

I-25: Speer & 23rd Bridge and Interchange Project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General

- **Why is this project happening?** *From 2017-2020, CDOT conducted the I-25 Central Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. This previous study examined Interstate 25 (I-25) between Santa Fe Drive/US 85 and 20th Street in Denver. The results of this study, along with the fact that the 23rd Avenue and Speer Boulevard Bridges over I-25 were built in 1952 and are in poor condition are the reason for this current project. The bridges do not meet current vertical clearance standards and have experienced multiple vehicular impacts resulting in structural damage.*
- **What will the result of this project be?** *This project will result in bridges that meet current standards providing safe travel on or across I-25 at 23rd Avenue and Speer Boulevard and any associated improvements.*
- **What is NEPA?** *The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires projects that have a federal nexus (e.g., Federal funds are involved, Federal permits, new or revised access to the interstate system, or other Federal approvals are required) to analyze the project's effects on the environment prior to a Federal Agency making approvals or taking an action on the project.*

Since CDOT uses federal funding to maintain and improve the interstate system throughout Colorado, most improvement projects on the Interstate must first undergo some level of NEPA review (Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Environmental Assessment (EA), or a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX)).

- **How long will the planning phase of the project last?** *The NEPA and design work to replace the 23rd Avenue and Speer Boulevard bridges should be completed with a recommendation for future construction by the end of 2023.*
- **When will the project be constructed?** *Dependent on available funding, construction is anticipated to occur between 2024 and 2026.*

Community and the Environment

- **How will neighborhoods and stakeholders be involved in this project?** *Similar to the process used in the I-25 Central PEL, this project will engage the neighborhoods and local stakeholders throughout the alternatives development, environmental, and design process. Understanding the ideas, perspectives and needs of neighborhoods and stakeholders in the area is critical to building broadly supported decisions and solutions.*
- **Will construction impacts affect surrounding businesses?** *Construction may have impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and businesses within them. CDOT will work with stakeholders to develop a plan to minimize or mitigate impacts.*

- **How will neighborhood quality of life be considered in this project?** *This project will engage the neighborhoods throughout the alternatives development, environmental, and design process. Through this engagement process, the project will consider enhancements where feasible.*
- **Is this project looking at, and addressing, environmental issues, like air and water quality?** *Yes, this project will consider air and water quality issues. Environmental impacts will be assessed and reduced, minimized, or mitigated as needed in the NEPA process for this project.*
- **Will this project improve the ability to move between downtown and the Highlands?** *Yes, this project is anticipated to improve multimodal connectivity between downtown and the Highlands.*
- **Will bikes and pedestrian facilities be part of the bridge redesign?** *Yes, this project is anticipated to enhance bike and pedestrian facilities as part of the bridge design.*
- **Will the project improvements support public transit?** *Where feasible, this project will enhance existing transit, such as RTD services, or not preclude future transit improvements. This project is considering concepts and alternatives in context with existing and on-going planning efforts including local plans—such as Denver’s bicycle, pedestrian, transit and development plans—and more regional plans—such as Front Range Rail.*
- **Is this an opportunity to improve the bridge aesthetics with a new “signature” design?** *Yes, there will be opportunity to improve the bridge aesthetics and this will be part of the design process.*

Traffic, Mobility, & Safety

- **Will the project improve safety on or across I-25?** *Safety is a primary need that has been identified and will help craft concepts and evaluate alternatives. This study is modeling safety performance and working hard to ensure that safety is improved.*
- **How will the project account for future plans and future technology?** *Autonomous and connected vehicle technology is at the forefront of research at this time, but the impact on future traffic volumes is currently unknown. Whether this technology will result in increases or decreases in trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is being debated by industry experts. A large unknown is how long it will take to create market penetration of the given technology to create a significant impact on traffic volumes or miles driven. Traditionally, market penetration depends on economic feasibility and affordability. CDOT is looking at using new technologies that will benefit traffic operations and safety for the entire state with the focus on higher traffic volume highway corridors such as I-25.*

Public Involvement

- **How can I stay up-to-date on the project?** There are several ways to be involved and stay up-to-date. CDOT will provide regular updates on the project [website](#). You can sign up [here](#) to receive email updates. The project also has two (2) planned public meetings and the project team will be participating in other community events throughout the project development process.
- **How can I get involved in the project?** The project has multiple ways to get involved and stay informed.

Stakeholder Advisory Group

The stakeholder advisory group (SAG), is a group of representatives from a wide range of local stakeholders throughout the corridor. This group includes people from neighborhood associations, businesses and business coalitions, and non-profit organizations. The SAG meets at key milestones to review the work to-date and provide feedback to the project team.

Public Open House

As part of the alternatives evaluation process, the project plans to host a public open house. This will provide all interested persons the opportunity to learn more about the alternatives being evaluated, the initial results of the evaluation process, and ask questions directly to the project team.

Project Website

In addition to in-person or virtual engagement opportunities, current information about the study's progress to-date as well as feedback opportunities are always available within [this site](#).

- **How can I send you a question or comment?** Questions and comments may be sent through the project [website](#). You can also reach us by phone (720) 515-3311 at or by email at Speer.23rd.Bridges@gmail.com.