



SH 82 GRAND AVENUE BRIDGE

November 19, 2014, Public Hearing Summary

Project: SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Meeting: Public Hearing –November 19, 2014

Study Team Attendees:

Colorado Department of
Transportation:

Josh Cullen, Joe Elsen, Roland Wagner, Mike Vanderhoof, Richard Alexander, Dorlynn Erickson, Tim Woodmansee

Colorado Bridge Enterprise: Matthew Cirulli

Consultant Team:

Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, Misty Swan, Jennifer Merer, Jennifer Forbes, George Tsiouvaras, Randal Lapsley, David Woolfall, Pat Noyes, Tom Newland

Date, Time, and Location of the Public Hearing

The public hearing was held on November 19, 2014, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Glenwood Springs Elementary School, 915 School Street, Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

Purpose of Public Hearing

The purpose of the public hearing was to present the environmental impacts and mitigation measures described in the SH 82/Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment and obtain public comments.

Public Hearing Announcements

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) announced the public hearing, as well as availability of the Environmental Assessment for a 30-day public comment period, in the following ways:

- Announcements were printed in the Aspen Times and the Glenwood Springs Post Independent on October 31, 2014 and November 14, 2014.
- CDOT distributed a press release on November 13, 2014.
- Emails were distributed to the project contact lists on October 31, 2014.
- Postcards were bulk mailed to the 81601 and 81602 zip codes (approximately 8,610 addresses) on October 30, 2014 for receipt on October 31, 2014.
- An announcement was placed on the project website (www.coloradodot.info/projects/sh82grandavenuebridge) beginning on October 31, 2014.

In addition, the Glenwood Springs Post Independent printed articles about the project and public hearing on November 10 and 12, 2014.

Public Hearing Format

The public hearing was held in an open house format from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. A 30-minute formal presentation was made at 6:30 p.m. Following the presentation, attendees were provided the opportunity to provide verbal comments and questions about the project.

Public Hearing Summary

During the open house portion of the public hearing, members of the public viewed information from the Environmental Assessment that was displayed around the room, and Study team members were available to discuss the project and answer questions. A physical model of the project was also displayed. In addition, current aesthetic designs for the project were displayed, as well as information about how the project works with a future bypass. A 30-minute presentation was made at 6:30 p.m. that summarized the project purpose and need, the Environmental Assessment process, alternatives screening conducted for the project, the Build Alternative design, construction detours, project impacts, historic effects, project funding, and next steps for the project.

At 7:00 p.m., members of the public were provided the opportunity to speak and provide verbal comments. Verbal comments were provided until approximately 8:15 when all attendees who requested to speak had spoken. A court reporter was present throughout the public hearing to record verbal comments during the open house portion of the hearing, and to record the presentation and verbal comments provided afterward. Comment sheets were made available for attendees to complete and submit at the public hearing or submit later during the official Environmental Assessment comment period.

CDOT Right-of-Way staff was available throughout the hearing to provide information about the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.

Handouts were provided to all attendees as they arrived at the hearing, and included:

- Executive Summary from the Environmental Assessment
- Methods for providing comments on the Environmental Assessment
- Comment sheet

Project information displayed around the room included:

- Welcome
- Project Purpose/Project Needs
- Project Goals/Project Information
- Where We Are in the Environmental Assessment Process/What's Next?
- Alternative Screening Process
- Public Involvement Throughout Environmental Assessment Process
- How has Public Input Influenced Build Alternative Design?
- Build Alternative
- Build Alternative Illustrations (three displays)
- Transportation Impacts During Construction
- Nighttime I-70 Construction Detour
- SH 82 (8th St. Extension) Construction Detour
- Permanent Transportation Impacts/Improvements

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- Right-of-Way Impacts
- Economic Impacts
- Noise Impacts
- Other Project Impacts
- Section 106: Historic Resources Within the Area of Potential Effect
- Section 106: Historic Effects
- Funding
- How to Provide Comments
- Thank You For Attending

Flip charts were also provided that presented the following information:

- Summary of Impacts and Mitigation from the Environmental Assessment
- Graphics illustrating the major traffic movements at the proposed 6th and Laurel roundabout

A traffic simulation model was shown via computer screen. The simulation showed traffic movements for the following areas:

- Through the 6th and Laurel roundabout.
- Connecting SH 82 and Grand Avenue to the I-70 Exit 116 ramps

In addition to information from the Environmental Assessment, current aesthetic design information was displayed, including:

- Pedestrian/Bicycle Underpass
- Retaining Walls
- Wayfinding
- Plaza Under Grand Avenue Bridge

Further, a display board illustrated how the new Grand Avenue Bridge works with a future bypass located along Roaring Fork River corridor.

Information provided during the 30-minute presentation included:

- Welcome
- Purpose of Public Hearing
- Project Purpose and Need
- Bridge Deficiencies
- Project Goals
- Project Information (Colorado Bridge Enterprise)
- Where we are in Environmental Assessment Process
- Alternative Screening Process
- Public Involvement
- Build Alternative
- Design Reflects Public Input (project elements)
- Public Input Shown in Design (aesthetics)
- SH 82 Detour
- I-70 Detour
- Project Impacts

- Section 106: Historic Effects
- Funding
- What’s Next?
- How to Provide Comments
- Thank You for Attending the Public Hearing – Comments?

Public Hearing Attendees

There were 124 people who signed in at the public hearing. Attendees included business owners, property and home owners, residents, consultants, public officials, and members of the local press.

Comments Received

Attendees submitted 18 comment sheets at the public hearing, and two attendees provided verbal comments directly to the court reporter. There were 30 people who provided verbal comments following the formal presentation, which were recorded by the court reporter.

Written comments received at the hearing voiced both opposition and support of the project. Some individuals who spoke at the hearing supported the project. However, most individuals who elected to speak at the hearing were opposed to the project for reasons such as the project would not relieve traffic volumes through Glenwood Springs, a bypass is needed instead of a new bridge to address traffic issues on Grand Avenue, the Environmental Assessment should be rejected and an EIS be prepared to address larger regional transportation issues, and the public review period for the Environmental Assessment should be extended.

The table below provides a summary of comments received at the hearing. Comment sheets received at the hearing and the public hearing transcript, which includes the formal presentation and verbal comments, are attached to these meeting minutes. Responses to all comments submitted at the hearing and during the comment period for the Environmental Assessment will be addressed in the Decision Document that will be prepared for the project.

Subject of Comment	Comment
Environmental Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is no longer just a bridge replacement project; it is building a bridge on a new alignment and reconfiguring the 6th/Laurel intersection. The Environmental Assessment should be rejected and an Environmental Impact Statement prepared to address regional transportation issues. • The Environmental Assessment did not examine all alternatives. • The project does not address the goals stated in the Environmental Assessment.
Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bridge serves the entire state of Colorado; the real need is for a bypass that is a statewide project. • A bypass will preserve the small community character of Glenwood Springs. • A bypass is needed for emergency evacuation. • Build a tunnel to divert traffic out of downtown Glenwood Springs.



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Subject of Comment	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bridge does not need to be replaced; it can be repaired and/or widened. • Proceed with replacing the bridge. • Do not build a super highway in Glenwood Springs - it does not fit with the town. • The project will be a benefit to Glenwood Springs. • The project will improve the safety of the 6th and Laurel intersection. • This project is a solution for today, but not for the future. • The project will ruin Grand Avenue. • CDOT needs to develop a better plan to handle increasing traffic exiting I-70. • This project will create a more bikeable, walkable, vibrant downtown area. • Use of wrought iron fencing for the bridge rail is recommended. • The new bridge should have a favorable and interesting design that fits with the City of Glenwood Springs. • The new bridge alignment does not visually and historically fit with the town. • Build a bridge with a longer design life.
Pedestrian Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will provide additional pedestrian connections. • People can't safely walk across Grand Avenue because of traffic congestion. • Do not want an elevator; consider an escalator instead.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will create economic opportunities on 6th Street.
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new bridge will not relieve traffic on Grand Avenue. • The new bridge will increase traffic. • The new bridge will increase speeds. • A bypass is needed instead of a new bridge to relieve traffic volumes on Grand Avenue. • Graphics presented at hearing do not show the high volume of traffic that currently exists. • Is there a disaster traffic plan in place? • High traffic speeds on the bridge should be addressed - concerned about safety of pedestrians crossing Grand Avenue.
Environmental Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new bridge will increase traffic, resulting in increased air pollution and noise. • The impact from tree removal is not addressed in the Environmental Assessment. • Removal of street trees is a concern. They have historic value. Relocate utilities so that street trees can be replaced. • Impacts from building and removing causeways in the river were not evaluated in the Environmental Assessment. • The design of the bridge should be context sensitive.

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Subject of Comment	Comment
Construction Impacts / Detours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planned detours are unsafe and unacceptable. • Detours will impact residents and businesses along detour routes, including access and noise. • Building a temporary detour route on 8th Street is a waste of money. Coordinate with the City to build a permanent 8th Street connection. • Detours will impact emergency response during detours. • Provide physical barriers to discourage short cuts during detour. • The square-about used during construction detours is a concern. • The safety of school children crossing streets during construction is a concern. • Construction detours will create a hardship on the community. • The 90-day bridge closure will be hard on downtown businesses - please reduce bridge closure time as much as possible.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the funds for a new bridge to build a bypass instead. • The Environmental Assessment states that the bridge replacement will not preclude future consideration of a bypass, but after funding the bridge, would CDOT ever consider funding a bypass? • The cost of a bypass is incorrectly stated in the Environmental Assessment. • Repairing the existing bridge will cost less than replacing it. • It is unacceptable for the city of Glenwood Springs and Garfield County to contribute \$6 million for a regional transportation project. • CDOT should pay for the entire project. • If the project goes over budget, who will pay for the overrun?
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider building a parking garage west of the Grand Avenue bridge. It would mitigate parking removed and solve issues with overflow parking in the area. • Please extend the 30-day comment period on the Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment is a large document that takes time to review. • Did local police and emergency services provide input on this project? • Schedule a regional vote regarding a bypass. • CDOT has not listened to citizen input. • The quality of life for Glenwood Springs citizens should be considered. • Who will mitigate area near 6th Street where existing bridge north touchdown will be removed?

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