



SH 82
GRAND AVENUE BRIDGE

APRIL 4, 2012, PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Project: SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Meeting: Public Open House
April 4, 2012

Study Team Attendees:

CDOT: Josh Cullen, Joe Elsen, Roland Wagner, Tammie Smith, Tim Woodmansee, Sean Yeates

Colorado Bridge Enterprise Charlie Trujillo

Consultants: Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, George Tsiouvaras, Ryan Abraham, David Woolfall, Dan Logsdon, Don Connors, Pat Noyes, Tom Newland, Mary Speck

DATE/TIME/LOCATION

April 4, 2012, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Glenwood Springs Community Center.

PURPOSE

To listen to and gather the public's concerns, issues, and ideas about the alternatives under development and to answer questions about the project. The study team members attending the meeting were instructed to communicate that we do not have solutions yet. The study team was available to:

- Provide project background information
- Display an updated project schedule
- Explain the Purpose and Need for the project
- Explain the Environmental Assessment process
- Describe the responsibilities of the project working teams
- Explain bridge issues and concerns
- Describe the evaluation process
- Describe the initial alternatives
- Answer questions about right-of way
- Show how the public can participate in the process
- Ask for public input on what is important about the elements of the initial alternatives

MEETING NOTICES

A press release about the Public Open House was sent to the media distribution list on March 15, 2012. Accompanying information was distributed via GovDelivery, Facebook, and Twitter.

A display ad announcing the Public Open House was placed in the Glenwood Post Independent and Aspen Times on March 20 and March 28 that included a contact number for Spanish speakers.

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A two-page 11- x 17-inch display ad was placed in the Glenwood Post Independent and Aspen Times on April 2 that contained a reminder about the Public Open House, background of the project, alternatives that are under consideration, and thumbnail graphics of the alternatives and intersection options that would be presented in more detail at the Public Open House.

MEETING FORMAT

There was no formal presentation. Boards were displayed and the study team was available to answer questions. Also, there was a traffic simulation of two of the north side intersection options displayed via computer.

Presentation Boards were as follows:

Project Background

1. Welcome
2. Purpose of Tonight's Public Open House/Project Overview/Project Background
3. Vicinity Map/Stakeholder Input to Decision Process
4. Stakeholder Input (Roles and Responsibilities)
5. Context Statement\Critical Success Factors/Key Project Outcomes
6. Existing Bridge Conditions
7. Draft Project Purpose/Draft Project Needs/Draft Project Goals

Alternatives

1. Alternatives Screening Process/No-Action Alternative
2. Rehabilitation Alternative
3. Development of Replacement Alternatives/Level 1 (Fatal Flaw) Screening Criteria
4. Level 2A Evaluation-Alignments - Alignments Evaluated
5. Level 2A Screening - Alignments Screened Out
6. Level 2A Screening - Cross Sections South of 7th
7. Level 2A Screening - Alignments to be Evaluated for Level 2B
8. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (4-Lane Bridge on the South End of Grand Ave.) - Alternatives 1 & 2
9. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (4-Lane Bridge on the South End of Grand Ave.) - Alternatives 3 & 4
10. Level 2B Alternatives -Alternative 3 Intersection Options
11. Level 2B Alternatives Cross-Section Options - (4-Lane Bridge on the South End of Grand Ave.)
12. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (Couplets Using Grand Ave. and Colorado Ave.) - Alternative 5
13. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (Couplets Using Grand Ave. and Colorado Ave.) - Alternatives 6 & 7
14. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (Couplets Using Grand Ave. and Colorado Ave.) - Alternatives 8 & 9
15. Level 2B Alternatives-Cross-Sections (Couplets Using Grand Ave. and Colorado Ave.)
16. Level 2B Alternatives - Alternative 9 Intersection Options
17. Level 2B Alternatives-Alignments (Couplets Using Cooper Ave. and Colorado Ave.) - Alternatives 10 & 11
18. Level 2B Alternatives - Alternative 11 Intersection Options

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19. Level 2B Alternatives- Cross Sections (Couplets Using Cooper Ave. and Colorado Ave.)
- Alternatives 10 & 11

Environmental

1. What is an Environmental Assessment/ Environmental Assessment Categories/EA Process/Historic Resources Map

Comments

1. Project Schedule\ Next Steps for the Project Team/How You Can Keep Informed/Please Give Us Your Comments

Other

1. Help Us with the Glenwood Springs Travel Survey
2. Colorado Bridge Enterprise
3. Large Format: Historic Timeline

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

Approximately 91 people attended the meeting – a mixture of business and building owners, long-time area residents, and public officials.

The attendees at the meeting were very engaged. There was positive discussion surrounding concerns and ideas for the project. There were several opinions about the various alternatives, which included a single bridge, couplet combinations, and options for intersections on the north side of the Colorado River.

DEBRIEF IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The study team also took notes during the meeting. At a debrief following the meeting, the following topics were noted:

1. Several folks think a bypass should be built instead.
2. Couplets in general were not too popular, for numerous reasons:
 - a. Couplets create event planning challenges.
 - b. Couplets affect the new Library.
 - c. Couplets affect the new parking garages.
 - d. Couplets affect downtown businesses.
 - e. Couplets affect the County parking and campus.
 - f. Couplets affect the nearby elementary school.
 - g. Couplets affect traffic flow.
 - h. Couples affect circulation.
 - i. CDOT has already spent money putting down concrete paving. Why consider couplets that might not use all of this?
3. Cooper Street couplet was seen as the worst of the options.

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4. There was some support for couplets, particularly using Colorado.
5. Without the proposed 8th Street bridge, couplets would be bad for downtown traffic.
6. Concern about traffic speeds on Grand Avenue.
7. Keep bike and ped movements separate.
8. Build an iconic structure.
9. Parking is not as important on Grand Avenue.
10. Parking downtown is very important.
11. 5th lane on bridge would be good for events.
12. Some folks had gripes about other transportation problems, such as Midland Avenue.
13. Three-lane roundabout was generally less favorable.
14. Not much support for flyover alternative.
15. General opposition to change.
16. Not much interest in Maple.
17. Some City Council members expressed interest in more council presentations.

COMMENT FORMS

The Comment Form provided to attendees contained both ranking questions and questions that required written responses. They addressed the project Purpose & Need, Project Goals, Level 1 and 2A Screening, and questions about the 2B alternatives and options presented in the displays. (A copy of the Comment Form is attached.) There were 15 Comment Forms filled in and left by attendees the day of the Public Open House. Several people took the Comment Form with them to turn in later via mail, fax, or email. The Comment Form in a Survey Monkey format also was accessible from CDOT's project website. There were an additional 3 forms submitted to the study team after the Open House and 6 submitted via Survey Monkey. There were 2 comments emails sent to the project team through the website specifically commenting on the Public Open House.

All of the comments are recorded as part of the documentation for the NEPA process.

An analysis of the ranking questions provides general preferences of those who responded. This analysis weighted responses either from 0 to 100 based on how supportive they were of the subject and from -100 to +100 based on how strongly they disagreed or agreed with the ranking questions.:

1. Purpose & Need: Respondents are generally supportive of both needs. On a scale of 0 to 100 with 100 representing strong support and 0 representing no support, the rating was 65 for support on the connectivity need and 60 for support of the bridge deficiencies need. The most frequent response for both needs was "extremely important."
2. Couplet alternatives: The overall rating was -18 on a scale from -100 to +100 with -100 being very unfavorable and +100 being very favorable. The most frequent response was "strongly disagree" (with couplets).

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3. Existing pedestrian bridge: There was strong overall support retaining the existing pedestrian bridge with a +55 positive rating (scale from -100 to +100). The most frequent response was “strong agree” to keep existing pedestrian bridge.
4. Changes in parking associated with couplet: Responses generally felt it was not good to remove parking from Cooper and Colorado Avenues to gain parking on Grand Avenue with a -15 rating. (scale from -100 to +100). However, the most frequent response was to “agree” that these parking changes are acceptable. The lower rating was due to many “strongly disagree” responses.
5. Ground level space was generally considered more important than bridge sidewalk space with a rating of +34, (scale from -100 to +100). The most frequent response was “strongly agree” with ground level space being more important than bridge sidewalk space.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA COMMENT FORMS, EMAILS TO CDOT, AND THE SURVEY MONKEY

Comments on Purpose and Need

Responses were generally supportive of both stated needs, other than those who want a bypass. Additional transportation needs mentioned were:

- Separate bike and pedestrians from traffic.
- Consider bypass concept.
- Maintain easy on/off access for I-70.
- Reduce speed of vehicles on the bridge.
- Improve traffic speed through 6th Street intersection.
- Improve pedestrian experience from west Glenwood to the Pool and downtown.
- Improve bike/ped access.
- Connections from the 8th St. bridge to the Meadows Area and Red Mountain with Grand Avenue, Blake Avenue, and Pitkin Avenue.
- Improve safety of “malfunction junction” (6th and Laurel).
- Remove graffiti on pedestrian bridge.
- If the solution results in moving traffic off of Grand Avenue, then a true SH 82 bypass should be considered instead.

Comments on Project Goals

- Consider traffic outcomes from changes – keep big picture in mind.
- Minimize impact on tourism during construction and promote it post-construction.
- Move through traffic on SH 82 through town as quickly as possible.
- The solution should create best opportunities for future development.
- Keep our small town feel.

Comments on Level 1 and Level 2A Alignments and Cross-Sections Screened Out

There were very few comments provided here. If any, they agreed that the screening made sense.

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Comments on “Single Bridge or Couplet (Paired) Alignments

There was some support for couplets. The advantages to couplets over a single bridge included that they would provide a less imposing structure through downtown; they would move traffic efficiently; would be safer in case of accident; and would reduce the potential for head-on collisions. Couplets would create advantages for Grand Avenue—those paired with Grand Avenue would take some traffic off of Grand, which would have a calming effect, and couplets not using Grand Avenue would create an opportunity to revitalize downtown and Grand Avenue. Couplets would also have advantages over a single bridge in constructability.

Alignment 3 (single bridge) was considered to have fewer impacts to other projects (library, pedestrian plaza, 8th Street), neighborhoods, businesses, and local traffic. Elevating the single bridge is a good idea.

There were more disadvantages listed for couplets than advantages. Overall, traffic movements were seen as more complicated. For example, couplets would require one-way access onto business streets; the out-of-direction travel would move traffic to side streets; 90-degree turns would be difficult for trucks to maneuver, especially those on 9th Street; and there would be no way for cars to turn across couplet traffic going to/from bridge. There also would be more conflicts with parking and the pedestrian plaza on Cooper.

Transferring traffic to streets other than Grand Avenue just transfers adverse impacts to other parts of downtown. For example, the businesses and residences on the couplet streets would have more impacts in noise and fumes, particularly if the traffic is slowed down. Neighborhoods and businesses on Cooper and Colorado would be boxed off.

Other disadvantages mentioned were the added cost to build two bridges and added impacts to the river.

Comments on Intersection Options on the North Side of I-70 and the Colorado River

Most people preferred the smaller roundabouts because they would be less complicated and therefore less confusing for pedestrians and tourists who aren't familiar with the area. Intersection C was seen as the most desirable because of its smaller scale and it would move traffic better, easing pressure on local traffic and it would have the least amount of traffic congestion.

It was considered important to think about how to move people from the hotels to the Hot Springs and to downtown. Intersection B would create a more direct connection to I-70 and direct pedestrian movement from hotels to the Pool. Moving the intersection to Laurel was seen as positive because it leaves 6th and Pine intersection more for pedestrians. Alignments to Pine and Maple would still be restricted by 6th Street. It was noted that improvements are needed to the current 6th and Laurel intersection.

Some of the options were considered confusing to tourists and difficult for larger trucks to maneuver. There was a desire to separate through traffic from local traffic (Intersection A), if possible. There was a concern about loss of businesses with the intersections—for example, by bypassing 6th Street. Stop lights were thought to add to the cost, and medians are difficult with snow and at night.

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Comments on Couplet Combinations

Couplets aligning to Laurel were generally more acceptable than those touching down at 6th and Pine. It was noted that Alternative 9 (aligning Colorado and Grand with Laurel) provides the best opportunity for long-term urban design. It also would allow the existing pedestrian bridge to remain and/or create additional bike/ped crossing, and it would open Colorado to more development. In addition, it keeps some traffic in front of businesses on Grand and on 6th.

Colorado was more acceptable than Cooper for one of the couplet routes. Reasons cited for liking the couplet configurations were: they keep traffic off of Grand so it is better for pedestrians, makes room for more parking on Grand, and they open other possibilities for development. It is better for construction phasing, offers an opportunity to reclaim Grand Avenue between 7th and 8th, and is the best opportunity for future improvements on the south side.

There were several reasons cited for not liking couplets. Multiple bridges would look too “big city” and detract from the historic character of the residential streets, Hotel Colorado, and the train station. Cooper and Colorado would have to be rebuilt to accommodate the added traffic; they are not suited to additional traffic and would impact residential areas. Couplets would add to traffic generated by courthouse, post office, and school. The couplet on Cooper would impact the train depot and likely require the removal of the existing bike/ped bridge. Its width would also impact access to stores and eliminate parking. Also, the turns and additional stop lights would slow traffic down.

Alternatives 6 and 7 – traffic movements at 6th look restrictive.

Comments on Pedestrian/Bicyclist Considerations

Most of the comments on these questions indicated a strong desire to create an environment in Glenwood Springs that enhances the experiences for pedestrians and bicyclists. There was a lot of support for keeping pedestrians and bicyclists separated from vehicle traffic, several people preferring to have them on separate facility. It was generally accepted that the separation greatly improves the experience of both visitors and locals as they move from one side of the river to the other. Safety, fumes and noise were mentioned as concerns.

There were comments related to improving the pedestrian crossing at the north end of the bridge (access from 6th Avenue is confusing to pedestrians). It is dangerous for pedestrians coming off of south side of bridge because they aren't aware of cars turning onto to 7th Street. A suggestion was made to direct bike traffic to Midland if the trail through South Canyon gets built; also, to keep the existing pedestrian bridge.

Additional Comments on How Could the Alternatives or Options be Modified to Meet the Project Goals and Key Objectives More Effectively

- Consider safe and efficient snow removal.
- Avoid creating a haven for pigeons and other birds.
- Reduce number of options in an efficient manner to study/minimize impacts on the north side.
- Reduce traffic speed.
- No traffic on Cooper or Colorado.
- Must retain pedestrian refuge – close Grand to traffic completely.

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- Weight some objectives more than others, i.e., the ability to accommodate traffic flow and demand and the ability to enhance urban design.
- Include east-west bike tunnel under bridge at alley in the 700 block of Grand Avenue.
- Incorporate delivery truck unloading areas in planning
- Design bridge(s) without pilings/supports in river.
- Design east-west bike route from Two Rivers Park to Glenwood Canyon path.
- Specify low-carbon concrete.



SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Public Open House, Wednesday, April 4, 2012

COMMENT FORM

The following transportation needs have been identified for the project. Please rank the relative importance of each need.

	Extremely Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
Improve connectivity between downtown Glenwood Springs, and the Roaring Fork Valley, with the historic Hot Springs pool area and I-70.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Address the functional and structural deficiencies of the bridge to improve public safety, including emergency service response, and reliability as a critical transportation route.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Are there other important transportation needs in the vicinity of the project?

Do you have thoughts or comments on the identified Project Goals?

What thoughts or ideas do you have regarding the Level 1 and Level 2A alignments and cross-sections that were screened out?

For each of the Level 2B Alternatives shown on the boards, tell us what you think their advantages and disadvantages are and why.

Single Bridge or Couplet (Paired) Alignments

What advantages does a couplet offer compared to a single bridge?

What are the disadvantages of a couplet compared to a single bridge?

Intersection Options on the North Side of I-70 and the Colorado River

What are the advantages to the different options on the north?

What are the disadvantages of each?

Please indicate your preferences for the following and provide comments, as needed, to explain your preferences.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A couplet (two one-way roads between 7 th and 9 th) would enhance downtown Glenwood Springs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retaining the existing pedestrian bridge is preferable to adding sidewalks to replacement bridge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is acceptable to lose on-street parking on Cooper or Colorado in exchange for wider sidewalks and more parking on Grand Avenue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is more important to maximize the ground-level sidewalks on Grand Avenue and minimize the bridge width than to add a sidewalk to the new bridge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

How could the alternatives or options be modified to meet the Project Goals and Key Objectives more effectively?

Please provide your email to be notified of planning updates and meetings:

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Please leave completed comment sheet in the drop box located at the exit/entrance.

You may also (by April 25, 2012):

- **Mail** your comments to: Joe Elsen, Colorado Department of Transportation, 202 Centennial Street, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601.
- **Email** your comments to: Joseph.Elsen@dot.state.co.us.
- **Fax** your comments to: Joe Elsen at 970.947.5133.
- **Fill out this form on line at:** <http://www.coloradodot.info/projects/sh82grandavenuebridge/public-involvement>.