



I-70 Bakerville to Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels (EJMT) Westbound Auxiliary Lane Technical Team (TT) Meeting #2

Meeting Summary

November 3, 2022, 2:00 PM - 4:00 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
- Francesca Tordonato, CDOT
- Maria Rocken, CDOT
- Christiana Lacombe, CDOT
- Shannon Mero, CDOT
- Kristin Salamack, USFWS
- Carrie DeJiacomo, Ulteig
- Angy Casamento, Ulteig
- Lindsey Wickman, Ulteig
- Brian Dabling, FHWA
- Nora Kern, DRCOG
- Margaret Bowes, I-70 Coalition
- Rob Goodell, Ski Loveland
- Nicole Malandri, United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Sandy Beazley, HDR
- Mandy Whorton, Peak Consulting Group
- Loretta LaRiviere, Peak Consulting Group

1. Welcome and Meeting Purpose

Mandy Whorton (Peak Consulting Group) reviewed the agenda and thanked everyone for attending. The presentation from the meeting is attached to these notes for reference.

Mandy said the primary purpose of today's meeting is to continue to go through the CSS 6-Step Process. At our last meeting we defined our desired outcomes, the Context Statement and Core Values. Today we will focus on our evaluation criteria.

2. Design Update

Carrie DeJiacomo (Ulteig) said the design team has been working on:

- Aerial survey is complete and survey ground shots are in process. The survey should be processed and available by the end of the year. Utility locates have been completed. Some challenges have been encountered with utilities in the median as well as confirming the US Forest Service easement.
- Pavement cores and soil samples are in progress and have been taken throughout the roadway as well as existing shoulders to support future widening.



- Inspection of existing conditions of bridges and culverts has been completed to aid in the existing conditions report.
- The traffic team is wrapping up future traffic forecast volumes and traffic modeling should be completed within a few weeks.
- Currently working on conceptual layouts using aerial views and old LIDAR, which is not as accurate as the new survey information we will get towards the end of the year. These conceptual layouts will help determine the best options for such things as the beginning and end of the auxiliary lane and the potential impacts.

3. Review and Confirm Context Statement and Core Values

Context Statement

The TT reviewed the draft Context Statement which has incorporated the comments received from the first PLT & TT meetings. There were no further comments.

Core Values

The Core Values are based on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Core Values for the I-70 Mountain Corridor. At our last TT Meeting we all agreed these were relevant to this project.

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

4. Critical Issues and Evaluation Criteria

The Critical Issues are specific to the project area. The Technical Team will evaluate our alternatives against these critical issues to ensure our design is taking into account items of importance related to the Core Values we have identified. Some examples of the critical issues are:

- Conflicts with slow moving vehicles
- Chain station location and safety
- Wildlife connectivity
- Fen wetlands on south side of I-70
- Historic context of communities
- Maintenance
- Compatibility with AGS
- Construction impacts to businesses
- Recreation access and (over) use
- Parking around Loveland Ski area



Next, each Critical Issue was reviewed in more detail.

Safety Critical Issues

- Emergency operations
- Chain Stations
- Hazardous Materials - freight
- Safety of traveling public
- Loveland interchange

Additional comments:

- Vehicle/Wildlife collisions and debris on highway should be added to the safety critical issues.
- The addition of formalized parking at Herman Gulch, Bakerville, and Loveland interchanges where, currently informal parking occurs along the on and off ramps, were discussed.
- Informal parking on the shoulders and ramps throughout the project area are used for recreational access. This could also be an accessibility issue. The informal parking/recreational use should be considered when determining placement of wildlife fencing.
- Rob Goodell (Loveland Ski Area) expressed some concerns regarding relocating the Loveland interchange and if it becomes a full stop without a merge lane. Currently the interchange allows for free flow movement for WB off traffic. There is a need for adequate accel/decel lanes especially for hazmat vehicles. The I-70 westbound exit is more of an issue than the I-70 eastbound exit.
- There is also an issue when Loveland Pass is closed and passenger/commercial vehicles miss the closed sign and exit at US 6. When this occurs, the vehicles utilized the Loveland Ski Area parking lots to turn around. Adding additional signage noting that the Loveland Pass is closed is of interest to CDOT and Loveland Ski Area. Signage is beneficial but it may be helpful to evaluate where the closure gate is located.
- USFS noted that CDOT typically communicates avalanche mitigation 24 hours in advance, which is appreciated.

Mobility and Accessibility Critical Issues

- Traffic Operations
- Freight Operations
- Traffic Conflicts
- Local Access
- Truck Parking
- Geotechnical Hazards
- Advanced Guideway System (AGS)



Additional Comments:

- Snow removal/storage needs to be considered in the shoulder width.
- The design should maximize shoulder widths for emergency access and to keep traffic moving. People parking on the shoulders limits their use.
- Pegasus (ski busing service) should be consulted about their plans for future operations and it should be taken into consideration in our design.
- Loveland Ski Area participates in Snowstang (ski busing service), but the current number of buses in service now do not affect mobility. The bus drops off skiers at Loveland Ski Area and then parks for the day at the EJMT east portal parking lot. An increase in bus service could trigger parking issues.
- Formalize parking on the north side to better serve buses and backcountry users is desirable.

Implementability Critical Issues

- Constructability
- Construction Impacts

Additional Comments:

- Consider “early action” projects to have a better chance of getting grant funding.
- Chain stations may be eligible for a specific separate funding source.
- Obtaining full support from all stakeholders increases the likelihood of funding.
- Project phasing should be considered for projects that can serve an independent utility and can be implemented early.
- Need to consider the timing of projects because of the limited construction season.

Community Critical Issues

- Protection of Recreational Resources
- Recreation Access
- Wayfinding and Signage

Additional Comments:

- Formalized parking could increase the number of recreational users.
- There should be communication outreach and explore potential partnership opportunities with user groups such as VOC, CFI and winter sports enthusiasts.

Environment Critical Issues

- Scenic Quality
- Wildlife Protection (Trout, Lynx, etc.)



- Water Quality
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)
- Noise

Additional Comments:

- Consider general forest health: trees impacted by deicers, fire risk, and fuel reductions.

Engineering Criteria & Aesthetics Critical Issues

- Aesthetics Guidance and Design Criteria
- Design Considerations

Additional Comments:

- CDOT has guidelines for the chain stations and the existing stations mostly follow them. Modifications to chain stations could create issues if moved within close proximity to wildlife crossings due to lighting.
- Need adequate accel/decel lanes at the chain station entrances and exits.
- Structure replacement could result in aesthetic improvements as the existing structures do not follow all established I-70 corridor aesthetics guidelines.
- There are sight distance concerns on the westbound approach to EJMT.
- There are landslide concerns on the north side of I-70 near the westbound bore of the EJMT and should be avoided.
- FHWA would prefer to minimize the number of design variances.
- Design evaluations should look at the benefits and any technical challenges. Considerations should be taken for the best design instead of just going with the standard.

Sustainability Critical Issues

- Sustainability
- Resiliency

Additional Comments:

- Resiliency was not an identified Core Value in the PEIS, but it has become a common consideration. This includes resiliency for wildfires, flooding, avalanches, and rockslides.

Historic Context Critical Issues

- Historic context will be considered in design.

Additional Comments:



- There could be opportunities for educational/interpretive signage to honor the history of the area at formalized parking areas, such as the Wichita State Football team plane crash.

Decision Making Critical Issues

- Adhere to Past Agreements
- Partnerships with user groups, Great Outdoors Colorado

Additional Discussion:

Mandy asked the TT how involved they would like to be going forward. We had originally intended to meet monthly where the team would have a chance to look at each element independently. However, Mandy asked if the group would prefer to wait and have the design further along and look at everything at once.

The group agreed it would be more beneficial for the project team to come up with more defined concepts for the TT to consider. In addition, to have identified areas of the project where there's not a clear recommendation or different constraints have been identified. It's difficult to balance the considerations without additional discussion with the TT about what is important. The TT members often have expertise that the CDOT team doesn't, so we want to make sure their input is being received, particularly around the environmental and community non-engineering decisions. We need to ensure that we have the correct expertise to determine if design options fail to meet, meet, or exceed expectations/needs.

- Major project elements for decision making:
 - Alignment
 - Structures
 - Interchange
 - Wildlife crossings

The team discussed the use of pros/cons and decision matrices to help weigh/compare design options. Overall, the group appears to prefer matrices with the use of color coding. Color coding is an easier way to visualize the comparison between options. The matrices and supporting information should be provided to the TT at a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the meeting for additional review time.

5. Next Steps

SWEEP and ALIVE Meetings are scheduled for next week.

The design schedule, CSS Process flow chart, and meeting minutes will be sent out in approximately a week.