

Jim White's Email Correspondence  
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As you know, lots of people on Floyd Hill have major problems with CDOT's 4th concept for the interchange between US-6 and I-70. This is the concept of moving that interchange up to the top of Floyd Hill. (See the attached excerpt from the storyboards at the July 28 public meeting.)

The idea of a roundabout on the north side of I-70 could be helpful. It would improve a dangerous intersection. In fact there is adjacent land available that could be acquired, and in conjunction with a north-side roundabout could help staging and managing truck traffic in winter weather. However the idea of moving interchange traffic to this point has so many severe issues that it should be abandoned as an alternative.

The routing of through traffic 3-4 miles up the hill and then the same distance back down the hill is a terrible idea. That idea is made even worse since through-traffic motorists who had to take the trip could see how far they had been taken out of their way, as the downhill route is visible from the uphill route. Motorists from Golden and Boulder who use US-6 as a way to get to recreation in Clear Creek and Summit Counties would find that they had 7 miles and 800 feet of altitude added to a 15-mile trip up the creek. This would create such a problem that it would probably divert a fair amount of traffic from US-6 onto I-70 up Mount Vernon Canyon; this is the opposite of what we are trying to achieve for I-70.

Yet more importantly, the evaluation of criteria #1 through #4 in the Evaluation Matrix for the interchanges focuses only on through traffic. There is also a lot of local traffic through the interchange at the top of the hill.

Criterion #1 evaluation admits that the concept would limit emergency access to residents (and the school) in this area. But it does not document that there is not enough capacity for emergency EGRESS from the area. Residents greatly appreciate the work that CDOT did to facilitate the use of Sawdust Court as an emergency egress route; in an emergency that will save lives. However, the capacity of the remaining egress route is still insufficient to get all of the people whose sole option is the road over the bridge on the top of Floyd Hill at MM 247 (Homestead Road). The concept of bringing more truck and gaming traffic up to this point is directly counter to the safety of residents and students at the school; in the event of an emergency, more people would not survive.

Criterion #2 evaluation again addresses only the safety of through traffic. It does not consider the safety of the 1100 residents, plus several hundred school students, who would have to use this route in an emergency evacuation. Evergreen Fire Rescue has told us that this is a life-and-death issue.

Criterion #3 evaluation admits that this alternative would add out of direction travel and reduce travel options for through traffic, but it does not address the potential for adding traffic to I-70 through Mount Vernon Canyon. Furthermore, the evaluation ignores the problem of how hard it is for LOCAL traffic to go out and get home during peak traffic periods. Through traffic already uses US-40 as an additional lane of traffic during peak periods, effectively blocking local access to and from their homes. Bringing more truck and gaming traffic to this critical juncture would just make this aggravating problem much worse.

Criterion #4 evaluation admits that multiple operational conflicts have been identified, even as far as through traffic is concerned. These operational conflicts increase many times as local traffic for residents and for the school are considered.

When the local traffic considerations are taken into account, the concept of bringing the interchange traffic up to the top of Floyd Hill becomes unthinkable.

What would it take to make sure that this alternative is NOT advanced to the NEPA process?

- Jim White