

TWIN TUNNELS EA: PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED 10-3-11 THROUGH 10-7-11

1. **From:** Chris Hertig [<mailto:chertig98@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2011 10:07 AM

To: Bemelen, James P

Subject: Simple, cheap and immediate solution for I-70 ski/summer weekend traffic jams

Jim Bemelen,

My wife and I believe we have come up with a serious, simple and inexpensive solution to some of the busy weekends delays between Route 40 and the Twin Tunnels going eastbound on I-70. It won't eliminate all the delays but it will minimize the length of them. We have included an attachment that explains and maps out our thinking.

We would love for you to take a look at it or pass it on to someone who deals with this issue for CDOT and the CSP.

Thanks,
Chris & Beth

Cheap, simple and immediate solution to I-70 weekend rush hour traffic delays.

PROBLEM: The two main problem areas for eastbound I-70 rush hour ski and summer weekend traffic are where three lanes merge down to two at the Eisenhower tunnel and Route 40 coming from Winter Park. Unfortunately, there are two more unnecessary merges at the last Idaho Springs exit (241A) and the Hidden Valley exit (243) causing the delays to last 9 to 11 miles longer. The key words are UNNECESSARY and 9 TO 11 MILES LONGER.

Once cars get past the Eisenhower tunnel and the Route 40 merge at exit 232, traffic should slowly speed up. However enough people "cut the line" of slow or stopped I-70 traffic by driving the frontage road from the Georgetown exit 228 all the way to exits 241A and 243. The entire frontage road traffic merges again slowing everyone to a crawl from Route 40 all the way to the tunnels and Hidden Valley.

Overview map of the problem area from exits 232 to 243

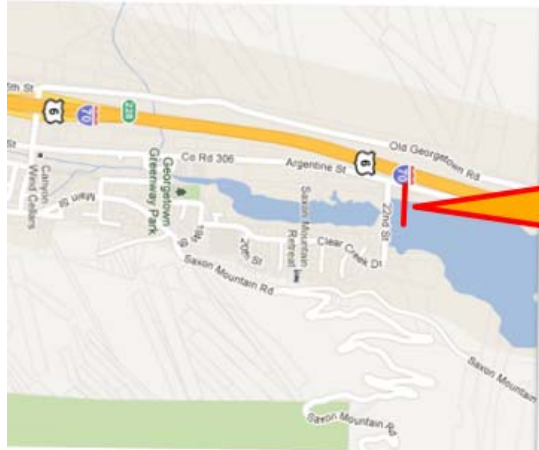


The frontage road shortcut (in purple) is an unnecessary third lane of traffic that re-merges with I-70 at exits 241a & 243 causing an extra 9 to 11 miles of backups from exit 232.

THE SOLUTION: The solution is relatively simple and does not require extra lanes, years of study, taxpayer money, lots of manpower or closed exits.

1. Have CSP or local police limit access to the frontage road during the summer and winter weekend rush hour times to local residents only.
2. The police would only have to set up three checkpoints on the frontage road east of Georgetown, at the junction of Route 40 and 308, and east of Downieville.
3. Combine this solution with the CSP driving 45mph from the tunnel to Route 40 along with the ramp metering and traffic should flow much more smoothly for everyone.

Checkpoint at Georgetown



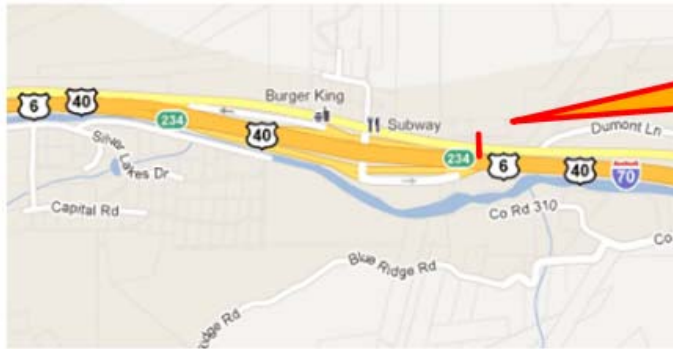
Georgetown Checkpoint

Checkpoint at Route 40 and County Road 308



Route 40/Cty. 308 Rd.
Checkpoint

Checkpoint east of Downieville.



Downieville
Checkpoint

ECONOMICS: The local towns would not lose business because the exits would remain open. The wear and tear on the frontage road would be less due to less traffic. If the cost of setting up checkpoints is beyond the normal duties of the CSP or local police, the funding could come from a variety of Summit and Eagle county businesses since they are the ones who would benefit the most from improved traffic flow.

Any costs to the Summit and Eagle county business would easily be offset by increased income. With a quicker commute back to Denver, more people would stay in the mountains longer and more would also go to the mountains because the return trip wouldn't be three hours.

STUDY and IMPLEMENTATION: Using CDOT cameras, traffic simulation software, or onsite people over the course of a few busy weekends, you would be able to see how this pattern emerges around 2:30 to 3:00 PM.

1. To test our theory, you could set up a test checkpoint at Idaho Springs exit (241A), cutting off the flow along the frontage road (East Idaho Springs road) to Hidden Valley exit (243). Traffic would clear up by the tunnels.
2. With that success you could then set up the checkpoint at Downieville, just east of the businesses there. Traffic would clear up after exit 234.
3. Then setup the next two at the junction of Route 40 & County Road 308 as well as in Georgetown (somewhere near 22nd St. by Georgetown Lake). Traffic would clear up after exit 232.
4. Or you could set up the checkpoints all at once and see what happens.
5. You can also look at morning westbound ski traffic that seems to only back up at Floyd Hill and then progresses steadily up the mountains. No one has a need to take the frontage road in the morning.
6. Since there are no permanent, complex or environmentally sensitive road changes required, the initial study shouldn't take very long and wouldn't be very expensive. You would only need to pay the overtime or salary of a few CDOT workers to set up and take down the checkpoint barriers and the police to man checkpoints for four or five hours. It could be funded by a local, state or federal grant or the ski areas marketing department trying to figure out how to get more people to the mountains.

INFORMING THE PUBLIC: If the test study works, an explanation of this solution could be advertised in local newspapers, town meetings, handed out with ski pass renewals and at the checkpoints, e-mailed to the ski areas client list, and broadcast on AM radio to people stuck in traffic. Locals could get a sticker to put on their windshield to easily identify them to the person at the checkpoint making that traffic move more quickly.

My wife and I came up with this solution sitting in countless hours of traffic watching hundreds of cars hop off the Georgetown exit thinking they had a clever way to avoid the traffic jam when in fact they were prolonging the jam at the expense of us and everyone else who stayed on I-70. Traffic "miraculously" cleared up after Hidden Valley even though the extra third lane of Floyd Hill was still a mile or two past the area where traffic began to flow again. Although we live within an hour and a half of the best skiing and hiking in the US we literally do not buy a ski pass or go on certain hikes that involve I-70 because of the Saturday and Sunday rush hour traffic. Not only is this frustrating for us, it should frustrate the businesses and government that are losing revenues because of a traffic jam that is unnecessarily long.

Thanks for taking a look at our solution,
Chris Hertig & Beth Downey

REPLY

Mr. Hertig,

Thanks for your email, I will forward your email to our Region Traffic Engineer for consideration.

(FYI: A number of years ago, the county Sheriff did just what you suggest in your email. He barricaded the frontage road on a Sunday afternoon and only allowed local traffic. From my recollection, this didn't help relieve the I-70 congestion.)

-- Jim

-
2. (NOTE – MEGAN ALSO RECEIVED AND RESPONDED TO THIS COMMENT WITH THE STANDARD RESPONSE)

From: Richard Strauss [<mailto:rstrouts@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2011 5:42 PM

Subject: Colorado TramRide/I-70 Twin Tunnels Alternative Option Public Comment

**Tramway Cable Propelled Transportation Alternative Option To or Companion Project
With the I-70 Corridor Twin Tunnels Project?**

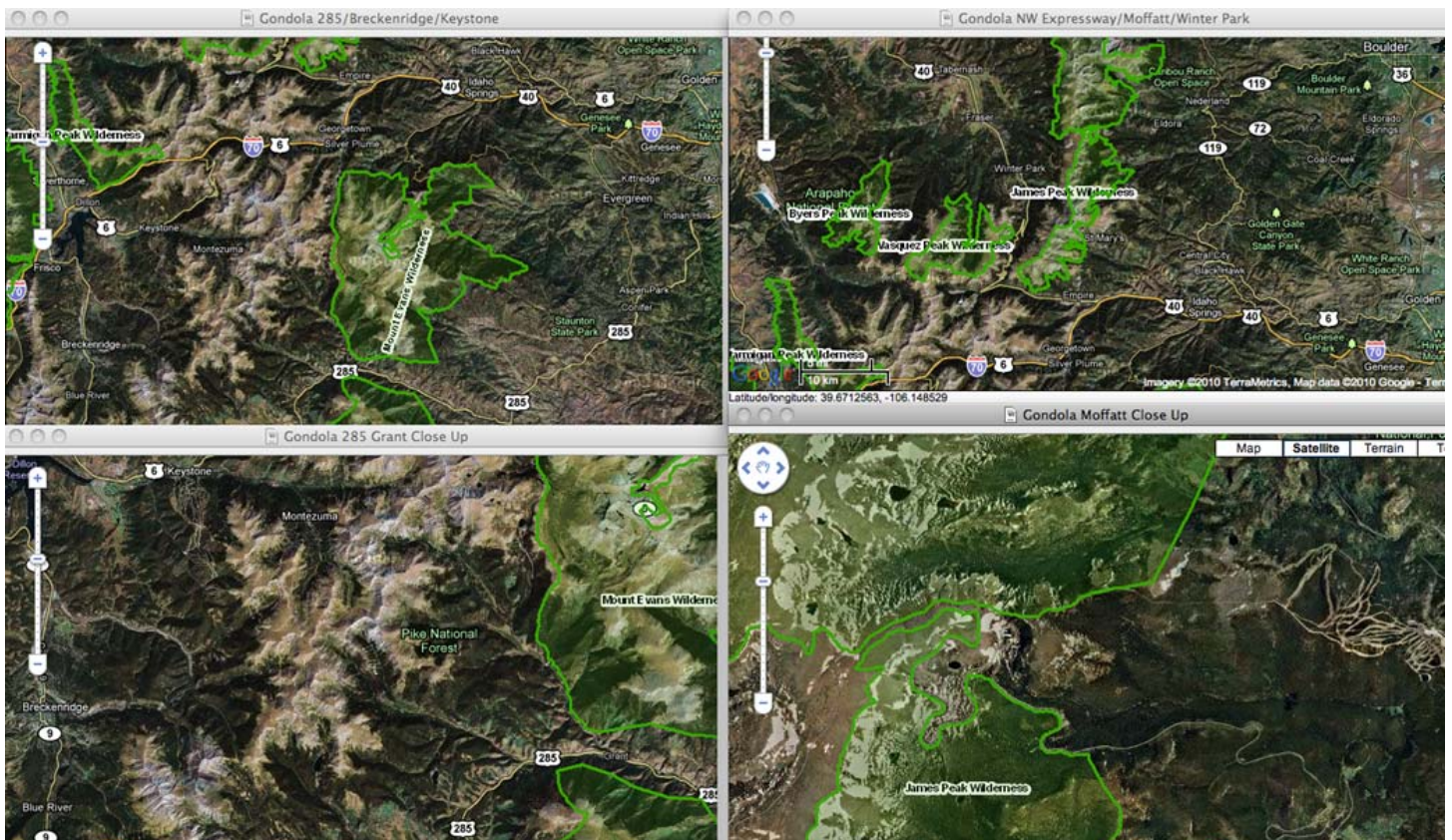
Greetings,

My name is Richard Strauss and am a longtime Arvada, Colorado resident and I-70 mountain corridor transportation user.

Cable propelled tramway transportation is a creative, proven and feasible alternative so I am submitting this "Colorado TramRide" proposal as a companion with or alternative option to (Step 4 in 6 Step process) the I-70 Twin Tunnels improvement project in comparative, relevant and beneficial terms for Colorado to help reduce, divert and resolve the I-70 Corridor's transportation challenge:

Build two year-round, high speed and maximum carrying capacity cable propelled tramway systems from East Slope parking areas to West Slope mountain towns, one between designated wilderness areas from approximately Grant (Hwy 285) to Keystone/Breckenridge on or near the Roberts water diversion right-of-way and one between designated wilderness areas from approximately Arvada (Northwest Parkway/Hwy 93 & Coal Creek Rd) to Winter Park on or near the Moffatt railroad right-of-way.

See Attachment/images for location and <http://gondolaproject.com/> for information and feasibility examples.



According to some of this website's articles/images, long distance tramways travelling at and providing an efficiently high speed and carrying capacity has been accomplished in mountainous areas around the world. Besides the obvious, existing and practical tramways, lifts and gondolas at various Colorado ski areas, there are gondolas at Estes Park and Royal Gorge. Also, many tramways were used in historical mining operations throughout the mountains of Colorado. The Moffatt and Roberts locations are the only two places that are non-Wilderness designated areas on the Front Range and useful for transportation purposes. There are articles and images on the gondolaproject.com website describing that people will ride, support and enjoy tramways more readily than a train, bus, etc.

Benefits:

- 1 Divert, alleviate and reduce traffic from I-70 to these alternative routes;
- 2 Use environmentally green, clean and traffic pollution reduced or eliminated cable propelled transportation technology;
- 3 Build with comparative cost effectiveness, minimal footprint and maximum environmental sensitivity;
- 4 Create jobs in Colorado with aerial tramways designed, developed and manufactured by Grand Junction headquartered Leitner-Poma. See <http://www.leitner-poma.com/> ;
- 5 Provide a positive aesthetic as well as transportation solution;
- 6 Enable recreationally, socially and sensory stimulative experiences en route to and from the originations and destinations;
- 7 Accommodate passenger comfort, security and safety
- 8 Impact economies of Arvada, Grant area, Eldora, Breckenridge, Keystone, Winter Park, Grand Junction and overall Colorado with a unique, sustainable and 4 season tourist attraction; and
- 9 Fund in partnership with private interests.

Will you please confirm to me receipt of, enter into the Scoping Comments and distribute this proposal to the Project Leadership Team, Technical Team and others appropriately involved to consider the feasibility of this proposal as an alternative option to or companion project with the I-70 Twin Tunnels project?

Thank you and with regards,

Richard Strauss
Arvada, CO
303-456-0619
rstrouts@gmail.com

REPLY

Mr. Strauss,

Thank you for your comment. Receipt is confirmed. Your comment and others received during the scoping period will be considered and included in a Scoping Report, which will be available on the project website by the end of the month:

<http://www.coloradodot.info/projects/i70twintunnels>

Thank you for your interest in the Twin Tunnels project.

Jim Bemelen
CDOT Region 1
I-70 Mtn Corridor Program Manager

From: Charles Berling [<mailto:c.berling@att.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2011 9:36 AM
To: Acimovic, Benjamin
Cc: David Reid; Peterson, Jeff
Subject: I70 Twin Tunnels Pro

Benjamin- I received an email from Jeff this morning with your contact info and am reaching out to you to let you know our interest in the Twin Tunnels project. My partner, Dave Reid, and I own a 5 acre lot that has two vacant houses on it located on the south side of CR 314 across from the concrete batch plant and just east of Xcel's substation. I have two questions which I hope you can answer for me. First, with about 3 acres of level area and the two empty houses that could be converted to project offices, would CDOT, their vendors or contractors have any interest in the site as a staging area for your project? And the second, how will the construction work and schedule on CR 314 impact the access to our site? If possible, Dave and I would like to be included on your stakeholder information distribution list. Thanks for your assistance and good luck with getting the project underway.- Regards, Chuck

Chuck Berling
7341 Homesteader Dr.
Morrison, CO 80465

Cell- 303-638-2275

From: Acimovic, Benjamin [Benjamin.Acimovic@dot.state.co.us]
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2011 7:44 AM
To: Charles Berling
Cc: David Reid; Peterson, Jeff; Jason Longsdorf; Whorton, Mandy/DEN; McAfee, Gina L. (Gina.McAfee@jacobs.com); Vobejda, Mary Jo/DEN; Bemelen, James P; Gerak, Janet
Subject: RE: I70 Twin Tunnels Pro

Good afternoon Chuck,

. I think I can answer both your questions. First, the project team, once the design and contractor are selected, will look at all available resources for offices and logistics. I can't promise you that your resources will be used but thanks for letting us know about the availability of your resources.

The construction impacts to your site should be minimal for the first phase work on CR314. Besides lane closures and traffic control, we do not plan to have construction adjacent to your parcels in Phase I at this time. The Twin Tunnels work itself should not impact your parcels, as CR314 will be closed at the intersection of CR314 and Old US40/Game Check Road. You will still have access from the west end of CR 314 near I-70 MP 241.

Phase II could include widening, paving, and other enhancements along the stretch of CR314 from MP 241 on I-70 to MP 243 at Hidden Valley. These enhancements are going to be developed and discussed with our Project Leadership Team and Technical Teams on both the EA and Frontage Road over the next several months.

If you have additional questions and concerns please feel free to contact me.

Benjamin Acimovic, P.E.
Region 1 Mountain Residency
Ph: (303) 512-5814(7-5814)
Cell: (720) 951-6151
Fax: (303) 512-5675