

DRAFT CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

INTRODUCTION

The Collaborative Effort, a 27-member group¹ representing varied interests of the corridor, was charged with reaching consensus on a recommended transportation solution for the I-70 Mountain Corridor². The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) were active participants in this group and committed to adopt the consensus recommendation in the I-70 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS).

The Collaborative Effort's vision for the I-70 Mountain Corridor is multi-modal. Transit and highway improvements are based on proven needs and will enhance the corridor, its environment and communities. All parties must take ownership in needed changes and continue to work together to achieve this vision.

The criteria below informed the Collaborative Effort's recommendation:

- The solution should improve safety and mobility for all users.
- The solution should be responsive and adaptive to broader global trends that will affect the way we make travel decisions into the future.
- The solution will meet all environmental and legal requirements.
- The solution should preserve, restore and enhance community and cultural resources.
- The solution should preserve, and restore or enhance ecosystem functions.
- The solution should be economically viable over the long term.

The Collaborative Effort's solution recognizes the importance of providing meaningful recommendations, short-term direction, and the ability to adapt to future conditions and needs. The Collaborative Effort has not considered the potential environmental impacts of this recommendation. A comparative analysis must be made of the impacts of this alternative against all other alternatives identified in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The CE understands that the agencies will make this comparison as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. As soon as this analysis is complete and prior to publication in the Final Programmatic EIS the agencies shall provide a briefing to interested members of the CE of the results of this analysis.

The recommendation below captures the consensus of the Collaborative Effort.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation for I-70 through Colorado's mountain corridor is a multi-modal solution including non-infrastructure components, a commitment to an Advanced Guideway System (AGS), and specific highway improvements. A reassessment of the improvements' effectiveness and reviews of study results and global trends shall be conducted prior to implementing additional capacity improvements. Continued stakeholder involvement is necessary for all tasks conducted on I-70.

The following describes the components of this recommendation:

Non-Infrastructure Related Components

Non-infrastructure related components can begin in advance of major infrastructure improvements to address some of the issues in the corridor today. These strategies and the potential tactics for implementation require actions and leadership by agencies, municipalities and other stakeholders beyond CDOT and FHWA. The strategies include the following:

- Increased enforcement.

¹ See **Attachment A** for a list of Collaborative Effort representatives and organizations.

² The I-70 Mountain Corridor as defined by the study boundaries identified in the PEIS.

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- Bus service in mixed traffic.
- Programs for improving truck movements.
- Driver education.
- Expanded use of existing transportation infrastructure in and adjacent to the corridor.
- Use of technology advancements and improvements which may increase mobility without additional infrastructure.
- Traveler information and other intelligent transportation systems.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies:

- Shift passenger and freight travel demand by time-of-day and day-of-week.
- Convert day-trips to overnight stays.
- Promote high occupancy travel and public transportation.
- Convert single occupancy vehicle commuters to high occupancy travel and/or public transportation.
- Implement transit promotion and incentives.

Advanced Guideway System

An Advanced Guideway System (AGS) is a central part of the recommendation and includes a commitment to the evaluation and implementation of AGS within the corridor, including a vision of transit connectivity beyond the study area and local accessibility to such a system, including defining roles and responsibilities for implementation

Additional information is necessary to advance implementation of an AGS system within the corridor:

- Feasibility of high speed rail passenger service.
- Potential station locations and local land use considerations.
- Transit governance authority.
- Alignment.
- Technology.
- Termini.
- Funding requirements and sources.
- Transit ridership.
- Potential system owner/operator.
- Interface with existing and future transit systems.
- Role of AGS in freight delivery both in and through the corridor.

Several studies currently underway will provide further information to assist stakeholders with evaluation and implementation of AGS. CDOT is committed to provide funding for studies in support of the additional information needs to determine the viability of the AGS. The implementation plan included in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement will identify roles and responsibilities, including actions and leadership required by agencies, municipalities and other stakeholders beyond CDOT and FHWA.

Highway Improvements

Highway improvements are needed to address current corridor conditions and future demands. These improvements must be planned considering all elements of the recommendation. The following safety, mobility, and capacity components are not listed in order of priority, are not subject to the parameters

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established for future capacity improvements identified in the latter part of this document, do not represent individual projects and may be included in more than one description³:

Specific Highway Improvements

- A six-lane component from Floyd Hill through the Twin Tunnels including a bike trail and frontage roads from Idaho Springs East to Hidden Valley and Hidden Valley to US 6.
- Empire Junction (U.S. 40/I-70) improvements.
- Eastbound auxiliary lane from the Eisenhower Johnson Memorial Tunnel (EJMT) to Herman Gulch.
- Westbound auxiliary lane from Bakerville to the EJMT.

Other Highway Projects

- Truck operation improvements such as pullouts, parking and chain stations.
- ~~Safety and capacity improvements~~ west of Wolcott.
- Eastbound auxiliary lane from Frisco to Silverthorne.
- ~~Safety and capacity improvements at~~ Dowd Canyon.
- Interchange improvements at the following locations:
 - East Glenwood Springs.
 - Gypsum.
 - Eagle County Airport.
 - Eagle.
 - Edwards.
 - Avon.
 - Minturn.
 - Vail West.
 - Copper Mountain.
 - Frisco/Main Street.
 - Frisco/SH 9.
 - Silverthorne.
 - Loveland Pass.
 - Georgetown.
 - Downieville.
 - Fall River Road.
 - Idaho Springs West.
 - Idaho Springs/SH 103.
 - Idaho Springs East.
 - Base of Floyd Hill/US 6.
 - Hyland Hills and Beaver Brook.
 - Lookout Mountain.
 - Morrison.
- Auxiliary Lanes:
 - Avon to Post Boulevard (eastbound).
 - West of Vail Pass (eastbound and westbound).
 - ~~Morrison to Chief Hosa (westbound)~~.

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³ A detailed description of curve smoothing, interchange and auxiliary lane projects can be found in [Attachment B Including a Map Showing the Areas for Improvements](#).

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Future Stakeholder Engagement

Ongoing stakeholder engagement is necessary because the aforementioned improvements may or may not fully address the needs of the corridor beyond 2025, and the recommendation does not preclude nor commit to the additional capacity improvements. Further, global, regional, or local trends may have an unexpected affect on travel needs, behaviors and patterns, such as climate change, resource availability, and/or technological advancements. CDOT and FHWA will convene a stakeholder meeting at least once every four years that retains the Collaborative Effort member profile. Such meetings will review the current status of all projects and will consider the following in evaluating the need for additional improvements.

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Vision of Corridor – It is acknowledged that the Collaborative Effort has not completed a corridor-wide vision for the future which limits the ability of the group to accurately determine future actions and needs. In order to adequately assess future transportation needs, the Collaborative Effort member profile members, along with additional regional participation need to develop a long-range corridor vision for transportation and mobility. One primary purpose of this endeavor would be used to assist in the evaluation of capacity improvements.

Triggers for Future Capacity Improvements

Additional highway capacity improvements may proceed if and when:

- The Specific Highway Improvements are complete, and an AGS is functioning through Clear Creek County, or
- Specific Highway Improvements are complete and AGS studies that answer questions regarding the feasibility, cost, ridership, governance, and land use are complete, and indicate that AGS with the Specific Highway Improvements will

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OPTION 1: either not satisfy the regional mountain corridor growth vision for 2025, cannot be funded by 2025 or are otherwise deemed unfeasible to implement by 2025.

OPTION 2: not result in highway mobility that meets the purpose and need of the PEIS or 2) that AGS cannot be funded by 2020

OPTION 3: not improve mobility (as measured by a modeled increase in person trip throughput for AGS and the SHI compared to person trip throughput with just the SHI) or OR.

- There are global, regional, or local trends that have an unexpected affect on travel needs, behaviors and patterns, such as climate change, resource availability, and/or technological advancements or

- 2020 has arrived.

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Assessment of Effectiveness:

The criteria below shall inform, but not limit, the assessment of effectiveness of the AGS and Specific Highway Improvements:

- The improvements improved safety and mobility for all users.
- The improvements responded and adapted to broader global trends that will affect the way we make travel decisions into the future.
- The improvements met all environmental and legal requirements.
- The improvements preserved, restored and enhanced community and cultural resources.
- The improvements preserved, and restored or enhanced ecosystem functions.
- The improvements were economically viable over the long term.

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The CE recommends that the Record of Decision for the PEIS require that Tier 2 studies commit CDOT and FHWA to continuous stakeholder involvement through various existing and developing processes by specifying compliance with:

- The Section 106 Programmatic Agreement,
- The Memoranda of Understanding for:
 - Stream Wetland Ecology Ecosystem Project (SWEEP),
 - Minewaste, and
 - A Landscape-level Inventory of Valued Ecosystem Components (ALIVE),
- Tier 2 environmental studies, and
- The Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) decision making process and guidance manual.

CDOT and FHWA also will consider the principles of the Colorado Governor's Climate Action Plan within future environmental studies.

| By signing, members of the Collaborative Effort concur with and support this agreement.

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