



I-270 Corridor Improvements

Draft Environmental Impact Statement - I-270 Corridor Improvements Project

Volume 1 of 2

Federal Project Number: STU 2706-046

CDOT Project Code: 25611

Identification Number: FHWA-CO-EIS-24-001

October 2025





I-270 Corridor Improvements

Draft Environmental Impact Statement - I-270 Corridor Improvements Project

Volume 2 of 2

Federal Project Number: STU 2706-046

CDOT Project Code: 25611

Identification Number: FHWA-CO-EIS-24-001

October 2025



STU 2706-046
Subaccount 25611 I-270
I-270 from I-25 to I-70
Adams County, Commerce City, and City and County of Denver, Colorado

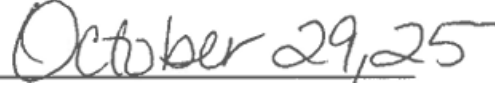
Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Document Submitted Pursuant to:
42 USC §4332, 49 USC §303, and 23 USC § 139

by the
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
and
Colorado Department of Transportation

Cooperating Agencies
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

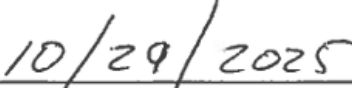
Submitted by:

 
Jessica Myklebust
Region 1 Transportation Director
Colorado Department of Transportation

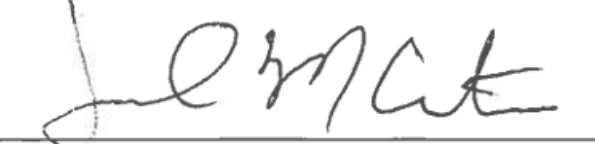
Date

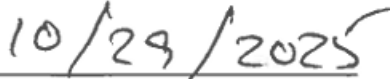
Concurred by:


Keith Stefanik, PE
Chief Engineer
Colorado Department of Transportation


Date

Approved by:


John M. Cater
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration


Date

After circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and consideration of the comments received, the Federal Highway Administration intends to issue a combined Final EIS/Record of Decision (ROD) document unless statutory criteria or practicability considerations preclude issuance of the combined document.

The Federal Highway Administration may publish a notice in the *Federal Register*, pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) Section 139(l), when the ROD is approved. If such notice is published, a claim arising under federal law seeking judicial review of a permit, license, or approval issued by a federal agency for a highway or public transportation capital project shall be barred unless it is filed within 150 days after publication of a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing that the permit, license, or approval is final pursuant to the law under which judicial review is allowed. If no notice is published, then the periods of time that otherwise are provided by the federal laws governing such claims will apply.

Abstract

This Interstate 270 (I-270) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents the anticipated effects associated with transportation improvements planned along the I-270 corridor between Interstate 25 (I-25) and Interstate 70 (I-70).

The purpose of the I-270 Corridor Improvements Project is to implement transportation solutions that modernize the I-270 Corridor to accommodate existing and forecasted transportation demands. The project needs are:

- Traveler safety on the corridor
- Travel time and reliability on the corridor
- Transit on the corridor
- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity across I-270
- Freight operations on the corridor

In addition to addressing project needs, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Cooperating and Participating Agencies have established a key project goal: to minimize environmental and community impacts resulting from the project.

The alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this Draft EIS include:

- No Action Alternative
- Three General-Purpose Lanes Alternative
- Two General-Purpose Lanes and One Express Lane that Accommodates Transit Alternative

The preliminarily identified Preferred Alternative is the Two General-Purpose Lanes and One Express Lane that Accommodates Transit Alternative.

Any permanent and temporary impacts of the alternatives are identified in a broad range of categories, including traffic; air quality; noise; biological resources; wetland and aquatic resources; water quality; floodplains; land use and right of way; social and economic conditions; hazardous materials; soils and geologic resources; historic properties and Section 4(f); paleontological resources; recreational, Section 4(f) non-historic, and Section 6(f) resources; visual resources; and utilities. Mitigation measures are identified to address resource impacts.

Visit the project website at <https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i270study> for an electronic version of the Draft EIS and attachments, including technical reports. The project website lists locations where hard copies of the Draft EIS and associated materials are available for public review. Information on dates, times, and locations of public meetings that will be held during the public review period are also included on the project website.

For additional information concerning this document, contact:

Bill Schiebel, P.E.
Federal Highway Administration
12300 West Dakota Avenue, Suite 180
Lakewood, CO 80228
720-963-3032

David Merenich, P.E.
Colorado Department of Transportation
4670 Holly Street
Denver, CO 80216
720-933-5755

The Executive Summary for the Draft EIS is also provided in Spanish and is available on the project website, <https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i270study>. For additional Spanish assistance, please call 303-512-4270.

El Resumen Ejecutivo del Borrador del EIS también se proporciona en español y está disponible en el sitio web del proyecto, <https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i270study>. Para obtener ayuda adicional en español, llame al 303-512-4270.

CDOT is dedicated to providing an accessible experience for everyone. While we are continuously improving our standards, some complex items in this document, such as certain figures and images, are difficult to create with fully accessible parameters to all users. If you need help understanding any part of this document, we are here to assist and have resources to provide additional accessibility assistance to any requests. Please email us at CDOT_Accessibility@state.co.us to request an accommodation, and a member of our I-270 Engineering Program will schedule a time to review the content with you. To learn more about accessibility at CDOT, please visit the [Accessibility at CDOT webpage on the CDOT Website](#).

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	ES-1
ES.1 How is the Draft EIS organized?	ES-1
ES.2 What is the proposed project, and where is it located?	ES-2
ES.3 What is an EIS and why was it prepared for this proposed project?	ES-3
ES.4 What happens after publication of the Draft EIS?	ES-4
ES.5 How were the public and stakeholders involved in the project development process?	ES-4
ES.6 How were agencies involved in the EIS?	ES-5
ES.7 How did the public and stakeholders shape the proposed project?	ES-6
ES.8 What is the proposed project's Purpose and Need?	ES-6
ES.9 What is the range of alternatives considered, and which are fully analyzed in the Draft EIS?	ES-10
ES.9.1 No Action Alternative	ES-11
ES.9.2 Proposed Build Alternatives	ES-11
ES.10 What are the proposed project's transportation impacts?	ES-15
ES.10.1 Traveler safety on the corridor	ES-15
ES.10.2 Travel time and reliability on the corridor	ES-15
ES.10.3 Transit on the corridor	ES-15
ES.10.4 Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity across I-270	ES-15
ES.10.5 Freight operations on the corridor	ES-15
ES.11 What resources are evaluated for impacts and benefits in the project area?	ES-16
ES.11.1 How would air quality be affected?	ES-16
ES.11.2 How would noise levels be affected?	ES-16
ES.11.3 How would habitat and natural areas be affected?	ES-17
ES.11.4 How would social and economic conditions be affected?	ES-17
ES.11.5 How would the South Platte River Trail and the Sand Creek Trail be affected?	ES-18
ES.11.6 How would visual resources and aesthetic qualities be affected?	ES-19

ES.12	What is the proposed project's Preferred Alternative and why was it preliminarily identified?	ES-19
ES.12.1	How much would the proposed project cost, and how would it be funded? ..	ES-20
ES.12.2	How would travel in the area be affected during construction?	ES-20
1.0	Introduction	1-1
1.1	History of the I-270 Corridor	1-1
1.2	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process	1-2
1.3	History of the I-270 Corridor Improvements Project.....	1-4
1.4	Agency Involvement and Coordination.....	1-5
1.5	Alternatives.....	1-6
1.6	Next Steps after the Draft EIS.....	1-6
1.7	Project Construction Timeline	1-6
1.8	How to Stay Involved	1-7
2.0	Purpose and Need.....	2-1
2.1	Purpose.....	2-1
2.2	Needs for the Project	2-1
2.2.1	Traveler Safety on the Corridor.....	2-1
2.2.2	Travel Time and Reliability on the Corridor	2-3
2.2.3	Transit on the Corridor.....	2-7
2.2.4	Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity across I-270	2-9
2.2.5	Freight Operations on the Corridor.....	2-16
3.0	Alternatives Considered	3-1
3.1	Overview of Alternatives Development Process	3-1
3.2	No Action Alternative	3-2
3.3	Build Alternatives	3-4
3.3.1	Improvements Included in Both Build Alternatives.....	3-4
3.3.2	Three General-Purpose Lanes Alternative.....	3-8
3.3.3	Two General-Purpose Lanes and One Express Lane that Accommodates Transit Alternative	3-8
3.4	Preliminary Identification of the Preferred Alternative.....	3-9



3.4.1	Need: Traveler Safety on the Corridor.....	3-9
3.4.2	Need: Travel Time and Reliability on the Corridor	3-10
3.4.3	Need: Transit on the Corridor.....	3-10
3.4.4	Need: Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Across I-270.....	3-10
3.4.5	Need: Freight Operations on the Corridor.....	3-11
3.4.6	Comparison of Potential Impacts to the Environment.....	3-12
3.5	Capital Costs of the Build Alternatives	3-13
3.6	Project Financing Strategy and Relevance to Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning Processes	3-13
3.7	Construction Phasing Strategy	3-14
3.7.1	Phase 1: Critical Bridges	3-14
3.7.2	Future Phases.....	3-15
3.8	Range of Alternatives	3-15
3.8.1	No Action Alternative	3-15
3.8.2	Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Enhancements Alternative	3-15
3.8.3	Minimal Build Alternative	3-16
3.8.4	Three General-Purpose Lanes Alternative.....	3-16
3.8.5	Two General-Purpose Lanes and One Transit-Only Lane Alternative.....	3-16
3.8.6	Two General-Purpose Lanes and One Express Lane That Accommodates Transit Alternative (Preferred Alternative)	3-16
3.8.7	Three General-Purpose Lanes and One Express Lane That Accommodates Transit Alternative	3-17
3.8.8	Two General-Purpose Lanes and Two Express Lanes That Accommodate Transit Alternative	3-17
3.9	Alternatives Evaluation and Screening.....	3-17
3.9.1	Level 1 Screening	3-17
3.9.2	Level 2 Screening	3-19
4.0	Environmental Analysis	4-1
4.1	Transportation Impacts	4-4
4.1.1	Existing Transportation Facilities.....	4-5
4.1.2	Overview of the Transportation Impacts Analysis Approach.....	4-5
4.1.3	Alternative Compatibility with the Regional Transportation System.....	4-5



4.1.4	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-6
4.1.5	Mitigation	4-8
4.2	Air Quality	4-9
4.2.1	Affected Environment	4-10
4.2.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-13
4.2.3	Mitigation	4-16
4.3	Noise	4-16
4.3.1	Affected Environment	4-18
4.3.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-19
4.3.3	Mitigation	4-20
4.4	Biological Resources	4-21
4.4.1	Affected Environment	4-22
4.4.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-26
4.4.3	Mitigation	4-28
4.5	Wetlands and Aquatic Resources	4-28
4.5.1	Affected Environment	4-29
4.5.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-32
4.5.3	Mitigation	4-33
4.6	Water Quality	4-33
4.6.1	Affected Environment	4-34
4.6.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-37
4.6.3	Mitigation	4-38
4.7	Floodplains	4-38
4.7.1	Affected Environment	4-39
4.7.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-41
4.7.3	Mitigation	4-44
4.8	Land Use and Right-of-Way	4-45
4.8.1	Affected Environment	4-45
4.8.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-49
4.8.3	Mitigation	4-50
4.9	Social and Economic Resources	4-51
4.9.1	Affected Environment	4-51



4.9.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-54
4.9.3	Mitigation	4-55
4.10	Hazardous Materials	4-56
4.10.1	Affected Environment	4-56
4.10.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-60
4.10.3	Mitigation	4-61
4.11	Soils and Geologic Resources.....	4-62
4.11.1	Affected Environment	4-62
4.11.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-63
4.11.3	Mitigation	4-63
4.12	Historic Properties	4-63
4.12.1	Affected Environment	4-64
4.12.2	Section 106 Consultation.....	4-67
4.12.3	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-68
4.12.4	Mitigation	4-70
4.13	Paleontological Resources	4-71
4.13.1	Affected Environment	4-71
4.13.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-72
4.13.3	Mitigation	4-72
4.14	Recreational and Section 6(f) Resources	4-72
4.14.1	Affected Environment	4-73
4.14.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-74
4.14.3	Mitigation	4-77
4.15	Section 4(f) Resources	4-77
4.15.1	Affected Environment	4-77
4.15.2	Section 4(f) Consultation	4-78
4.15.3	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-78
4.15.4	Mitigation	4-79
4.16	Visual Resources	4-79
4.16.1	Affected Environment	4-79
4.16.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-83
4.16.3	Mitigation	4-86

4.17	Utilities	4-86
4.17.1	Affected Environment	4-86
4.17.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-87
4.17.3	Mitigation	4-88
4.18	Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources	4-88
4.18.1	Affected Environment	4-88
4.18.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-88
4.18.3	Mitigation	4-90
4.19	Short-term Uses versus Long-term Productivity	4-90
4.19.1	Affected Environment	4-90
4.19.2	Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts of the Alternatives	4-90
4.19.3	Mitigation	4-91
5.0	Preferred Alternative Mitigation Commitments	5-1
6.0	Public and Agency Involvement	6-1
6.1	Agency Coordination Process	6-1
6.2	Agency Scoping and Coordination	6-4
6.2.1	EIS Process and Outreach Coordination	6-4
6.2.2	Purpose and Need and Alternatives	6-4
6.2.3	Environmental Considerations	6-5
6.3	Agency Approvals Needed	6-5
6.4	Community Outreach	6-5
6.4.1	Process and Objectives	6-6
6.5	Opportunities for Community Engagement	6-7
6.5.1	Public Meetings	6-7
6.5.2	Stakeholder Workshops	6-7
6.5.3	Listening Sessions	6-7
6.5.4	Community Office Hours	6-8
6.5.5	Project Presentations	6-8
6.5.6	Business Interviews	6-8
6.5.7	Community Tours	6-8
6.5.8	Events and Festivals	6-8



6.5.9	Volunteer Events	6-8
6.6	Summary of Public Input and How It Shaped the EIS	6-9
6.6.1	Purpose and Need	6-9
6.6.2	Alternatives	6-9
6.6.3	Other Improvements	6-10
6.6.4	Environmental Analysis and Focus	6-10
6.7	Review of the Draft EIS	6-11
List of Preparers		LoP-1

Appendices

Appendix A - Safety Assessment Technical Report
Appendix B - Alternatives Development Technical Report
Appendix C - Alternatives Map Books
Appendix D - Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Technical Report
Appendix E - Resource Technical Documentation
Appendix E1 - Transportation Impacts
Appendix E2 - Traffic Technical Report
Appendix E3 - Air Quality Technical Report
Appendix E4 - Traffic Noise Technical Report
Appendix E5 - Biological Resources Technical Report
Appendix E6 - Wetland and Aquatic Resources Technical Report
Appendix E7 - Water Quality Technical Report
Appendix E8 - Floodplains Technical Report
Appendix E9 - Land Use Technical Memorandum
Appendix E10 - Social and Economic Analysis Technical Report
Appendix E11 - Modified Environmental Site Assessment
Appendix E12 - Soils and Geologic Resources Technical Report
Appendix E13 - Historic Resources Technical Report
Appendix E14 - Archaeological Resources Technical Report
Appendix E15 - Paleontology Technical Report
Appendix E16 - Recreational and Section 6(f) Technical Report
Appendix E17 - Section 4(f) Resources Technical Report
Appendix E18 - Visual Resources Technical Report
Appendix E19 - Utilities Present within the Study Area
Appendix F - Public and Agency Involvement Technical Report
Appendix G - References

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
a.m.	morning
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials
ACM	asbestos-containing material
APCD	CDPHE - Air Pollution Control Division
APE	Area of Potential Effects
APEN	Air Pollutant Emissions Notice
ASL	American Sign Language
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
AVE	Area of Visual Effect
bgs	below ground surface
BMPs	best management practices
BNSF	BNSF Railway
BTE	Statewide Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise
CAA	Clean Air Act
CDLE	Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CDPHE	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
CDPS	Colorado Discharge Permit System
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIG	Communication Infrastructure Group
CLOMR	Conditional Letter of Map Revision
CM	control measure
CO 224	Colorado Highway 224
CO	carbon monoxide
Commerce City	City of Commerce City
CPW	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
CRS	Colorado Revised Statutes
CSA	Community Study Area
CTIO	Colorado Transportation Investment Office
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
Denver	City and County of Denver

Acronym	Definition
DOLA	Colorado Department of Local Affairs
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
<i>E. coli</i>	<i>Escherichia coli</i>
EA	Environmental Assessment
EB	Eastbound
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
ERIS	Environmental Risk Information Services
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FACWet	Functional Assessment of Colorado Wetlands
FAQ	Frequently asked question
FASTER	Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FF5	Flatiron Flyer 5
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRICO	Farmers Reservoir and Irrigation Company
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GP	General purpose
HAP	Hazardous Air Pollutants
HASP	Health and Safety Plan
HOV	high-occupancy vehicle
I-25	Interstate 25
I-270	Interstate 270
I-70	Interstate 70
I-76	Interstate 76
I-95	Interstate 95
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
IPaC	Information, Planning and Consultation Tool
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
LBP	lead-based paint
Leq	equivalent noise level
Leq(h)	hourly equivalent noise level
LOMR	Letter of Map Revision
LST	leaking storage tank

Acronym	Definition
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
MESA	Modified Environmental Site Assessment
MHFD	Mile High Flood District
MMP	Materials Management Plan
MOVES	Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator
mph	miles per hour
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
MSAT	Mobile Source Air Toxic
MVRTP	Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan
NAAG	CDOT's Noise Abatement and Analysis Guidelines
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
National Register	National Register of Historic Places
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NO _x	nitrogen oxide
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPL	National Priorities List
NPS	National Park Service
NWP	Nationwide Permit
OAHP	Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
OHWM	Ordinary High Water Mark
OSOW	oversize/overweight
OTIS	CDOT Online Transportation Information System
OWJ	Official with Jurisdiction
p.m.	afternoon
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyl
PFAS	per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance
PIP	Public Involvement Plan
PM	particulate matter
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (fine particulate)
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (coarse particulate)
ppb	parts per billion
project	I-270 Corridor Improvements Project
PUD	planned unit development

Acronym	Definition
PWQ	permanent water quality
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right of way
RTD	Regional Transportation District
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SB	Senate Bill
SCRGP	Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership
SGPI	Shortgrass Prairie Initiative
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	statewide implementation plan
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
STRAHNET	Strategic Highway Network
Suncor	Suncor Energy USA
SVOC	semi-volatile organic compound
SWMP	Stormwater Management Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMDL	total maximum daily load
TNM	Traffic Noise Model
µg/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter
ULTO	Ute Ladies' -tresses Orchid
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
US	United States
US 6	United States Highway 6
US 36	United States Highway 36
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDOT	US Department of Transportation
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	volatile organic compound
WB	Westbound
WOTUS	waters of the U.S.
WQCD	CDPHE - Water Quality Control Division