

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Project: CDOT Region 3 – SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge

Purpose: PLT #15/PWG #14 Combined Meeting

Date Held: August 23, 2012

Location: CDOT Region 3 Glenwood (Maintenance Video Conference Room)

Attendees:

FHWA:	Eva LaDow, Stephanie Gibson
CDOT:	Josh Cullen, Roland Wagner, Mike Vanderhoof
Glenwood Springs City Council:	Bruce Christensen
Glenwood Springs Chamber:	Suzanne Stewart
Colorado Bridge Enterprise:	Charlie Trujillo
Jacobs:	Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, Mary Speck, Sandy Beazley, Nitin Deshpande
Glenwood Hot Springs:	Kjell Mitchell
Historic Preservation Commission:	Gretchen Ricehill
Newland Project Resources:	Tom Newland
Pat Noyes and Assoc.:	Pat Noyes
TSH:	George Tsiouvaras, Jeff Simmons, David Woolfall
Interested Citizen:	Dave Sturges

Copies: PLT Members, PWG Members, Other Attendees, File

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTIONS

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE DEBRIEF

Summary

1. 76 people signed in – additional people attended; 45 Comment Sheets received.
2. Comment Sheet summary:
 - a. Which alternative best addresses the following criteria?

	Alternative 1	Alternative 3	Unanswered
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Traffic/access	4	27	24
Visual	4	25	16
Bike/ped	9	22	14
Land use	7	24	12

- a. Comments included:
- i. Modeling of 3-A does not represent enough traffic from US 6.
 - ii. Build a bypass.
 - iii. Alternative 3 has less construction impacts.
 - iv. Keep pedestrian access between 7th and 8th Streets and the alleys.
 - v. Build the ADA access ramp from 7th to the existing pedestrian bridge.
 - vi. Pedestrians will struggle to safely cross the roundabout when moving between the hotels and the Hot Springs.
 - vii. Develop 6th Street as a pedestrian friendly mall and use the Grand Avenue “stub” as open space.
 - viii. Maintain the pool view while traveling across the bridge for Alternative 3.
- b. Which intersection Option best addresses the following criteria?

	Alternative 3A	Alternative 3D	Alternative 3E	Unanswered
Traffic	23	6	2	15
Bike/ped	15	5	5	18
Visual/land use	16	5	2	18

- c. Comments included:
- i. Keep ped bridge.
 - ii. Combine 3A and 3E for bikes.
 - iii. Concern about ice on bridge.
 - iv. 3A and 3E still confusing – signage critical.
 - v. Options move traffic, not people.
 - vi. Eastbound I-70 access is still just one lane.
 - vii. Like 3E because peds aren’t next to highway.
 - viii. People will still cut through the roundabouts.

- ix. 3A – could create a positive entryway to Glenwood.
- x. Intersections still look too “big city.”

Roundtable on Public Open House Comments Received

PLT, PWG, and study team members shared comments they received from the public during the Public Open House meeting.

General Comments from Public

1. Very few supported Alternative 1; several supported Alternative 3.
2. Alternative 3 was the preference.
3. Positive comments – change is difficult. Thankful for process.
4. Opinions have softened about replacing the bridge (originally there was more interest in rehabilitating the bridge)

Input on Pedestrian Bridge/Ramp

1. Some support for keeping pedestrian bridge and pedestrian ramp (7th to 8th).
2. Concern about a new pedestrian facility being attached to the new bridge and lack of separation from highway traffic.
3. Some support for keeping pedestrian ramp between 7th and 8th.
4. Wanted to know the width of bridge between 7th and 8th - concerned that widening structure for pedestrians brings it too close to buildings.
5. Underlying reason for keeping pedestrian bridge – maintain or enhance connectivity. Keep the experience.
 - a. When asked what it is about the bridge they liked, it was because the peds/bikes weren't next to traffic; also its location and feel.
6. More support for new ADA ramp along 7th instead of widening the highway bridge with a new pedestrian facility because the widened bridge would be closer to buildings.
7. Adding width to existing pedestrian bridge, or having a wider pedestrian bridge, would be good – with mixed use and amenities like benches.
8. Some concern about adequacy of existing pedestrian bridge. If it's replaced, focus on walkability and safety; make wider, more modern.

General Pedestrian/Bike Input

1. General desire for better pedestrian connectivity.
2. If we add bikes to the bridge, they could go on Alt. 3 – leave pedestrian bridge for the pedestrians.
3. Consider facility for bikes only on new bridge.

4. Keep bikes/peds off the new bridge.
5. Police Chief concerned with keeping pedestrian movements as simple as possible for movements from Two Rivers Park. Also, limit pedestrian crossings and use improved signage.
6. On 6th Street, bikes/pedestrians still a concern.
7. Fear of pedestrians being next to traffic, particularly on new bridge.
8. High level of interest in bike and pedestrian access.
9. Suggestion to create new detached sidewalk for Alternative 3.

South Side Input

1. Property and business owners near 8th and Grand – questions about height of roadway. When I look out of my window, what will it look like?
2. Concern with raising the structure profile effecting visibility of signs. City ordinance sign requirements are to stay within the traditional sign board locations on historic buildings between 1st and 2nd floor.
3. Concerned about bridge landing on south side being too obtrusive (wide) and affecting businesses between 7th and 8th.
4. Concerned about vehicle exhaust – preference for separating bikes/peds from traffic.
5. Owner of building on west side of bridge between 7th and 8th commented he didn't see active participation from the City in the process. Feels strongly there should be an economic impact study done by the City.

Input on Alternative 3 and Options

1. Some concern about pedestrian movements around the roundabout. Pedestrian safety better with 3A
2. Concern for pedestrian safety at unsignalized crossing.
3. Concerns with property acquisition of Alternative 3.
4. Want to know where and how touchdown of bridge works –want to simplify connections.
5. Concerned about westbound movement from the I-70 ramp to the Subway store. It's not intuitive or easy. Locals will get used to it, tourist and other thru traffic won't be easy.
6. How easy is it for a new person to exit I-70 and find the way?
7. Northern end – hope we can improve intersection options.
8. Someone felt that Alternative 3 did not meet the criteria presented in the newspaper ad.
9. In support of Alternative 3D, the space and travel time between intersections is good because unfamiliar drivers using GPS could navigate easier and there is more time to make the turns.

10. No overwhelming support for a specific Alternative 3A or 3E.
11. Alternative 3A – liked how it moved traffic; could become a beautiful entrance.
12. Alternative 3 might preclude the bypass. Leave slate more open to the future.
13. Is roundabout really the solution?

Public Input on Viewpoints

1. View from pool a concern.
2. Some concerns with not being able to see the full pool view with Alternative #3.

Bypass Discussion Input

1. Some of those who didn't like Alternative 3 didn't like it because they perceive it takes away the need for bypass.

PLT/PWG Discussion on Bypass Input

1. Discussion about how to respond to bypass proponents.
 - a. NEPA process for bypass won't begin until there is funding identified for the project. Estimates for studying the relocation of SH 82 in \$3 to 5 million range. That level of funding has not been identified,
 - b. The City of Glenwood Springs would have to come to consensus and then apply for TPR funding.
 - c. A PEL process could be an interim first step.
2. What can we do?
 - a. Document relationship between our project and the bypass so it can be included in the environmental documentation. Show how we won't preclude the bypass. Refer to the policy of the City set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. Emphasize the bypass is not an either/or project.
3. Intermountain TPR – now corridor based. Bypass is on the list – “do an EIS for relocation of 82.”

Public Input on Visualizations/Drive Throughs

1. At the visualizations/drive-throughs station, feedback was 50/50 in preference for roundabout or signalized intersection; note this is different from what was submitted in the Comment Sheets.
2. People commented on the number of signals/turns in each intersection alternative.
3. Is there a way to work with the City to improve wayfinding?
 - a. PLT/PWG input: We must remain cognizant of what is and is not part of this project. The City's Wayfinding Plan is two years old and there isn't much funding to implement.

4. Police Chief stated simulations don't take into consideration driver expectations, i.e., vehicle braking and weaving, or pedestrians stepping out in front of traffic.

Other Input

1. Somebody stated they were "waiting for the great project to appear [and hadn't seen it yet]."
2. Concern about ice on the bridge in the winter time.
3. Questions about sustainability and snow melt system.
4. Someone brought a new alignment to connect to RFTA corridor on the south at Bighorn Toyota.
5. West side business owner asked how SWG members were selected.
6. A question was asked if we will we use local materials in construction of bridge.
7. Question about why the money must be used now. Answer: Condition of the bridge is such that it is on the state's priority list to fix. So, even if a bypass is pursued, bridge must be fixed.

Grand Junction CBS Television Interview

1. Joe and Tom were interviewed. Centered on reason for the project, CBE funding, general descriptions of alternatives and their pros and cons.

Support Given for Suzanne's Statement at SWG

1. All of us participating in the process are responsible to communicate to others about it and to encourage input to the process. This is to avoid someone saying that the solution is being forced on us.

Things to Address Based on Feedback

1. Expand our graphics to include everything the 8th Street intersection and the whole block between 7th and 8th. Also, show the connection coming in on River Trail from Two Rivers Park.
2. Come up with principles that guide design. For example, keep bridge as low as possible, keep narrow as possible. Document what we want to have happen? These are the important values that drive design components.
3. Clarify titles on videos and visual simulations that downtown is on both sides of the river (downtown north of river; downtown south of river).
4. Need more work on pedestrian movements and connections, particularly details on separation from new bridge.
5. Consider that bikes and pedestrians have separate needs.
6. Create more visuals from pedestrian perspective.

7. After alignment is identified, start looking at design options on how we would keep pedestrian experience.
8. Visualizations – on CDOT’s website? Mary to find out.
9. Request that videos be comparable.
10. Be sure to link mitigation with impacts – something FHWA and CDOT will be checking for.
11. Need to make it clear to public about the next steps.
12. Between 7th and 8th, consider chalk on sidewalk to show how close bridge will be; also poles (story sticks) to indicate height.

SWG MEETING DEBRIEF

1. In the traffic group, people tended to be hung up on how intersections looked in the plan views. Suggestion to maybe relate the configurations to a real-world location that they’re familiar with.
2. Add #s of left turns, right turns, lights, etc.
3. 3D is counterintuitive – requires traffic to backtrack.
4. Show for Alternative 1 - this is what you need to do to get to the hotels – basis of comparison.
5. Heard that we need more bike/ped connectivity, don’t sever 7th to 6th St. connection, separate bikes/peds from roadway.
6. We need to be clear about where we’re going in the process – educate public on next steps.
7. Question about difference between right-of-way acquisition and eminent domain.
 - a. Answer: The Uniform Relocation Act requires the following:
 - i. Look at need, look at comparable values, evaluate use of property, develop a fair market value, make an offer that is either accepted or negotiated. Owner is entitled to relocation consulting services. Eminent domain is used as a last step – law enables government to condemn a property for best public benefit. Not a favored option by the agencies, and rarely happens.
 - b. Tim Woodmansee, CDOT Region 3 Right-of-Way Manager has met with Greg and Teresa Beightel (owners of Shell station).
 - i. There is a sense that people in the community feel beholden to Greg and Teresa and what they might want.
 - c. There are flyers that give an overview of the process. Mike Vanderhoof to forward info to the group.

NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1. Identify agency preference for alignment.
2. PWG objective is to identify alignment. PLT to make sure we're following process.
3. Communicate identified alignment to the public via newspaper.
 - i. Message to public: We are applying what we learned as we identify a preferred alignment. The final decision on the preferred alignment will come at a later stage.
4. Work toward identification of preferred alternative based on bridge type.
5. Proceed with evaluation and screening process. Lay out all impact and evaluation data to support the identification of the Preferred Alignment and the decision process. This could be in table format.
6. Bridge type alternatives will be ready starting middle of September, reviewed by PWG, and then ready for the public by November public meeting. Evaluation will include constructability, how long closures are, relative cost between options
7. Check in with PLT about project objectives and values that we have heard that will shape bridge type and aesthetics criteria and measures of effectiveness. Possibly by email.
8. Information we need to document.
 - a. How to access pier locations.
 - i. From what side?
 - ii. What time of year?
 - iii. By what method?
 - b. Ped/bike connections.
 - c. How we get traffic thru Alternative3 options -how we portray or do it.
 - d. Orders of magnitude costs.
 - i. Continued work on river access, utilities, phasing, mitigation so we can provide relative costs - by November.

UPDATES

Engineering

1. Engineering analysis is progressing.
2. Starting to talk to utilities, how overall project is accomplished - staging, phasing, constructability.
 - a. How much can be built off line? How quickly can we finish piece of south end?
 - b. Access from below.

3. Alignments/profiles are getting better defined – now putting it into CADD.
4. Structure types:
 - a. AMEC is looking at steel options.
 - b. TSH looking at concrete options.
5. Coming up with reasonable solutions that can be drawn up to present to public. Must be vetted from a constructability standpoint.
6. Still need for the aquatic, recreational aspects – what does the PWG need to make judgments about which option to access piers is better? Will be discussed further at the PWG meeting following this one.

Environmental

1. Economic impacts.
 - a. Economic subconsultant attended July 31 Joint Open House and has talked to business owners. Has thoughts on how to assess impacts – both short and long term. Good case studies – GAPP, others in- and out-of-state. St. Croix, Minnesota (historic downtown bridge replacement). Will be identifying impacts, lessons learned, appropriate mitigation concepts.
 - b. We'll be building a business profile of downtown. Which are auto-dependent, ped-accessed, etc. 6th Street businesses are more travel-based.
 - c. Will look at travel study (origin and destination data). Helpful for construction phasing.
2. Historic.
 - a. Finishing the Survey Report. It includes recommendations about which structures are historic or recommended to be historic.
3. Jim to follow up with Mike re: the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and wrapping it into the Survey Report.
4. Environmental staff can help with input to the engineering/ constructability analysis.

Public Involvement

1. Now that we have final input on alignment input, we want to portray the ongoing evaluation process.
2. Will continue to present all impact data in support of the decision process.
3. Next steps on input.
 - a. Consistent with the CSS process, we will continue to engage the public. PI team still meeting weekly to discuss how and when we do this.
4. Check in with PLT about project objectives and values that we have heard that will shape bridge type and aesthetics criteria and measures of effectiveness. Possibly by email.

5. Keep Environmental staff involved when engineering staff are meeting with agencies and groups.
6. FAQ ads – stopping for awhile but may pick up as needed.
7. To communicate the identification of the alignment, we will prepare a press release and accompany with a newspaper ad.
 - a. How and why we chose the identified alignment.
 - b. Next steps
 - c. Clarify who makes project decisions.
8. Also considering preparing an ad prior to the next public Open House (tentatively scheduled for November).
9. Question: what level of PI will the construction contractor have? Probably some level to inform public of construction activities.
10. Comments on Additional Public Process Needed.
 - a. Discussion about outreach to groups we may not yet have reached and how you reach them.
 - i. Mothers who have to get around downtown.
 - ii. Youth.
 - Consider a laptop presentation for neighborhood groups, i.e., a “meeting in a box”
 - Consider a table at school sporting events (football games), other.
 - Burning Mountain Days
 - Tom Baker in New Castle
 - iii. Commuters and people who will have to make choices during and after construction.
 - New Castle, Rifle, Basalt, Silt – their needs, dislikes, feedback on delays.
 - Public Meeting in Aspen – input there from commuters – Alt 3 preferred b/c better access.
 - Billboard.
 - On radio at rush hour – Ron Milhorn and other stations
 - iv. What was the level of participation of the Latino community at the Downtown Market - Tom and Terri to estimate #s.
11. Possible decline in participation at SWG and Public Open House - is there anyone we're missing?

- a. PLT is responsible to get info out to their constituents.
- b. Garfield County participation hasn't been high. Consider suggesting an alternate; Tamara Allen - was at BOCC presentation also. They have been participating in the Access Control Plan and are concerned about access to their County Building.

DISCUSSION ABOUT PERCEPTION OF THE COMPLEXITY OF ALTERNATIVE 3 OPTIONS

1. What we have been hearing is a normal kind of response when traffic patterns change. Consider comparing the options to how you get downtown now. It's already not intuitive.
2. Maybe try to refine/simplify as much as possible.
3. Biggest concern may be signing - some movements are more challenging than others, primarily for those who aren't local.
4. Highest volume from I-70 to SH 82. Note that this movement is much easier.
5. What makes it easier for people to interpret the way to go?
 - a. GPS, Stop signs.
 - b. Key is advance warning and good information.

NEXT MEETING

1. October 12th, 8:30 AM

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