MEETING SUMMARY

Public Meeting #1
WB I-70 Concept Development Process

March 14, 2017 | 5 PM – 7PM

Clear Creek Recreation Center

Background of Public Meeting #1

Public Meeting #1 ("Meeting #1") was requested by the WB I-70 Mountain Corridor Project Leadership Team (PLT). The PLT advocated for a Public Meeting to involve constituents and project stakeholders as early on in the process as possible and prior to any highway concepts being developed.

Intent

The intent of Meeting #1 was to ensure a transparent process and provide the public with information on the Concept Development Process, answer questions from stakeholders, and gather input from the public to inform the context, critical issues, and conceptual highway improvement designs for I-70 in the Westbound direction from the top of Floyd Hill to Empire Junction.

A Chronology and Brief Summary of Meeting #1:

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM – Arrival, Check in and Review of Project Information

- Members of the public ("Attendees") arrive. Approximately 60 people signed in on the sign-in sheet.
- Representatives from CDR Associates and HDR, Inc. greet members at the door and ask people to sign in.
- A Meeting Information Sheet is distributed at the door to all Attendees (see, *Exhibit A*, attached). The Meeting Information Sheet outlines the Meeting Agenda, Project Limits, Project Need, Identified Solutions, Concept Development Process, "What's Next?," Additional Terms and Contact Information for Neil Ogden, CDOT Project Manager.

- As Attendees enter, they are encouraged to ask questions and speak to Project Management Team members who are wearing name tags.
- Attendees are also briefed on the Public Meeting Agenda and asked to walk around the room and look at the Meeting Boards (see*, Exhibit B* attached) and blank Segment Maps (see, *Exhibit C* attached).
- Attendees are asked to write on the three blank Segment Maps (from the Top of Floyd Hill to Empire Junction interchange) with sticky notes and comment cards to identify critical and context-related issues, opportunities and ideas. These comments are collected and typed up at the end of the meeting (see, *Exhibit D* attached). Segment maps are left out for public comment and viewing for the duration of the meeting.

5:30 PM – 6:00 PM – WB I-70 Concept Development Process Presentation

- Stephen Harelson, CDOT, provides an introduction to the Project. Key themes are noted below:
    - This is the first step in a two-year planning process to come up with highway improvements that fit community needs as well as design safety and mobility to improve congestion and decrease traffic incidents on the WB I-70 Mountain Corridor.
    - This process will use Eastbound PPSL as a model.

- Tim Mauck, Clear Creek County Commissioner, provided opening remarks.
    - Thank you to Clear Creek Recreation Center for providing a space for the Meeting. Commissioner Mauck recognized other elected officials and staff in the room.
    - The Westbound solutions process will be similar to Eastbound – we are using a Project Leadership Team and Context Sensitive Solution (CSS) design process. Commissioner Mauck pointed out the PLT members who are in the room and can answer questions.
    - The intent is to allow impacted communities and stakeholders to work alongside CDOT to start evaluating and considering alternatives early on in the project.
    - Tim asks Attendees for input on critical issues and ideas on how to move forward.

- Jonathan Bartsch, CDR Associates, presents a Slide Show (see, *Exhibit E* attached) to elaborate and explain the Public Meeting Boards that are placed around the room. The slide show content follows the Public Meeting Board graphics created by HDR, Inc (see*, Exhibit B* attached).

- Highlights from the presentation include:
    - The need for WB I-70 solutions due to increasing congestion, population growth, traffic incidents and hazards along the corridor, including difficulties providing emergency response and hazardous roadway conditions due to weather.
    - The first step in this process is to identify context related critical issues that will inform solutions. The role of Attendees is to inform how the process moves forward.
    - The Concept Development Process will help inform Step 2 – the NEPA process.
    - The Project Management Team, Project Leadership Team and Technical Teams and role in the process were discussed.
    - Definition of Critical Issues and Core Values – we need public input here so community issues and values are recognized and addressed in the process
    - We want to incorporate lessons learned from EB

6:00 PM – 6:45 PM

After the presentation, the floor is open for a public Question and Answer period. CDOT, HDR, Inc., CDR Associates and THK Associates receive questions and write comments on large easel paper in the front of the room

- **Question**: How long is the project? **Answer**: 14 miles
- **Question**: How are we looking at geotechnical considerations? What about the landslide? **Answer**: We have two geotechnical firms involved to consult on these issues and the landslide in particular.
- **Question**: What about Wildlife Crossings? **Answer**: We are looking at this as part of the context of the corridor – it is hard for animals to get across 6 lanes, including bridges and split alignments.
- **Question**: I have asked CDOT for years to put in a noise barrier to reduce noise at my house in Idaho Springs. Will that be done as a part of this project? **Answer**: A noise analysis will be done as a part of this project and if noise abatement needs to be considered, it will.
- **Question**: We asked for CDOT to monitor noise levels before and after the EB PPSL was put in. What were the results of that study? **Answer**: In general, there were minor increases in noise in some locations, minor decreases in other locations and in other locations, the noise level was unchanged.
- **Question:** What widths are you considering for WB PPSL? **Answer**: It is likely to be similar to the EB PPSL, which varies but is generally 11' to 12' lanes with one of the lanes only used during peak periods. It is used as a shoulder the rest

of the time. During peak periods, the shoulder is reduced substantially especially on the inside.

Comments Received during Q&A:

- Consider the Cross Section width of WB. Make sure the MOU is followed.
- Need AGS or some other rail transit
- Eastbound should have included a full shoulder
- Consider three lanes and a shoulder lane
- WB doesn't need to be three lanes the entire corridor, consider passing lanes
- Empire Junction is dangerous - Exit 232W signs get knocked down, replace signs promptly
- EB express lane is dangerous due to trucks, speed, stopping, foliage blocking vision
- Traffic Management - need to consider Evergreen, acceleration lanes, focus on weekends
- Bike Paths – tunnel under landslide at US 6; take out horseshoe
- Improvements for rafting companies @ US 6 interchange
- Economic Impacts –don't want Clear Creak County to become a pass through. Would like to see data on economic impacts of EB PPSL
- Need data on: economics, environmental (air emissions), noise
- Make sure to pay attention to the areas of special attention identified in the I-70 CSS documents.
- Need frontage roads and passing lanes – Central City Pkwy to bottom of Floyd Hill
- Use real estate for highest and best use. Look at all opportunities for land use.
- Expand evaluation criteria specific to localities -- include water, exit 247, emergency access
- Interchange with US 6 near Mile Marker 244 is a problem
- Clear signage and instructional signage is needed
- Impact at top of Floyd hill due to closing US 6 – do not close US 6.
- Emergency access from neighborhoods – consider ingress/egress at the top of Floyd Hill
- Need access to I-70 for gamers/Casinos – this impacts Floyd Hill because traffic from the gaming areas affects residential traffic
- Need assurance that concepts will comply with previous agreements – MOU/ROD
- Need noise mitigation east of Idaho Springs historic district
- Geotechnical analysis needed early on, e.g. landslide
- Consider detours during construction and the effects of detours on truck traffic and gravel mine operations and traffic
- Need improved road closure information and residential traffic management
- Wildlife Crossings need to be considered at Kermitts and Two Bears
- Only one access/egress point from the four subdivisions that get access off MP

247. This is a problem.
- Sight distance on frontage roads is a problem. Foliage needs to be managed.
- Need neighboring county support (Summit County).

6:45 PM – 7:00 PM – Further comment and one-on-one question and answer period.

- Attendees continued to look at Segment Maps and Project Boards. Attendees provided comments in the comment box and had an opportunity to speak to Project Leadership Team members one-on-one to provide additional comments and ask questions.

7:00 PM – Close

A summary of the primary input and comments received from Attendees on the maps, in the comment box and as communicated during the public meeting is categorized and provided here:

<u>Purpose and Need</u>

- The residents of Silver Lake in Lawson do not want this. Please build a beautiful greenway bike trail on the Northside of I70 from Dumont through Lawson. The bicycles use this already and have for many years.
- My concern is that you will spend a lot of money and the band aid fit will not be enough for the long-term growth of our state.
- As a resident of Floyd Hill, I appreciate the effort CDOT is going through to improve I-70.
- There is a great deal of support for your initiative to relieve the congestion on westbound 1-70. Residents in the area can't go out or get back home on many weekends because of the traffic jams.
- Need AGS
- During summer months of June/July 2016, our neighborhood was routinely gridlocked. For example, 30-60 minutes to high school from Hwy 40.
- For Floyd Hill residents:
    - Concerns regarding fire: There are 1100 people who live in the area to the south of 1-70. The only way that any of these people can get out is via Homestead Road. That is the road that crosses the bridge over 1-70, at Exit 247. It has one lane outbound, as the Northbound lane would be needed for emergency vehicle access to the community. Evergreen Fire Rescue (EFR) has designated the Floyd Hill area at Exit 247 as one of the 4 Most Dangerous places in their protection area, due to characteristics such as:

        - Steepness of terrain
        - Vegetation
        - Density of population

    Need to improve emergency egress to protect community from fire.
- Improve the safety for Floyd Hill residents wherever you can. This includes doing things like an emergency egress at Sawdust Court.

Issues to Consider

- **Community**
    - Too much traffic from gaming area on US 6 and US 40
    - Improvements on CO Blvd and on I-70 will help property values in Idaho Springs
    - What will be the impact to mobile homes in Idaho Springs?
    - Quality of life should be a priority
    - Locals should not have to pay a toll
    - My family owns the restaurant at Exit 244. I hope you take into consideration, the restaurant, rafting, and wildlife that are in the area.
    - Will improving access to this area increase the congestion?
    - Major concern for Floyd Hill residents: Safety, egress and evacuation.
    - Avoid moving US 6 ramp traffic to Floyd Hill. Increasing traffic would pose traffic and safety issues for our community.
    - Traffic Noise Reduction and Visual Enhancements needed.
    - Concerns relative to the specific locale around Exit #247. Decision Criteria seems to take into account greater regional needs, but does not indicate an understanding of specific concerns.
    - Criteria need to be added to decision matrix, specific to the needs of people who live at Exit 247.
        - Additional criterion about public safety in the area, in case of the need for an emergency evacuation
    - Reevaluate several of the other criteria, particularly #2 and #7, as they impact the local considerations on Floyd Hill

- **Cost**
    - The return on investment does not justify this project. There are more long-term investments worthy of taxpayer money.
    - The money used on this project should have been invested in a train instead.

- **Highway Safety**

- Need speed limit enforcement in the WB PPSL. There is currently no enforcement on EB. People drive way too fast. Currently the PPSL width does not support law enforcement vehicles to enforce speed limit.
- Need signage to deter speeding in the WBPPSL. People using these "express" lanes are jeopardizing local motorist safety.
- As a commercial shuttle operator, we could use better information on communications and safety closures. We had 15 vehicles in Silverthorne with passengers and no idea when the road might re-open. We could not make any decisions on what to do and when we did the road opened without warning.

- **Environmental**
  - Concerns about water supplies – is there enough water to support the urban sprawl that will come with adding capacity?
  - Big horn sheep and river conservation.
  - May need to discuss a wildlife passage in Segment 1 depending on alignment.
  - Restore Clear Creek

Design Solutions to Consider

- Connection to Jefferson County 65 will increase traffic
- Add "on-ramp" on South side of bridge at Exit 247 off existing alignment will provide best finished highway and the least amount of congestion during construction.
- Straightening curves will reduce accidents.
- Lessen the grade of hill from Exit 247 to Exit 244.
- Limit big trucks to non-peak hours.
- Cantilever a highway to double tier it to add 2 additional lanes.
- Make mass-transit system -- Monorail.
- Offer more buses like Front Range Ski Bus.
- Need more passing lanes.
- Have peak lane open more often.
- Design lanes wide enough to allow smooth traffic flow rather than what you did for East bound. Don't just repaint the line and say you added a lane. Give enough room for safe on and off exit-ramps.
- The roundabout on the north side of Exit 247 is a good idea -- there is no need for an off-ramp at Exit 247
- There is some land between this proposed roundabout and the building just to the west, signed as Marte. This land was intended to be parcels 2 and 3 of an overall PUD project, of which the Marte building was the first. There are

several acres included in these parcels. However, there was an agreement not to develop parcels 2 & 3 until there was a supply of public water available; that supply now looks extremely unlikely, so these parcels cannot currently be developed. If they could be acquired, they could be used for a parking/staging area for trucks during emergency winter closures. This parking/staging area could be tied into either US-40 and/or the roundabout. Furthermore, this area could be used in the summer as parking and a trail-head for the land just above it that was just acquired jointly by the Jefferson County and Clear Creek County Open Space Commissions. This might help with a number of issues: improving traffic flow in general; managing the trucks, particularly in the winter; keeping the trucks and other traffic from congesting emergency egress routes on the south side; and providing value to the community for use of its open space.

- At exit 247, follow the principle that has evolved over years of study: keep as much of the congestion (development, trucks and other traffic, etc.) as possible on the NORTH side of I-70.
- Do not ignore the county memorandum that stated NOT to have a full diamond interchange at this exit.
- Do not mix trucks and school buses.
- Do not put a roundabout on the south side of I-70, or anything else that would impede the emergency egress of residents.

- **Segment 1 Specific Design-Related Comments (Top of Floyd Hill to VMT)**

    - There will be more traffic noise if I-70 is elevated
    - Object to two diamond interchanges at Exit 247 and 248
    - Should tunnel under the landslide. It straightens curves and eliminates the bridge issues at US 6

- **Reaction to moving the US-6 interchange to the Floyd Hill area**:
    - **Inappropriate to the traveling public -** It would take them far out of the direction in which they are traveling. Travelers going westbound from US-6 would have to go 3 or 4 miles out of their way, and then backtrack the same amount. They would also have to climb 800 feet of altitude, just to descend the hill to where they started.
    - **It is an anathema to the residents of Floyd Hill -** It would draw traffic congestion just where they do not want it. It would further endanger people in case of an emergency evacuation.
    - Find a way to create a full movement interchange from US-6 onto both eastbound and westbound I-70 at or near the current location of Exit 244. Do not move any part of this interchange to exit 243 or 247, as that would be inconsistent with many things, including: the specific guidance from the county, the safety of people on Floyd Hill, the consideration of highway travelers, who would be taken far out of their direction of travel.

- Add criteria in your decision matrix specifically relevant to the needs and safety concerns for people who live at the specific exits where you are considering modifications.

- **Segment 2 Specific Design-Related Comments (Idaho Springs)**
  - PPSL must have wider shoulders and better sight distance than EB does
  - Build bridges off line
  - CC Parkway to US 6 should be considered a frontage road
  - Need more parking in Idaho Springs
  - Acceleration ramp from SH 103 to EB is too short
  - On the 1900 block of Miner St – we've been asking CDOT for a noise wall for 35 years. At exit 239 – the RR tie wall – how will it be impacted?
  - On the 2000 block of Miner St – the concern is the footprint behind the houses and what kind of impact or treatment will be provided
  - Are the EB lanes required width by state law – they seem too narrow. So will WB be the legal width?
  - On the 400 block of Idaho there was a previous agreement with the property owner to not impact any additional property. How will this be dealt with?
  - The design of the SH 103 bridge is an accident waiting to happen. Visibility for off ramp drivers is terrible. Need to almost get into oncoming traffic to see adequately.
  - Would eventually like to see metering of traffic as it is with E-470 and/or west of the EJMT tunnel – when only a certain number of cars may pass. That way with continued new residents of Colorado the I-70 E/W can continue to carry traffic

- **Segment 3 Specific Design-Related Comments (Empire Junction to west of Idaho Springs**)
  - Greenway should be on the north side of I-70 where bicyclists have been riding for years
  - The Greenway could come up Stanley Road, cross I-70 at the overpass at Dumont then continue west along the north side of I-70 past Lawson.
  - Need new bridge over to the frontage road from Fall River Road
  - Need new access to Fall River Road
  - Need to control speed to be more consistent – recommend speed signs to harmonize
  - The cross section of Eastbound is dangerous at MP 234

Construction Feedback

- Residents in Idaho Springs were experiencing deteriorating air quality during Eastbound construction with 10 – 12 black top trucks present.
- Use recycled pavement in road base.
- Construction went on for too long.

- A third party contractor installing fiber optic line was allowed to construct all night and noise was a real issue.
- Noise from rumble strips Eastbound during construction and currently on MP 234 on Segment 3 is bad.
- What is the plan to keep I-70 open during construction?