

Chapter 6. Public and Agency Involvement

6.1 What's in Chapter 6?

This chapter summarizes the public and agency information and involvement for the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) process. It describes the objectives of the public and agency information and involvement program; how the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) (lead agencies) informed and engaged members of the public, agencies, and stakeholders in the PEIS process; how the lead agencies reached out to low-income and minority populations; public and agency input received, including comments received on the Revised Draft PEIS; and plans for public and agency involvement through completion of the PEIS, Record of Decision (ROD), and future Tier 2 processes. The *I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Public and Agency Involvement Technical Report* (CDOT, March 2011) provides more detail about the public and agency involvement program.

6.2 What are the objectives of the public and agency information and involvement program?

The objectives of the program are to communicate with the public and agencies, document issues, and identify and incorporate any issues into the planning and decision making process. The lead agencies accomplished these objectives through scoping, alternative family identification, alternatives packaging, impacts assessment, alternative groupings, the Preferred Alternative recommendation, and response to comments received on the Revised Draft PEIS.

Public and agency involvement is vital to the National Environmental Policy Act process to help make informed decisions about future transportation planning in the Corridor.

The Colorado Department of Transportation formed several project committees and teams to inform and interact with technical experts, local residents and officials, interest groups, and government agencies (see **Section 6.5**). The Colorado Department of Transportation worked closely with the committees and teams over the last three years to identify the Preferred Alternative.

The lead agencies are committing to continue the public and agency involvement and interactive communication through:

- Completion of the ROD (the final decision document that concludes the National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] process for this Tier 1 process); and
- Future Tier 2 processes in the Corridor.

See **Section 6.9** for more information.

6.3 How did public and agency comments on the 2004 Draft PEIS shape this process?

The lead agencies published a Notice of Intent to prepare a PEIS in early 2000 and conducted scoping in 2000 and 2001. In 2002 and 2003, CDOT met with Corridor representatives, conducted baseline studies, held technical and management meetings, provided project updates and information in newsletters, and formed project committees to advise and provide input into the process. In 2004, the lead agencies released a Draft PEIS. That document was not well-received by stakeholders. Consistent themes emerged from the comments received on the 2004 Draft PEIS. Highlighted below are common concerns expressed by the public that influenced the approach to identify a Preferred Alternative and proceed with the NEPA process in response to these comments.

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- The 2004 Draft PEIS used a \$4 billion threshold for defining the reasonableness of the preferred grouping of alternatives analyzed. Comments asserted that this threshold was an arbitrary way to screen alternatives and unfairly biased against Transit alternatives and unfairly limited alternatives for a multimodal solution on the Corridor. The lead agencies agreed that, for the Tier 1 decision, the ability to fund the alternative should not limit alternatives, and the collaborative stakeholder process that developed the Preferred Alternative did not use a cost threshold in decision making. **Chapter 2, Summary and Comparison of Alternatives** describes the process for developing the Preferred Alternative.
- Based on concerns expressed about the transparency of the NEPA process, the Colorado Department of Transportation developed a transparent process with stakeholders and used the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process to assist identifying the Preferred Alternative, complete the NEPA process, and provide a framework for Tier 2 processes. See **Appendix A, I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Context Sensitive Solutions** for a summary of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process. **Chapter 2, Summary and Comparison of Alternatives** describes the process for developing the Preferred Alternative.
- Questions were raised about the connectivity and segmentation of the western and eastern project termini. The project termini did not change as a result of these comments, but **Section 1.5 “What are the study limits and why were they selected?”** clarifies the study limits and why they were chosen.
- Numerous comments were received about funding information provided for transit and the cost estimating methodology for all alternatives. **Chapter 5, Financial Considerations** presents updated cost estimates and discussion of revenue sources.
- In response to concerns expressed about climate change, **Section 3.16, Energy**, contains information about energy consumption, the uncertainties associated with future oil supply, and possible future changes in travel associated with those trends.
- This document includes anticipated environmental and cumulative impacts to wildlife, water quality, geologic hazards, mineral resources, noise, community, and historic resources. Each resource section in **Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences** discusses impacts anticipated during construction. **Chapter 4, Cumulative Impacts Analysis** discusses cumulative impacts.
- In response to questions about mitigation commitments made in the 2004 Draft PEIS, **Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences** contains information about mitigation strategies and planned processes for determining how these strategies are incorporated into Tier 2 processes and activities. **Section 3.19, Mitigation Summary** presents mitigation strategies for all resources.

A primary area of comment on the 2004 Draft PEIS was the need for a longer-term horizon with full consideration of solutions for the long term. In response to these comments, the lead agencies decided to change the future timeframe to year 2050, looking at the need for improvements and possible alternatives to address a 2050 purpose and need.

6.4 What is the role of Context Sensitive Solutions in the Corridor?

The lead agencies initiated I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process beginning in spring 2007 in response to stakeholder desires to have a Corridorwide perspective and to formalize commitments to ongoing stakeholder involvement on processes in the Corridor (CDOT, October 2007). The Colorado Department of Transportation based the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive

Solutions process on the concepts articulated in FHWA's definition of Context Sensitive Solutions, which is:

... a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS [Context Sensitive Solutions] is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. CSS principles include the employment of early, continuous and meaningful involvement of the public and all stakeholders throughout the project development process.

The lead agencies committed to follow the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process developed for all current and future processes in the Corridor. See **Appendix A, I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions**, for more information.

6.5 Who participated in the public and agency information and involvement program?

The Colorado Department of Transportation included local, state, and federal agencies in the PEIS process by inviting them to participate in project scoping and project meetings. The Colorado Department of Transportation formed project committees and teams, summarized below, to further involve stakeholders in the process. The *I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Public and Agency Involvement Technical Report* (CDOT, March 2011) lists the agencies involved.

6.5.1 Project Committees

The Colorado Department of Transportation formed committees to assist in understanding Corridor issues and/or to provide advice throughout the process. The lead agencies provided updates to the committees throughout the process. Members of the committees included:

- **Project Leadership Team** – The I-70 PEIS Project Leadership Team was formed in 2008 to efficiently and effectively complete an easily understood, publicly supported, and legally sufficient PEIS and ROD. The Project Leadership Team identified critical issues to be addressed, provided guidance for development of the comparative analysis, and provided insights about what was important to stakeholders to present in the PEIS. These enduring documents represent the best direction for future generations, and provide a “state-of-the-art” project. The I-70 PEIS Project Leadership Team includes representatives from FHWA, CDOT, the United States Forest Service, Trout Unlimited, I-70 Coalition, Garfield County, Eagle County, Summit County, Clear Creek County, Jefferson County, and consultants.
- **Issue Task Forces** – The I-70 PEIS Project Leadership Team formed a Cultural Resources Issue Task Force, Environmental Issue Task Force, and Community Values Issue Task Force to develop potential mitigation strategies for Tier 2 processes to address impacts to these resources.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** – A cross-section of local, state, and federal agencies, counties, municipalities, community associations, and special interest groups with various affected interests. The TAC provided technical expertise relevant to the project and knowledge about resource areas and issues. The TAC merged with the Mountain Corridor Advisory Committee (MCAC) later in the process.
- **Mountain Corridor Advisory Committee** – Representatives from counties, municipalities, community associations, and special interest groups with various affected interests.
- **Federal Interdisciplinary Team** – Decision makers from federal and state agencies, who provided expertise relevant to the resources managed by their respective agencies.

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- **A Landscape Level Inventory of Valued Ecosystem Components (ALIVE) Committee** – Wildlife professionals from federal and state agencies who identified wildlife habitat of high ecological integrity, wildlife habitat linkages, and barriers to wildlife crossings along the Corridor.
- **Stream and Wetland Ecological Enhancement Program (SWEEP) Committee** – Representatives from federal and state agencies, watershed associations, and special interest groups. Members identified and addressed environmental issues related to the improvement of wetlands, streams, and fisheries in the Corridor.
- **Section 4(f) and 6(f) Ad Hoc Committee** – Representatives of state, federal, tribal, and historic entities. Section 4(f) and 6(f) Ad Hoc Committee members identified and inventoried Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) properties within the Corridor.
- **Finance Committee** – Representatives of state, federal, and county agencies. Finance Committee members explored the potential affordability of the alternatives and the economical feasibility of the Preferred Alternative.
- **Peer Review Committee** – Seven technical experts in their respective fields provided guidance and suggestions on the inputs to the travel demand model as it was being developed, and reviewed model outputs.

6.5.2 I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Team

The Colorado Department of Transportation adopted the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process to consider the total “context” of the proposed transportation projects—not just the study’s physical boundaries. In 2007 CDOT formed an I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Team that included 150 public and agency stakeholders to develop Context Sensitive Solutions Guidance for the Corridor. The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process commits to implement Context Sensitive Solutions and to form collaborative stakeholder teams, called Project Leadership Teams, on all Corridor projects. The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process authorizes Project Leadership Teams to create Issue Task Forces to address specific issues outside the Project Leadership Teams’ area of expertise. The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process is described in **Appendix A, I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Context Sensitive Solutions**.

The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Team considered the unique scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources of the Corridor to develop the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process to guide current and future projects along the Corridor.

6.5.3 Collaborative Effort Team

The Colorado Department of Transportation commenced a Collaborative Effort team to address the stakeholders’ desire to be involved in the identification of the Preferred Alternative. The Colorado Department of Transportation worked with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to establish a selection committee made up of diverse stakeholders and to select a facilitator. The Colorado Department of Transportation chose the Keystone Center to facilitate the effort. The Keystone Center interviewed more than 50 stakeholders throughout the Corridor in August 2007 to identify stakeholder issues and make recommendations regarding a process for developing consensus on a Preferred Alternative. Stakeholders voiced a range of procedural interests, concerns, and suggestions, ranging from a lack of trust and confidence in agency

The Colorado Department of Transportation formed the Collaborative Effort team to establish trust and confidence in agency leadership and collaborative decision making, to build agreement around a broad alternative that identifies travel modes and transportation improvement priorities.

decision making to acknowledgement that not all stakeholder groups have identical interests and a desire for alternatives to be able to adapt better to future trends and conditions.

The Colorado Department of Transportation formed a 27-member Collaborative Effort comprised of agencies and stakeholders to reach consensus for recommended Corridor transportation solutions. The Collaborative Effort team included one representative from each of the following entities:

- Blue River Group, Sierra Club
- City of Idaho Springs
- Clear Creek County
- Colorado Association of Transit Agencies
- Colorado Dept. of Transportation, Region 1
- Colorado Dept. of Transportation, Region 3
- Colorado Environmental Coalition
- Colorado Motor Carriers Association
- Colorado Rail Passenger Association
- Colorado Ski Country USA
- Colorado Trout Unlimited
- Denver Mayor's Office
- Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Eagle County
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Garfield County
- Rocky Mountain Rail Authority
- Sierra Club, Rocky Mountain Chapter
- Summit Chamber
- Summit Stage
- Town of Frisco
- Town of Georgetown, Georgetown Trust
- Town of Vail
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- United States Forest Service
- Vail Resorts

The Collaborative Effort team's objective was to reach consensus for Corridor transportation solutions that address stakeholder issues, consistent with the project purpose and need statement. In June 2008, the Collaborative Effort team identified a "Consensus Recommendation" that includes a multimodal solution, an incremental and adaptive approach to transportation improvements, and a commitment to continued stakeholder involvement. The Collaborative Effort process adheres to the purpose and need and provides for the long-term transportation needs beyond 2035 by establishing a vision for 2050. The Collaborative Effort team also agreed that the Preferred Alternative had to meet a 2050 Vision. The lead agencies committed to adopt the Collaborative Effort team's Consensus Recommendation as the Preferred Alternative in this PEIS. The Collaborative Effort team has convened at key project milestones during completion of this PEIS, and will continue to meet through the implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

6.5.4 I-70 Coalition

The I-70 Coalition is a non-profit organization formed in response to the PEIS process to address accessibility and mobility issues along the I-70 Mountain Corridor apart from the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS. In January 2004, more than 30 political jurisdictions adopted an intergovernmental agreement to address Corridor transportation issues and respond to the 2004 Draft PEIS in a coordinated fashion. Coalition members include representatives from cities and counties located along the Corridor, Denver Regional Council of Governments, Roaring Fork Transit Authority, and the private sector. Representatives of the I-70 Coalition also participated in the I-70 PEIS Project Leadership Team and Collaborative Effort team processes.

6.5.5 General Public

Outreach to the general public, organizations, and interest groups focused on hosting open houses, hearings, workshops, interviews, and small group meetings. The lead agencies distributed information through newsletters and the project website. A number of individuals and representatives of interest groups also participated in the project teams and committees described previously in **Section 6.5**.

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Throughout the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS process, public interest has been high throughout the Corridor and Denver areas and to a lesser extent other locations in Colorado and United States. Public engagement is evidenced by heavy attendance and participation in meetings. **Section 6.6** summarizes the meetings and outreach methods.

6.6 What methods did the lead agencies use to provide information and conduct outreach to stakeholders?

Stakeholders had an opportunity to receive information early in the process by attending agency scoping meetings and serving on the several project committees and teams. As the project progressed, stakeholders expressed the desire for a higher level of involvement in decision making and became more involved through the formation of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Team, Project Leadership Team, Issue Task Forces, and the Collaborative Effort team. The stakeholders' involvement and commitment were critical in achieving consensus on a Preferred Alternative.

The Colorado Department of Transportation used several different processes to notify, inform, involve, and engage members of the public and local organizations, including agency coordination, media relations, and public information and participation. Availability of this Final PEIS was announced in the *Federal Register* and local newspapers, and the document will be available for public review for 30 days from its publication. During the public and agency review period, CDOT will provide updates to the project website, prepare and distribute newsletters, provide media releases, and conduct small group meetings and presentations.

The following bullet list outlines (in reverse chronological order) the major activities that occurred prior to the release of the Final PEIS. **Section 6.4** provides additional details on the stakeholder involvement program.

- Held four public hearings for the Revised Draft PEIS at locations along the Corridor and in Denver in October 2010.
- In September 2010, distributed the Revised Draft PEIS for review to 16 libraries, 8 county offices, 6 CDOT offices, the FHWA Lakewood office, 19 Corridor city/town offices, 2 community centers, 13 federal agencies, 6 state agencies, 21 elected officials, 25 consulting parties, 18 interested parties, 23 Collaborative Effort team members, and 8 Project Leadership Team members. Posted the Revised Draft PEIS on the project website.
- Announced availability of Revised Draft PEIS and public hearings through notice published in the September 10, 2010 *Federal Register* and through local newspaper announcements, radio advertisements, email and postal notices, and the project website.
- Created a Project Leadership Team in 2008 to complete the PEIS and ROD. See **Section 6.4** for more information. The Project Leadership Team then formed three Issue Task Forces to develop strategies to mitigate impacts to cultural resources, environmental resources, and community values. The Project Leadership Team met throughout the development of the PEIS.
- Formed the Collaborative Effort team in 2007 to reach consensus on a Preferred Alternative for the Corridor. See **Section 6.4** for more information. The Collaborative Effort team met several times during the preparation of the Revised Draft PEIS and met with the lead agencies on December 3, 2010 to review public and agency comments on the Revised Draft PEIS.
- Established the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Team in 2007 to develop the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process to guide current and future projects along the Corridor.
- Held MCAC meeting on January 12, 2005, to review key differences between the 2004 Draft PEIS and the September 2003 Summary of Preliminary Findings; discuss document availability

options, public hearings, and public repositories; and identify the process for responding to public, next steps, and the MCAC's/TAC's future role in the PEIS. Posted the meeting presentation on the project website.

- Held 10 public hearings in January and February 2005 at locations throughout the Denver area and Corridor communities where the public could question the project team and provide formal comments to a stenographer. Held hearings in an interactive open house format with a 30-minute presentation.
- Distributed the 2004 Draft PEIS for public and agency review to 17 libraries, 4 county offices, 5 community centers, and other locations in and around the Corridor; 13 federal agencies; 6 Colorado state agencies; 31 elected officials (Executive Summary only); and 75 Mountain Corridor Advisory Committee/Technical Advisory Committee members. Posted the 2004 Draft PEIS on the project website.
- Announced the Notice of Availability of the 2004 Draft PEIS in the December 10, 2004, *Federal Register*; 38 regional and local newspapers; and in notices sent to more than 11,000 recipients.
- Invited 16 Native American tribes to participate and held two field trips.
- Held more than 90 internal coordination and planning meetings with local communities; special interest groups; and federal, local, and state agencies over the ten-year PEIS preparation period.
- Mailed six newsletters between 1999 and 2004.
- Held four sets of public open houses at 19 locations in 2000 and 2001.
- Held four agency scoping meetings between January 2000 and June 2000.
- Conducted 16 community interviews in May 2000 to identify issues and begin to develop a relationship with communities along the Corridor.
- Distributed project scoping information through news media in 2000.
- Set up project website (www.i70mtncorridor.com) and telephone information line (877-408-2930) in 2000 to provide project information, obtain questions and comments, and add names to project mailing list.
- Published Notice of Intent in the January 13, 2000 *Federal Register*.

6.7 How did the lead agencies involve minority and low-income populations?

The lead agencies implemented an environmental justice outreach program to distribute information to and solicit participation from minority and low-income populations that might be interested in the PEIS. The project team interviewed community planners, school district superintendents, housing authorities, and Health and Human Services agencies to gather information about potential low-income and minority populations in the Corridor and solicit suggestions for effective outreach methods. The interviews indicated that Spanish speaking residents were present in all communities.

The first project newsletter (March 2001) was distributed with a bilingual insert to more than 900 people. Spanish language information was distributed at community events and posted in public places. Public announcements were provided in Spanish through a local cable television station in Eagle County. In addition to providing written and televised notifications and information, the project team attended community events, such as the Cinco de Mayo festival at the Eagle County Fairgrounds. Spanish translation was offered at all public meetings and open houses. These outreach efforts yielded little feedback.

After the release of the Revised Draft PEIS in September 2010, the lead agencies worked with local municipal planners and housing authorities to identify minority or low-income populations in the Corridor

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for which additional outreach might be required. Through this coordination with project area jurisdiction representatives, the lead agencies identified 19 non-Spanish speaking and/or low-income communities along the Corridor. Eight of the 19 communities are located at least 15 miles from the closest public hearing site for the Revised Draft PEIS, a distance considered possibly prohibitive for low-income populations to attend due to fuel expense or transportation availability. Three of the eight communities are located in Glenwood Springs: two senior assisted-living (long-term care) facilities and one mobile home park. Community managers advised interest in the PEIS in these three communities would be low. A separate small group meeting was not justified in Glenwood Springs given the low level of interest. Instead, information was provided over the phone to the assisted-living facilities, and informational packets were mailed to the mobile home park. The remaining five communities are located close to each other in Eagle County and were invited to a single small group meeting in Avon. One individual attended this meeting.

All but one of the 19 identified communities has a large concentration of Spanish-speaking members. (The exception is an assisted-living facility in Glenwood Springs.) Regardless of distance from public hearing sites, the lead agencies determined that additional outreach should be conducted with all Spanish-speaking communities, given past distrust by Corridor minority communities of government-sponsored meetings. Targeted outreach efforts were used for Spanish-speaking communities, including project briefings at church services; translated informational materials; advertising placed in and news releases sent to Spanish-language newspapers; and advertisements on Spanish radio stations. These outreach efforts were more successful than the Avon small group meeting in reaching minority populations: approximately 1,000 individuals, mostly minorities, received information about the project at four separate church presentations.

Overall, the outreach efforts generated only minor response from minority and low-income communities. No specific questions or comments about the PEIS or the alternatives were raised. The few comments and questions raised focused on the potential for the project to generate work or business opportunities.

The *I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Public and Agency Involvement Technical Report* (CDOT, March 2011) and the *I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS Environmental Justice Technical Report* (CDOT, March 2011) detail the environmental justice outreach program.

6.8 What public and agency input was received on the Revised Draft PEIS?

Substantial public interest in the I-70 Mountain Corridor generated many comments on the Revised Draft PEIS. In total, more than 1,100 comments were received from more than 550 agencies, organizations, and individuals. Nearly 300 people attended one of four public hearings in October 2010; several individuals attended more than one meeting and/or submitted multiple comments on the document.

6.8.1 Distribution of the Revised Draft PEIS

Availability of the Revised Draft PEIS and public hearings was announced in the September 10, 2010 *Federal Register* and through local newspaper announcements, radio advertisements, email and postal notices, and the project website.

The Revised Draft PEIS was placed for review in 16 libraries, 8 county offices, 6 CDOT offices, the FHWA Colorado Division office in Lakewood, 19 Corridor city/town offices, and 2 community centers. The Revised Draft PEIS was also distributed to 13 federal agencies, 6 state agencies, 21 elected officials, 25 consulting parties, 18 interested parties, 23 Collaborative Effort team members, and 8 Project Leadership Team members for review and comment. Additionally, the document and its associated technical reports were posted on the project website.

6.8.2 Public hearings

Three Corridorwide hearings were conducted on October 5, October 6, and October 7 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Summit County at the Silverthorne Pavilions, Clear Creek County at Clear Creek High School, and Eagle County at the Eagle County Fairgrounds, respectively. In response to requests for a hearing in the Denver metropolitan area, a fourth public hearing was held at CDOT Headquarters in Denver on October 21, 2010. Each hearing included an open house period both at the beginning and end where attendees could speak with staff and view displays depicting project details. Display materials were organized in four main groupings: welcome and background, alternatives and implementation, environmental resources, and public comments. Each hearing also included a formal welcome by a local official, an informational presentation by CDOT, and a formal oral comment period. Comments were accepted at the hearing in a variety of formats: through a court reporter recording the official oral comments, a court reporter recording oral comments in private, written comments provided through comment sheets, and website comments submitted through laptops available at the meetings. The hearings collectively attracted nearly 300 registered attendees and generated approximately 190 public comments. The largest meeting in terms of number of attendees was in Clear Creek County, while the Denver meeting generated the most comments.

6.8.3 Public and agency comments received

The lead agencies received more than 1,100 comments from more than 550 agencies, organizations, and individuals on the Revised Draft PEIS. Most comments require explanation, clarification, or factual corrections, and some resulted in changes to the PEIS. Many comments require more detailed information than can be addressed with information at the Tier 1 level and will be addressed in Tier 2 processes. A complete accounting of comments received during the comment period and the lead agencies' responses to those comments is contained in **Appendix F, Response to Comments**.

Comments were generally supportive of the Collaborative Effort process to reach a Consensus Recommendation and Preferred Alternative, the development and use of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process in the Corridor, and the format and readability of the PEIS document. Other comments were mixed in support and criticism of details of the PEIS analyses and identification of the Preferred Alternative. Comments fell into broad categories as follows:

- **Transportation needs.** Most comments were supportive of multimodal options but some commenters expressed preferences for only Highway or only Transit alternatives. Some commenters questioned traffic and travel demand projections as either too high or too low; others expressed similar questions about transit ridership projections – that projections were too high, too low, or not fully developed. Many comments expressed concern about the termini and connectivity of Transit alternatives, particularly at the east end of the Corridor. Comments generally supported the 50-year vision and longer planning horizon. Comments received about safety centered on concerns about tunnels, auxiliary lanes, speed enforcement, location-specific needs, and slow moving vehicles.
- **Process, Collaborative Effort, and Context Sensitive Solutions.** Many commenters expressed praise for the lead agencies for the Revised Draft PEIS document and the process used to develop the Preferred Alternative. Some expressed concerns about the need to clarify implementation of the Preferred Alternative, including how Tier 2 processes would be developed within the statewide planning process; how the Collaborative Effort and stakeholder involvement would be formalized; and how implementation of Context Sensitive Solutions, the SWEEP and ALIVE Memoranda of Understanding, and the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement would be ensured in Tier 2 processes.

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- **Alternatives.** Comments on alternatives represented the largest category of comments received, accounting for nearly half of all comments received. Comments centered on preferences, including support of and opposition to the Preferred Alternative, as well as support for or opposition to the other alternatives evaluated in the document (particularly support for other Transit alternatives). Comments also voiced support for/interest in alternatives not carried forward, particularly alternate and parallel routes, car ferry or “autotrain,” aviation alternatives, expanding or improving existing rail, reversible lanes, buses in mixed traffic (as a stand-alone option), and reinstating the Winter Park Ski Train service. Other comments voiced general support for the non-infrastructure component, with particular interest in truck restrictions, expanding shuttle or regional bus service, use of variable messaging, and speed enforcement. Many commenters expressed particular interest in tunnel construction.
- **Environmental Analysis.** Comments were received about nearly every environmental resource analyzed but the majority of comments about environmental analyses focused on air quality, economic analyses, land use and growth projections and impacts of induced growth, noise and potential noise mitigation, and wildlife crossings. Comments expressed support for the Corridor-specific agreements for mitigation strategies for Tier 2 processes contained in the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions Process, SWEEP and ALIVE Memoranda of Understanding, and Section 106 Programmatic Agreement and requested that the role of these agreements in Tier 2 processes be clearly defined.
- **Implementation, funding, and cost.** These comments asked for clarification of priority and timing of implementation, expressed concern about the project costs and CDOT’s ability to implement the Preferred Alternative, and voiced support for alternative financing (tolling, public private partnerships, community investments such as bonding or user taxes). Other comments questioned cost estimates and related details, such as transit ridership and fare projections.

6.9 What future public and agency involvement opportunities will be provided?

Remaining steps to complete the first tier NEPA process for the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS are:

- Distribute the Final PEIS that includes responses to individual comments received during the public comment period on the Revised Draft PEIS.
 - Issue Notice of Availability
 - Provide 30-day public review period
- Offer meetings with organizations or individuals through completion of the ROD. Conduct these meetings if requested.
- Prepare ROD, the final decision document that concludes the NEPA process for this Tier 1 study.

The Revised Draft PEIS indicated that public hearings would be held for the Final PEIS. However, the lead agencies decided not to hold hearings for the Final PEIS because discussions with Corridor stakeholders indicated that interest in additional hearings would be low, largely because the Final PEIS was being released within several months of the release of the Revised Draft PEIS. Based on anticipated low interest and high costs of holding formal hearings, the lead agencies determined that small group meetings would be more appropriate and have offered to meet with any group or individual interested in discussing the Final PEIS.

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The lead agencies will develop specific public and agency involvement programs for each Tier 2 process. The level of public involvement depends on the NEPA action undertaken (Environmental Impact Statement, Environmental Assessment, or Categorical Exclusion). Stakeholders, including the public, will be offered opportunities to participate in or provide input to all Tier 2 processes, which will follow the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process described in **Appendix A**. Types of public involvement opportunities may include scoping meetings, project committees, public open houses, project information distribution, public and agency document review and comment, and public hearings. Tier 2 processes could be preceded by feasibility studies to inform Tier 2 processes. Stakeholders will also be able to participate in feasibility studies. Please refer to the **Introduction** for additional details about Tier 2 processes.

In 2020, there will be a thorough assessment of the overall purpose and need and effectiveness of implementation of this Tier 1 decision. At that time, CDOT and FHWA, in conjunction with the stakeholder committee, may consider the full range of improvement options.

The lead agencies will follow I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions process, SWEEP and ALIVE Memoranda of Understanding, and Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for Tier 2 processes and maintain ongoing stakeholder involvement to foster partnerships and communication.

The lead agencies will complete Tier 2 processes in the Corridor, and stakeholders will be involved in these processes. A Collaborative Effort team will meet at least once every two years through 2020 to review the status of Tier 2 processes and consider the need for additional capacity improvements based on specific milestones or “triggers” included in the Preferred Alternative (see **Section 2.7.2**).

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