

Public Involvement Plan

I-270 Corridor Improvements Environmental Impact Statement

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Traducción al español disponible, para solicitarlo mande un correo electrónico a cdot_i270@state.co.us.



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1 Acronyms and Abbreviations

2	ADA	American Disabilities Act
3	ASL	American sign language
4	CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
5	EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
6	FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
7	I-270	Interstate 270
8	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
9	Plan	Public Involvement and Stakeholder Plan
10		

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this Public Involvement and Stakeholder Plan (Plan) is to document the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) approach to providing updates to and obtaining input from the general public and interested stakeholders for the I-270 Corridor Improvements Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. The overall mission of public involvement for the I-270 Corridor Improvements EIS is to create an atmosphere of openness and trust with the public. Community input is vital to the project's success, and the project team is committed to providing meaningful public involvement opportunities throughout the process.

The objectives of this Plan are to:

- Identify interested stakeholders;
- Provide forums and mechanisms for distributing accurate, easy-to-understand, timely information on issues and activities throughout the process to the general public and interested stakeholders;
- Ensure meaningful opportunities for public participation from low-income and minority populations and other historically underrepresented communities;
- Encourage and solicit agency, stakeholder, and public comments on all aspects of the process, well before key decision points;
- Incorporate comments/feedback received into the process and key decisions; and,
- Ensure the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and any other associated regulations are followed with respect to disclosure and opportunities for the general public and interested stakeholders to provide comments.

The Plan outlines the approach to engage the public and stakeholders. This Plan is intended to be a flexible document that can be adapted based on the project and public needs. The Plan details various communication mechanisms that were developed to assist in establishing a larger role for the public in the EIS process.

This Plan includes the goals and principles, the specifics of the community outreach, and details of the public involvement plan.

1.2 Goals and Principles

Robust public and stakeholder involvement is critical for the success of the project. The I-270 Corridor (Corridor) runs through Environmental Justice communities where the population mostly consists of low-income and minority populations¹. Enhanced public input and

¹ The Project will follow the classifications as stated in Executive Orders 12898 (1994) and 14096 (2023), Colorado Senate Bill 21-260, and the Justice40 Initiative.

participation at all points of the EIS process ensures meaningful participation and non-discrimination as mandated by Title VI and environmental justice requirements. The public involvement effort is intended to establish and maintain a two-way exchange of information and ideas between the public and the project team regarding corridor issues and priorities. Public involvement goals for the EIS include:

- Conducting an extensive public outreach effort to gather input from users of the corridor as well as the diverse populations along the project area;
- Ensuring meaningful public participation for all stakeholders;
- Using a grassroots approach, such as setting up tables in front of common community gathering places to provide project information, for neighborhoods directly affected by I-270;
- Informing the public about work in process and continually monitoring community concerns;
- Providing information in a manner that is easy for the public to access and understand;
- Educating the public on the study and the EIS process;
- Working with local businesses, chambers of commerce, community groups, and other organizations to obtain comments from a broad cross-section along the corridor; and,
- Ensuring the federal, state, regional, and interested local government agencies are well informed at every stage.

The overall objective of all outreach activities is to ensure that the community has meaningful input into the study and that the project reflects community input and values. Based on the identified public involvement goals, several principles were developed as the foundation for the public involvement program. These principles include:

- Facilitating early involvement by public stakeholders in identifying corridor issues and opportunities;
- Building an understanding of the project and transparency for the EIS process;
- Establishing and maintaining productive partnerships with individuals and organizations who are interested in the project;
- Providing project information in English and Spanish and using a bilingual community liaison to help plan and conduct community outreach;
- Providing assistant services at corridor-wide meetings (e.g., transit accessible meeting locations, American Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible sites, translation, childcare, services for hearing and visually impaired, as requested) so that residents can participate in the process;

- Using local vendors for reproduction, catering, childcare, and other services as much as possible;
- Being aware of and breaking down cultural barriers to provide information and gather public input;
- Providing information to the media proactively throughout the EIS process;
- Maintaining a project record that clearly tracks the public input into the decision-making process; and,
- Providing remote meeting opportunities, scheduled calls, or telephone town halls.

These principles support the goals of the Plan and ensure that the EIS process serves the public interest.

1.3 Community Outreach Plan

Community outreach for the I-270 EIS will elicit a unique approach to increase inclusive and meaningful public involvement. The approach will focus on developing trust in neighborhoods that historically do not see governmental agencies as credible, as well as identifying and addressing barriers that may limit meaningful participation from these residents. The project began developing community relationships and coordination when the NEPA process was first initiated in spring 2020 through various techniques, mostly virtual, which the team intends on expanding upon during the EIS. While virtual engagement during this time period generated a great deal of public input, outreach fell short of what it could have been due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the primary goals and drivers of the EIS is to increase public participation and develop relationships with the community.

1.3.1 I-270 Corridor Improvements Outreach 2020-2022

A summary of the public outreach techniques used during the initial phase of the NEPA process are listed below:

- Hosted a bus tour through the corridor for key stakeholders and elected officials that included Spanish translation;
- Conducted two virtual public meetings;
- Attended small group meetings with businesses and other stakeholders;
- Developed and updated a project website;
- Utilized CDOT's social media platforms;
- Sent media releases and involving media in a proactive manner;
- Met with local and state elected officials as well as advocacy groups;

- Used flyers to notify residences and businesses of virtual meetings and project updates;
- Sent direct mail postcards to residents; and,
- Sent email updates to I-270 project subscribers.

Additional outreach efforts and meeting minutes during the 2020-2022 period are included in the Project Record.

1.3.2 Public Outreach Approach for the I-270 EIS

Our focused outreach approach will use different techniques to ensure meaningful involvement from the various neighborhoods and the public at large. Community outreach for the EIS will implement creative strategies and innovative tools that make participation by the public easier and more convenient. The project team will tailor tools, such as advertisements, hybrid public meetings, and on-the-ground outreach, to reach as many people as possible, including minorities and low-income and traditionally underserved segments of the population, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those without access to transportation.

To conduct effective community outreach, CDOT also needs to ensure that it understands cultural barriers and adjust outreach techniques as necessary. CDOT will identify and address these barriers by:

- Working actively with CDOT’s Environmental Justice and Equity Office to get cultural training and be connected with local community leaders. Additionally, CDOT staff will identify barriers to participation by:
 - Researching culture, customs, language, and community styles
 - Hiring a bilingual community outreach and local government affairs liaison to help improve outreach to the communities adjacent to the I-270 corridor
 - Identifying and reaching out to local community organizations and leaders
- Working actively with CDOT’s Environmental Justice and Equity Office and soliciting an in-house interpreter to assist in approaching language barriers in the planning process in accordance with Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.” CDOT will also work to provide web pages and other major documents in Spanish. Additionally, the Department will address language related barriers by:
 - Providing videos with English and non-English subtitles
 - Ensuring materials are in languages that are representative of where the meeting or outreach is taking place
 - Providing interpreters



- Provide Spanish translation at all public outreach events and for all public outreach materials
- CDOT staff will also be attentive to any calls or other forms of communication where individuals request assistance to participate in the planning and programming processes. This includes, but is not limited to, meeting access (in compliance with the ADA), or meeting materials in Braille or large print. The Department will work to ensure meeting facilities are accessible and addresses barriers to participation by:
 - Providing materials in large print format or Braille for those who are vision impaired
 - Ensuring all electronic materials are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (regarding accessible electronic information and communications)
 - Using American sign language (ASL) interpreters
 - Offering hearing aid amplifiers and other hearing assistance devices
 - Using telecommunication devices for communication via telephone with hearing impaired
- CDOT will consider meeting locations in terms of multimodal accessibility and meeting times that help to not only provide participants convenience but also with meals (not snacks) and childcare. Additionally, CDOT will consider using local catering companies for meals at public meetings. The Department will work to increase participation as well as address economic related barriers by:
 - Hosting meetings face-to-face interactions at convenient times and locations
 - Providing childcare
 - Providing light meals at public meetings
 - Advertising transit options and other ways to attend in person meetings

CDOT will also implement a “public engagement toolkit” to help inform and educate the public about the EIS process and provide opportunities for input and feedback. The following sections outline public involvement tools and techniques will be used throughout the EIS for maximum effectiveness.

Overall, the combination of these approaches and other specific tools described in below will develop trust and credibility for the process, define issues for each neighborhood, provide the opportunity for meaningful involvement in the process, and help the project team understand community priorities.

1.3.2.1 Public Meetings

CDOT will host five public meetings, three of which will be in-person and two will be virtual. The first public meeting will be a scoping meeting held to introduce the EIS process, educate the public about the project's purpose and need and the history of the corridor. It will provide attendees with an opportunity to express their concerns and ideas via comment cards. In-person meetings will be used for major updates where input and two-way conversations are critical, and virtual public meetings will be used when smaller milestones during the EIS are achieved and need to be communicated to the public. All meetings will be appropriately noticed, and CDOT will ask attendees how they heard about meetings to determine most effective outreach tools. At a minimum, in-person public meetings will be noticed by mail (postcard), distribution to the project email list, posting and distribution of flyers in community locations, and coordination with community leaders and agencies.

All in-person public meeting materials will be available online, in both English and Spanish, following the conclusion of the event including a recording of the meeting should a presentation occur. Virtual comment cards will also be available on the public meeting webpage for the I-270 Corridor Improvements Project. Virtual public meetings will be translated, and a feedback form will be made available. CDOT will ensure that Public Meetings are held at venues with ADA compliant access.

In addition to ensuring that venues have ADA compliant access, CDOT will also offer several options for meetings to ensure that there are multiple day and time options available to suit people's schedules. For example, one in-person meeting may be held on a weekday after work, another in-person meeting may be held on a weekend morning, and a webinar option may be included on a different day.

1.3.2.2 Comment Forms

Comment forms will be provided at every public and community meeting and public hearing. They will include project contact information with instructions on how to return. Comment forms will also be available on a project website. All materials will include a QR code to allow an easy option to submit their comments virtually. The project team will also utilize a comment tracking form.

1.3.2.3 Email Updates

As the project progresses, the project team will continually add names to the e-mail distribution list and notify those on the list of meetings, workshops, and project updates via e-mail blast or mail distribution. The email distribution list includes federal and state agencies, local officials, regional transportation planning entities, citizen advisory groups, neighborhood/community groups, civic and professional organizations, property owners, and other interested citizens.

The project team will ensure that information sent to individuals on the mailing list is translated into appropriate language(s) as necessary.

1.3.2.4 Online Surveys

Online surveys will allow the public to provide valuable input on a specific set (or sets) of questions without requiring participation at a meeting. These surveys will be made available in both English and Spanish. The public will be prompted to provide input and feedback at the conclusion of the survey.

1.3.2.5 Digital and Virtual/In-Person Roadshow Presentations

CDOT will conduct a presentation roadshow to help display and communicate information about the EIS to stakeholder groups, community organizations, elected officials and others. These presentations will deliver information in-person or via virtual meeting services (i.e. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meets, etc.). The project team will hand out comment cards to collect input during the presentations and will gather them once it concludes. If presenting virtually, a QR code will be provided for electronic comment cards and/or comment cards will be emailed to attendees to fill out and send back to the Project team via email.

1.3.2.6 Videos

The project will develop and distribute video with audio and subtitles in both English and Spanish for the purpose of public education and engagement. All videos produced will meet accessibility requirements, including:

- Include closed captions;
- Contain audio descriptions for pertinent visual information that is not explained in the dialogue or captions;
- Have special considerations made to not use erratic animations, consecutive flashes and constant motion blur;
- Audibly explain any graphics or text on screen that is not solely decorative;
- Ensure that colors are not used as the only means of conveying information because blind users are not able to see color, and colorblind or older users may not see colors correctly;
- Use an online color contrast checker to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA requirements; and
- Have the ability to toggle on and off all accessibility options.

1.3.2.7 Advertisements and Meeting Notices

All meetings will be advertised in local newspapers, social media, and other sources, such as radio, if determined useful. Advertisements will be in Spanish and English and typically include:



- General description of the project.
- Date and location of public meetings.
- Invitation to place names on the project e-mail distribution list.
- Information required to comply with the public involvement requirements of other laws, regulations, or Executive Orders.
- Statement that reasonable accommodation will be provided at public meetings and hearings for persons with disabilities, and translators will be provided if necessary.

1.3.2.8 Public Information Materials

The project team will develop and distribute public information materials that will quickly communicate the EIS message. The materials will be distributed through hard copy and/or virtually (email, website, etc.) as deemed appropriate by the project team. These will be visually engaging and easy to understand. These materials may include advertisements (display and legal notices); newsletters; brochures; fact sheets; flyers; press releases; progress bulletins; summaries of reports; models; FAQs; display boards; project website posts; and utility bill stuffers.

1.3.2.9 Maps and Graphics

The project team will use both electronic and large print maps and easy-to-understand graphics to illustrate locations, transportation data, and analysis to help the public better understand the Corridor and provide comments on proposed plans or help determine priorities. Electronic maps and graphics will contain alternative text to explain the material and be accessible to screen readers.

1.3.2.10 Telephone Town Halls

A telephone town hall will be held during the comment period for the DEIS. Telephone town halls allow a large number of participants to provide input, ask questions of CDOT staff over the phone, and make participation convenient while reducing the need to travel to a public meeting. Other telephone town halls may be held if demand warrants.

1.3.2.11 Bilingual Community Outreach and Local Government Affairs Liaison

CDOT's in-house Bilingual Community Outreach Liaison and Local Government Affairs Liaison will be able to speak on behalf of the project to community members adjacent to the corridor and to local elected officials. The Liaison will meet with public and private organizations, groups and individuals on behalf of the project. The Liaison will ask for input via comment cards or will take notes during conversations when out in the community. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.



1.3.2.12 *Postcard Mailings*

CDOT will gather mailing lists from appropriate zip codes in the project area. Mailings will provide public information, meeting notices and other information to interested parties.

1.3.2.13 *Stakeholder and Directed Outreach*

Stakeholder meetings will be held with property or business owners, business or homeowners' associations, special interest groups, religious organizations, neighborhood associations, police/fire personnel, and others as appropriate. These meetings will be held at the request of stakeholder organizations and may be part groups' regularly scheduled meetings with recorded meeting notes. Comment cards will be handed out, and Project team members will take notes when receiving input or feedback verbally from attendees. CDOT will coordinate with major corporations and small businesses to educate employees who frequently commute through I-270 about the project and elicit input. Businesses can include Denver International Airport, Walmart, Suncor, local restaurants, non-profits, etc. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.

In addition, bilingual stakeholder workshops will be held to engage stakeholders throughout the process. The stakeholder workshops will include stakeholders such as residents, business owners, users, community leaders, environmental groups, and local agency partners. The goals and purpose of the workshops are to understand community context, values, priorities; evaluate and refine alternatives with stakeholders; and collaborate and obtain consensus on the range of alternatives to be included in the EIS. The workshops will continue after the EIS process through final design and construction.

1.3.2.14 *Colorado Motor Carriers Association Outreach*

CDOT will coordinate with the Colorado Motor Carriers Association to solicit input and feedback from the freight community. CDOT will also solicit feedback about freight interests and develop tools to seek direct feedback from freight users. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.

1.3.2.15 *Attend Scheduled and Special Community Events*

The project team will integrate into the community and meet residents where they are. Throughout the EIS process, the team will work to identify events that will attract large, diverse crowds including local school sporting events, swap meets, flea markets, and farmers' markets. The project team will use these events to set up a booth and conduct interviews with the public. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.



1.3.2.16 *Involve School Students*

Schools near the Corridor represent an excellent avenue for engaging area residents. It will be important to share information in a creative way to students as they often act as information conduits to their parents. Students' involvement in the project will likely generate their parents' interest to participate and build community support. Some techniques the project may use include:

- Partnering with the school's art teacher to develop an art assignment for students to visualize what the corridor could look like.
- Work with the school to provide information about the project and a link to the website and/or online survey in their school newsletters.
- If a school sends students home with folders with important information for parents, work with the school to include a fact sheet and link to an online survey in those folders.
- Hand out coffee and fact sheets/advertisements for upcoming public meetings to parents at school drop-offs.

1.3.2.17 *Develop a Feedback Loop*

Community members should receive feedback on how their input was incorporated to help increase transparency and retain a positive reputation within the community. The project team should not wait for a final report to be published nor for information to be posted to a web page. The team should develop a realistic strategy for providing periodic and prompt feedback to the community. Some strategies may include:

- Flyers or mailers that state what is happening in the EIS and how it ties back to input received from the public.
- Provide short, follow-up presentations with opportunities for questions, answers and comments following public/community meetings or hearings.
- If community engagement helps elicit other agencies to change or focus on efforts to improve certain aspects of the community, then the project team will need to communicate with the leaders of these changes on how their input has helped improve their area.

1.3.3 **Environmental Justice Community Outreach Tools**

Individuals who are affected by but historically underrepresented in infrastructure development projects, are low income, low literate, and/or have limited English proficiency or need other special accommodations to participate meaningfully in the project will need comprehensive and innovative support services and outreach techniques. Thoughtful and unique techniques should be used to address the needs of these Environmental Justice communities which include the Riverside, Fernald/Frei Crossing, Adams City, Adam Heights, Fairfax Park, Mill Valley, Memory Lane Gardens, Tichy, Kemp, Clermont, Central, Rose Hill,



Victory Crossing, 56th Avenue Industrial Park, Central Park, South Rose Hill, Stapleton Industrial Park, Sand Creek, Northeast Park Hill, Elyria Swansea and Globeville neighborhoods. The I-270 Corridor Improvements Project team will implement the tools discussed in both Section 3.2 and this Section 3.3 to provide targeted outreach to Environmental Justice Community.

1.3.3.1 Provide Public Outreach Materials that Target Minority Populations

The project team will identify offices of health, radio stations, newspapers, faith-based organizations, cultural groups, community organizations and political leaders that serve minority populations in the project area and coordinate with these organizations to disseminate information regarding the EIS to the community. Because the minority populations are largely or exclusively Spanish speaking, the EIS will provide all public materials in both Spanish and English.

1.3.3.2 Talk to Local Officials and Community Insiders

The project team will meet with community leaders or insiders who have daily contact with the public in the project area. Information from these individuals will be verified for accuracy and used discretely to protect residents' privacy. These community insiders could include:

- Elementary school principals.
- English as a Second Language coordinators.
- Parent Teacher Associations.

These community leaders can help the project team understand the fabric of the community and the co-dependencies that exist between households. This information will be used to tailor the Project's outreach efforts to ensure that it is as effective as possible and that the team is reaching all affected community groups and individuals.

1.3.3.3 Work with Existing Organizations

The Project team will work closely with existing community organizations to build trust and help expedite critical relationship building. The project team will add those identified as important individuals in the community by the organizations and will be added to the project's database.

1.3.3.4 Visit Laundromats, Grocery Stores that Accept Food Stamps, Discount Stores, etc.

The project's Bilingual Community Outreach Liaison will visit shops and stores where low-income populations often visit in order to conduct interviews or provide a link to the online survey. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.

1.3.3.5 Color and Symbols

The project team will bring squares of paper with pictures of different transportation elements if the public is asked to identify potential areas of improvement on a map.

1.3.3.6 Provide Incentives to Participate in Public Meetings

The project team will explore ways to incentivize community members to participate in public meetings or hearings by offering meals, childcare, advertising transit options, and providing virtual, on-demand meeting options. There can be barriers to participation for individuals who are already taxed with other stressors or responsibilities and may not want to attend meetings in fear that providing their input may not be worth their time. It is important to gather as much public input as possible while letting community members know that their efforts are appreciated and helpful.

1.3.3.7 Provide Opportunities for Walking or Bike Tours

The project team will host walking or bike tours to get a better sense of mobility constraints and safety concerns within the community while developing relationships with community members. All recorded input will be passed along to the project team for consideration in the EIS alternatives development and analyses.

1.3.3.8 Comprehensive Community Engagement Calendar

The Bilingual Community Outreach Liaison will create a calendar to identify events within the community during the EIS process to provide updates regarding the project and to elicit input via comment cards.

1.4 Public and Media Relations

Public relations for the I-270 EIS consists of protocols for disseminating information, media relation policies, messaging, and response protocols. The overall goal is to accurately and quickly respond to information requests, proactively engage the media, provide consistent information from all team members, and respond appropriately to issues that arise.

1.4.1 Information Dissemination/Communications Protocol

To ensure consistency, clarity, and accuracy, the I-270 EIS project team has prepared a protocol for communicating with inquiries from the public, media, elected officials, and other interest groups.

CDOT's Strategic Communications Lead and Regional Communications Manager are the primary spokespeople authorized to speak on behalf of the I-270 EIS. All policy and process inquiries should be directed to these individuals.

Project team members may respond to questions from the public, media, elected officials and other interest groups during public meetings or when responding to calls, if the questions are based upon their presentations or specific areas of expertise. Some examples would include:

- After an extensive technical presentation on the alternatives analysis during a public meeting, a team member is approached by a reporter who needs to clarify several points. The team member responds to questions relative to the analysis but refers questions about which alternative will be selected to either the Communications Lead/Regional Communications Manager or the Project Director.
- A caller asks a public information officer how they can be appointed to the Executive Oversight Committee. The public information officer takes the caller's contact information. The Project Director then returns the call.
- During a conversation, an elected official asks a member of the team what the ultimate goal of the project is, from CDOT's point of view. The project team member should politely tell the elected official that the subject is out of their area of expertise and refer them to the Project Director and Communications Lead.
- The Project Director and Communications Lead/Regional Communications Manager will determine the appropriate response and messaging during the EIS. If additional spokespersons are necessary for specific circumstances, the Project Director and the Communications Lead will make that decision.

It is understood that agency staff will be communicating internally with their respective managers, peers, and elected officials to provide project updates. Consistent messaging is critical, and project information will be posted on the I-270 Corridor Improvements website so all project team members can refer to it as necessary.

Contact reports documenting all relevant conversations or inquiries should be published on the website within five working days. Either electronic or hand-written contact reports are acceptable.

All inquiries about the project by the public, whether they are received via the project phone number (303-512-4270), the project email (cdot_i270@state.co.us), through the feedback section of the website, or written comment will be responded to as soon as possible. In most cases, a response will be made within 48 hours.

1.4.2 Media Relations

The media policy is a critical element of rapid-response coordination, because it clearly outlines for all internal players how interaction with the media will be managed, who is allowed to interact with the media and under what circumstances, and the policies for media interaction.

1.4.2.1 Project Spokesperson

The I-270 EIS Project Director and Communications Managers will be the primary media spokespeople. They will work within the project's media relations policy.

Other team members with specific areas of expertise will serve as information resources, either providing data to the spokespersons, or interacting directly with the media at the

request of the Communications Managers. Media training will be provided to those who are anticipated to talk with the media.

1.4.2.2 Media Relations Policy

The EIS project team is committed to building and maintaining effective, on-going and mutually beneficial communications with the media. Working with the media builds the project's credibility. The project spokespersons and any other team members who are authorized to do so will work with the media in an open, honest, and forthright manner. The Communications team will treat all media even-handedly and will answer all legitimate questions from the media fully and fairly.

Because we represent the Colorado State Government, we will honor all state laws providing for a free and open discussion of all issues, including the Open Meetings Act and the Open Records Act. The Communications team and Project Director should be consulted before distributing documents to the public or scheduling public meetings, particularly those involving state elected officials, to ensure that the process complies with these laws.

It is the policy of this project that those authorized to interact with the media will:

- Never go “off the record” with a reporter, no matter how well you know them.
- Never comment on subject matter with which you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable.
- Never lie or mislead a reporter.

The media can significantly impact this project and its effectiveness. It is in the project's best interest to manage its relationship with the media in the best way possible.

1.4.2.3 Media Contacts

Developing ongoing relationships with the key media covering the project is critical. Primary reporters and editors will be briefed at least twice monthly, or more often when needed. The project team will also brief editorial boards, when appropriate. Television and radio coverage will be solicited for significant project events. Additionally, message-based bylined articles by the project team will be developed and placed with local media.

1.4.2.4 Rapid-Response Plan and Protocol with Regard to Issues Management

The rapid-response plan for the EIS will be used for newspaper reporters, public officials, neighborhood groups, local advocacy groups, and others in a timely, message-based format. To effectively present the EIS project team's perspective in a clear, user-friendly manner, the goal will be to respond to media inquiries within a news-deadline cycle with any developments that impact the project to maintain ownership of the narrative and messaging.

A rapid-response program focuses on every public event or new development that might affect the project goals and objectives. For the EIS project, rapid-response would likely be used in reaction to opposition from organized neighborhood groups or criticism from special-

interest groups. The various Denver media have different schedules and agendas that will dictate how they may cover issues related to the project.

1.5 Public Outreach Documentation

Documentation will be kept for all outreach activities during the study. CDOT will track specialized outreach techniques and results for Environmental Justice communities to ensure that these groups have an opportunity for meaningful involvement in the project.

Documentation will involve several feedback loops, including from communications and public outreach specialists to the project team and from the public outreach specialists and project team back to community members. It is important that the feedback is documented to build transparency and credibility in the project development and EIS analyses. This documentation will be comprehensive and will include:

- Outreach database and log of community events and meetings, including.
 - Meeting notes and sign-in sheets.
 - Survey results.
 - Comment cards.
- Public meeting summaries.
- Contact database for email and phone inquiries and comments.
- Other documentation.

1.5.1 Outreach Database

A database has been developed to track different forms of interaction that the project team has with the public including survey answers and public comments, stakeholder and public outreach, meeting attendance, phone calls and emails. Information obtained from each contact will include address (if the individual feels comfortable providing), name, phone number and other pertinent information obtained about the contact. From this database, summary reports can be generated by neighborhoods or precincts. The database will also track outreach efforts with elected officials, businesses, and other stakeholders in the project area.

1.5.2 Meeting Notes and Sign-in Sheets

Meeting notes or summaries will be recorded for all outreach meetings. These meetings will include block meetings, stakeholder meetings, area meetings, neighborhood meetings, and corridor-wide meetings. These meeting notes will be available to the public following each meeting. Sign-in sheets will also be recorded and entered in the outreach database.

1.5.3 Outreach Technique Information for Environmental Justice Communities

Interactions with all members of the public will be documented, and special attention will be paid to participation from Environmental Justice communities. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this plan provide specialized tools and techniques to reach these communities, and CDOT will regularly review tools and techniques to determine which are most effective. CDOT will specifically collect and track input from surrounding zip codes and/or specific neighborhoods to track how many people within affected Environmental Justice communities interacted with the Project. Interactions can include meeting with individuals in-person, conversations with members of the public at events, calls to the hotline that require a call back (callers will be asked which zip code and/or neighborhood they live in), comment cards, etc. The Project team will also record attendance at meetings, fairs, festivals, gatherings, etc. that occur within an Environmental Justice community. If applicable, the Project team will ask event organizers for estimated total of attendees. If participation is low, CDOT will work with its bilingual community liaison, Environmental Justice and Equity Office, community insiders, and other community leaders to adjust or develop new techniques to encourage meaningful participation.

1.5.4 Other Documentation

Newsletters and other publications sent informing the public of upcoming decisions and project status updates will be documented according to when they are sent, and who they are sent to. In addition, advertisements and other publications will also be documented.

1.5.5 Public Comments

The project team values comments received through all public involvement efforts. The project will strive to the following guidance regarding public comments:

- The project team will review all public comments in a timely manner. The team will categorize comments and identify common themes. For common comments, we will develop responses via Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). FAQs and answers will be distributed to the public via appropriate methodologies described in section 3.2.8 of this plan.
- Additionally, the project team will identify uncommon, substantive comments that are not appropriate to respond via FAQs. We will provide clear, definite, and specific responses to these comments; differentiating between philosophical and factual differences; and providing an explanation of why one approach or alternative was selected over others. These responses may be provided through project documents or materials.
- Direct or individual responses to public comments will be provided at the discretion of the project team
- Ensure all public comments become a part of the public record.



- Explain how public comments were addressed in the project development and environmental analyses.
- Include a section in the EIS describing public and outreach opportunities, public and agency input received, and how input shaped the EIS and/or was incorporated into the project.
- Track and respond (via FAQ or specific response) to all comments received during official comment periods. Ensure that official comment periods are well noticed and include an explanation of what CDOT will do with input received.

1.6 Measures of Effectiveness

The following are measures the project team will use to determine if its approaches and techniques used during the EIS process were effective.

1.6.1 Website and Electronic Media

- How many visitors did the web page receive?
- How much time did visitors spent on the site?
- Was the website updated in a timely manner with the most current information? (i.e., within a day or two of the information being finalized for the web)
- How many subscribers are there to distribution lists, news feeds, and other electronic interactive media?
- How many times was a document viewed or downloaded from the website?
- How many comments were received through the website?

1.6.2 Meetings and Outreach

- Were meeting notes or summaries prepared for meetings?
- Was the outreach log complete and maintained?
- How many people attended meetings?
- What percentage of people attending meetings or events joined the project mailing lists after attending meetings?
- How many people did the staff speak to at in-person meetings?
- Were meetings advertised to and held in locations accessible to Environmental Justice Communities?
- Did the number of participants increase from previous planning efforts?
- Did the number of meeting participants increase over the course of the EIS?

- Was information gathered shared with and among cooperating and participating agencies?

1.6.3 Outreach Method Evaluation

- What outreach method was the most effective and why?
- Were outreach methods adapted or new methods developed in response to input or community suggestions?
- Was the use of news and/or electronic media increased from previous efforts? Did it result in increased participation?
- What communication tool did residents and the general public use the most?

1.6.4 Printed Materials

- Were informational documents (brochures, fact sheets, documents, white papers) made available?
- How many newspaper articles were written covering the planning or programming process?
- How many people took information or asked questions?

1.6.5 On-going Stakeholder Identification

CDOT will proactively seek community input and participation. CDOT will continuously refine and adapt its approaches used to identify and engage stakeholders. CDOT hopes to increase awareness of the project and EIS, determine appropriate frequency and types of interaction, and better understand specific issues and concerns of all stakeholders.