

**Entrance to Aspen Reevaluation  
Status Report  
Summary of Traffic and  
System Management Analysis**

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**November 16, 2006**

**EOTC Meeting**



# Reevaluation Requirements

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- 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.129 (c):
  - After EIS approval, consultation with FHWA is required prior to requesting major approvals to determine whether or not the approved FEIS remains valid for the requested action.



# Reevaluation Purpose

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- Is the **project** substantially different or changed, resulting in environmental impacts that were not previously identified and evaluated?
- Has the **affected environment** changed, and will an impact occur that was not previously evaluated?
- Have **regulations or laws** changed, and are there new requirements that were not previously addressed?
- Do changes require additional environmental documentation, or do the Final EIS and resultant project decisions remain valid?



# Why Reevaluate Preferred Alternative Only?

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- This is a technical analysis of the action previously approved (1998 ROD)
- Purpose is not to re-open project planning
- Purpose is to determine if decisions made remain valid for the approved action, prior to next major step



# Three Potential Outcomes

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- Existing, Approved Final EIS and Project Decisions Remain Valid
- Revise ROD if decision is made to approve a different, fully evaluated alternative that meets the Purpose & Need
- A Supplemental NEPA document is required to move project forward



# Current Status of Reevaluation

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- Technical Reports
  - All are drafted (22)
  - Team and agency reviews are underway; 90% are in final review stage
- Reevaluation
  - To be completed when Technical Reports are final



# Traffic Analysis Report

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- Final EIS: 1993-94 (existing) and 2015 (future)
- Reevaluation: 2005 (existing) and 2030 (future)
- Updates based on CDOT statewide planning methodology, and 2030 traffic forecasts prepared using CDOT traffic database – trends and actual counts
- Updates include growth factors that capture effects of Transportation Management (TM) program on traffic growth



# Highway Traffic Congestion

## Level of Service (LOS)

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- A**      **Best operating conditions – considered free flow.**
  
- B**      **Reasonably free-flowing conditions.**
  
- C**      **Constrained constant flow below speed limits, with additional attention required by drivers to maintain safe operations.**
  
- D**      **Traffic operations approaching unstable flow with high passing demand and passing capacity near zero.**
  
- E**      **Unstable flow near capacity.**
  
- F**      **Worst conditions with heavily congested flow and traffic demand exceeding capacity.**





# Existing Traffic Operations

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- ❑ Much of the State Highway 82 corridor was at peak-period capacity in 1993 – LOS E and F
- ❑ Under already saturated conditions, cannot pass more traffic through the corridor during peak hours in 2005
- ❑ Increases in 2005 traffic volumes have resulted in extended peak-hour queues and a longer duration of congestion.

# LOS – Summer Average Peak Hour

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<b>Section (Mileposts)</b>	<b>1993 Average PM Peak Hour Volume</b>	<b>2005 Average PM Peak Hour Volume</b>	<b>Maximum Capacity (Total of Both Lanes)</b>	<b>Level of Service 1993 / 2005</b>
Buttermilk Ski Area to Maroon Creek Bridge (38.5 to 39.2)	1,950	2,370	2,420	E / E
Maroon Creek Bridge to Maroon Creek Road (39.2 to 39.8)	2,030	2,380	2,420	E / E
Maroon Creek Road to Cemetery Lane (39.8 to 40.1)	2,280	2,400	2,420	E / F
Cemetery Lane to 7 <sup>th</sup> Street and Main Street (40.1 to 40.5)	2,430	2,440	2,260	F / F

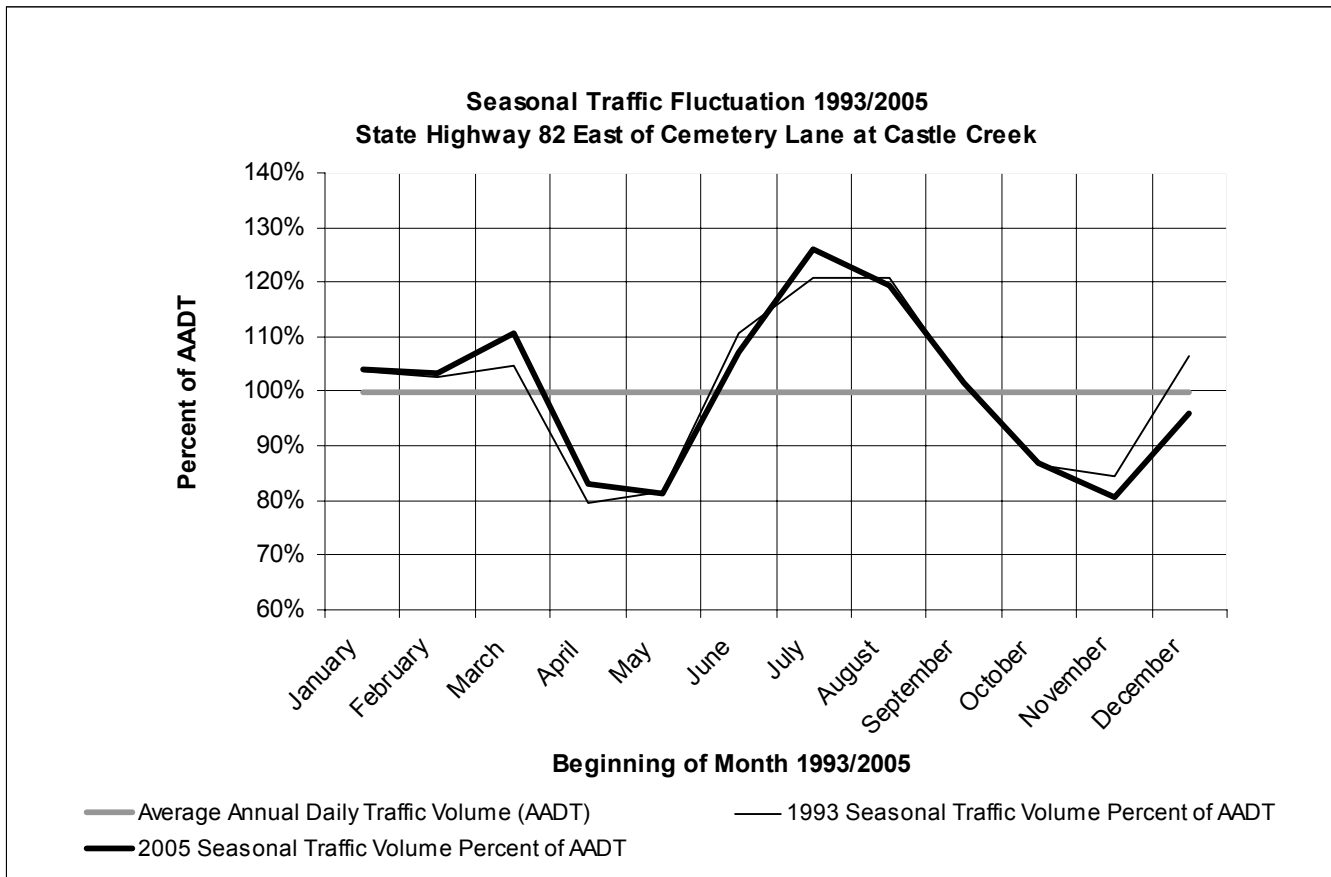


# Consequences of Corridor Saturation

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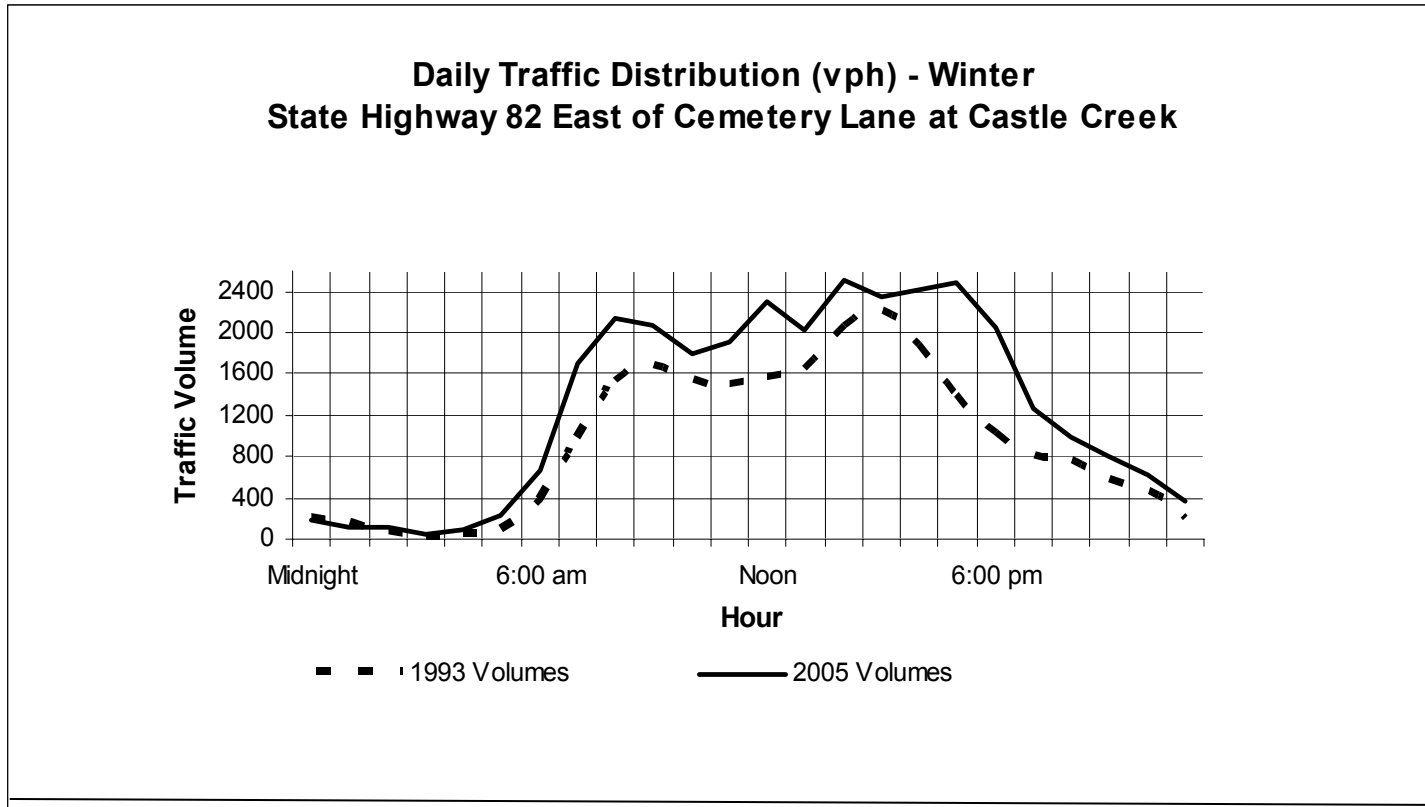
- ❑ Increases in overall (average annual) traffic volumes are small due to TM program
- ❑ Even small increases during peak hour are enough to drop the LOS between Maroon Creek and Cemetery Lane from LOS E to F.
- ❑ AM Peak – LOS F, Buttermilk to 7<sup>th</sup> & Main
- ❑ PM Peak – LOS F, 4<sup>th</sup> & Main to Buttermilk

# Seasonal Traffic Volume – Distinct Seasonal Peaks (Percent of Average Annual Daily Traffic)



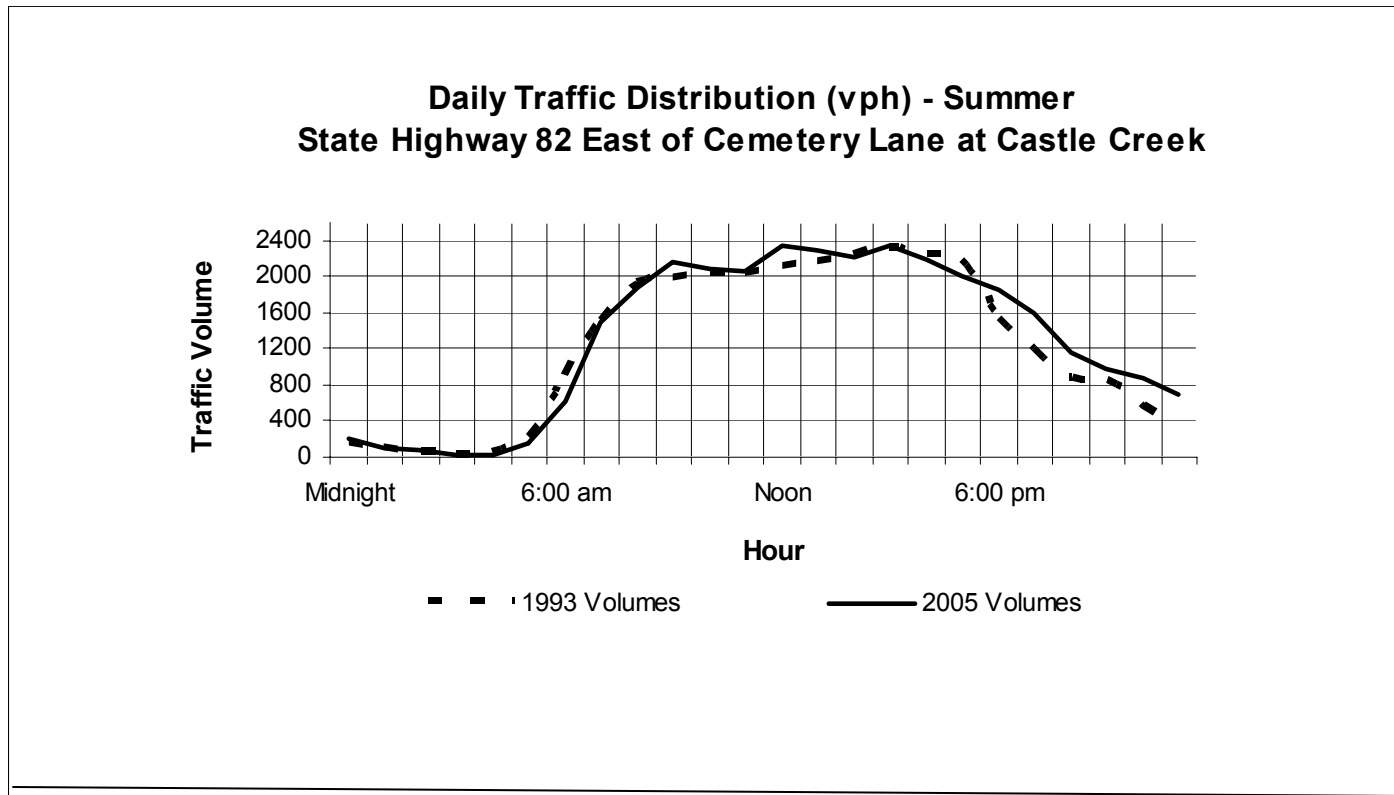
# Traffic Distribution by Time of Day

## Winter



# Traffic Distribution by Time of Day

## Summer





# Summary of Existing Traffic Operations

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- ❑ City of Aspen implemented Incremental Transportation Management (TM) Program in 1995
- ❑ Goal: maintain future traffic volumes at or below 1993-94 levels in the project corridor
- ❑ TM Program has kept *Average Daily Traffic* during peak season essentially the same as 1993-94 for 2005 (Corridor saturated; LOS E or F)
- ❑ Peak-hour volume increases result in extended queues and longer congestion duration



# Future Traffic Operations

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- 2030 with No Action and Continued TM Program:
  - Traffic demand (Cemetery Lane) predicted to be 44,800 vehicles per day (summer) and 37,000 (winter)
  - Summer peak hour = 3,800 vehicles per hour
- Far exceeds roadway capacity and available parking
- Period of the day operating under LOS F is extended
- Increases in down-valley traffic volumes will extend congestion and failing LOS down-valley along the entire corridor





# Future Traffic Operations

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- ❑ Serving existing and future person-trip demand on the State Highway 82 project corridor will require combination of general purpose lanes and transit facilities
- ❑ High-capacity transit facilities (light rail transit, buses, or other dedicated-vehicle transit modes) critical to providing capacity for forecasted person-trips in 2015 and 2030
- ❑ Combination will help achieve stated community goal of maintaining 1993-94 traffic levels



# System Management Report

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- Relationships between transportation modes
- System management concepts
- Incremental Transportation Management (TM) Program
- Parking demand
- Future transit ridership characteristics

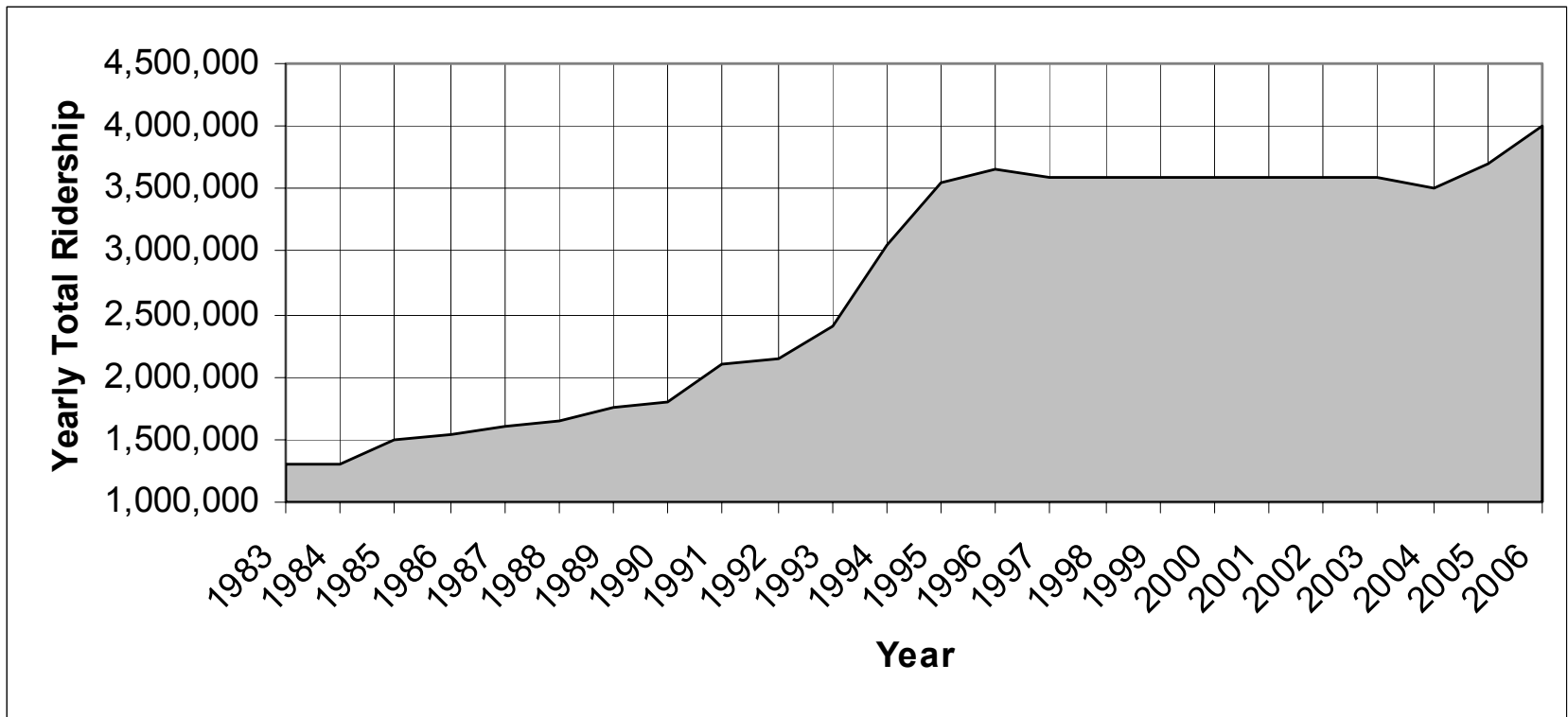


# Existing Transit

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- Serving 14 routes: 7 city, 3 skier shuttle, 3 valley routes, and a direct route between Aspen and Brush Creek/SH 82 or Snowmass Mall
- 2005: All RFTA services = 3.7 million rides with 1.7 million provided by commuter services
- 2006: Ridership as of Sept. 2006 is up 10% over 2005 levels - total 2006 ridership anticipated to exceed 4 million

# RFTA Ridership



Note: 2006 total is estimated based on September 2006 actual ridership data showing 10% increase over 2005



# Constraints to Increasing Ridership

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- Getting to the next level of ridership (such as increase between 1994 and 1996) will require major improvements to the transit system to accommodate additional capacity
- Implementation of the exclusive bus lanes/LRT is a critical step in providing additional transit system capacity & meeting



# Transit Operations with Exclusive Bus Lanes in Place

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- ❑ 5-minute headways provided on a consistent basis for buses operating between Rubey Park and the Brush Creek park-and-ride
- ❑ During evening peak (3:00 - 6:00 p.m.) a total of 37 bus trips in dedicated bus lanes would carry an estimated 1,665 passengers in the peak direction.
- ❑ 5-minute headways could be maintained using approximately 8 to 9 vehicles; further demand can be met by adding vehicles



# Summary of System Management Analysis

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- Incremental TM Program must continue to maintain 1993-94 traffic volumes
- Transit ridership is again on the increase (10% in 2006 over 2005 levels)
- Substantial ridership jump now requires major increase in capacity through infrastructure improvements



# Bottom Line

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- ❑ Buses must begin making 15-minute trip between Rubey Park and Brush Creek
- ❑ The only way to do this is for buses to run in exclusive lanes, and get out of mixed traffic





# Reevaluation Findings

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# What's Next?

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- ❑ Complete Reevaluation Document
- ❑ City of Aspen Open Space Vote
- ❑ Project Funding
- ❑ EOTC Public Process



# EOTC Public Process

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