians
- Wadsworth Boulevard existing conditions and concept retained for evaluation
- Wadsworth Boulevard concepts not recommended for detailed evaluation
- Year 2007 existing traffic levels of service
- Year 2035 No Action traffic levels of service
- Level of service explanation board
- Environmental resource areas to be analyzed
- Water quality treatment options

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

- Agenda
- Project purpose and need
- EA process
- Noise information
- Frequently asked questions
- Level 1 screening results
- FHWA *Benefits of Access Management* brochure
- CDOT right-of-way information
- Open House #2 comment form

Single, reference-only copies of Lakewood's *Wadsworth Boulevard Strategic Plan* and *Wadsworth Station Area Implementation Plan* were also available at the reference table.

4.0 Open House #2 Comments

Members of the public provided comments through discussions with project staff during the meeting, and through 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 Open House #2 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 Open House #2 were design concepts and traffic. Other topics of interest included noise, safety, pedestrian and bicycle issues, right-of-way acquisition, and maintenance.

Design Concepts

- Reroute traffic through the neighborhood on the southeast side of the interchange, and develop a slip ramp similar to the Carr Street/Garrison Street entrance for cars entering eastbound 6th Avenue between Wadsworth Boulevard and Sheridan Boulevard. Close the existing eastbound on-ramp onto US 6.
- Project needs could be addressed by 1) reconfiguring the southbound US 6 off-ramp and removing the signal at 5th Avenue; and 2) adding a slip ramp to enter US 6 east of Wadsworth Boulevard rather than reconstructing the interchange, because it would disrupt fewer residences.
- The project must plan for transit. Support for a future trolley car along Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Support for the Single-Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) concept.
- Support for concepts that do not add more traffic signals. Additional signals will not help accommodate current and increased traffic volumes on Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Support for Tight Diamond and SPUI concepts because signalized intersections at ramp terminals are safer for pedestrians.



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Traffic

- The intersection of Wadsworth Boulevard with 5th Avenue is skewed with “dips” on both sides. Southbound Wadsworth Boulevard needs a right-turn lane onto 5th Avenue and larger turning radii at the 5th Avenue intersection.
- Signals along Wadsworth Boulevard are not synchronized; they increase traffic congestion and make drivers stop at every light.
- The Carr Street/Garrison Street slip ramps should be removed.
- The Carr Street/Garrison Street slip ramps should be maintained.

Noise

- Noise levels have increased since the speed limit on US 6 was raised to 65 mph. Look into lowering the speed limit back to 55 mph.
- Please look into quiet pavement on US 6, like rubberized asphalt or pavement similar to that on US 6 near Indiana Avenue.
- Residents experienced high levels of noise, dust, and fumes during noise-wall construction along US 6 east of Wadsworth Boulevard. Hotel vouchers were offered to residents proximate to the Transportation Expansion (T-REX) Project construction on Interstate 25, and this sounds like a good idea during construction for this project.

Safety

- The 65-mph speed limit on US 6 is too high and causes too many accidents. Look into lowering the speed limit back to 55 mph.

Pedestrian and Bicycles Issues

- Consider providing a pedestrian overpass at the interchange, to alleviate ice build-up on pedestrian path.
- Prefer no pedestrian crossing to a pedestrian underpass.
- Provide more sidewalks along Wadsworth Boulevard.

Right-of-Way and Property Acquisition

- A property owner was concerned that a decision in December 2008 meant that all negotiations for acquiring right-of-way and property would be finalized by this time; the owner expressed concern that this is very little time to make decisions about relocation. Staff explained that right-of-way negotiations will occur after a decision on the project is issued, and affected property owners will have time to negotiate and make decisions.
- CDOT should make it a priority to purchase vacant land for right-of-way.



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Drainage and Utilities

- Project team should be aware of existing ditch systems in the neighborhood.

Maintenance

- There is currently insufficient snow storage on Wadsworth Boulevard. Future designs for snow storage should not block pedestrian and bike paths.

Miscellaneous

- The public needs to understand the details of the cost estimate for the project so that they can understand how mitigation for noise and property impacts is being considered.
- Please start construction as soon as possible.
- Please continue to keep the public informed of project progress and decisions.
- Put mesh in front of walls to prevent graffiti.
- Please mitigate construction impacts such as noise and dust.

4.2 Summary of Written Comments

Approximately 18 comment forms were handed in at Open House #2. Seven additional comment forms were mailed to the project team after the open house. 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 agree with the results of the Level 1 screening for the interchange concepts – yes or no? Comments?
2. Do you agree with the results of the Level 1 screening for the Wadsworth Boulevard concepts – yes or no? Comments?
3. Which criteria do you feel are most important in evaluating the design concepts carried forward? Please fill out the checklist (provided on the back of the comment form), and provide any comments on the criteria in the space provided below.
4. Do you have any additional comments?

Exhibit 2 documents the responses to Questions 1 and 2.



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EXHIBIT 2

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

Question	“Yes” Responses	“No” Responses	No Answer
1. Do you agree with the results of the Level 1 screening for the interchange concepts?	15	2	8
2. Do you agree with the results of the Level 1 screening for the Wadsworth Boulevard concepts?	15	4	6

Source: CH2M HILL, 2008.

The responses that disagreed with the results of the screening for the interchange cited the following reasons for disagreement:

- The interchange concepts must plan for transit. (Project team note: the interchange concepts do not preclude transit.)
- The frontage road in the northwest quadrant of the interchange must be accessible to traffic exiting westbound US 6 to northbound Wadsworth Boulevard. (Project team note: the interchange concepts were not developed to this level of detail for Level 1 screening.)

The responses that disagreed with the results of the screening for Wadsworth Boulevard cited the following reasons for disagreement:

- The two-way left-turn lane (Concept 9) seems like a reasonable concept to carry forward. Dedicated transit lanes (Concepts 10 and 11) seem like reasonable concepts to carry forward.
- The Wadsworth Boulevard concepts must plan for transit.
- The frontage road in the northwest quadrant of the interchange must be accessible to traffic exiting westbound US 6 to northbound Wadsworth Boulevard. (Project team note: the Wadsworth Boulevard concepts were not developed to this level of detail for Level 1 screening.)
- The concept carried forward does not include the possibility of future left-turn lanes or space for snow loading adjacent to the road. (Project team note: left-turn lanes are included in the concept carried forward for further evaluation; the raised median would become narrower to accommodate left-turn lanes at intersections.)

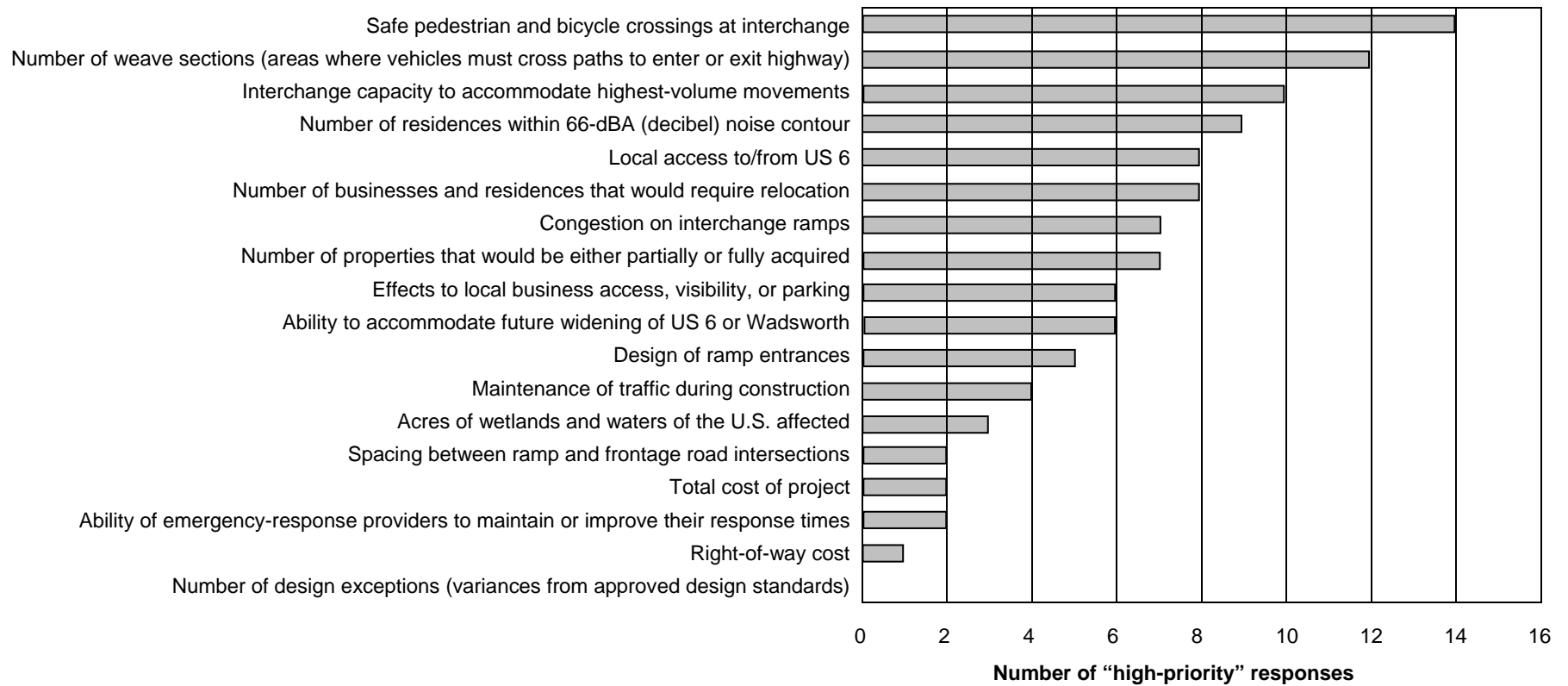
Question 3 asked respondents to mark as “high priority” those Level 2 evaluation criteria that they feel are important in evaluating the design concepts carried forward. Respondents were asked to mark up to five criteria as “high priority” for the interchange concept evaluation, and up to five criteria as “high priority” for the Wadsworth Boulevard concept evaluation. Exhibits 3 and 4 document the number of Level 2 screening criteria that received “high priority” responses for the interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard evaluations, respectively.

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EXHIBIT 3

Open House #2 Comment Form Question 3 Responses – Level 2 Evaluation Criteria Priorities for Interchange

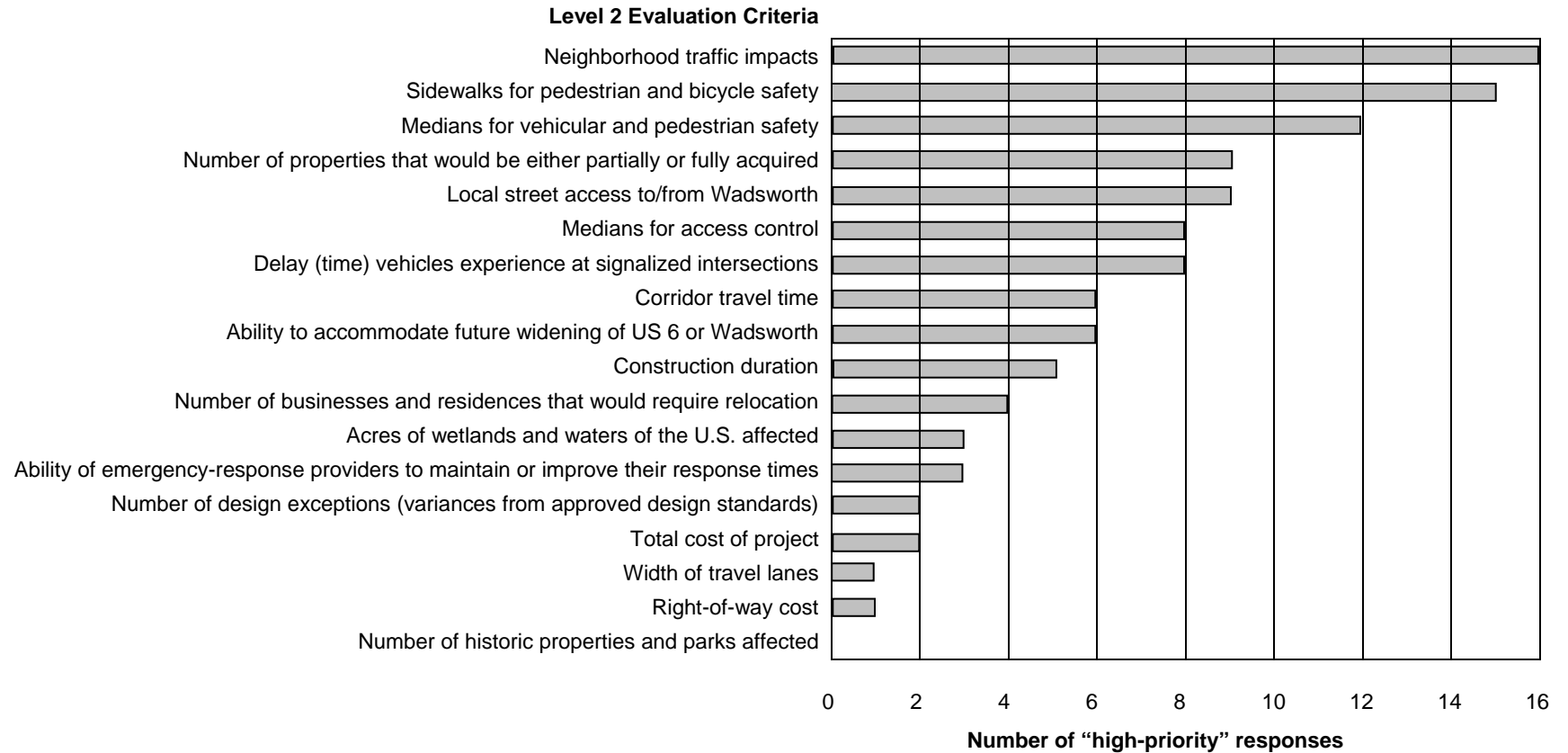
Level 2 Evaluation Criteria



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EXHIBIT 4

Open House #2 Comment Form Question 3 Responses – Level 2 Evaluation Criteria Priorities for Wadsworth Boulevard





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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.

Interchange Concepts

- The SPUI seems most effective and has lowest impacts to businesses and residents.
- The partial cloverleaf concept is not pedestrian- or bicycle-friendly.
- Any concepts with a loop configuration must provide grade-separated crossings for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Interchange must provide for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings.
- All interchange concepts must provide a grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing. If the crossing is an overpass, it should be enclosed for weather protection.
- Support for the partial cloverleaf concept.
- Incorporate special features, xeric landscaping, and aesthetic treatments for bridge and walls into the interchange design.
- For the Tight Diamond with Loop and Partial Cloverleaf concepts, suggestion to upgrade existing loop ramps rather than reconstruct them, to decrease cost of construction.
- Do not make Broadview Drive become part of the frontage road north of US 6. This area is purely residential, and bringing the frontage road through to Broadview Drive would be dangerous to children in the neighborhood and would devalue surrounding properties. Broadview Drive currently does not have access to Wadsworth Boulevard (it has a dead end), and residents want it to remain that way.
- Maintaining traffic flow on Wadsworth Boulevard through the interchange is the most important factor to consider, as there are no north-south alternatives in the area.

Wadsworth Boulevard Concepts

- Landscaped buffers between sidewalks and road, and raised medians, take up too much space.
- Raised medians improve safety by eliminating dangerous turns and controlling access.
- Raised medians impede access, cost too much money, and are expensive to maintain.
- Wadsworth Boulevard should have the same number of travel lanes from Alameda Avenue to 14th Avenue. Current four-lane section between US 6 and 14th Avenue is a bottleneck.



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- Accommodation for future widening of Wadsworth Boulevard should include rapid bus or rail transit as a possibility.
- There should be a middle lane in Wadsworth Boulevard to accommodate traffic turning from Highland Drive to southbound Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Additional right-of-way should be acquired to integrate US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard traffic with light rail and to provide workable connections to each of these and to Colfax Avenue. Development in this area will be major.

Noise

- Provide noise reduction through noise walls or quiet pavement between Wadsworth Boulevard and Kipling Street.
- Do not increase noise levels over current conditions.
- Noise levels have increased since the speed limit on US 6 was raised to 65 mph. Look into lowering the speed limit back to 55 mph.
- Please look into quiet pavement on US 6, like rubberized asphalt or pavement similar to that on US 6 near Indiana Avenue.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

- Provide safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit patrons, and disabled citizens.
- Provide detached sidewalks so that there is room for snow removal. Attached sidewalks render sidewalks impassable when they are covered with snow from snow plows.
- Consider pedestrian and bicycle access across Wadsworth Boulevard, east to west.
- Provide a connection from Wadsworth Boulevard to the future Two Creeks Park.
- Wide pedestrian and bike paths are important.
- Plow and sweep the pedestrian and bike paths.
- Bicycle paths crossing US 6 should be established on north-south collector streets ¼- to ½-mile east or west of Wadsworth Boulevard.

Access and Traffic Issues

- Maintain the Carr Street slip ramps, even if they are moved to a different location.
- Synchronize traffic signals on Wadsworth Boulevard so that traffic does not have to stop at every signal. Current signal timing significantly slows traffic on Wadsworth Boulevard, particularly regional journeys.



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- Improve traffic flow onto US 6. Do not use loops to enter US 6 because [the existing weave sections when entering US 6] are scary to negotiate during rush hour.
- Install “No U-turn” signs along Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Existing access from Eiber neighborhood (northwest of interchange) to Wadsworth Boulevard is good, and no changes should be made.

Safety

- Provide safe access from Wadsworth Boulevard onto US 6.
- The existing Carr Street slip ramp entrance to US 6 is dangerous and should be closed.
- Provide better signage on US 6 announcing Wadsworth Boulevard exits, to prevent dangerous U-turns on Wadsworth when drivers realize they have exited in the wrong direction. Provide better signage prior to project construction.

Drainage

- Provide water runoff drains sufficient for the 30-year flood.
- Enhance slopes of Lakewood Gulch by a) cutting them back for a gentler cross profile; b) providing adequate bridging for large floods; and c) providing for eventual trail construction along the gulch.
- Be aware of all creeks and irrigation ditches that cross Wadsworth Boulevard between US 6 and 13th Avenue, specifically Wright Lateral and Rocky Mountain Ditch Company.

Miscellaneous

- Consider providing a bus lane on US 6.
- Start construction as soon as possible.
- Construct the project correctly the first time so it does not have to be reconstructed in seven or eight years.
- Coordinate appropriately with the RTD West Corridor project.