

Summary Notes
Collaborative Effort Meeting 2, November 26, 2007
USDOT Building, Lakewood Colorado

Key Discussion Items

The group reviewed and approved edited operating protocols for the Collaborative Effort (CE). Protocols will be posted to the website.

An overview and status of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and alternatives was presented by Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The possibility of “mixing and matching” alternatives was discussed.

A number of larger questions for the CE, PEIS and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) processes were highlighted including:

- How much travel demand do “we” want to accommodate?
- How is environmental protection and mitigation addressed in a Tier 1 PEIS?
- Logistics and realities of Ballot Initiatives
- Review of the findings of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Transportation Funding
- Overview and status of Rocky Mountain Rail Authority and I-70 Coalition transit studies
- What level of information is necessary to make decisions for Tier 1 vs. Tier 2 studies?
- Assumptions underlying the analysis and decision making in the draft PEIS.
- Let the voters decide what is reasonable and affordable in terms of improvements to I-70

CDOT and Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) presented a letter that highlights the commitment of these agencies to be forthcoming and proactive in CE discussions and that if a consensus agreement around an alternative is reached, CDOT and FHWA intend to adopt such an agreement.

Led by FHWA, the group discussed some general concerns and questions such as:

- General requirements and phases of a programmatic study
- Key issues considered in FHWA legal sufficiency review
- Mechanisms to update the draft EIS including supplemental studies

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) led a group discussion about the application of the Clean Water Act within a Tier 1 Programmatic Study. Any project which may impact “waters of the US” requires a permit from USACE. A key consideration during permitting includes identifying the “Least Environmentally Damaging Alternative” (LEDPA) of all the “practicable” alternatives.

Public comment highlighted the importance that bus and non-rail transit, as well as incremental improvements to transit in general, are considered in the PEIS.

Comments previously submitted to the PEIS are in a searchable database which is accessible online at www.i70mtncorridor.com

The group formed a small committee to select an independent National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) expert to be available for group discussions and consultation.

The Context Statement and Core Values, both early products of the CSS process, were presented to the CE and may inform discussions about criteria to evaluate alternatives. The ultimate product of the CSS will be a guidance document for design, decision making and construction of I-70 beyond the CE and the Tier 1 PEIS. The CE and CSS processes may share topic-specific working groups to examine key issues in greater detail.

Next Steps and Deliverables

- Meeting Minutes for meetings 1 and 2 will be circulated for review by Friday, November 30th
- FHWA scoping report for the PEIS will be posted to the PEIS website
- Convening of the committee to select NEPA expertise for the CE
- Presentations in CE meetings will be posted to the CE portion of the I-70 mountain corridor website
- **Next meeting is December 19th 9:00-4:00 at The Keystone Center in Keystone.**