



## Public Meeting #2 Summary

March 2017

The US 24 PEL Study's second public meeting was held on March 2, 2017 at Falcon Legacy Campus in Peyton. This meeting was held from 5:00 - 7:00 PM in an open house format, with a presentation by the consultant Project Manager at 5:30 PM. Attendees were invited to review the Level 1 and Level 2 alternatives and evaluation completed to date. Feedback was requested regarding the alternatives being considered, which will be considered by the project team while determining Level 2 alternatives screening results and moving forward into alternatives refinement. Approximately 55 members of the public attended the meeting.

Following is a summary of comments submitted by meeting attendees on comment sheets and maps, recorded by open house staff during one-on-one conversations with attendees, submitted via the project web page, and recorded during telephone conversations prior to the public meeting. This summary includes comments received through March 23, 2017.

### Comments

**Please provide feedback regarding the Level 1 and 2 alternatives screening. Do you agree with the evaluation completed to date?**

- ✦ Roundabouts are counterproductive to stated goal of improving freight flow.

**What are your specific comments regarding alternatives being considered in each corridor segment? What should the project team consider as alternatives are screened and design layouts are further developed and refined?**

#### Powers Boulevard to Constitution Avenue Segment:

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Preference
  - » Go with four lanes and shoulder for rush hour (Alternative 2).
  - » Four lanes.
- ✦ Signs automated to lower speed limits during fog and snow/black ice.
- ✦ Overhead digital warning equipment.
- ✦ Perimeter lighting on sides of roads.
- ✦ Underground wildlife crossings needed.
- ✦ Define truck lanes (normally to the right).
- ✦ Peterson Air Force Base (AFB)
  - » At Peterson Road intersection traveling west: Extend queue line for safety for Peterson AFB Gate traffic backups.
  - » Pedestrian connection at east leg of Peterson/US 24 intersection.



### Constitution Avenue to Falcon (Woodmen Road) Segment:

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Preference
  - » Alternative 1 (Four Lanes with Accel/Decel Lanes).
  - » Four lanes.
  - » US 24 just west of Falcon Highway needs minimum of 3 lanes!!
    - *Another person wrote to add on to this comment: with eastbound merge lane.*
  - » Alternative 3 - Four lanes with Peak Period Shoulder Lanes.
  - » Consider four lanes thru Falcon.
- ✦ Paving improvements needed.
- ✦ Signs automated to lower speed limits during fog and snow/black ice.
- ✦ Overhead digital warning equipment.
- ✦ Perimeter lighting on sides of roads.
- ✦ Underground wildlife crossings needed.
- ✦ Define truck lanes (normally to the right).
- ✦ From Dodge and Garrett, speed limit should be 45 mph to Woodmen Road.
- ✦ Recommend more roundabouts to slow traffic down and prevent accidents at: US 24/Garrett, Garrett Road/Meridian, Falcon Highway/Meridian and US 24/Meridian.
- ✦ Garrett Road intersection
  - » At intersection US 24 and Garrett, should be right turn only! Lots of cars on right lane speed past cars in left lane only to crowd into one lane, which causes possible crashes.
  - » On northbound US 24 at Garrett Road, thru-right allows people to pass on the right, then cut in front of other cars (*another person wrote "agree" next to this comment*).
  - » At Garrett, huge power lines are staggered on both sides of the road. Xcel has very wide easement and a Diamond Shamrock gas line. These utilities would constrain US 24 widening.
  - » Like the US 24 northbound to eastbound Garrett right turn lane.
  - » Right turn in and acceleration lane off of Garrett.
  - » Consider bridge over with jug handle.

### Falcon (Woodmen Road) to Peyton Segment:

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Preference
  - » Alternative 1 (*Two Lanes plus New Auxiliary Lanes*).
  - » Four lanes.



- ✦ Are you allowing for increased transport—semis?
- ✦ Plan to have the future development north at Curtis to tie into Elbert instead of US 24.
- ✦ The plan should consider traffic count effects of the 2040 Mobility Plan for connection of Briargate to Stapleton.
- ✦ Recommend more roundabouts to slow traffic down at US 24/Woodman and US 24/Judge Orr.
- ✦ Rio Road - utilize frontage roads for access rather than right turn only.
- ✦ Old Meridian/New Meridian intersections (*one person's comments below*)
  - » The planned closure of the Old Meridian/US 24 intersection (allowing right turns only) will surely hurt the Falcon area, will hurt the businesses that are on Old Meridian and McLaughlin up to Woodmen, and the businesses on the other side of US 24, and it will of course hurt the people who use these businesses.
  - » The New Meridian Road that was put in many years ago will be a real game changer. It should have all the attributes of Woodman meeting US 24 (acceleration lane, blinking yellow arrows).
  - » Glad there will be a way for people to get to the Farmers State Bank or Diamond Shamrock or any of the other businesses along old Meridian and McLaughlin. People will just have to drive an extra half mile. Extra time extra money for the people of the Falcon area.
  - » Those visitors from out of state will not know how to get to Diamond Shamrock and this could be a real problem at two o'clock in the morning.
  - » This new Meridian extension will also have a park-and-ride attached to it, maybe even a bus stop. If you travel Woodmen you know how well park and ride parking lots do and maybe you remember how well the test bus service did a few years ago in Falcon. What a waste of money.
  - » With the new Meridian extension to the Old Meridian, the amount of traffic will be just about the same as it is at the Old Meridian/US 24 intersection for east west traffic. This means traffic on US 24 will be stopped with a red light about the same. This means the eastward traffic that is turning left onto new Meridian will have to stop. It will not have the flashing yellow arrows to continue on, but a red stop light. If the new Meridian were designed like the Woodman intersection and the Old Meridian/US 24 was allowed to still be an intersection, traffic could continue to turn onto new Meridian even though there was a red light at the Old Meridian/US 24 intersection. The five o'clock rush will keep moving. Why can't we have a stoplight at both intersections? The answer is you are not to have stoplights so close together on a major US 24. However, is the new stoplight that would be at the new Meridian really a stop light? The only time that the light would turn red at new Meridian/US 24 would be when someone traveling on the new Meridian wanted to turn left onto US 24, that is go east. Think about it, who would do this? Somebody maybe who was lost or somebody who just remembered they wanted to get gas at Diamond Shamrock. How many can that be in a day? The afternoon traffic going east is bad enough as it is. CDOT's plan will make it even worse.



- ✦ Meridian Road and Woodmen Road intersections area
  - » So many accidents at Falcon and Meridian.
  - » From Woodmen turning east - barely across bridge and people start turning right at next dirt road to the south causing cars behind to slam on brakes.
- ✦ Judge Orr Road intersection
  - » There was a head-on collision near Judge Orr this week.
- ✦ Stapleton Road intersection
  - » The westbound traffic at Stapleton/US 24 has very poor visibility.
  - » Intersection at Curtis Road has very poor visibility for westbound traffic looking north/east.
  - » There are serious problems with the northerly sight-line for eastbound Stapleton at US 24. At that location the eastbound stop bar for Stapleton is quite far back from the intersection. The problem is that from the stop bar on Stapleton there is an obstructed view of southbound US 24. The obstruction is an elevated anchor point for power lines. Vehicles stop at the bar, look north, and then have to move forward to see far enough to turn left or cross US 24. Once they do this, with their attention directed northward, they pose a hazard to northbound vehicles on US 24 turning left and cutting the corner.
  - » The El Paso County Commissioners resolution 06-183 calls for a grade separated trail crossing at Stapleton & US 24. This should be integrated to each alternative.
  - » Comments associated with Jug handle intersection or Junior interchange at planned roadway east of Stapleton Road (present on all alternatives)
    - Revise to have a traffic light?
    - What is planned for managing this traffic from planned development?
    - Possible to move this to Elbert Road instead? Why on US 24? Already too congested.
- ✦ Elbert Road intersection
  - » Can't turn left at Elbert - take life in hands.
  - » In the seventeen years since I moved south of the intersection of Elbert Road and East US 24, the traffic has increased dramatically. At several times during the day it is very difficult to make a left turn from Elbert Road and go west on US 24.
- ✦ Bradshaw Road intersection
  - » Turning right from US 24 south on Bradshaw very narrow shoulder!
  - » It is dangerous to turn left off US 24 to south Bradshaw. Even though I signal far in advance, cars going west almost rear-end me.



### Peyton to Calhan Segment:

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Preference
  - » We need four lanes. No current way to pass slow drivers.
- ✦ Additional Turn Lanes
  - » Would like additional turn lanes at Soapweed.
  - » Turn lanes needed for Fairplay Road.
- ✦ Should do truck parking in Peyton.
- ✦ Poles or some type of roadside lineation to help in blowing snow at Peyton and Calhan.
- ✦ The truck and semi traffic on this 65 mph highway in front of our house is tremendous and increasing in volume every year - so is the damage to our vehicles in driving from our home to anywhere in Colorado Springs. That 35-mile trip in the best or worst weather is a challenge when one considers this is an INTERSTATE HIGHWAY! The huge increase in all traffic since the developments have occurred in Falcon is further proof that we need a four lane highway from Colorado Springs to not only our home in Calhan, but even further east! We have at least a 40-mile trip when going east from Calhan to Limon, and what makes that an even more dangerous trip than going west toward Colorado Springs is the fact that there are NO SHOULDERS on US 24 in that direction, and absolutely no means of assistance on that stretch in the event of an accident or car trouble of any kind. WE ARE ENTIRELY ON OUR OWN! But instead of improving the stretch of US 24 from Colorado Springs in an easterly direction ANYWHERE, all we hear and know about is the decision to widen I-25 north to Denver. How about some highway improvement consideration to our part of CO? It seems obvious that we residents of “Podunk” are second class citizens to the citizens of Colorado Springs and Denver! Highway US 24 is the major east/west interstate highway in this part of Colorado and should be given more attention and improvement project priority than it is. It not just us living in Podunk....it's everyone having to travel east in this part of Colorado!
- ✦ At Ellicott Highway intersection: Thank you for the widening of this intersection!
- ✦ Vertical sight distance issues between Peyton and Calhan.
- ✦ Hill blocks visibility of road at McClelland Road.
- ✦ Straighten curve and lower speed in Peyton.
- ✦ Concern with Roundabouts
  - » No roundabouts.
  - » Roundabouts NOT desirable in Calhan.
  - » We oppose a roundabout in Calhan. After experiencing such in Colorado Springs they are very dangerous.
  - » Calhan roundabouts not logical for trucking. Consider truck route bypass and let passenger cars go thru town.



- » At Palomino Drive intersection (just east of Ellicott Highway): Residential left turn for westbound traffic with hill to the east. Recorded fatality at this location.
- » Roundabouts in Calhan not a good idea. Harder for semi-trucks, RV's, trucks pulling stock trailer to go through.
- ✦ Highway through Calhan
  - » At 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Yoder Street intersections: Speed bars (rumble strips).
  - » Enforcement of speed limit between Calhan and Peyton is needed. US 24 is dangerous in Peyton because of speeding.
  - » Calhan may need to look at eventual bypass for through traffic if they want to change the highway through town to more of a Main Street setting. Same with each community.

### Calhan to Ramah Segment:

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Preference
  - » We need four lanes. No current way to pass slow drivers.
- ✦ Eliminate center exit.
- ✦ Plan for conduit connections.
- ✦ Concern with Roundabouts
  - » No roundabouts.
  - » At Yoder Street intersection: Roundabout not easy for trucks and livestock trailers coming from fairgrounds.
  - » No roundy circle in my town you!! Rabble rabble rabble!
  - » We oppose a roundabout in Calhan. After experiencing such in Colorado Springs they are very dangerous.
- ✦ Intersections in Ramah
  - » Possibly keep eastern intersection open and improve it but close western ones.
  - » Suggest frontage road/combined access.

### **Please provide general suggestions and comments regarding the transportation study.**

- ✦ Roadway Cross-section Needs
  - » Need shoulder along entire corridor.
  - » Partially US 24 is an interstate highway - needs four lanes.
  - » Don't think reversible lanes are a long-term solution if going to trouble to add one lane, should add two.
  - » No suicide lane changing direction at different times.



- ✦ Wildlife Crossings
  - » Wildlife bridges are a significantly better alternative to fencing or signs. Frequently the fences trap the animals in the highway corridor area used.
  - » Have you considered wildlife crossings?
- ✦ Street Lighting
  - » No street lights along US 24.
  - » No street lights on the corridor because they ruin the skyline.
- ✦ Bike/Trail Facilities
  - » Rock Island Trail improvements to keep bicyclists off US 24.
  - » Fully support extension/improvement of separated multi-modal trail all the way to Ramah.
  - » Fully support extension of multi-modal trail to Ramah and associated improvements.
  - » Strongly opposed to bike lanes on the road. Separated trail is better.
- ✦ Safety
  - » Prioritize improvements on areas/intersections where the most accidents/fatalities have occurred.
  - » Don't limit improvements to US 24. Improvements for safety on other roads are also needed.
  - » Get rid of all small and narrow wooden bridges where accidents are numerous. New bridges could be widened out to accommodate for future four lane, acceleration lanes and turn lanes.
  - » The entire corridor is a safety disaster, with distracted drivers, cars following too close, speeding, passing on the right and running people off the road, and many accidents.
  - » 65 mph is too high of a speed limit. It causes accidents.
  - » Yellow-flashing warning lights for pending red light signals are excellent.
  - » The flashing yellow lights alerting motorists of a future red light are excellent! They reduce red-light runners.
- ✦ Weather
  - » Weather information on VMS signs.
  - » Improve ability to see striping and lane direction during fog or snow.
- ✦ Concern about Roundabouts
  - » Roundabouts will be a disaster. They would have to be too large and impactful.
  - » Roundabouts are silly.



- » Roundabouts would need to accommodate livestock trucks. Would be so large they would impact the properties around it.
- » Prefer turn lanes and not roundabout.
- » Too much truck traffic for roundabouts.
- » This corridor has potential for significant freight increases coming off of I-70 and I-76 as I-25 continues to become more congested. Any design should take into account for large trucks and to keep the corridor free flowing as an alternative to I-25 as the area grows to the east in population and need for freight and commuters. Roundabouts are not good for trucks and through traffic on a major corridor.
- ✘ Current eastbound traffic from Falcon to Calhan is drastically dense during morning and evening rush hour.
- ✘ Every major intersection needs to be done similar to Elbert Road and Ellicott Highway.
- ✘ How would high speed rail effect this corridor?
- ✘ Driver education would be helpful. Help people understand and deal with left turns, speed limits, right turns.
- ✘ Planned developments should be made public.
- ✘ At least ten major projects are planned between Falcon and Ramah and developers would cooperate more at this time, build in extra road space and be more willing to work with CDOT if the original drawings and specs could be done all at one time. This would save thousands of dollars of architect's time and legal fees. A lot of highway frontage could be acquired at very low costs or free if small reciprocal concessions can be done by CDOT.
- ✘ I really do not understand why US 24 is not an interstate highway from Limon to Colorado Springs. El Paso County has the largest population in the state, yet has to fight for any highway funds. There never seems to be a lack of money for road projects in the Denver six-county area. Let's get things rolling in El Paso County, it is overdue.
- ✘ All designs need to allow for easy movement of goods in, out and through the communities from I-70 to I-25 or at least Powers. US 24 should have strict access control implemented to keep it free flowing with only major intersections allowed from Calhan to Colorado Springs. Hwy 34 in Greeley is a good model to look at.
- ✘ Glad to hear the study is being done. I can tell CDOT is serious about making improvements to US 24 and that is nice to see.