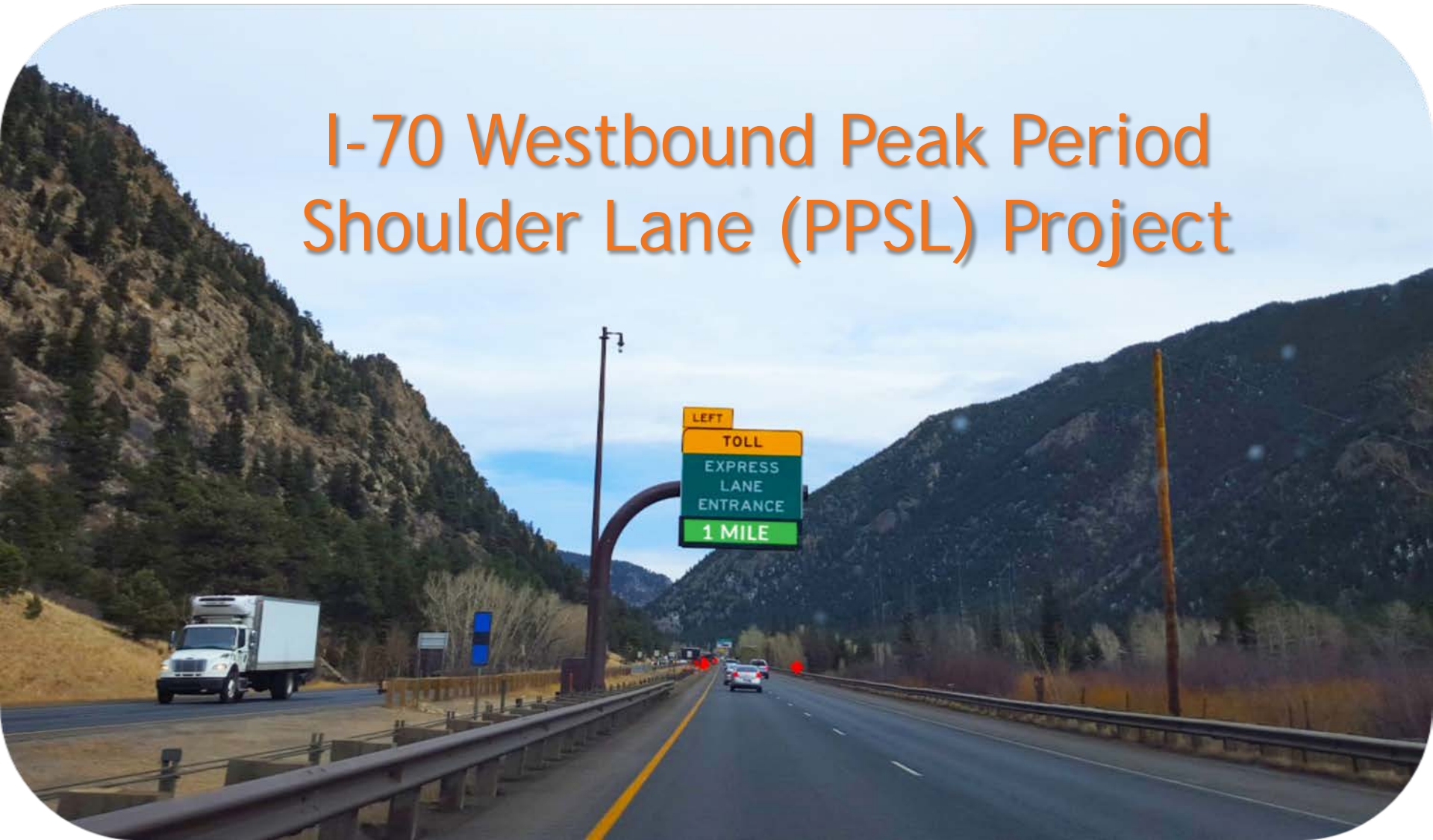




COLORADO

Department of
Transportation

I-70 Westbound Peak Period Shoulder Lane (PPSL) Project





Project Corridor





How did we get here?



BIG IMPACT FROM POPULATION BOOM

Colorado is the eighth fastest growing state in the US. The total current population is more than 5.6 million, with 77,059 new residents in 2017.*

* According to the July 1, 2017 U.S. Census Bureau report



I-70 CORRIDOR TRAFFIC CONGESTION

This rapid growth has caused major road congestion issues especially during peak periods. During the 2016 winter and summer seasons, a combined 2.1 million vehicles traveled the I-70 Mountain Corridor. The peak periods for the project area are on Friday afternoons, weekends and holiday mornings.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process Overview

- ✓ Tier 1 NEPA completed in 2011 for the I-70 corridor from C-470 to Glenwood Springs
 - Determined general location, mode, and capacity strategies
- ✓ Tier 1 Record of Decision
 - Provides a long-term vision for the 144 mile I-70 corridor
 - Includes a program of transit, highway, safety, and other improvements to increase capacity, improve accessibility and mobility, and decrease congestion
- ✓ Tier 2 NEPA processes focus on analyzing project-specific impacts and issues
- ✓ The Westbound PPSL project is being evaluated through a Tier 2 NEPA process (Categorical Exclusion)



Context Sensitive Solutions Process and Project Partnerships

PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAM

- CDOT
- City of Idaho Springs
- Clear Creek County
- Federal Highway Administration
- I-70 Coalition
- Town of Empire
- U.S. Forest Service
- Consultant Team

TECHNICAL TEAM*

- CDOT
- City of Idaho Springs
- Clear Creek County
- Clear Creek County Emergency Services
- Clear Creek Greenway Authority
- Clear Creek Tourism Bureau
- Clear Creek Watershed Foundation
- Colorado Motor Carriers Association
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Federal Highway Administration
- I-70 Coalition
- Law Enforcement
- Summit County
- Town of Georgetown
- Trout Unlimited
- U.S. Forest Service
- Consultant Team

*Technical team is made up of agencies that have been invited to participate



Why is This Project Needed?

- ✓ The purpose of these I-70 improvements is to provide westbound operational mobility improvements during peak periods when westbound traffic volumes are highest.

- ✓ Traffic congestion during peak periods:
 - Reduces travel time reliability
 - Increases traffic on local roads
 - Increases congestion-related crashes
 - Compromises the ability of emergency responders to respond quickly



Project Overview



This project will provide operational improvements when westbound traffic volumes are highest helping to increase travel time reliability on I-70.

CDOT intends to quickly implement improvements, without substantial construction outside the existing highway footprint, to lessen delays caused by these peak period volumes.

What is a peak period shoulder lane?



This project will use the existing shoulder as a tolled travel lane, or Express Lane, that is open only during peak periods. It will operate similarly to the eastbound I-70 Mountain Express Lane.



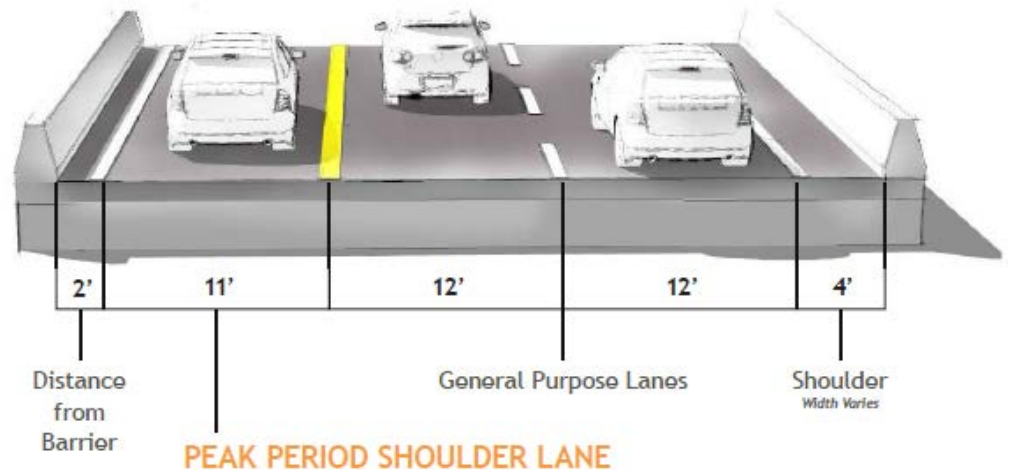
How Does a PPSL Work?

TWO FREE LANES, ONE EXPRESS LANE

During peak periods on westbound I-70, the shoulder will be open as a third lane in addition to the two existing lanes similar to eastbound I-70.

- ✓ The shoulder lane will be tolled during operation
- ✓ During non-peak periods, the shoulder lane will be used only for vehicle safety and emergency response
- ✓ Signage will alert motorists when the shoulder lane is available for use

TYPICAL CROSS SECTION 41' Variable Width





Project Improvements

MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE WESTBOUND PPSL PROJECT



I-70 will be resurfaced and slightly widened in select areas to make room for the peak period shoulder lane



Rock fall mitigation will be incorporated



Pull-outs will be added for law enforcement and breakdowns



Interchange work will improve pedestrian access and sight-distance problems



Several drainage improvements will be addressed along corridor



Will This Project Be a Long-term Fix for I-70?



The Westbound PPSL will be installed with the intention of ceasing operation by the year 2035.

This project is intended to be an interim project that does not address all future needs. It is projected to provide congestion relief until future improvements can be developed. With this project, a goal is to implement improvements without substantial construction beyond the existing highway footprint.



What is an interim project?

In the context of this project, “interim” is an immediate short-term solution that minimizes throw-away features, and addresses some elements of the purpose and need for the corridor.



Why Take This Approach?

BENEFITS OF A PPSL

In December 2015, CDOT opened the eastbound I-70 Mountain Express Lane between Empire Junction and the Veterans Memorial Tunnels. This project is now the precedent in the study area for non-infrastructure improvements and has done the following:

- ✓ Improved travel times
- ✓ Decreased back-ups and congestion
- ✓ Crashes being cleared quickly
- ✓ Frontage road congestion alleviated



Why Take This Approach?

WITH EASTBOUND I-70 MOUNTAIN EXPRESS LANE:

- ✓ Travel times improved
 - In a worst-day comparison between 2015 and 2016, eastbound travel times between Georgetown and US 40 improved by 21 minutes with the addition of the shoulder lane.
- ✓ Response times were faster
 - In 2017, incident clearance times in the eastbound lanes were 17 minutes or 46% faster than they were prior to completion of the shoulder lane.

VOLUME IN CORRIDOR

Winter 2016: 1.03 million
vehicles

2010-2012 average: 896,000 vehicles

Summer 2016: 1.06 million
vehicles

2010-2012 average: 993,500 vehicles

Eastbound I-70 Mountain Express Lane data was collected from January 1, 2016, through April 10, 2016, and May 30, 2016, through September 5, 2016, and is part of the Summary of Findings Report; Westbound data is expected to perform similarly.



Tier 2 NEPA Process

The NEPA Process requires preparation of environmental document(s) addressing the impacts associated with a project. During this process, elements taken into consideration include:

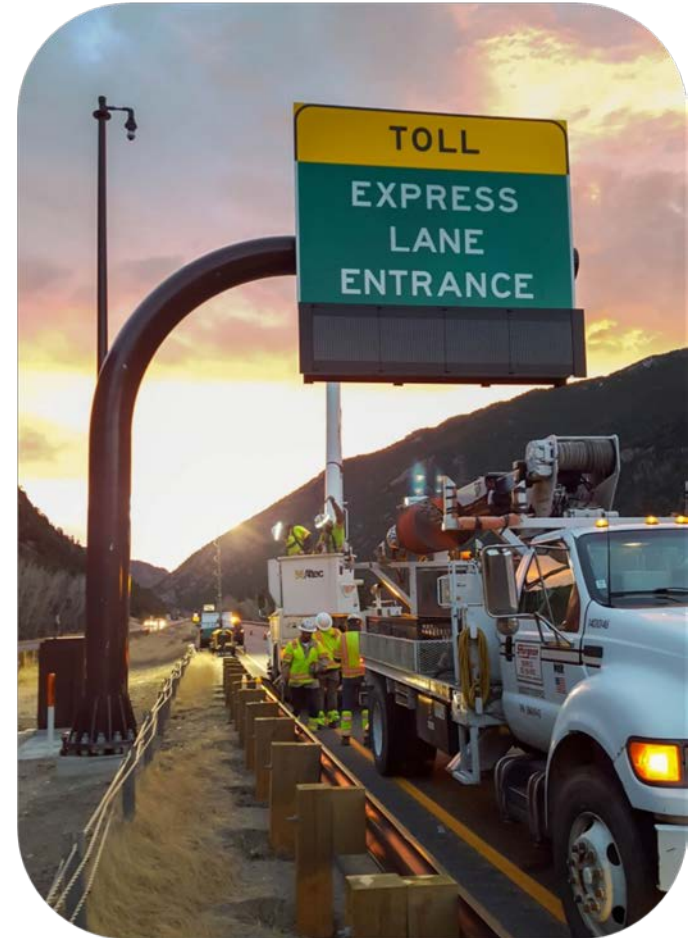
- ✓ Social impacts (land use, community facilities, noise, etc.)
- ✓ Economic impacts
- ✓ Impacts to environmental resources (wildlife, water resources, parks, historic resources, aesthetic conditions, etc.)



Construction Impacts

This construction will be simpler than Eastbound Mountain Express Lane:

- ✓ No bridge construction (SH 103)
- ✓ No interchange reconstruction (SH 103 and Exit 241)
- ✓ Minimal need for lane closures to build walls
- ✓ Use of Eastbound Mountain Express Lane for construction access
- ✓ No need for substantial out of direction detours
- ✓ No deep excavation for bridge piers (contaminated groundwater)
- ✓ Shorter construction period
- ✓ Less overall disruption





Construction Impacts

ACTIVITIES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER DURING CONSTRUCTION

- Noise
- Heavy Machinery
- Lights
- Dust
- Lane shifts
- Vibration



Periodic short-term full road closure will occur during rock fall mitigation. This may include all lanes of I-70.



Construction Impacts & Mitigations

CONSTRUCTION CONGESTION AND NEED FOR DETOURS

- Construction traffic mitigation plans from the CSS process will be included in contract specifications
- CDOT will work with local communities and the school district to minimize impacts to local traffic
- Work requiring closure of one lane will be conducted at night as much as possible
- Advance signage along I-70 will give warning of impending closures





Construction Impacts & Mitigations

INCREASED POTENTIAL FOR CRASHES DURING CONSTRUCTION

- CDOT will notify emergency service providers (Colorado State Patrol, sheriff, police, fire dispatchers, ambulance providers, etc.) of the timing of impending detours or closures
- CDOT will maintain access for emergency vehicles through the project area at all times by providing a shoulder of adequate width for emergency access





Construction Impacts & Mitigation

PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS ACCESS RESTRICTIONS AND DETOURS



- ✓ CDOT will minimize I-70 construction activities on weekends that could shift travel to alternative routes (SH 9 and US 285), and avoid peak travel weekends and special event time periods
- ✓ Trail closures and detours will be clearly signed and advance notice will be given
- ✓ Construction areas near the banks of the creek will be fenced off to prevent access by anglers or other pedestrians



Public Involvement Plan

To ensure that local residents, businesses and I-70 users are well informed during these construction impacts, CDOT will:


- ✓ Implement robust public information strategies, such as media advisories, variable message signs, website updates, telephone hotline, real-time web cameras, text message alerts and alternate route advisories to notify the public of construction activities
- ✓ Provide a detailed construction and detour plan to residents and business owners in the surrounding area
- ✓ Place signs notifying drivers of access to local businesses in both directions in advance of the East Idaho Springs Interchange






Get Involved


VISIT PROJECT WEBSITE & SIGN UP FOR OUR MAILING LIST
codot.gov/projects/i-70-westbound-peak-period-shoulder-lane


 Email
cdot_wbppsproject@state.co.us


 Twitter
[@ColoradoDOT](https://twitter.com/ColoradoDOT)
You can also sign up for travel alerts here

 Facebook
[@coloradodot](https://facebook.com/coloradodot)
You can also sign up for travel alerts here

Please fill out a comment card to provide additional remarks on the Westbound I-70 Peak Period Shoulder Lane Project like:

 Do you have any project concerns?

 What do you like about the project?

 Do you have any suggestions that could help with the project improvements?



CDOT is Listening

We've held meetings, considered your input and will always make listening to your I-70 corridor comments a priority.

Project Website Comments

Eastbound peak period lane is not used.

Recommend putting in bus rapid transit or a train instead of improving I-70.

Are tolled lanes equitable?

Eastbound peak period lane is too narrow.

What is being done to prevent cars from running into wildlife?

All lanes should be tolled.

Online Public Meeting Comments

Most people feel that the eastbound traffic congestion has improved with the peak period shoulder lane during peak times.

It is important that the Fall River Bridge be included in the plan.

The toll lane is pretty expensive.

Traffic congestion will be improved if westbound gets a peak period shoulder lane.

Anything you can do to improve the congestion is appreciated



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QUESTIONS?

