



I-70 Bakerville to Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels (EJMT) Westbound Auxiliary Lane Project Leadership Team (PLT) Meeting #1

Meeting Summary

August 29, 2022, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

In Person and Virtual Meeting

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

Mandy Whorton/Peak Consulting Group welcomed the group, and did a roll call of participants:

- Ben Davis, CDOT
- Maria Rocken, CDOT
- Tamara Burke, CDOT
- Mike Kelemen, CDOT
- Shannon Mero, CDOT
- Carrie DeJacommo-Wiedner, Ulteig
- Angy Casamento, Uletig
- Korey Kleinknecht, Ulteig
- Lindsey Wickman, Ulteig
- Margaret Bowes, I-70 Coalition
- Amy Saxton, Clear Creek County
- Tracy Sakaguchi, Colorado Motor Carriers
- Nicole Malandri, United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Mandy Whorton, Peak Consulting
- Wendy Wallach, Peak Consulting
- Loretta LaRiviere, Peak Consulting

Mandy reviewed the agenda and thanked everyone for attending. The presentation from the meeting is attached to these notes for reference.

PLT members introduced themselves and provided their background on the corridor. Mandy said she was excited to work with so many experienced people familiar with the CSS process and noted that if there were any questions or clarifications about the process to please discuss them at the meeting.

1. Project Updates

Mandy noted this project was identified as a “specific highway improvement” project in the I-70 Mountain Corridor Record of Decision (ROD). It was called a climbing lane and we are now calling it an auxiliary lane from Bakerville continuing to EJMT. The auxiliary lane is called that because they address more than just the slow-moving vehicle problem. The project also includes the Loveland Interchange which was identified for replacement or improvement in



the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), and the two westbound chain up stations. Tracy Sakaguchi/Colorado Motor Carriers noted there is one additional westbound chain station not identified on the map. Mandy said they would add it.

This area has been identified as a Linkage Interference Zone (LIZ) for wildlife and this stretch is identified as containing lynx as a target species, but there are other wildlife that attempt to cross the interstate so we will be looking at wildlife mitigation, including crossings. The Bakerville interchange is in the project area but was not identified for improvements.

This is a high priority improvement project for improving mobility, enhancing safety and it has high level of public support.

The project is mostly contained in a Forest Service easement so the USFS will have a high level of involvement in this project.

There are a lot of recreational resources in the project area including two 14'ers, trails, and world class skiing at Loveland and Arapahoe Basin Ski Areas.

2. CSS Overview

This project will follow the CSS six-step process included in the ROD which is primarily web based.

The Project Leadership Team (PLT) is convened in the pre-planning phase and generally stays together through NEPA, design, and construction. This project is now in Step One of the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) 6-Step process, which is to Define the Desired Outcomes and will quickly move to Step Two which is to Endorse the Process.

The PLT will develop and endorse the Context Statement, Core Values, Critical Issues and Evaluation Criteria. The PLT will lead the project, and CDOT and FHWA will be the final decision-making body. FHWA is the lead federal agency for NEPA.

Rob Goodell from Loveland Ski area has committed to being on the PLT but did not accept this meeting.

Brian Dabling will be representing the FHWA on the PLT but could not attend this meeting.

In addition to the PLT, there will also be a Technical Team (TT) and Issue Task Forces (ITFs). Project staff will be included in all CSS teams and will be a resource to them. The PLT will have a lot of involvement in the beginning of the project and then as the planning moves into alternatives development and evaluation, the TT will be doing more of the work and will require a bigger time commitment.

Mandy explained that CDOT is updating their website to be 100% 508 compliant which means that many of the older CSS and reference documents will be removed from the website, and CDOT is still evaluating how to effectively share information in the interim.

The Context Statement from the Tier 1 PEIS identifies the entire 144 miles as a significant place, and each Tier 2 project builds on the overall context statement and identifies the site-specific issues.



The project is in the Crest of the Rockies segment of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Aesthetic Guidelines. Herman Gulch is identified an Area of Special Interest. There are several significant views in the project. The two gateways in the project area are where there is a noticeable change in the visual context of the area.

The interstate parallels Clear Creek, and there are fen wetlands on the south side which will need to be avoided.

3. PLT Concerns and Areas of Opportunity

Clear Creek County (CCC): Amy Saxton said the Bakerville Interchange is a recreation hub and is very important to Clear Creek County. There are five different trails that diverge in an area that is a privately owned (Bakerville, LLC) parking lot and functions as a public trailhead. CCC developed a private easement with a homeowner last year for a parking lot that included Port-O-Potties and trash receptacles. Issues are continuing with people living in the parking lot and the trash receptacles were overflowing. One EMT stopped at the parking lot and counted 52 cars in one hour stopping to throw out trash and relieve themselves. This became a huge challenge to manage and keep up with it and CCC is not installing Port-O-Potties or trash receptacles this year.

Amy also noted the surface of the Bakerville to Loveland Trail is in poor condition. It is on Forest Service land, and the county has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with them to do basic maintenance. There was a cyclist fatality last year, which the family believes is related to the poor surface condition of the trail. Clear Creek is working with the family to raise funds from private donors to donate to public entities to improve the trails. This could be a potential partnership opportunity. A rest area that could be used by recreationalists and trucks is desired.

The health of the trees along the shoulder is a concern. There are a lot of dead trees, which poses a fire hazard. This portion of the interstate is treated 100% with mag chloride for snow/winter maintenance, and there is high salinity that could be contributing to this.

Colorado Motor Carriers Association:

US 6 is the only hazmat route to the western slope so the Loveland interchange is critically important to freight. The I-70 grades are issues both east and westbound a chain station eastbound for chaining down and westbound for chaining up are needed in this area because hazmat trucks are required to chain up on snow and ice. Currently, they are going farther up the hill beyond the chain up station to Watrous Gulch where there is typically snow and ice. Chaining up before going over Loveland Pass is a concern for safety and congestion at the Loveland Interchange for both the public drivers, pedestrians, and truckers. Safety of chain stations is a concern in low visibility conditions, which are common in the winter when chain up/down operations are needed. The speed differential is also problematic.

Truck parking is also a huge issue. The trucks need large pull thru parking rest areas, they can't get into Georgetown. There is a need for restrooms and trash bins. Tracy said there are no facilities for truckers between Denver and Vail.



Hot brakes are an issue and the trucks need space to move off the highway to cool down before going downhill beyond EJMT.

Mandy noted this project is westbound uphill only, and the ROD does not have any improvements to the eastbound downhill side in the Minimum Program. (There is an approved auxiliary lane in the eastbound uphill direction west of EJMT.)

Mandy said the EJMT Incident Response Command Center is a communications and incident response hub and may provide an opportunity to add messaging and signage for truckers and other travelers.

Forest Service: Nicole Malandri/USFS said the 1997 Forest Service Management Plan prioritizes preservation of scenic views. [Amendment No. 9](#) replaces the Visual Management System (VMS) with the Scenery Management System (SMS) (10/2006). Wildlife crossings and recreational access at Herman Gulch for hiking are also important. the Continental Divide Trail (CDT), which is also a National Scenic Trail, crosses I-70 at Herman Gulch. She also noted that there are recreation residents (cabin owners) in the area.

A question was raised asking if the scope of work is wholly contained in the highway easement. The highway easement deed was done in 1970 and is not in digital format and we need to understand if the scope of work will go beyond the boundaries. Ben Davis/CDOT said CDOT has the boundaries of easement, and the Ulteig team is scoped to do additional survey crews as part of this project.

Nicole said that the skier tunnel under I-70 connecting the north and south sides of the Loveland Ski Area has long-standing sedimentation issues. The USFS is working with the ski area to address, and it would be good to look at whether addressing the skier tunnel could be included in the project. The USFS has observed sediment buildup on the eastbound I-70 lane on the south side.

Mandy asked if CDOT maintenance was using sand or chlorides for winter de-icing. Amy said that they have been told that CDOT only uses deicers in Clear Creek County. She said that how salinity affects streams and vegetation is a concern for the county that would be compounded by adding more pavement impacts as the amount and impacts of additional snow removal treatment will increase. Amy also noted that there have been issues with a build up of salt on electrical transformers, which has had an impact on power availability. There are several utilities located in this area.

Water quality from snow removal applications at Loveland Ski area parking lots is also an area of concern. Amy said she hoped that this project could make progress on options from a scientific and environmental perspective.

Mandy said CDOT is aware of the concerns with salinity and that the SWEEP ITF will look at this. She also said that the project would need to address new and existing pavement impacts.

I-70 Coalition: Margaret Bowes/I-70 Coalition asked for clarification on the project scope: Herman Gulch is at MP 218? Yes.



Bakerville Trail is on the south side of I-70 between Loveland Ski area? Yes.

Are the Loveland Interchange improvements just on the north side of I-70 or the entire interchange? Both. Mandy said this will be the only opportunity to address the south side because it is part of the minimum program of improvements in the PEIS and would include the entire interchange.

Margaret said that the project was important to the Coalition. Enhancing mobility for travelers on I-70 is the focus for the Coalition and this project will help improve mobility; however, there will still be a pinch point at EJMT when it drops down to two lanes and signing, striping, and merge points will important considerations to not cause backups at the tunnel.

Parking use at the Loveland interchange westbound ramp needs to be defined what it is for. There are sometimes both trucks and cars parked there, and it is not clear if this is allowed or if additional signage is needed to specify acceptable uses.

Margaret noted that cyclists coming off Loveland Pass destined for the Bakerville trailhead sometimes get lost and find themselves on I-70, which is a safety concern. She suggested signage would be an easy addition to the project.

CDOT: Ben said CDOT is aware of the issues in and sensitivity of the area. It is an unique area, and it is important to stick with the processes and commit to preserve what people love about the area. This project has the opportunity to fix some of the issues, and CDOT is committed to doing so.

Expanding traffic and population increases the need for trucks on the interstate to deliver goods.

Mandy recapped the points brought up:

- Surveying the demand and protecting the recreational resources
- Surveying freight, particularly hazmat
- Chain up stations and truck parking
- Scenic quality that makes this area special
- Wildlife protection
- Water Quality
- Recreation enhancements such as the Bakerville to Loveland trail and how that could be better signed in both directions and also a better surface
- Loveland interchange for truckers
- This is an environmentally sensitive ecosystem
- Critical nature of this portion of I-70 for resilience perspective for impacts from avalanches and geotechnical hazards
- Air and Noise
- Health of trees
- Signage
- Constructability



4. Core Values

Mandy reviewed the PEIS Core Values:

- Safety
- Mobility and Access
- Implementability
- Community
- Environment
- Engineering Criteria and Aesthetics
- Sustainability
- Historic Context
- Decision Making

The group discussed including Resiliency with Sustainability or having it be another Core Value.

Constructability has been a constraint in recent projects. Mandy said that constructability has been included in the Implementability value but it could also be another Core Value.

Recreation was also suggested to be added as a Core Value but it does fall into many of the other Core Values.

The PLT recommended that the PEIS core values be maintained for now but that if the critical issues did not fall logically under one of the values, additional ones could be added.

5. Critical Issues

The critical issues help establish criteria and ensure that decisions and alternatives support the Core Values and desired outcomes and actions. It allows the recommendations to reflect the stated outcome. Critical Issues are generally included in the Core Values, and developing critical issues will need more discussion on this at another meeting.

Mandy reviewed some of the example critical issues. She noted that consideration of the Advanced Guideway System (AGS) is important and will need to be addressed in this area because of the pinch point with EJMT and how project components in the ROD fit with other improvements. The width of wildlife crossing locations (across the highway) would need to consider needs of future improvements, including AGS.

Historic context of the communities is also something we will look at.

6. Technical Team

The group reviewed the suggested TT members. Mandy said that some organizations may have multiple people on the TT because of their different areas of expertise.

Amy said Clear Creek County is launching a Recreation Management Plan and the Bakerville area will be a part of it. They may want to add a representative to the TT.

Having representation of landowners or homeowners, like Bakerville LLC on the TT was discussed. There are so few of either in this area, and they may not be a good fit for the TT



because of the time commitment. However, it is important to have these stakeholders have a chance to voice their perspective and perhaps they could be an ITF. Mandy said we will need to discuss this further. Margaret suggested this project would be well suited to have a Project Information Leadership Team (PILT) to handle communications as the project nears the construction phase and we know more about the traffic impacts.

Mandy said the Coalition is a good partner for communications. DRCOG is also on the TT and have good ideas for communicating with Front Range travelers. Mandy suggested that a broader Communications ITF may be better than a Public Information ITF since the PLT identified other communication needs, such as traveler information, signage, highway closures, truck information, etc.

7. ITFs

The suggested ITFs are:

- Section 106
- SWEEP
- ALIVE
- Air Quality & Noise
- Other Focused Issues as appropriate (e.g., Emergency Services)

Climate issues are an important component and will be looked at, perhaps as a separate ITF, or as part of the Air Quality and Noise ITF.

Tamara Burke/CDOT said this project could be identified as a Regionally Significant Transportation Capacity Project as part of SB 260 and we may need to do air quality modeling if it is and the Air Quality ITF could be engaged at that time. She will continue to have conversations with CDOT headquarters about this and will update the PLT when she has any news.

9. Next Steps

The website will be available soon.

The preliminary schedule shows the NEPA process being completed at the end of next year or early 2024.

There will be a work plan, stakeholder involvement/public information plan and a PLT charter.

We will work on getting the TT members finalized so we can set up a meeting.

We will be looking at existing conditions and doing some data collection and environmental surveys that will start to inform the project.



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Westbound Bakerville to EJMT Auxiliary Lane

PLT Meeting #1

August 29, 2022



- Welcome and Objectives
- Context Statement
- Core Values and Critical Issues
- CSS Process and Participants
- Next Steps





Use these meetings to foster collaboration with project partners and stakeholders throughout the project development process. We will:

Discuss the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solution Process, including roles and responsibilities

Discuss Desired Outcomes

Context Statement

Core Values/Critical Issues

Establish CSS teams and lay foundation for charter

Next Steps



“Specific highway improvement” approved in I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS ROD

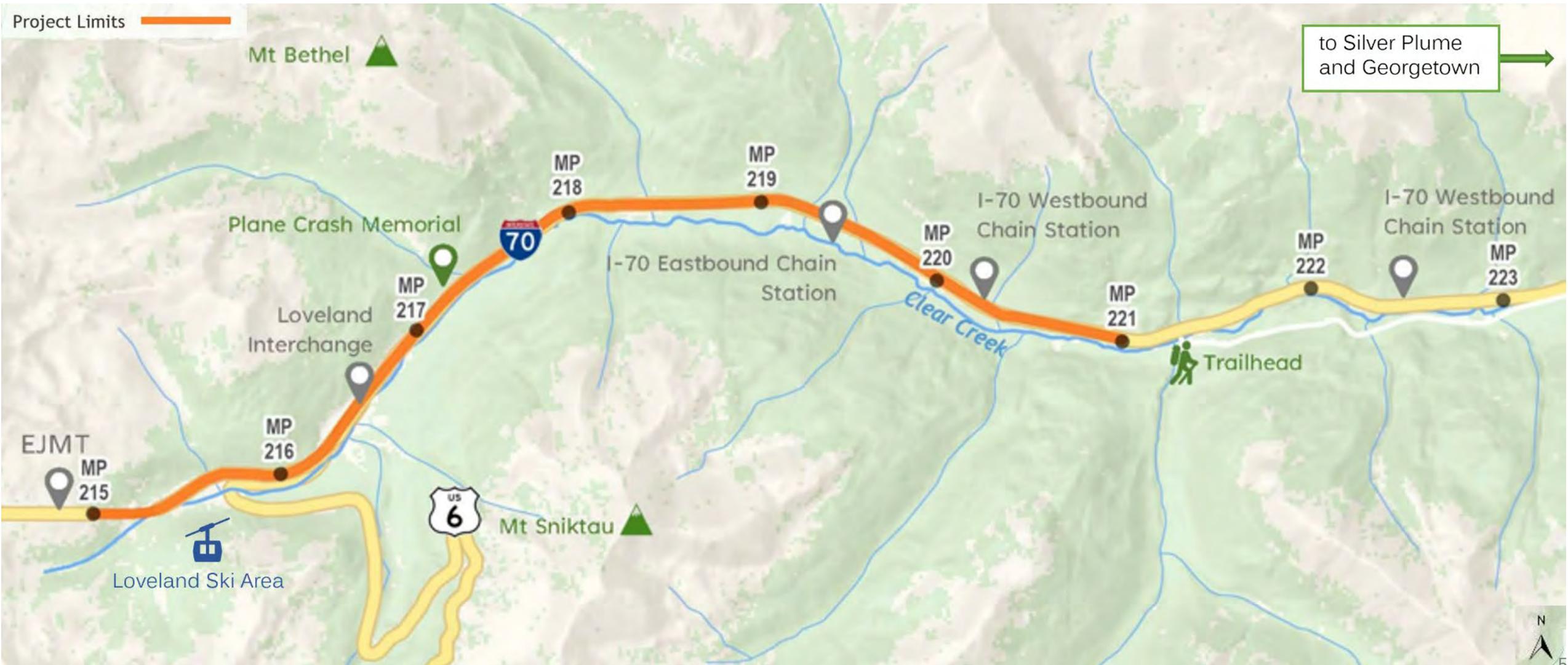
- Westbound auxiliary (climbing lane) from Bakerville to EJMT
 - Would become third lane in Maximum Program
- Loveland interchange
- Chain up stations
- Wildlife crossing mitigation



Westbound auxiliary lane from Bakerville to the Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels identified as a high priority component of the PEIS Preferred Alternative because it “improves mobility, enhances safety, and has public support.”



Project Location



Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Overview

I-70 Mountain Corridor

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Process

Project Staff

- Multidisciplinary team that includes both CDOT and consultant staff
- Develops goals for the project and develops the project-specific decision making process
- Develops and analyzes alternatives
- Plans and implements stakeholder engagement activities
- Documents the projects decision making process

Project Leadership Team (PLT)

- Stakeholder team that leads the project, champions CSS, and enables decision making
- PLT members include FHWA , CDOT, and corridor leaders
- The team remains intact throughout all life cycle phases
- Facilitates formal actions required by councils, boards, and commissions

Technical Team

- Multidisciplinary team that includes experts in all of the Core Values, made up of federal, state, city, county, NGO, CDOT, and consultant representatives
- Assures local context is integrated into the project
- Recommends and guides methodologies for data collection and analyses
- Assists with development and evaluation of alternatives, including identification of a Proposed Action or Preferred Alternative
- Provides input into methodologies and technical analyses

Issue Task Force

- Multidisciplinary team formed to address a single project issue
- Includes stakeholders and experts in the Core Values surrounding a single issue
- Works through the elements of the issue to reach a recommendation for the PLT, Technical Team, or Project Staff
- There are three standing Issue Task Forces for wildlife (ALIVE), streams/wetlands/water quality (SWEEP), and historic resources (Section 106). Others can be convened as issues are identified

Project Life Cycle Phases



The I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS process provides guidance for future studies, designs, and construction projects to ensure that stakeholder values, such as preserving and maintaining scenic and environmental integrity, are incorporated into the project decision making process.

The CSS process is implemented for all Tier 2 projects along the corridor and is used through the entirety of a projects life. The CSS process involves several teams that collaborate through each life cycle phase. The teams and an overview of their roles are described on the right.

For more information about the I 70 Mountain Corridor CSS process visit: <https://www.codot.gov/projects/contextsensitivesolutions>



Commitment from I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic EIS

Establishes a process of making long-term decisions taking into account diverse perspectives—values, beliefs, and expectations.

Based on principles and methodology, a set of tools is designed to help groups agree on strategic actions when decision makers either have amongst themselves, or must consider, perspectives other than their own.





Context Statement

The I-70 Mountain corridor is a magnificent, scenic place in close proximity to the Denver Metro area. Human elements are woven through breathtaking natural features. The integration of these diverse elements has occurred over the course of time.

The corridor is a recreational destination for the world, a route for interstate and local commerce and a unique place to live. I-70 is also federally designated as a high priority corridor, a significant part of the defense network, a major east/west continental corridor and a major economic corridor for Colorado. For many local communities along the corridor, I-70 is the lifeline, primary access and only connection to other communities.

Current I-70 roadway geometry is constrained with narrow shoulders and tight curves that impact safety, mobility, accessibility and capacity for travelers and residents.

In a manner that respects the unique environmental, historic, community and recreational resources in Clear Creek County, Westbound improvements are needed to lessen delays caused by peak period volumes.

‡ As modified by WB PPSL PLT and TT

Core Values

- Safety
- Mobility & Accessibility
- Implementability
- Community
- Environment
- Engineering Criteria & Aesthetic Guidelines
- Sustainability
- Historic Context
- Decision Making

Critical Issues

- Emergency response / incident management
- Safety of traveling public
- Geometric problems
- Traffic operations
- Local access
- Reliability
- Blends with future modes (AGS, Greenway)
- Roadway network connectivity
- Constructability
- Construction impacts
- Fiscally responsible costs
- Recreation access and facilities
- Supports private development
- Supports local businesses
- Tourism and economy
- Water wells
- Livability
- Clear Creek / fishery
- Wildlife habitat and movement
- Mining
- Erosion / water quality
- Landslide protection
- Balance design using CSS Guidance
- Aesthetics
- Geometric standards
- Maintenance
- Significant archaeological site
- Known historic properties
- Adherence to ROD, MOU and Design Speed Study

Evaluation Criteria

1. Accommodates emergency access and response?
2. Addresses safety of the traveling public and the community?
3. Improves mobility and reliability?
4. Improves traffic operations at interchanges?
5. Blends or does not preclude other modes (AGS, Greenway)?
6. Minimizes construction efforts?
7. Creates infrastructure investments that are reasonable to construct and provide the best value for their life cycle, function and purpose?
8. Supports / enhances recreation access and facilities?
9. Supports private development and economic development opportunities?
10. Enhances tourism and the economy?
11. Protects / enhances wildlife?
12. Protects Clear Creek, its fishery resource and water quality, including wells?
13. Minimizes conflicts with geologic hazards?
14. Meets I-70 Design Criteria and Aesthetic Guidance?
15. Minimizes effort and cost to maintain?
16. Protects historic and archaeological resources?
17. Adheres to ROD and Design Speed Study?
18. Consistency with Clear Creek County Visioning?

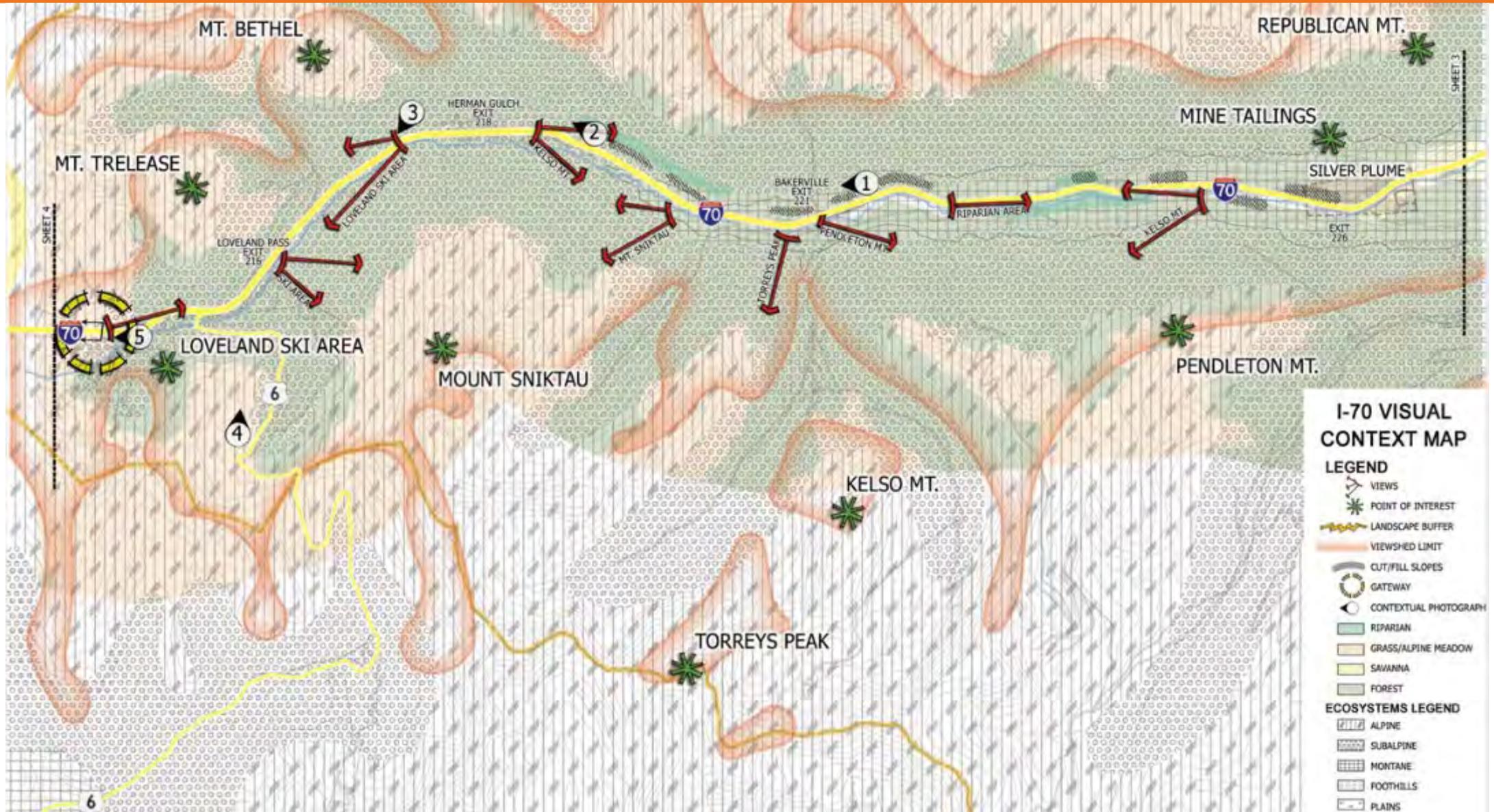


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Context Statement

“The I-70 Mountain Corridor is a magnificent, scenic place. Human elements are woven through breathtaking natural features. The integration of these diverse elements has occurred over the course of time. This corridor is a recreational destination for the world, a route for interstate and local commerce, and a unique place to live. It is our commitment to seek balance and provide for twenty-first-century uses. We will continue to foster and nurture new ideas to address the challenges we face. We respect the importance of individual communities, the natural environment, and the need for safe and efficient travel. Well-thought-out choices create a sustainable legacy”.





What is important about this place?

- Crest of the Rockies
- World class skiing
- Hiking trails, including Grays and Torreys 14ers
- Alpine and Subalpine ecosystem
- Clear Creek and fen wetlands
- Gateway/entrance to EJMT
- Steep grades





- SAFETY
- MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY
- IMPLEMENTABILITY
- COMMUNITY
- ENVIRONMENT
- ENGINEERING CRITERIA & AESTHETICS
- SUSTAINABILITY
- HISTORIC CONTEXT
- DECISION MAKING





CRITICAL ISSUES

- Help to establish criteria
- Used to ensure that decisions made, and alternatives selected support the Core Values and desired outcomes and actions
- Allows Recommendations to reflect the stated outcomes and project goals

EXAMPLES

- Conflicts with slow moving vehicles
- Wildlife connectivity
- Fen wetlands
- Historic context of communities
- Maintenance
- Compatibility with AGS
- Construction impacts to businesses
- Recreation access and (over)use
- Chain station location and safety



➤ Lead the Project

- Identify the relevant materials needed for the project
- Identify the teams needed for the project work
- Confirm the team members represent the stakeholders

➤ Champion CSS through all phases of a project

- Ensure the CSS Guidance, Context Statement, Core Values and 6-step process are integrated into the project
- Define desired outcomes
- Endorse the process

➤ Move the project forward by enabling decision making

- Review the project specific process steps and work plan to be sure they are consistent with CSS
- Identify and implement the steps needed to move decisions forward

Members:

Clear Creek County

CDOT

Colorado Motor
Carriers Association

FHWA

I-70 Coalition

Loveland Ski Area

Peak

Ulteig

US Forest Service



Technical Team: Roles and Responsibilities

- Assure local context is defined and integrated into the project
- Recommend methodologies for data collection, criteria, and analysis
- Prepare and review technical project reports
- Support and provide insight with respect to community and agency issues and regulations
- Assist in developing evaluation criteria
- Assist in developing alternatives and options
- Assist in evaluating, selecting, and refining alternatives and options
- Assist in the formation of the final recommendation
- Coordinate and communicate with respective agencies
- Present recommendations to the PLT



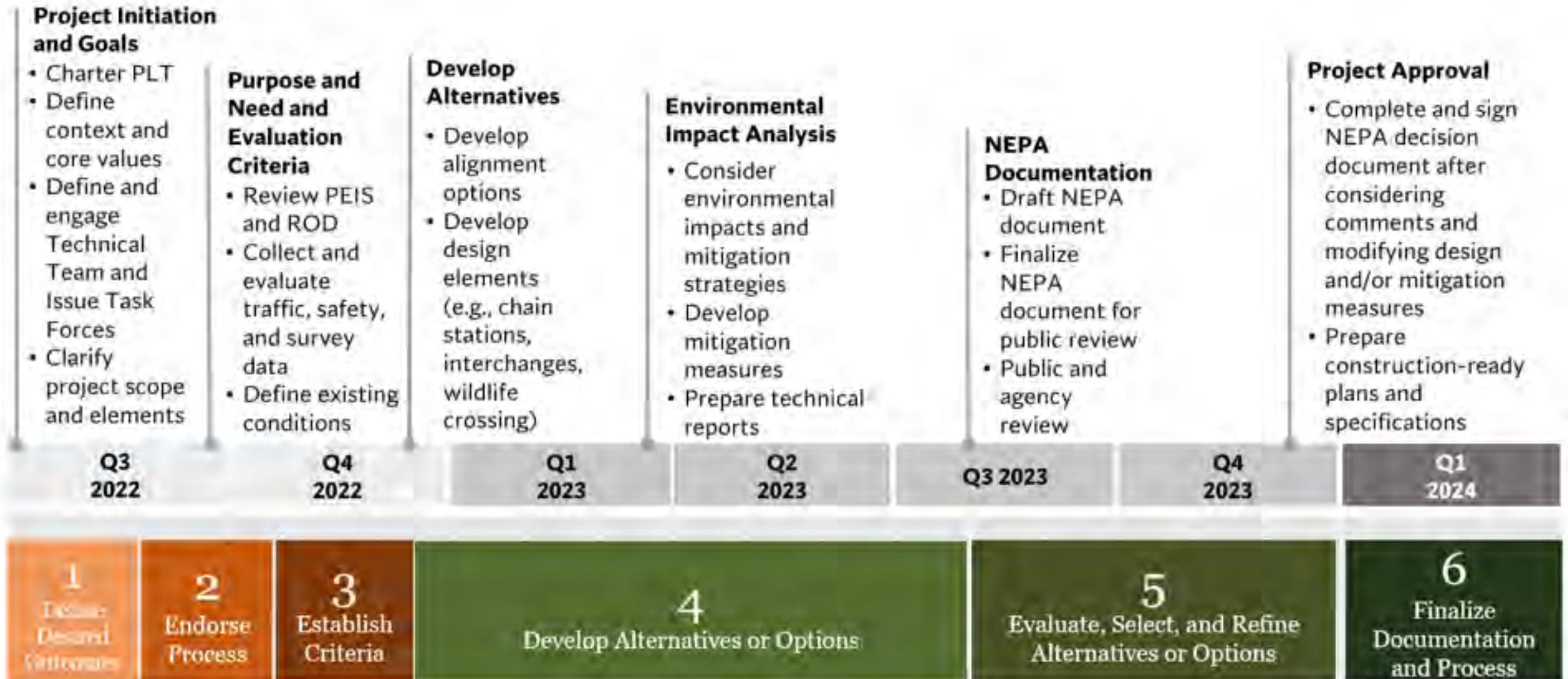
- Clear Creek County
- CDOT
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Colorado Motor Carriers Association
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- FHWA
- I-70 Coalition
- Loveland Ski Area
- Town of Georgetown
- Town of Silver Plume
- US Forest Service



- Multi-Disciplinary Team of experts formed to address single issue
- Works through elements of issue to reach recommendations for the PLT, TT, and/or Project Staff

ISSUE TASK FORCES

- Section 106 (Programmatic Agreement)
- SWEEP (Stream and Wetland Environmental Enhancement Program MOU)
- ALIVE (A Landscape-level Inventory of Valued Ecological components MOU)
- Air Quality and Noise
- Other focused issues as appropriate (e.g., emergency response)





Work Plan, Stakeholder Involvement
Plan, Public Information Plan

PLT Charter

Purpose and Need

Convene Technical Team

Existing Conditions

Environmental Surveys

Data Collection

