

## US 36 DEIS PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the United States Highway 36 (US 36) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) public comments received from August 3, 2007 to September 17, 2007. Comments were solicited and received from a variety of sources including input from the US 36 Environmental Impact Statement website, e-mail, written letters, and comments received during the three public hearings. Many of the 214 comments received addressed multiple issues and are summarized and categorized below.

### ALTERNATIVE PACKAGE COMMENTS

Members of the public expressed both support and concern for each of the build packages of alternatives, and provided comment on the No Action Package. Additionally, numerous comments expressed support for a *hybrid* package of alternatives (described below).

#### Package 1: No Action Comments

- Support for Package 1 (No Action) was expressed based on the perception that both build alternatives have unacceptable levels of impact and cost. Other comments favored Package 1 because they felt the planned and funded improvements (especially Northwest Rail) provide sufficient transportation capacity. Other comments supported Package 1 because of the perceived air quality benefit as a result of implementing only rail. Some comments suggested that the current bus service is sufficient and any improvements should focus on addressing bus capacity. Some Adams County residents expressed support for Package 1 in order to avoid the property impacts of highway widening.

#### Package 2: Managed Lanes/Bus Rapid Transit Comments

- Support for Package 2 was expressed based on the ability to *manage* future congestion. Other comments noted that Package 2 encourages carpooling, provides better access for bus rapid transit, and may help to manage sprawl. Other supportive comments noted that high-occupancy toll lanes would generate revenue to fund ongoing operations and maintenance of the US 36 highway. Some comments suggested the use of buffer, not barrier, separation, while others supported barrier separation citing safety and enforcement reasons.
- Concern was expressed over Package 2 because of the access limitations and impacts to local streets with drop-ramps; primarily in Broomfield and Westminster. Other Package 2 concerns included the sentiment that toll lanes do not provide equal access to all and might potentially exclude low-income populations.

#### Package 4: General-Purpose Lanes, High-Occupancy Vehicle, and Bus Rapid Transit Comments

- Support was expressed for both general-purpose and high-occupancy vehicle lanes based on the increased access, speed, and the level of service they would provide. Others noted that Package 4 would improve transit connections and cost less than Package 2. Some supported Package 4 because it was most similar to the Major Investment Study locally preferred alternative that was developed through a collaborative process and unanimously supported by the US 36 Mayor's and Commissioner's Coalition.

- Concern was expressed regarding the implementation of general-purpose lanes. It was noted that if built, volumes attracted to these general-purpose lanes would quickly exceed capacity.

### **Hybrid Package Comments**

A hybrid package of alternatives was defined by the public in multiple ways; however, it generally included incorporating the *best* aspects of the build packages into a combined package. A hybrid package was also one with a smaller footprint and a lower cost of implementation. A hybrid alternative was identified by those who felt that transportation improvements are needed but that the DEIS build packages were too large or expensive. The US 36 Corridor Urban Partnership Agreement proposal was mentioned as a means to integrate the best aspects of both packages.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

### **Design and Operations Comments**

Sixty-eight comments suggested modification to the build package designs, and most referred to interchanges and access points. Business representatives provided comment regarding Package 2 access and requested additional access options, especially in Broomfield and Westminster. Comments on the west-end terminus options varied, with a number supporting Option B, because a fly-over would eliminate the necessity for buses to weave across lanes to access the Table Mesa Station.

### **Noise Comments**

A total of 98 comments regarding US 36 DEIS noise impacts were submitted. The majority of comments were received from Boulder residents along Moorehead Drive, Apache Drive, Fox Drive, and the Martin Acres and Frasier Meadows neighborhoods. Comments urged additional noise mitigation on US 36 from Table Mesa Drive to Baseline Drive. Some comments advocated for a reduction in the speed limit from Baseline Drive to the Table Mesa Drive interchange to diminish noise impacts. Other noise mitigation requests were received from residents in Superior.

### **Property Impacts and Acquisition Comments**

Seventy-three comments were received regarding property impacts and right-of-way acquisition. Comments received in this category were from the Adams County Segment and were primarily in reference to properties along Worley Drive, Skyline Drive, and Kristal Way. Residents identified themselves as being from unincorporated Adams County, Westminster, and Denver. Comments focused on whether, when, and how properties would be acquired as part of the proposed US 36 highway widening. Some comments, mostly those with potential direct property impacts, expressed strong interest in a clear timeline for project implementation. A number of comments noted that residents have perceived potential reduction in current property values because of the uncertainty of the highway plans.

### **Environmental Comments**

Over 100 comments were submitted regarding other environmental aspects of the project including parks, wetlands, open space, land use, visual impacts, air quality and pollution, environmental justice, and drainage issues. A number of comments expressed support for the alternative package that would have the least environmental impacts and that best preserves open space.

## Funding Comments

Numerous comments highlighted the lack of funding to implement either build package. Comments suggested identifying and implementing *phases* of improvements to address the funding shortfall. Numerous comments suggested that the Colorado Department of Transportation provide funding for better maintenance of the existing facility (trash and noise wall maintenance) before considering large-scale improvements.

## Bikeway Comments

Fifty-seven bike comments were received. Several of these comments expressed support for the Denver to Boulder bikeway. Some comments expressed interest in a direct US 36 alignment bikeway. Others noted that while funding for the bikeway has not been identified, the total cost is low and should be implemented as a first phase. One comment supported the South Boulder Road/Cherryvale Road bike alignment as a more scenic route. Another comment emphasized the need for a bicycle *commuter* facility not a mixed-use path. Other comments noted that the bikeway is not a transportation alternative, will not reduce congestion on US 36, and should not be considered further.

## Public Involvement Comments

Comments regarding the public involvement process were received primarily from Adams County residents with potential property impacts. The comments urged the project team to communicate decisions at the earliest possible time and to provide specific timelines regarding when the acquisition process would begin.

## Other Transportation Projects Comments

Many comments mentioned other transportation corridors. The majority of these comments made reference to the Northwest Rail Corridor Project and the desire to examine both rail and highway improvements together. Over 15 comments made comparisons to projects such as Transportation Expansion and the north Interstate 25 corridors.

## PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

The comments summarized above have been organized in the tables below, according to general topic. Several comments that were received included numerous issues and concerns, so results do not add up to 214 comments. For instance, a comment may refer to more than one topic, such as noise abatement walls, bikeways, and the importance of preserving open space.

Place of Residence	Number of Comments
Adams County	5
City of Boulder	93
City and County of Broomfield	20
City and County of Denver	19
City of Louisville	2
Town of Superior	4
City of Westminster	45
Other or Unidentified	35
<b>Total Comments</b>	<b>214</b>

Source: CDR and Associates, 2007.

Issue/Concern	Number of Comments
<b>Alternative Packages</b>	
Support for Package 1 (No Action)	17
Support for Package 2 (Managed Lanes/Bus Rapid Transit)	9
Support for Package 4 (General-Purpose Lanes, High-Occupancy Vehicle, and Bus Rapid Transit)	19
Support for a Hybrid Package (See Description in Text)	20

Source: CDR and Associates, 2007.

Issue/Concern	Number of Comments
<b>Environmental Impacts</b>	
Noise	98
Boulder Noise	40
Boulder Speed Limit	25
Property Impacts and Acquisitions	73
Right-of-Way/Acquisition	21
Adams County Property Value and Impacts	30
Environmental Preservation	11
Parks, Wetlands, and Open Space	23
Land Use	22
Visual Aesthetics	5
Air Quality and Pollution	28
Environmental Justice	11
Drainage	4
<b>Design and Operations</b>	
Alignment/Road Changes to Proposed Packages/Design	28
Access and Interchanges	22
Traffic/Congestion/Transit Operations/TDM	16
BRT Operations	12
Transit Ridership	5
park-n-Rides	5
<b>Funding</b>	
Funding/Costs	33
Economic Impacts	3
<b>Bikepath</b>	
Bikepath Concerns and Alignment	57
Bike and Pedestrian Access and Connectivity	12
<b>Public Involvement</b>	
Public Involvement Process	26
<b>Other Transportation Projects</b>	
Northwest Rail	21
TREX	11
I-25	7

Source: CDR and Associates, 2007.

Notes:

BRT = bus rapid transit

TDM = Transportation Demand Management

I-25 = Interstate 25

TREX = Transportation Expansion