MEETING NOTES

PROJECT:	21685 I-70 West Vail Pass Auxiliary Lanes
PURPOSE:	Project Leadership Team (PLT) Meeting #2
DATE HELD:	January 17, 2018
LOCATION:	Town of Vail, 1309 Elkhorn Drive
ATTENDING:	PLT Members: Joel Barnett, FHWA Stephanie Gibson, FHWA (by phone) John Kronholm, Project Manager, CDOT Region 3 Karen Berdoulay, Resident Engineer, CDOT Region 3 Dave Cesark, Planning and Environmental Manager, CDOT Region 3 Randy McIntosh CDOT Region 3 Maintenance Matt Klein, US Forest Service (by phone) Ben Gerdes, Eagle County (by phone) Tom Gosiorowski, Summit County Greg Hall, Town of Vail Dick Cleveland, Representing Vail Town Council Tracy Sakaguchi, Colorado Motor Carriers Association Don Connors, Consultant Project Manager, Amec Foster Wheeler Leah Langerman, Consultant Public and Stakeholder Involvement Coordinator, David Evans and Associates Kara Swanson, Consultant Environmental Task Lead, David Evans and Associates Others in Attendance: Matt Figgs, CDOT Region 3 David Singer, Environmental Program Manager, CDOT Headquarters (by phone) JJ Wierema, Consultant Roadway Designer, Amec Foster Wheeler Tammie Smith, CDOT Region 3 Environmental
COPIES:	PLT Members, Attendees

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

(Please Note: Action items are shown In **_bold italics_**.)

1. **Introductions**

   a. The group did introductions and John presented the goal of the meeting which was to endorse the process of the project and ensure that CSS was being followed.

2. **Work Plan and Public Involvement Plan Review**

   a. Don walked through the work plan slides in the presentation (attached to these notes).

   b. Don spoke about the desired outcomes of the project including adding auxiliary lanes from mile post (MP) 180 to 190 on I-70, improve safety and operations, minimize environmental impacts, implement the Black Gore Creek sediment plan, meet the commitments of the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS, and complete the template Environmental Assessment (EA) and FIR plans (30% design) by early 2020.

i. Leah asked if other outcomes were desired by the project's PLT.

ii. Tom mentioned that the desire to reduce construction impacts to the traveling public should be a desired outcome due to the history of impacts from road work on I-70 over Vail Pass in previous years. As this project will span multiple years, this should be an added desired outcome. The group agreed that this is a good addition to the list.

iii. Greg suggested that the goal should not just be to minimize environmental impacts, but improve upon past impacts from previous projects. The group agreed to add this to the list.

iv. Karen recommended that the implementation of the Black Gore Creek sediment plan should include refinements to that plan as needed as the plan is at least 10 years old. This will be added.

v. Stephanie asked to change the statement "template EA" to just "EA."

c. Don explained the list of documents (inputs) that are being incorporated into the project that the team will follow.

i. Don requested PLT members send any other relevant documents not listed in the presentation to the design team.

1) Don stated that the project staff has a copy of the original Vail Pass EIS and can send it to anyone who would like. It. ***Don will send the original Vail Pass EIS to Stephanie for her records.***

d. Don went over the project schedule and key milestones that will take place between now and the EA decision document/(Field Inspection Review (FIR) 30% design milestone in early 2020.

e. The alternatives analysis process was covered next and how different alternatives for adding auxiliary lanes will be screened and then developed into a preferred alternative.

i. Greg asked how an advanced guideway system (AGS) template would not be precluded from a preferred alternative. Don explained that the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS shows that an AGS cannot be precluded by projects, and while this project will not include an alignment for a potential future AGS, it will not preclude it either.

1) David S. mentioned that the key is that a future AGS would have to react to this project's ultimate build out as there are too many alignments to consider with a future AGS alignment. However, this project to not preclude an AGS.

f. Leah talked about the different project teams that will be assembled for the project. The project staff includes FHWA, CDOT, and consultant Staff

i. The PLT will plan to have four meetings in total. Its role is to ensure that the project is following the process.

ii. The Technical Team (TT) is composed of technical experts. Seven meetings are currently planned with the TT.

iii. The Issue Task Forces (ITFs) will be part of the project as well. Three of them are required (Section 106, SWEEP, and ALIVE), but the project staff wanted to add another ITF composed of emergency service providers as they will be able to provide insight and guidance on how to improve the operations and safety of I-70 over Vail Pass.

g. Leah showed the slide with contact information for certain lead project staff. She asked that any media questions on the project be directed to Tracy Trulove, R3 Public Information Officer (PIO).

h. She then covered other agencies that the project is coordinating with. FHWA has invited three other federal agencies to be cooperating agencies but has not received anything back from them yet.

i. Leah spoke to the public information principles that the project team will adhere to in providing stakeholder and public information regarding the project.

    i. A project website, hosted by CDOT, will be established soon (the link will be sent to the PLT group once it is active).
    ii. Public comments received from public meetings or via other methods will be compiled and presented to the PLT in future meetings.
    iii. Three public meetings will be held, including a public scoping meeting projected to be in late February (the first of the three public meetings).
    iv. Trail intercept surveys will be completed later in the process from trail uses on the 10-Mile Canyon recreation trail.
    v. Mailers will be sent to East Vail residents, email lists will be complied, and the project staff will work with CDOT and local Public Information Officers (PIOs) to cast a wide net for providing information to the public.
    vi. A text for information service is being explored as well.

3. **Purpose and Need Review**

a. Kara talked about the Purpose & Need (P&N) component of the EA.

    i. The P&N in the presentation has not been endorsed by FHWA yet.

b. Kara spoke to the P&N statements. The factors include safety concerns and operation issues.

    i. Stephanie asked why eastbound and westbound are being specifically stated rather than I-70 generally. Kara responded that Mike Vanderhoof (the previous CDOT Region 3 Environmental lead) had asked that those directions be added to the purpose statement. Tracy mentioned that she liked that both directions were mentioned as only the west side of Vail Pass is being considered and it might be confusing if both directions of travel aren't mentioned. Tom added that as public perception is this is a climbing lane project, keeping both eastbound and westbound shows that this is more than a climbing lane.
    ii. Tom stated that the weather (chain/traction laws) and snow removal operations are such a big component of the project that they should be added to the P&N statement. Kara explained that details like that (where supported by data) will be included in the "need" discussion in the P&N section of the EA.
    iii. Stephanie suggested changing the Need statement to start off with the fact the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS recommended a project to address safety and operations. She also added that auxiliary lanes should not be mentioned as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) should not pre-determine a solution. John stated that since the PEIS recommended auxiliary lanes, it was included in the Need statement. Stephanie responded that the needs from the PEIS should be added rather than the solution. Kara stated that the project team would revise the Need statement to reflect this.

1) Tom asked if solutions other than auxiliary lanes are going to have to be considered now. Stephanie stated that while the PEIS recommended auxiliary lanes as the solution, that isn't the only solution that should looked at. Don mentioned that roadway geometry and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) components will also be reviewed, so auxiliary lanes will only be a component of the solution.

iv. Greg stated that safety and operations aren't the only "issues" along the corridor as there are aspects like environmental and wildlife.

1) John responded that the P&N for the project is highway related, the project is not being generated because of environmental or wildlife. Those other items will be addressed as they are in the core values of the project, but are not a part of the P&N.

v. Tracy asked if specific mentions of trucks could be removed as other large vehicles (RVs, campers, boats, etc.) also contribute to the differential speeds. These mentions will be changed to recognize slow moving vehicles are not solely trucks.

vi. Tom asked about how wildlife movement along the corridor plays into the P&N statement.

1) Kara mentioned that to be in the Purpose & Need statement, there would have to be a documented safety issue from wildlife collisions. John added that it will be reviewed as part of the project (via the ALIVE ITF), but the wildlife collisions along the Vail Pass corridor are actually lower than many other areas of I-70. The group agreed this would be a good approach.

vii. Leah stated that the project staff will make revisions to the P&N statement to capture this discussion. It will be provided for PLT review and concurrence prior to the public scoping meeting.

4. **Review of Draft CSS Material**

a. Kara covered the draft Context Statement based on input and discussion from the PLT Meeting #1 (covered in the meeting handouts – attached).

i. Stephanie asked to move the second paragraph to be first in order to mention the statewide importance of I-70 before being location specific. This was agreed upon by the group.

ii. Tom stated that the I-70 corridor is more than connecting ski resorts to the front range. The group discussed that it is a freight corridor, critical interstate commerce route, and provides links to the western slope.

iii. Stephanie asked to add the word "historic" when describing the corridor in the current first paragraph as I-70 itself (not just Vail Pass) is considered historic.

b. Kara then talked about the draft Core Values that were put together from the PLT Meeting #1 discussion.

i. Stephanie asked to add the historic considerations as a specific Core Value, but then agreed that it can be covered in other values, as long as it is included.

ii. Greg asked where the economic significance of I-70 fits into the Core Values as the corridor is the life blood of many communities in the state.

1) The group discussed that it makes the most sense to add it to the Context Statement as it is such a significant issue. CDOT has assigned a value of $800,000 of economic loss per hour to the economy of Colorado for when I-70 is closed on Vail Pass. If this issue is placed in the Context Statement,

improved operations and reduced closure times can be the measure for this issue.

    iii.   Stephanie asked to add the goal of reducing closures on Vail Pass to the list of Critical Issues. Last year Vail Pass was closed for 177 hours.

c.   The Critical Issues were then reviewed. These are the concerns related to each of the Core Values.

    i.   Greg asked if made sense to highlight all wildlife and not just threatened and endangered species. Wildlife will be added as a separate bullet to capture the change.

    ii.   Tom stated that substandard alignment should be changed to substandard geometry. This change was agreed upon.

    iii.   Stephanie asked what an emergency response area is defined as. Leah stated that this refers to when I-70 is closed and emergency response vehicles do not have the room to maneuver. This leads to safety closures in both directions of I-70 to allow emergency response vehicles to travel the wrong direction on I-70 so they can respond to an incident. To clarify this need more, this will be changed to emergency response access.

    iv.   Stephanie stated that the operational challenges are not very well identified in the current Critical Issues. She suggested this idea be expanded on more. The project staff will look at how this may be accomplished.

    v.   Stephanie asked that the section on capacity be reduced as it is not a Core Value for this specific project. The group discussed that while the capacity is not a Core Value, as the safety and operations improve on I-70, the capacity will naturally improve. The group decided to look further at whether this should be a Core Value or simply removed.

    vi.   Kara asked if aesthetics of the corridor (not just the landscape views, but the views of the bridges and the highway) should be a critical issue. David S. suggested adding keeping with the CSS requirements of the corridor as a Success Factor for this issue.

d.   Success Factors were discussed. The slideshow presentation showed some examples Success Factors that could be added to address critical issues. The Success Factors will be drafted by the project staff based on input from the PLT.

    i.   Tom mentioned that the theme of the examples is a good start and should be continued. One that he recommended adding was the reduction in crashes along I-70. He also mentioned that another one could be improving the aggregate travel speed for all users on Vail Pass.

    ii.   Greg asked how CDOT's RoadX effort and connected vehicles in the future come into consideration on the project. Dick mentioned that there is a current inability to communicate current conditions on the pass and that communication should be enhanced with this project. Stephanie stated that other projects have talked about "near term technology" and "long term technology" in their EAs. The current technology is easy to discuss as it already exists, but the longer term is more difficult as it is too hard to predict what it will be and the EA should not preclude anything that hasn't been invented yet. The group discussed that this project would be a perfect candidate for emerging technology (specifically the Panasonic pilots), but it may need to be a separate project that ties into this project. ***Karen will talk to Peter Kozinski, CDOT RoadX Director, to see how this project may tie into their efforts.***

      iii.   Greg also asked how the potential for CDOT to issue more Code 16s (Passenger Vehicle Chain Laws) plays into the project. The existing truck chain stations would not be an option for passenger vehicles and this issue should be addressed by the project.

      iv.   Dick talked about how noise issues and mitigation would play into this project as it has always been an important issue to locals in the Town of Vail. It was decided to move the noise item in Critical Issues to a separate bullet.

      v.   Leah asked that in the interest of time, PLT members email her any other Success Factors that should be considered as the project staff drafts these factors. ***PLT members will email any other Success Factors for consideration to Leah.***

   e.   ***The Context Statement, Core Values, Critical Issues, and Success Factors will be revised to capture this discussion and then sent out to the PLT.***

5. **Technical Team Members**

   a.   Leah talked about the proposed Technical Team (TT), its purpose and responsibilities, and the draft list of individuals on the TT, as shown on the attached handout. To keep the PLT informed, PLT members would be copied on all TT correspondence and invitations, but not expected to go to the meetings, although they are welcome to attend and participate. The group agreed this was a good approach.

      i.   Stephanie asked if TT members would be responsible for reviewing technical reports generated during the EA process. David S. stated that this was not typical, but TT members will contribute to what goes in those reports. This will be removed from the TT member responsibilities.

      ii.   Leah presented the proposed TT meeting discussion topics to the group for review. Since each TT member would not be an expert in each discussion topic, the project staff would send an agenda and proposed topic to the entire TT group and each member would decide whether to attend the specific TT meeting.

   b.   The proposed TT member list was reviewed and changes were recommended by the PLT. ***These changes will be incorporated into the updated TT list and sent out to the PLT.***

      i.   Greg asked if emergency service providers should be added to the list since they respond to Vail Pass incidents. Dick stated it would be important that they be added to the TT member list. Leah agreed with the importance of emergency service provider input, but noted that it may be more appropriate to respect their time by holding separate meetings (ITFs) with them, in order to focus on items relevant to them. On previous projects, this has been a successful approach that has increased their involvement. Due to his past involvement, Capt. Duran will be kept on the TT list, and a separate ITF to engage other emergency service providers will be assembled. This approach was agreed upon.

      ii.   Karen stated that the project staff struggled with refining the draft list to include as many groups and individuals as possible, but not make the group too large to function well.

          1)   The group discussed that the common approach is for the towns and local agencies to have one TT representative, and that member would decide to bring other specialty members of their agency to specific TT meetings as needed.

              a)   David S. suggested that rather than inviting more people to the TT meetings, hold more ITFs to capture specific topics. Greg still asked to

have the Town of Vail's environmental lead officially on the TT list and then have the flexibility to bring technical experts as needed.

    iii. A suggestion was made to move some of the specific environmental groups from the TT list to the ITF lists. David S. added that on previous projects, this was done and those ITF meetings were summarized to the TTs so their issues can be more directly addressed.

        1) Tom suggested that a good approach would be to identify ITF members and reach out with a project introduction and invitation to participate in the ITFs to these individuals early in the process (and note that ITFs will convene a few months later). The group agreed that this would be a good approach.

           a) The group discussed different ITFs and which representatives listed on the draft TT list should be moved to an ITF so their areas of focus could be better discussed.

           b) It was discussed if the ski resorts listed should be kept as TT members, or if they should be engaged via public meetings or specific stakeholder outreach. The group decided that specific outreach would be a better approach rather than having them be a part of the TT.

           c) The project staff recommended that providing the local PIOs with information from the TTs, rather than having them be on the TT, would be a good approach. Summit & Eagle Counties and Town Of Vail agreed to this.

    iv. Leah suggested that in the interest of time, PLT members send their suggestions for specific members to ITFs to her.

   c. ***An updated TT member list and ITF list with members will be drafted and sent to the PLT.***

6. **PLT Charter Agreement Review**

   a. Leah reviewed the PLT Charter.

      i. ***The Context Statement, Core Values and Critical Issues will be revised as discussed previously and included in the Charter.***

   b. Leah asked if there were any recommended changes to the PLT members listed in the Charter.

      i. Tom Gosiorowski will replace Thadd Knoll for Summit County.

      ii. Andy Garcia will be replaced with Randy McIntosh for Michael Goolsby's alternate.

   c. Leah discussed the expectations of PLT members, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each PLT member (as laid out in the CSS guidelines and discussed at PLT Meeting #1). The group approved to what was listed.

   d. Greg asked if there would be an Executive Oversight Committee from CDOT as mentioned at PLT Meeting #1.

      i. Karen stated that there will be an Executive Oversight Committee and that the member list is being drafted currently. The proposed list currently only contains CDOT upper management and no local elected officials. The intent would be to keep CDOT management apprised of the project and future funding needs. ***The PLT will be presented with the Executive Oversight Committee member list once it is finalized.***

e. Leah covered the Team Performance Assessment which listed performance measures to ensure the success of the team. These draft measures were approved by the PLT and will be incorporated into the final Charter.

f. Leah spoke to the remaining items on the Charter and asked for any additions to.

    i. Stephanie suggested adding a statement about making decisions to the Discussions and Deliberations section. All decisions should be documented thoroughly as to why each decision was made. This will also be highlighted in the Meeting Summaries section.

    ii. Greg asked about email communication protocol and whether the whole PLT should be included or just the project staff.

        1) The group decided that the Email Communication section should show that important discussions should be sent to the entire PLT group.

    iii. The group discussed the Public Coordination section of the charter.

        1) There was discussion about how to handle public comments at the PLT meetings if members of the public attend.

        2) Stephanie recommended that while PLT meetings not be specifically advertised (as that is not the right avenue for public comment), if the public asks to come to the meetings that would be allowed (PLT meetings would not be closed-door).

        3) After discussing the public comment idea, the group decided that rather than having time at the end of each PLT meeting giving the public time to comment, that in the interest of time the public can attend PLT meetings and then submit comments to the project staff that the PLT can then review outside of the meetings.

        4) Advertising PLT and TT meeting dates/times/locations was discussed. The group decided that this process should be consistent with what is done for the CDOT Floyd Hill project. [Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that PLT and TT meeting dates are not advertised, but notes from the meetings are posted to the project web page.]

        5) The group decided for both PLT & TT meetings, the meeting times and locations will be advertised following the Floyd Hill project's method.; the public is welcome to observe meeting proceedings and public comment/question period will not be allowed during these meetings .

        6) ***The procedures for public participation and comment in the PLT meetings will be added to the PLT Charter.***

    iv. The group approved of the criteria listed that will be used by the PLT to measure the project's success with the following revision:

        1) Change the second bullet to read: Was the project consistent with the recommendations from the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS?

g. ***The Charter will be revised and sent to PLT members for signature by Leah.***

7. **Schedule and Next Steps**

a. **DECISION POINT:** The PLT gave consensus that the process of the project is acceptable (endorsed) and the project can move forward.

b. The project schedule and next steps of the project were presented by Leah.

      i. Documents reviewed today will be revised and sent to PLT members with the notes from this meeting.

      ii. Invitations for TT participation will be extended and the first TT meeting will be scheduled [2/7/18, 1-4pm, Miller Ranch Community Center, Edwards].

      iii. An agency scoping meeting will be held mid-February.

      iv. Public Meeting #1 is tentatively scheduled for 2/22 [now confirmed for 2/22/18 at Donovan Pavilion].

      v. PLT Meeting #3 will be held in late summer 2018.

8. Other Items

a. It was asked if a shared drive will be set up for the PLT.

      i. ***A Google Drive folder will be set up for the project and shared with the PLT for shared documents.***