

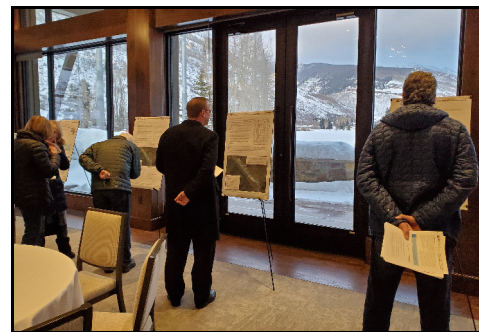
## **SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS SURROUNDING EAST VAIL TRAFFIC NOISE MEETING**

**HELD FEBRUARY 13, 2020**

### **Meeting Overview**

A public meeting focused on traffic noise impacts and mitigation in East Vail was held on February 13, 2020 at the Vail Golf & Nordic Clubhouse. Members of the project team gave a presentation at 5:30 PM, which provided a brief project overview and explanation of the noise analysis process and preliminary noise mitigation recommendations. Following the presentation, the meeting was conducted in an open house format until 7:00 PM to allow attendees to view information that was discussed during the presentation on display boards and to have conversations with project team members. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting.

This document includes a record of all comments submitted surrounding this East Vail noise meeting, from February 6 - 20, 2020. Comments were received through the project web page comment form, emails and phone calls to project team members, in addition to those documented on comment sheets and recorded by project team staff during the open house.



### **Preliminary Noise Analysis Comments**

#### **Heavy Trucks & Engine Brakes**

- ❑ South side from MM 180 – 182 is what needs the noise barrier. Most noise comes from owner-operator independents, i.e. hay, cattle, steel, etc. with no mufflers; they also run jake brakes excessively 7:00 – 9:00 AM westbound and 2:30 – 5:30 PM eastbound.
- ❑ The trucks that are the loudest are the smaller operations such as cattle and steel haulers. The big-named trucks aren't loud- they clearly have proper mufflers.
- ❑ Enforcement of jake brakes is needed. Why didn't Colorado State Patrol come to this meeting? This should be a team effort. How many citations are written for jake brakes/mufflers?



- ❑ Jake brake (all of the trucks ignore the signs), auto, and plow noise exceeds acceptable levels near the Vail Racquet Club. We need noise mitigation now and this project only exacerbates that need. Please help us.
- ❑ In addition to the safety of the project I would hope that the noise problem from the trucks using non muffler brakes descending the pass be addressed. I have had a second home in East Vail since 1980 and the truck noise has increased over that time. I am not sure if this project might address this problem but would hope it does. Thank you for your attention.
- ❑ I am extremely in favor of noise mitigation for East Vail. We hear every I-70 truck at our East Vail house.
- ❑ Definitely need some type of noise abatement devices installed along I-70 by East Vail. The big rig trucks always compression release Engine Brake when going up and down the incline. It is especially bad around the overpass of Columbine Drive.
- ❑ Living on the south side of East Vail we hear highway noise and "jake" brakes all the time from trucks coming down the pass. While the use of jake brakes is supposedly against the law, it doesn't ever seem to be enforced. Adding a lane will most definitely increase both tire and jake brake noise. Obviously, we are opposed to that happening.
- ❑ Will increase speeds with third lane. More trucks will come and go faster. There will be more jake brakes.
- ❑ Will the additional lanes increase or decrease noise levels in East Vail? Trucks can already be a noisy problem.
- ❑ Before spending \$750 million for upgrading the Vail Pass west side, has a computer study been done of the effect of limiting truck traffic and other vehicles that cannot maintain a speed of 60 miles per hour during peak periods? Also eliminating truck or trailer traffic when snow covered roads exist? The numerous cameras on I-70 should make it easy to enforce the elimination of truck traffic at peak periods. Doesn't New York and Vail prohibit truck traffic at specific times?
- ❑ The road conditions are bad because of the ruts in pavement caused by trucks. When it is icy cars bounce and they slide causing accidents.
- ❑ Engine brakes are used for safety. CMCA is in full support of ticketing any driver not compliant with law and has no muffled system.
- ❑ There are no laws for jake brake use on West Vail Pass, so there is nothing for Colorado State Patrol to enforce on the pass itself. The Town of Vail has one sign near town limits that references the related ordinance, which refers to "extended use" of jake brakes. It is the Town's jurisdiction to enforce, but is very difficult to enforce as written. It seems to come down to a choice between noise and crashes.



## Noise Analysis

- ❑ Auxiliary lane downhill will increase speeds and reduce safety. This will become a speedway. This study is very flawed. Noise impacts because speed limits won't be followed. It will end up like westbound I-70 from Eisenhower Johnson Memorial Tunnel. Need to incorporate higher speeds in model. Would like to talk with someone about these concerns and how traffic modeling incorporates increased traffic speed.
- ❑ Straightening the curves could make people come down the pass even faster. Need speed control. Should say how this will be addressed.
- ❑ I live near receptor S13 and have a pocket decibel meter. I've measured readings around 80 decibels. Traffic is worst between 7:30-9am for traffic heading WB and from 2:30-5:30 for traffic heading EB.
- ❑ Please conduct a study assessing the potential of reflections of traffic noise towards residents to the southeast of I-70 with the development of barriers to shield residents to the northwest.
- ❑ Lmax levels should be used to define the noise threshold instead of the hourly average.
- ❑ A noise measurement should have been made at my house.
- ❑ More long-term measurements should have been made.

## Noise Mitigation

- ❑ It can be quite loud on the Creek due to highway noise, particularly in the summer (I think because the snow dampens the noise in the winter and because windows and screens tend to be open in summer). Especially if additional traffic will be added or there is a lane addition extending closer to Vail Racquet Club, efforts to mitigate road sounds would be greatly appreciated. Concrete walls would be great.
- ❑ I am very concerned about both noise and safety with respect to I-70. I own a duplex that backs up to I-70 in East Vail. Noise and vibration from large trucks that are on I-70 is a problem that needs mitigation. Also, during the winter chemicals sprayed on I-70 drift into East Vail, adhere to windows and impact the landscape. Even more important, I-70 is a major safety risk to all buildings along it and people who are near it. At my duplex, a semi-truck tire and wheel weighing hundreds of pounds flew off a truck and landed within several feet of my building. It mangled the perimeter chain-link fence. Major damage would have occurred if the tire and wheel had hit my building. A safety and sound wall is imperative along I-70 in East Vail.
- ❑ Brenner Pass in Europe has great noise walls.

## Meeting Feedback

- ❑ Please include copies of all the slides used during the presentation – it's too hard to hear or see without something in your hand to follow.



- ❑ Thanks very much for the Vail public meeting on noise mitigation. Your team did a masterful job in explaining the subject matter. Please keep us informed as this potential project goes forward.

## Overall Project Comments

- ❑ Concerned about the construction, traffic, noise and how it impacts East Vail values.
- ❑ Where exactly will the new auxiliary lanes will be starting in East Vail? According the Vail Daily article it would be the East Vail exit but on the other hand there are two huge and flat bridges east of it which I don't believe need an auxiliary lane.

## Project Need

- ❑ An auxiliary lane is very important in the eastbound direction.
- ❑ "Need" paragraph needs work. (1) "Safety and operational uses due to: geometric conditions, slow moving, passenger vehicle interactions [not clear] resulting in inconsistent and slow travel time." You need to add weather, snow, etc. as one would hope this would be reduced?? (2) "Mobility" needs a better definition. It duplicates safety. "Efficiency" needs a definition, just more to be useful such as travel at speed limit at a certain percentage of time or without weather, etc.
- ❑ I question the need for additional lanes. The main problem seems to be closures due to adverse weather condition not traffic. I would hate to see the existing road widened because of the adverse aesthetic and environmental impacts that would ensue, but I'm open to learning more.

## Improvement Suggestions

- ❑ I have owned a home in East Vail for 28 years. Isn't it about time to start planning a light rail from Denver to the mountains rather than accommodating more cars?
- ❑ We sure wish that any work done on the highway could include correcting the huge design flaws at the following: (1) mm 180 westbound off-ramp: those turning left (i.e. onto Bighorn Rd are in a blind spot - you cannot see vehicles moving north, under the overpass (2) mm 180 the eastbound on-ramp is too short. We feel we're taking our life in our hands because eastbounders in the right lane cannot see us coming on.
- ❑ What I'm really wondering as a homeowner and East Vail resident going on to 20 years, is making auxiliary lanes really going to make a difference when somebody doesn't have the right tires in the winter time or the noise is that really going to make a difference here especially with our wildlife & human space?? Have YOU all looked into doing a tunnel from the bottom of Copper into East Vail instead of widening the pass and leaving the pass for those vehicles that are not allowed to go through a tunnel would that not be a safer way to go in the long run the noise will be less the traffic will be less isn't this a better route for a peaceful living area for wildlife & those of us who live in East Vail. Is a tunnel even an option that the state let alone the county has looked into, at what is this going to do for impact on wildlife and human living space? How would it compare to



costs?? Has this even been compared or considered or thought of? If there is a problem isn't it best to look at what the real problem is in the best, BEST Way to go about correcting I-70 over Vail pass so that we don't have a bigger problem after we thought we corrected the problem?????!!!!

- ❑ Colorado should take the approach that California does- have state troopers lead traffic in bad weather.
- ❑ Hey geniuses we need indoor ski in metro area. We don't want 3 lanes to Vail -trees already dying from gas/beetle. Tell BLM/USGS no desalination plants in world. We aren't paying to suck out own ocean for water. Houses are overvalued everywhere get price down or free.
- ❑ If speed limit was dropped to 55mph, it would be safer and quieter.
- ❑ Trucks going EB are the worst problem; semis shouldn't be allowed to pass each other.
- ❑ Would like a no truck passing zone, just like Glenwood.
- ❑ Truck ramps need to be improved.

## Comments Regarding Issues Outside of Project Area

- ❑ What would be the cost to reconfigure the Eisenhower - Johnson tunnels to have 3 lanes going one way and changing the direction of the three lanes during peak periods? Or would this change make no difference because of the bottleneck of two lanes further down the road? I think this concept is used in the Bay area near San Francisco.
- ❑ Lights are really helping at Dowd Junction.
- ❑ Big concern from homeowners near the chain down station about the unfinished berm near Bald Mountain Road:
  - Multiple homeowners were very upset that the berm they were promised 20 years ago still hasn't been completed. They say it was a commitment to the neighborhood for noise and light mitigation when the chain station was placed there. The chain station was constructed long ago, but the mitigation and safety for the neighborhood is still not done. The timeline of the berm construction was the most important to the residents, and CDOT and Vail defaulted.
  - Would have liked the West Vail Pass project to go further into Vail so the project area would cover this berm.
  - Vail blames CDOT and CDOT blames Vail for not finishing, but residents have not ever gotten a straight answer detailing why it hasn't been done.
  - Have heard there are certain allocations of dirt for CDOT and Vail and that may be the hold up. Should waive the allocations and just let someone finish it.
  - Why can't the extra dirt from other projects in town, even private developments, get dumped on the berm? Seems there could be a solution to this if CDOT, Vail, and homeowners sat down to problem solve. One homeowner especially willing to help in any way possible.



- If we add a lane on Vail Pass, more trucks will speed down the hill and burn up their brakes. Currently, trucks burn up their brakes and often catch fire and use the chain down station to stop. Cars also use the chain-down station when they break down/catch fire. This is a giant fire hazard for the people that live on Bald Mountain Road and there's no way out for those residents as it's a dead-end street. This is an even larger concern in the dry summers. The berm is needed for safety, or better yet, they'd like a fire wall constructed to protect their homes.
- The west end of the berm isn't as high as the east end. The center section is the most important and the part not done.
- The berm is supposed to be top-dressed at the end of each season. This doesn't happen and the haz mat and trash comes down to homes.
- Residents would like CDOT and Vail to follow up and set a real timeline for finishing the berm.