



# Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

## What is CSS?

- The CSS process is an approach based on the idea that transportation projects should consider the total “context” of their existence. The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions team has carefully considered the scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources that make the I-70 Mountain Corridor so unique and dynamic. This context has been captured in the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Statement.
- Partnering with mountain corridor communities and stakeholders, the I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS process developed a guidance manual, historic context report and design guidelines that are the framework for all current and future projects along the I-70 Mountain Corridor.
- Before any construction begins on I-70 Mountain Corridor projects, environmental studies will include CSS in their planning processes.

*CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. Context Sensitive Solutions is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. Context Sensitive Solutions principles include the employment of early, continuous and meaningful involvement of the public and all stakeholders throughout the project development process.*

Source: Federal Highway Administration

## How was CSS developed?

- CDOT initiated the I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS project to provide effective guidelines for all future planning, design, and construction projects along the 144-mile corridor. CDOT’s goal was to have the corridor become the nation’s standard for collaboration, partnerships, transportation innovation, and environmental sustainability.
- The I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS process brought together a multi-disciplinary, multi-interest stakeholder group to discuss, debate, and capture what they respect and will work to preserve in the corridor.
- The corridor stakeholders, the authors of the CSS material, want the best and newest ideas — consistent with the vision and goals — to be used on the Corridor.

## What does CSS on the I-70 Mountain Corridor mean?

**CSS provides guidance on future studies, designs, and construction projects to ensure that planners, designers, and constructors incorporate stakeholder values into their decisions on the I-70 Mountain Corridor.**

- The Context Statement and Core Values provide direction to achieve improvements that exceed expectations by incorporating goals for agencies, communities, and users. The Context Statement and Core Values represent a vision and goals for the Corridor.
- The 6-Step process has been developed for use on future studies, designs, and construction projects to ensure that planners, designers, and constructors incorporate these values into their decisions.
- To provide further depth and support to studies, designs, and construction projects on the corridor, strategies have been included for engineering, aesthetics, mitigation, and construction. These strategies are proposed or suggested as methods consistent with the Context Statement and the Core Values today, in 2009. These strategies can be found on the CSS web site [www.i70mtncorridorcss.com](http://www.i70mtncorridorcss.com).

### The CSS Guidance

- Directs all Tier 2 processes in the Corridor
- Ensures that CSS principles are employed
- Directs an open, comprehensive, and fair public process for each project
- Reflects the unique context of the corridor and directs future designs
- Supports the identification and protection of historic resources through the Historic Context
- Presents the Corridor Context Statement and Core Values
- Delineates the Decision-Making Process to be used on projects
- Defines the design criteria
- Organizes corridor environmental data on maps
- Indexes the PEIS data by mile marker
- Provides tools, templates, photos, exercises, and ideas for project managers
- Makes available all Corridor agreements
- Captures years of stakeholders comments and concerns
- Links to other relevant materials

**The I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Statement**

The I-70 Mountain Corridor is a magnificent scenic place. Human elements are woven through breathtaking natural features. The integration of these diverse elements has occurred over the course of time. This corridor is a recreational destination for the world, a route for interstate and local commerce and a unique place to live.

It is our commitment to seek balance and provide for 21st century uses.

We will continue to foster and nurture new ideas to address the challenges we face.

We respect the importance of individual communities, the natural environment, and the need for safe and efficient travel.

**Well thought-out choices create a sustainable legacy.**

**The I-70 Mountain Corridor Core Values**

**Sustainability** is an overarching value that creates solutions for today that do not diminish resources for future generations. Ideal solutions generate long term benefits to economic strength, scenic integrity, community vitality, environmental health and ecosystems.

Methods for **Decision Making** must be fair, open, equitable and inclusive. Collaboration moves decision making beyond individuals and agency interests. New ideas will always be considered with respect and an open mind.

Enhancing **Safety** for all is paramount in all decisions.

A **Healthy Environment** requires taking responsibility to preserve, restore, and enhance natural resources and ecosystems.

**Mankind’s past has contributed** to the sense of place. The broad **Historic Context** is foundational to the corridor and must be a part of every conversation.

We must respect the individuality and viability of **Communities** in a manner that promotes their viability. The character of the corridor is realized in the differences and commonalities of its communities.

**Mobility and Accessibility** must address local, regional, and national travel providing reliability, efficiency and the interconnectivity between systems and communities.

**Aesthetics**, inspired by the surroundings will protect scenic integrity and incorporate the context of place. Timeless design continues the corridor’s legacy.