



The Story of the North Forty

As the primary route between Northern Colorado and the Denver metropolitan area, the I-25 corridor has experienced considerable growth over the years. People are increasingly aware that demands on the existing transportation system are exceeding its ability to serve travelers efficiently. Along with increased traffic volume on I-25 and parallel roadways has come an increase in accidents, resulting in a need to plan for transportation improvements within the corridor.

In 1993, CDOT initiated an "Environmental Assessment" for improvements to enhance the capacity and safety of I-25 between State Highway 7 and State Highway 66. The study was followed by a "Finding of No Significant Impact" in 1995 that enabled CDOT to proceed with a series of construction projects that are still ongoing. The current construction activities between State Highway 7 and Weld County Road 16 were addressed in these previous studies. Also addressed were the right-of-way acquisitions and utility relocations currently underway between Weld County Road 16 and State Highway 66. These are being done in anticipation of future construction.

In the late 1990s, CDOT, in conjunction with regional planning groups (North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council, Upper Front Range Regional Planning Commission, and Denver Regional Council of Governments), undertook the North Front Range Transportation Alternatives Feasibility Study which included a study area from Denver to Fort Collins. It evaluated an extensive range of alternative highway improvements, transit alternatives including passenger rail, and travel demand management programs. This study, published in March 2000, produced a Vision Plan that included an inter-regional bus service, combination general purpose/high occupancy vehicle lanes, and passenger rail service.

More recently, a number of studies have been conducted to establish planning guidelines for growth in segments of this corridor, addressing both land use and transportation issues.

The initiation of the North I-25 EIS represents the next step in evaluating and planning for improvements in this corridor.



North Link

A SCOPING DOCUMENT INTRODUCING
THE NORTH I-25 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

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A Growing Need

Good schools.
Mild weather.
Open space.
Regional Connections.

Northern Colorado is a wonderful place. Planning for the future will help us preserve this character.

Anyone who has traveled I-25 through Northern Colorado has already experienced increasing congestion and a growing concern for safety. After 40 years, daily volumes of traffic on the highway now exceed what it was intended to serve. If no changes are made to the I-25 corridor, it is likely that travel times will double or even triple in the next couple of decades.

That's why the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway



Administration and the Federal Transit Administration are studying options to improve mobility for local commuters as well as those traveling between neighboring states and throughout the region. The next step, and one of the most critically needed toward addressing the future transportation needs of the region, is underway: the North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement.

During the next three years, we'll look at ways to improve safety and mobility, including those alternatives developed in previous area transportation feasibility and investment studies. And, we'll make a recommendation that best serves travelers in Northern Colorado and throughout the region.



Have a Voice

Ensuring the success of the North I-25 EIS requires a full and complete record of public comments and feedback throughout the process. This feedback will help shape the options and alternatives considered by the study. It will be available for reference when decisions are made about future projects. Your input will help ensure that the best possible transportation improvements are made, and that they meet the challenges faced by travelers in and through Northern Colorado now and in the future.

We are committed to providing opportunity for frequent and meaningful public input at every step of the process. We resolve to foster open lines of communication, develop mutually beneficial relationships, and act in a responsive manner to all groups and individuals interested in this process.

Members of the public outreach team will accept comments and feedback through the following means:

- Submissions to our Web site located at www.cdor.info/northi25eis/
- Public meetings
- Letters
- Comments made at small group presentations (i.e., service clubs, environmental organizations, neighborhood associations, civic organizations, etc.)
- Displays/exhibits in public locations
- Booths at public events
- Other events/opportunities to be determined

We Need Your Help

One of the most important elements of an EIS process is drafting the Purpose and Need Statement. This statement outlines why the study is necessary and what transportation issues currently exist in the area. The definition of purpose and need is crucial to the subsequent development of project goals and then the development of possible transportation options to address those needs and goals. Your comments are crucial.

Choices for the Future

For major transportation projects, the National Environmental Policy Act requires that a range of alternatives be considered and that their environmental impacts be analyzed. This type of study is required prior to the commitment of federal funds to any major project, or prior to any action taken by a federal agency that might cause a significant impact on the environment.

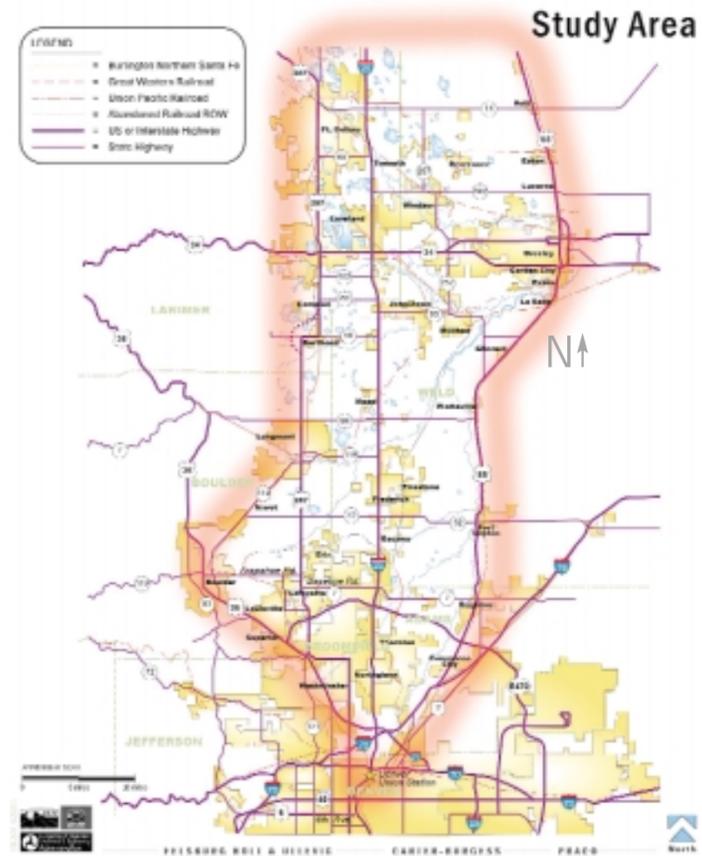
The North I-25 EIS is led by two federal agencies, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, in partnership with CDOT. Basic steps in this process include:

- A. Scoping:** A public process to help define the purpose and need for the proposed action or project and to identify environmental issues that need to be studied.
- B. Data Collection:** Collecting transportation, environmental and land use data. This step will also include developing a tool for predicting future (year 2030) travel.
- C. Development of Alternatives:** Identifying a wide range of highway, transit and other types of alternatives, then narrowing these to the reasonable range of alternatives for detailed study. This will include the "no-action" alternative.
- D. Analysis of Alternatives:** Transportation, social, economic and environmental impacts of a range of alternatives are studied in detail, and comparisons are made.
- E. Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement:** A printed report for public review and comment is prepared documenting the need for the project, describing alternative courses of action, analyzing likely impacts from each alternative, and describing any steps to be taken to avoid impacts or minimize harm to the environment.
- F. Public and Agency Review of the DEIS.**
- G. Preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement:** Documents the preferred alternative and provides response to comments that were made on the DEIS. This will be followed by a Record of Decision (ROD).
- H. Record of Decision:** Documents the decision and commits to mitigation of impacts by the lead federal agencies

The DEIS will evaluate the impacts of various actions to the following resources and cultural features:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ■ Land use | ■ Social, economic and environmental impacts to low income or minority populations |
| ■ Relocation/right of way | ■ Public safety and security |
| ■ Noise | ■ Farmlands |
| ■ Air quality | ■ Hazardous materials |
| ■ Floodplains | ■ Archaeological properties |
| ■ Water quality/water resources | ■ Historic properties |
| ■ Wildlife and fisheries | ■ Paleontological resources |
| ■ Wetlands | ■ Visual quality |
| ■ Threatened or endangered species | ■ Energy |
| ■ Pedestrian and bicycle facilities | ■ Parks, historic properties and wildlife refuges. |
| ■ Recreation | |
| ■ Economics | |

The analysis of direct impacts will include those associated with construction processes and operations. Not only will the direct impacts of various actions be studied, but also cumulative and indirect impacts and effects.



Contact Us

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Where and What

The goal of the study is to evaluate alternatives to improve mobility for residents and commuters as they travel around Northern Colorado, to and from the Denver metropolitan area, and between neighboring states. It will also look at how people and goods travel through this area on their way to and from locations throughout the nation.

Alternatives under consideration include:

1. Taking no action;
2. Improvements to the existing highway network, particularly I-25 but perhaps also US 85 and US 287;
3. Transit options, including bus and rail technologies; and
4. Constructing a highway on a new location.

EIS Process

