

NOVEMBER 15, 2011, PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING SUMMARY

Project: SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Meeting: Public Scoping Meeting Open House
November 15, 2011

Study Team Attendees:

CDOT: Josh Cullen, Joe Elsen

Bridge Enterprise: Charlie Trujillo

FHWA: Eva LaDow

Consultants: Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, George Tsiouvaras, Jeff Simmons, David Woolfall, Don Connors, Pat Noyes, Tom Newland, Mary Speck

Date/Time/Location

November 15, 2011, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Glenwood Springs Community Center.

Purpose

To listen to and gather the public's concerns, issues, and ideas about the project that might affect the scope, as well as to answer questions about the project. The study team members attending the meeting were instructed to communicate that we do not have answers yet. The study team was available to:

- Provide background information on the project
- Present the project's draft context statement and critical issues
- Explain the environmental process
- Obtain input from members of the public
- Answer questions about the project
- Listen to suggestions and concerns
- Identify how the public can get involved in the process
- Present what's next

Meeting Notices

A press release about the project initiation and the Public Open House was sent to the media on November 10, 2011. A display ad was placed in the Glenwood Springs Post Independent and the Aspen Times that included a contact number for Spanish speakers. In addition, study team members distributed a post card announcing the Public Open House to downtown businesses on November 11.

**SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment
Summary of Public Scoping Meeting Held November 15, 2011**

Page 2

Joe Elsen was interviewed on the KSNO radio station on November 15 to talk about the project and the Public Open House.

Meeting Format

There was no formal presentation. Boards were displayed and the Grand Avenue study team was available to answer questions.

Presentation Boards were as follows:

- Welcome
- Purpose of Tonight's Meeting
- What is Scoping?
- Project Overview
- Project Team
- Draft Project Key Issues
- Regional Map
- Project Vicinity Map
- Project Schedule
- Other Studies in the Area
- Alternatives Screening Process
- What is an Environmental Assessment?
- Environmental Assessment Process
- Environmental Assessment Categories
- Preliminary Critical Issues
- Preliminary Stakeholder Issues
- What is Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)?
- Draft Context Statement
- How will CSS be used on this project?
- How Can You Get Involved?
- Please Give us Your Comments
- Next Steps for the Project Team?

Number of Attendees

Approximately 70 people, a mixture of business owners, long-time area residents, and elected officials.

The attendees at the meeting were very engaged. There was positive discussion surrounding concerns and ideas for the project. There was little to no opposition to the project voiced, although there were several opinions about what the solution should be.

Summary of Comments at the Public Open House

The comments and discussions recorded by the study team generally fell into the following areas and are summarized below.

Comments received at the Public Scoping Meeting

Project Scope/Purpose

- Don't tell me this is another study
- Why is this different from previous attempts
- No open opposition to project
- Alternate route discussions
- Support expressed for bypass options
- Peer to peer communications is important

Bridge

- There was an historic bridge at Pitkin (a nice, flat bridge)
- Bridge should be iconic – positive statement
- Pothole on the bridge – repair it
- Story of accident on bridge – losing a mirror
- Need a “narrow bridge” sign where it can be seen
- Start the approach to the bridge at 9th Street
- Widen the bridge
- Aesthetics are important
- Success characterization – tourists taking photos in Glenwood Springs would include the bridge in the picture
- Explore potential for artwork from students
- Revised pier column between Colorado River and I-70. Could this allow lengthen of the on ramp? This would not be part of Bridge Enterprise funding.
- Solution needs to be consistent with character of Glenwood
- Bring bridge into the street
- Not a lot of discussion about rehabilitation vs. replacement
- Perception that rehab is just fixing the bridge in its exact configuration
- Double-decker had support

Bike/ped

- On the east side, need a bike rack – right now, people chain bikes to the bridge rail
- Bike access – there's limited space for a ramp
- Improve pedestrian access from under the bridge
- Pedestrian friendly
- Add pedestrian access to west side
- Create a vibrant space
- Space under the bridge – plaza
- Bike/ped separation is good because of splashback, noise, aesthetics
- Traffic exhaust affects the restaurants in the pedestrian mall on the west side.
- Treat the pedestrian plaza well

SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment Summary of Public Scoping Meeting Held November 15, 2011

Page 4

- Plaza concept – eliminate left turns at 8th Street
- Move restrooms further south
- Hot pot parties –north side of bridge

Safety

- Emergency access along Wing Street
- Sight distance is important to Fire Department

Utilities/Infrastructure

- Primary gas line can't be shut down in winter
- Future infrastructure – incorporate into bridge now, broadband, water – want to be able to expand in the future

Construction/Mobility

- SH 82 Corridor Optimization Plan – frustrations around implementation – mobility issues
- Construction traffic a concern
- Can't do anything on this bridge without shutting the city down
- Construction – can we at least have two lanes?
- Closing of Wing Street

Funding

- If there is \$50 million available for the project, there is not enough for a bypass
- How far does Bridge Enterprise funding go?
- How far will funding go?
- Great economic development opportunity for Glenwood
- We hear there is no money

Economic

- Can businesses be compensated for loss of business during construction?
- Don't impede the current momentum of the downtown businesses
- Impact to downtown businesses
- Maintain appeal of southwest corner
- Community is now cohesive – different from the past

Environmental

- City Council and River Commission have been looking at bank improvements, such as mini whitewater facility, fishing area, improving the visual as one looks across the river at 7th Street. There may be an opportunity for a grant and/or partner with CDOT to implement improvements as part of the Grand Avenue Bridge project.

Comment Sheets

There were 25 Comment Sheets filled in and left by attendees. Some people took the Comment Sheets with them and were asked to send them back to the study

**SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment
Summary of Public Scoping Meeting Held November 15, 2011**

Page 5

team. One additional form was submitted to the study team after the Public Open House.

About three-quarters of the comment sheets ranked the transportation issues listed on the sheet. When items were ranked, they were either ranked "Extremely Important" or "Important." Craig Gaskill summarized the rankings as follows:

Connectivity	Most important
Congestion & Access	Tied for second
Safety	
Reliability	
Mode choices	

There was one consolidated statement signed by representatives from the Downtown Development Authority and the City Council with recommendations and drawings.

All of the comments are recorded as part of the documentation for the NEPA process.

**Public Scoping Meeting
SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment
Glenwood Springs Community Center
November 15, 2011**

Public Comment Form

Date: _____ Telephone: _____
 Name: _____ Email: _____
 Address: _____ Preferred contact method: Mail Email

Note: The following questions relate to the informational boards located throughout the room. Thanks for attending this evening!

What important transportation issues need to be addressed with this project? Examples of transportation needs include access, connectivity, safety, modal choices (pedestrian/ bicycle/ transit/ highway), reliability, and congestion. In the table below, please rank the relative importance of each need.

	Importance for Grand Avenue Project				
	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
1. Access to local businesses/land uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Connectivity across the Colorado River, I-70, and the UP railroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Safety of the traveling public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Choices in transportation modes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Reliability (of bridge)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Congestion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Other (list)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Do you have thoughts or comments on the identified Key Issues?
