

FURNITURE ROW

11. 2004 3:46PM

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RESPONSE

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May 11, 2004

Wilson & Company
455 East Pikes Peak, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Attention: Mr. Doug Eberhart *via email doug.eberhart@wilsonco.com*

Re: I-25 Environmental Assessment
N. Nevada/ Rock Rimmon Interchange

Dear Mr. Eberhart:

1.... This firm represents Furniture Row, LLC ("Furniture Row"). As you know, Furniture
2 Row owns and operates several businesses situated along Interstate 25 ("I-25") in Colorado
3.... Springs, accessed from the Corporate Drive exit (148B). This exit is presently scheduled to be
4 closed and reconfigured in connection with proposed I-25 corridor improvements. By letter
5.... dated April 11, 2001, we submitted comments to Wilson & Company on behalf of Furniture
6 Row, detailing the adverse impact the Corporate Drive exit closure will have on Furniture Row,
7.... similarly situated Corporate Drive businesses and the Corporate Drive neighborhood as a whole.
8 Furniture Row continues to monitor the proposed corridor improvements, and in this regard has
9.... reviewed the Environmental Assessment prepared by Wilson & Company on behalf of the
10 Federal Highway Administration (the "EA").

11.....
12 We recognize the EA addresses the impacts of the proposed improvements along the
13... entire Colorado Springs corridor, concluding the proposed improvements will help relieve ever
14 increasing corridor traffic congestion. We appreciate Wilson & Company and the Colorado
15... Department of Transportation's ("CDOT") continuing efforts to inform the public of the
16 proposed action, and to solicit public input. Our focus remains on those impacts associated with
17... the N. Nevada/Rockrimmon interchange reconfiguration which will directly impact the Furniture
18 Row businesses.

19.....
20 The least impact to the Furniture Row businesses would occur if the Federal Highway
21... Administration ("FHWA") adopted the no-action alternative, leaving the existing Corporate

Lines 1-21: No response necessary.

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1..... Drive exit open. Because Furniture Row recognizes the need for overall corridor improvements,
2 they have listened to the bases for closing the Corporate Drive exit and have participated in the
3..... public process that identified the preferred alternative for the N. Nevada/Rock Rimmon
4 interchange, including the concept and design for the Corporate Drive Connection as the
5..... appropriate solution to minimize the negative impacts associated with the exit closure.
6 Accordingly, we affirm the inclusion of the Corporate Drive connection in the EA study as an
7..... integral part of the proposed N. Nevada/Rockrimmon interchange project. The connection
8 remains important for the reasons detailed in our April 11, 2001, letter and the attached Position
9..... Statement. While we will not reiterate the many reasons comprehensively addressed in our past
10 communication, construction of the connection as part of the interchange reconfiguration will
11..... help ensure the continued viability of an entire neighborhood of local, regional and national
12 businesses while simultaneously promoting the recognized goals of increasing neighborhood
13..... connectivity and preserving critical emergency access to people and property along Corporate
14 Drive.

15.....
16 The EA document recognizes the importance of the connection, stating "[t]he existing,
17..... substandard southbound off and on ramps at Corporate Drive (Exit 148B) will be closed, but
18 access to the adjacent business area ("Furniture Row" and others) will be replaced by a new
19..... connection to North Nevada Avenue." Socioeconomic Impact, EA at 3-17 (emphasis supplied).
20 The Neighborhood Impact section also confirms the need for the Corporate Drive connection
21..... stating in the Mitigation portion of the section "[a]ccess to businesses on Corporate Drive will be
22 provided by a new bridge connecting Corporate Drive to the reconfigured I-25 Nevada
23..... Rockrimmon Interchange." Neighborhoods Impact -Mitigation, EA at 3-35. Accordingly, the
24 benefit associated with the reconfiguration of the N. Nevada/Rockrimmon interchange, as well as
25..... mitigation of reconfiguration impacts, requires construction of the Corporate Drive connection.
26

27..... While we are pleased the Corporate Drive connection has been analyzed as part of the
28 EA, we must stress the benefits associated with the connection can be achieved only if the
29..... connection is constructed simultaneously with work on the entire N.Nevada/Rock Rimmon
30 interchange. We will object to any decision that does not result in the simultaneous construction
31..... of the interchange and the connection. In addition to the economics of scale and design, any
32 significant delay between reconfiguring the interchange and constructing the connection will
33..... result in the negative impacts the EA recognizes the connection will mitigate. Delayed
34 construction of the connection would reroute business access to Corporate Drive in an inefficient
35..... manner, contrary to intended project goals. Failure to simultaneously construct the connection
36 will effectively isolate these businesses, promoting possible abandonment of the area contrary to
37..... local and regional land use and transportation plans.
38

39..... Assuming the FHWA makes a finding of no significant impact and the project is allowed
40 to proceed, we will continue to monitor and provide input on the design, construction and

Lines 27-37: In accordance with an agreement reached between CDOT and the City of Colorado Springs in May 2004, a Corporate Drive extension will be included as part of the construction of the North Nevada/Rockrimmon interchange complex. A formal resolution affirming this decision was adopted by the Colorado Springs City Council on May 25, 2004.

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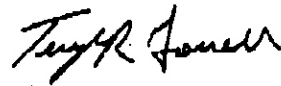
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- 1.... scheduling for the N. Nevada/Rock Rimmon interchange and the Corporate Drive connection
- 2 that remains the critical component of this project for Furniture Row and the Corporate Drive
- 3.... neighborhood of businesses.

Very truly yours,



Teryl R. Gorrell
For the Firm

TRG/jfm

cc: Gregory Ruegsegger
Corporate Drive Business Owners
Jim Hauck, City of Colorado Springs
Dave Watt

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Lines 1-3: No response necessary.