



Context Statement

The I-70 mountain corridor is Colorado's only east-west interstate and the primary access route from Denver to the mountains of western Colorado.

The segment of the I-70 corridor that runs from Empire Junction to the Twin Tunnels at Idaho Springs has spectacular view sheds and is one of the most heavily populated areas of Clear Creek County. It also is one of the narrowest sections in the corridor, with the roadway located on the canyon floor adjacent to Clear Creek. This segment of interstate is an important link for the community, acting as a major arterial throughout the area and also providing multi-modal forms of transportation. Improvements to the interstate in this area directly impact established communities as well as unique environmental, historic and recreational resources.

This segment of the corridor experiences heavy flows of eastbound traffic causing severe congestion and traffic delays during peak periods, especially at the I-70/US 40 interchange at Empire Junction.

Short term operational strategies need to be explored until funding for the corridor's ultimate vision can be implemented.

Core Values

- Safety
- Mobility
- Constructability
- Community
- Environment
- Engineering Criteria & Aesthetic Guidelines
- Sustainability

Critical Issues

- Emergency Response
- Safety of Travelling Public
- Driver Expectancy
- Determining Typical Section
- Concept of Operations
- Maintenance
- Active Management
- Schedule
- Bridge Structures
- Impacts to Environment/Community
- Minimize Infrastructure
- Keep to Operations Project
- Life Cycle Costs
- Historical and Cultural Resources
- Tourism and Economy
- Local Access
- Widening to Median or Creek
- Environmental Impacts
- Clear Creek
- Transitions of PPSL
- Mining
- Wildlife Habitat and Movement
- Input from Issues Task Forces
- Water Quality
- Signing
- Adherence to Aesthetic Guidelines
- Balanced Design Using CSS
- Adherence to ROD
- Adaptability
- Blends with Future Projects (AGS, Greenway, etc.)
- Definition of Interim

Project Criteria

1. Address Safety During PPSL Operations?
2. Maintain Safety During non-peak times?
3. Improve mobility during peak times?
4. Minimize the effort required to maintain the option?
5. Enable the project team to achieve the goal of opening PPSL by July 1, 2015?
6. Create infrastructure investments that are reasonable to construct and provide the best value for their life cycle, function and purpose.
7. Allow for a process to engage and communicate with all the local, regional and national users of the I-70 Mountain Corridor?
8. Create opportunities to "correct past damage"?
9. Provide access and protect opportunities for enhancements to tourist destinations, community facilities, and interstate commerce?
10. Incorporate sustainability by using locally available materials and environmentally-friendly processes?
11. Protect or create unique features for the area as a gateway?
12. Protect wildlife needs?
13. Protect Clear Creek?
14. Protect the defining historical elements of Clear Creek County?
15. Meet CDOT and industry standards?
16. Achieve the mountain mineral belt aesthetic guidelines?
17. Meet the I-70 Mountain Corridor design criteria?
18. Preserve opportunities for the AGS and the ultimate preferred alternative?
19. Adaptable for future changes/projects?