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Northwest Corridor
A TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

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7.0 PUBLIC COORDINATION

INTRODUCTION

The public involvement effort for the Northwest Corridor Transportation and Environmental Planning Study provided opportunities for public input and information dissemination through a variety of means. Public comments and input were compiled quarterly and summarized to facilitate timely review by the study team. Included in this chapter is the documentation of activities and public comment summaries from January 2004 through September 2006 that refer to the NEPA process and DEIS analysis. Because the study shifted to a planning document in May 2008, no further comments were documented.

7.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT QUARTERLY SUMMARIES

7.1.1 FIRST QUARTER, 2004

7.1.1.1 AGENCY SCOPING SUMMARY

On December 11, 2003, at the CDOT Region 6 Maintenance Conference Room in Denver, members of FHWA and CDOT participated in a scoping meeting. Discussion included the Purpose and Need Statement, the public scoping effort, public notification, and media release process.

Additionally, an agency scoping meeting was conducted on January 21, 2004. This meeting identified issues related to the proposed action and determined the scope of the issues to be addressed. The meeting was designed to share study information and collect comments, questions, and feedback.

The following agencies were in attendance:

- Colorado Department of Public Health and Education
- U.S. Department of Energy/Rocky Flats Project Office
- CO Division Minerals & Geology
- Colorado Division of Wildlife
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Federal Highway Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Colorado Building of Land Commissioners
- Jefferson County Administrators
- Regional Transportation District
- CO State Land Board
- Federal Aviation Administration – Denver ADO
- Air Pollution Control District
- Denver Water



The agency meetings focused on the identification of key/critical environmental, social, economic, and transportation issues in the corridor, and the project schedule. The group developed an initial list of potential environmental concerns as follows:

- Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse
- Other Threatened and Endangered Species
- Open Space
- Water Quality
- Standley Lake
- Church Irrigation Ditch
- Denver Water
- Woman Creek Impoundment System
- Identification and integration with other projects
- EPA concern over induced growth
- Increased safety on SH 93; review of accident rates on SH 93 and SH 72
- Noise impacts on the City of Golden; noise mitigation for levels that do not exceed federal standards. Local modifications to federal noise standards may not be achievable.
- Neighborhood Connectivity
- Economic Impacts with tolling considerations
- Environmental Justice Communities

The following is a summary of the agency comments received during the scoping process. They are divided by general topic and the order does not reflect order of priority or importance.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Comments were divided on the Purpose and Need for the Northwest Corridor EIS. Some felt the prior NW Quadrant Feasibility Study provided recommendations that should be implemented. Others felt the beltway should be completed.

Suggestions made for possible goals and objectives that could be part of the Purpose and Need Statement included: reducing traffic congestion and travel times; reducing vehicle miles traveled in the region; preserving open space and wildlife habitat; meeting regional and statewide transportation needs; reducing air pollution and contributions to global warming.

DEFINITION OF THE STUDY AREA

Generally, the group indicated the study area was too limited and did not allow for regional trips or statewide trip needs. There was also a concern that language regarding connecting the NW Parkway and C-470 indicates that the project may have a predetermined outcome.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Comments indicated that the Public Scoping meetings were too early in the day for some attendees, that they were not advertised well, and that there weren't enough meetings. There were requests to update the web site more regularly with public process related information. Additionally, some indicated that all meetings on the NW Corridor EIS should be open to the public, and there should be community representation on the Corridor Consensus Committee (committee of individuals meeting on a regular basis which represent the various corridor studies currently being undertaken in Colorado).



COORDINATION WITH OTHER STUDIES

Comments indicated that the NW Corridor EIS should be coordinated with other studies going on in the area, including US 36, I-70 west, I-70 east, and the Leyden Reservoir EIS.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Generally, comments indicated that the schedule is too short to adequately complete the study and analysis needed for this EIS. There was concern the schedule would not allow sufficient time for public review and input.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND OTHER SPECIES OF IMPORTANCE

Several species of animals and plants were identified by the group as having the potential to be impacted in the study area. Those species include, but are not limited to: Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse; Ute ladies-tresses Orchid; Colorado Butterfly Plant; Migratory birds and raptors (Bald Eagles, Red-tails and Peregrines); Black Tailed Prairie Dogs; Burrowing Owl; Release of Plains Sharp-Tailed Grouse.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Comments included the need to protect the new wildlife refuge at Rocky Flats (Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge) including its surrounding open space from any development. Maintaining wildlife migration patterns across roadways and planning for those movements across any new roadways was also expressed as a concern. Additionally, there was a statement regarding potential increase in human interaction with wildlife and the need to educate residents on the dangers.

WILDLIFE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Comments indicated that the effects on wildlife must be studied as a whole, including connectivity and cumulative effects. Concern was expressed regarding strip development and the potential to isolate habitat areas which may increase human/wildlife interactions.

ROCKY FLATS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE RELATED ISSUES

Generally, concerns included preserving Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, the surrounding open space, and other resources in the vicinity, such as remnant Tall Grass Prairie along the west side. Depletion of water resources from the South Platte River requires coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Recommendations were made to review the Rocky Flats Management Plan and EIS, which were to be released in February, 2004.

It was suggested the Northwest Corridor EIS consider steps taken by NW Parkway in Broomfield where additional right of way was purchased to avoid strip development along SH 128.

MAPPING

Comments included separating open space, golf courses, and parks on maps. A compiled map is available from the North Jefferson Area Group for resources that could be utilized for the area, rather than trying to decipher conflicting information from the various counties. It was recommended that mapping sources be verified and documented, such that "conceptual" information is not taken to be final. The group offered mapping sources and indicated a need to enlarge some mapping to provide more detail.

WETLANDS

It was questioned as to whether wetlands in the area (west of McIntyre Street) are mitigation. Additionally, caution was offered regarding mitigation to be sure to investigate quality rather than quantity. Location of a small amount of existing wetland material may be sustaining wildlife or habitat. Providing a larger mitigation amount in a different location may collectively increase the acreage, but may destroy a small wildlife community that was dependent on the original site.

WATER QUALITY

The project area is subject to MS4 requirements. There is concern about roadway runoff into creeks, and including design elements for control and treatment of runoff prior to reaching receiving waters. While it is understood that runoff water from Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge has very good water quality, the City of Westminster is concerned about capture of that water.



It was stated that a number of Denver Water Facilities were not on the GIS hydrology map, such as South Boulder Canal (feeding Ralston Reservoir), Ralston/Clear Creek Canal, and piping from Ralston to the city power plants.

Urban Drainage and Flood Control District is interested in potential impacts of transportation facilities on drainage ways. Relevant studies should be considered in this EIS. To review the current compilation of all studies, the project team can visit the web site at www.udfcd.org (under Activity Summary and Activity Summary Map).

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION AREAS

Concerns were expressed regarding plans for trail connections to Broomfield and Westminster trails, and that they are reviewed as part of the EIS. There were conflicting comments regarding open space areas along SH 93. While the east side of SH 93 is open space, it was stated that the west side is actually 50% county/50% open space, rather than all open space. There was also an indication that Golden has several parks along SH 93.

There was a comment that the City of Broomfield has plans to expand the Great Western Reservoir (non-potable water) to 12,000 acre feet, and that this EIS should consider reviewing the topographical boundaries of that possible expansion.

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

Generally, the group expressed concern about the scenic qualities of the area. The mountain backdrop west of SH 93 is very important.

HAZARDOUS WASTE/ABANDONED MINE AREAS

There is community concern regarding a low-level plume of plutonium across Indiana Street from Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Although the area is considered suitable for all uses, the community is still concerned. Additionally, there are historical problems around the Rocky Flats Industrial Park along the south side of SH 72. EPA did emergency removal of solvent contaminations at Great Western Reservoir.

Colorado Division of Minerals & Geology has maps of most abandoned coal mines and active mines. A private citizen of Arvada maps underground mines as a hobby and is willing to share the information.

The issue of natural resource depletion was raised. There is concern that CDOT will maximize the capacity of the landfill close to Golden and/or deplete gravel resources close to Boulder. The comment was offered that communities are eager for CDOT to incorporate sustainable improvements.

NOISE

Noise is a concern at the northern end, near Broomfield, and through Golden, because Golden is surrounded by mountains. Increasing traffic may increase the noise, which is not desirable. There is an interest in the potential mitigation measures (sound barriers, berms, etc.) so the public understands the possible options.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

There were mixed comments regarding the potential for a highway through Golden. Some felt it would ruin the rural character of the area, while others indicated that if it is the best alternative, then CDOT should be prepared to fairly compensate those displaced. Other concerns include loss of wildlife habitat, the feel of the foothills, and open space if an expressway were to be built through the City of Golden.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

There were questions as to whether CDOT will be conducting a Section 106 process prior to or concurrent with the NEPA process. Potential resources identified include historic farmsteads and fields along SH 93, Section 4(f) properties, dinosaur and mammal tracks close to SH 93 and US 6. The SHPO requested early and often communication, and indicated that a Cultural Resources Survey should be conducted, as well as outlining the Area of Potential Effects (APE) as soon as possible.



Additionally, part of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge legislation required a history museum, although it has not yet been decided where the facility may be located. The EIS needs to consider public access to a future museum as well as to any visitor center for Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

AIR QUALITY

Concerns were expressed about ozone levels in Golden because they are situated in valleys and air is trapped. Regional air quality modeling cannot accurately reflect air quality in the City of Golden.

Recommendations were given to work closely with APCD and RAQC on measures to reduce contributions to ozone, as well as to study the measures taken as part of the T-REX project to reduce emissions.

It was stated that FHWA cannot issue a decision document unless the project is within the fiscally constrained, conforming regional transportation plan, and that no improvements in this quadrant are identified in anything being tested for DRCOG's 2030 regional transportation plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

It was indicated that Environmental Justice cannot only reduce or eliminate effects to minority or disadvantaged populations, but it must distribute the positive benefits to these groups as well. There were mixed comments regarding the inclusion of elderly populations in the Environmental Justice group; however, it was stated that FHWA guidelines require them to be proactive in dealing with the elderly population.

It was requested that the maps show more detail in the densely populated areas, as larger scale maps are not legible or accurate. It was also stated that Environmental Justice communities need to be addressed in the public involvement efforts.

LAND USE

Land use concerns include the Department of Energy's wind research facility location (SH 128 and SH 93), effects of road widening on zoning, allowing enough corridor width for possible future RTD bus service and/or rapid transit and considering DRCOG's metro vision plan with regard to urban growth boundaries.

SUGGESTIONS ON ALIGNMENTS TO BE STUDIED

Comments were divided on the use of SH 93, or a modification of SH 93 for the alignment. There were comments opposed to alignments utilizing Eldridge St. Other suggestions included use of Flatiron Crossing, SH 128, Indiana Street, McIntyre Street, SH 58, and I-70.

A detailed alternative suggestion named "The Arvada Parkway" can be viewed at <http://www.earthside.com/arvadaparkway.html>.

It was suggested to consider a parkway modeled after those in Orange County, CA with 4-6 lanes at speeds of 45 mph (example Crown Valley Parkway).

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCE ISSUES

Other topics of discussion included questions regarding financing, area geology/expansive soils, involvement of the Colorado Tolling Enterprise, induced travel/induced growth, modeling process understanding, weather effects on driving, and socioeconomic effects, including home values, caused by increased traffic.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requested updates and contact with them and the Jefferson County Airport Authority regarding the effects on western approaches to runways. Specific concerns include, but are not limited to, affect to the runway protection zones, safety areas, and approach procedures.

7.1.1.2 FIRST QUARTER, 2004 PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

The Public Scoping effort included several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials at the onset of the study. Those opportunities were as follows:



Public Scoping Meetings:

- January 27, 2004 at Broomfield, CO
- January 28, 2004 at Arvada, CO
- January 29, 2004 at Golden, CO

A total of 478 people attended the three meetings. The meetings consisted of an open house with display boards and information for review from 4:30 to approximately 8:30 pm. In addition, there were brief presentations regarding the purpose and need of the project, information collected to date and a description of the process. The majority of each meeting was spent collecting public comment through a facilitated discussion, with records of the comments taken as flip-chart notes and notes taken on a computer by a project team facilitator.

The following is a summary of the public comments received through all means of communication during the scoping process. They are divided by general topic and the order does not reflect order of priority or importance.

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

Concern was expressed about the visual impacts from transportation improvements on communities.

AIR QUALITY

Comments were expressed that the City of Golden is situated in a valley where pollution settles and that transportation improvements would cause greater impacts.

It was stated that a beltway would generate less air pollution and have the potential for healthier living conditions.

There were questions about the approaches that could be used to mitigate ozone and air pollution. It was stated that Denver is listed as a non-attainment area for ozone.

A request was made for more information on air quality.

SAFETY

Concern was expressed about winter driving conditions along SH 93 including blowing snow and high winds combined with higher speeds.

Comments indicate the need to improve safety for children and pedestrians. Concerns included increased traffic on local roads and the intersection of 6th Avenue and 19th Street.

CRITERIA

Comments were received recommending criteria for analyzing alternatives. Those criteria included: impacts to residential areas, quality of life, safety and weather related issues, air quality, sound pollution, rapid transit, property value impacts, construction cost, water quality, scenic views, wildlife, affordability, separation of communities, and public acceptance.

It was also recommended that traffic flow consider safety, efficiency, and economy.

It was stated that the analysis should center on quality of life, building consensus between communities prior to deciding how it would be funded, and the timing for improvements.

A comment was received that land use assumptions and projections should have higher importance for the analysis and that the financial impacts on affected communities should be considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE/DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS

A comment was made that senior citizens often are without cars and that there is a need to provide transportation options.



A statement was made that process should not exclude disadvantaged groups of people including areas in the eastern portion of the study area. A request was made to describe how the project will consider and involve the low income, ethnic, elderly, and disabled. It was stated that the process use FHWA guidance to address impacts and mobility.

FUNDING/TOLLWAY

There were questions about the need for a toll road and its impacts on local access and free roads. It was stated that a tollway in the western portion of the study area would be underutilized.

There was a request to explain what the role of the Colorado Tolling Enterprise will be in the study. There was a request to identify potential investors, financial beneficiaries, and if the returns and benefits would affect the decision process.

It was stated that there may be some support for temporarily donating taxes to improve SH 93.

There was a request to identify the funding mechanisms. It was suggested that project selection should not be based solely on funding, but the best solution.

A concern was expressed that the transportation improvements should not be built with borrowed money and the transportation improvements should be based on the citizens' support for increased taxes.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Concern was expressed about the various pollutants at Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge and soil contamination including cadmium and the effects of blowing soil.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Comments indicated concern regarding the quality of life for those potentially close to a new highway. There were questions regarding sharing the burden and sharing the benefit among the communities.

It was suggested that the study consider the best use of limited resources for the metropolitan area and how it balances against other metro project needs and the geologic restrictions in the study area.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Generally, the comments indicate that there is concern about the potential impacts to the City of Golden including but not limited to: community separation, the historic nature of the town, quality of life, community character, safety, health, and scenic views. A concern was expressed about impacts to the Westwood Ranch area from potential transportation improvements.

There is concern that transportation improvements would impact scenic views, quietness of the area, and the ability to interact with SH 93 for recreation and shopping. Comments indicated a concern regarding the impacts of a roadway on property values.

PLANNING PROCESS

It was stated that the EIS process should be conducted carefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly. Comments indicate the need for the process to be honest and that the timeline for the study should not be rushed. Additionally, caution was offered regarding the MOU and its potential to bias the process. Several comments recommended that the MOU be eliminated. Also, there was a question as to why Golden was not part of the MOU.

Commenters asked that the EIS process be conducted carefully, thoroughly, and thoughtfully without rushing it. Any attempt to rush through this process would not only impede a thorough and thoughtful process, but may be perceived as going through the motions to arrive at a pre-determined outcome.

Comments indicate that the study limits should be expanded to the east to include Wadsworth and Sheridan.

It was stated that the study process be integrated with other studies that are currently underway or have been completed. Those studies identified included Rocky Flats EIS, C-470 expansion plan, Ward Road/I-70 intersection, C-470/6th Avenue intersection, and Jefferson County Airport plans.



NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Comments indicate that the No Action Alternative should be considered and that SH 93 should remain the way it is today. Several comments indicated that a beltway is not supported, but rather improvements to arterials are the solution.

NOISE

Noise is a concern through the City of Golden. There is concern that increased traffic will affect noise concentrations and that the graphic during the public meeting did not include this information.

There is concern that noise barriers have not been provided along SH 58.

NORTHWEST QUADRANT STUDY/ MULLER STUDY

Several comments questioned why CDOT, Arvada, and JeffCo won't accept the results of prior, costly studies already done, which recommend NO BELTWAY. It was suggested that the NW Quadrant Feasibility Study be a starting point for the EIS.

Golden would like more consideration of the Muller Study. They indicated that they worked hard on this study and are comfortable with the results. The Muller Study was praised for its sound analysis, free flow of traffic, and preservation of the quality of life.

Supporters of the NW Quadrant Feasibility Study indicated that this EIS should cover the same study area, and that transportation alternatives for the entire northwest quadrant should be evaluated.

OPEN SPACE

There is a concern for green space mitigation. Comments suggested that availability and cost of using green space versus the trade-off should be included in the analysis.

It was suggested that more open space be designated along the critical sections to preserve areas of concern to the City of Golden. Commenters expect CDOT to protect and preserve the Open Space in this process.

There were several comments regarding inaccuracy of the graphics utilized in the slide show and the GIS mapping. Commenters stated that the maps misrepresent the actual land use and open land in the study area.

There needs to be a good balance between open space and development. This will be difficult in this case but it can be done.

ALTERNATIVES

Comments received regarding alternatives covered a variety of potential improvements. Some felt an alternative east of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge would be preferable, as that land is "compromised". There were several comments suggesting SH 93 is acceptable as is, and the focus should be on improving Wadsworth. Some suggested improving select north-south arterials to act as collectors from congested areas to the east and west.

There was an equal contingency for and against building the beltway. There was also a fairly even amount of comments for and against a toll facility. Comments were given supporting and opposing use of McIntyre Street as an alternative. Use of Indiana Street was mentioned as the location where most of the traffic is located, and that improving Indiana Street would greatly improve traffic flow. There was opposition to utilizing Leyden Canyon as an alternative. It was suggested that Wadsworth Boulevard and Sheridan Boulevard be included in the alternatives analysis.

Several comments indicated that this EIS should also consider light rail or other reliable mass transit in the alternatives evaluation.

Some comments suggested the idea of building a highway over the top of North and South Table Mountain should be explored further as an option, and have the appeal of adding a "Glenwood Canyon" effect to this alternative.



The underground roads alternative was mentioned as an idea to be considered and it should include the areas served by other north/south roads in this study.

One commenter indicated that the Colorado School of Mines has considerable land holdings west of 6th Avenue between 19th Street and Heritage Road. They emphasized the need for the school to have access to this property from 6th Avenue.

Comments suggested that just putting an expanded road in that does not substantially decrease travel-time would not be a good choice. Time savings should be the first priority, preserving the environment second, and minimizing the impact on current residents third.

Several supporting issues to the various alignment suggestions were also mentioned, including: the effects of overhead lighting and headlights from a new beltway; adding cycling paths; blowing snow, particularly on SH 93; inclusion of pedestrian/bike facilities in the urban area; and maintaining access to Interlocken.

Interim suggestions for improvements were offered, such as providing more stop lights on SH 93 to slow the traffic down.

Some participants indicated an interest in having all of the possible alternatives considered in the EIS.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Meeting Forum

Most attendees felt the forum was good and allowed participants to express their opinions both in support of and opposed to the project. There were comments that the meetings began too early in the day for working people, and a suggestion for a separate room displaying boards for those arriving late or dropping in for only a short time. Some attendees expressed appreciation for the facilitation, while others felt it was not done appropriately. Some comments indicated a desire for a presentation followed by time allowed for individual comment to be given from a podium or via microphone rather than open house. A few comments indicated a strong desire for more direct two-way communication such that participants can receive direct answers to their questions. A few participants suggested more frequent, intimate meetings are needed, rather than large open house meetings.



Meeting Logistics

Some attendees felt the notification of the meeting events was sufficient. Others felt there was not enough notification in advance of the meetings. Most felt the accommodations of the meetings were adequate, while a few comments indicated the facilities were too warm. Comments generally indicated an appreciation of the availability of CDOT and study team staff for discussions. One comment requested directions to the meeting sites for those not familiar with the specific facilities and suggested making those directions available on the web site.

Meeting Schedule/Expectations

Some participants indicated a desire for a meeting schedule to be posted at the sign-in desk for a clearer understanding of the planned meeting activities. Some comments indicated confusion about the type of information they expected to see/hear. Some people thought there should have been more project information available.



Meeting Information

Many comments suggested that the maps were difficult to read. Some participants appreciated seeing project information on maps, and the various views of the project area. There was a request for more information about possible solutions being considered, possibly shown on maps as an alignment or delineated area of possible construction. Comments indicated the charts and exhibits were well done, and the storyboards were helpful in explaining the process. Generally, participants felt the project overview was good. Several participants felt that questions asked needed better answers. A few participants asked for more information about the project including: history, concerns, regional plans, corridor constraints, and possible funding mechanisms.

Meeting Follow-up

Several attendees requested that open house maps be made available before and after the public meetings on the web site. Several participants also indicated they intended to post comments to the web site following the meeting.

Meeting Preparation

A few attendees requested a clear list of all of the consulting firms that make up the study team. Some comments suggested that land owners and residents who may be directly affected by the possible solutions should be kept in the loop, and possibly have their comments be given more weight because they may be directly affected. Some participants commented that it was good to see citizens and elected representatives of Fairmount and the Cities of Golden, Westminster, Wheat Ridge, and Arvada present to express opinions. Some comments suggested the public should be given more opportunities to participate, in addition to public meetings and working groups. One comment questioned the study team's interest in participation numbers from Golden, Broomfield, and Arvada. Another comment suggested that the smaller working groups have a balance of participation between public, business section, Chamber members, and environmental advocacy groups.

EIS Process

Attendees generally support the EIS process and agree that the area needs a safe transportation system. There was support expressed for CDOT's efforts in heading up the EIS, and optimism regarding cooperation of all involved parties. Some participants questioned the need for meetings in this EIS process in light of so many past studies and suggested improvements for the area. There was a relatively even split between comments feeling the EIS was truly looking at objective solutions versus those clearly favoring either the beltway or the arterial improvements. There was a question as to why the short timeframe for this EIS process due to the Memorandum of Understanding between CDOT, the City of Arvada, and Jefferson County was not better explained to the public.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Generally, attendees were unclear regarding the purpose and need for the project. Many indicated that they did not see a need for a new highway connection. Some comments indicated a belief that the EIS was being conducted to justify the beltway connection, and cautioned against making that presumption.

One comment suggested that Wadsworth Boulevard and regions east of Wadsworth Boulevard should be included in the study area due to the transportation needs of those areas and the affects any improvements within the currently defined study area may have.

A few comments indicated that the purpose presupposes connectivity and questioned that assumption. They also felt that what is needed is adequate traffic patterns and flow within and across the northwest quadrant.

There were some comments questioning the benefit of this project to the City of Golden, and how the purpose or need could advocate options that would destroy a community.



TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

Several comments indicated that information provided at the meeting confirmed what many residents are experiencing. The comments support the finding that most of the traffic traveling up Indiana Street moves toward the east (McIntyre Street) rather than west on SH 72. They also feel that the traffic patterns along McIntyre Street are already greater than the community can bear. Both the volume and excessive speed of traffic make it difficult for residents to utilize their needed routes.

Comments suggested including careful trip analysis to determine where people are going and what would best satisfy their transportation needs. They requested showing population centers, origins, and destinations of travelers on mapping for public information, along with a description of the traffic modeling process. It was also requested to show the DRCOG Urban Growth Boundary on mapping and include Wadsworth Boulevard in the analysis.

Several participants had specific comments regarding traffic flow through Interlocken, traffic patterns in the City of Golden, use of SH 93, and use of forced road closures to induce traffic on particular roadways.

One attendee questioned what other projects in Colorado would suffer if the Northwest Quadrant beltway is constructed. One other attendee questioned if the beltway would eliminate 80% of the traffic in the northwest quadrant.

GROWTH

Most comments expressed concern with sprawl, and the potential beltway bringing more traffic and development, thereby increasing sprawl. The concern is that increased development will maximize the capacity of the new highway, which will cause traffic delays just as exist currently.

One participant stated that the two most effective strategies for managing population growth are increasing housing density and reducing traffic congestion.

Supporters of the beltway indicated that on a highway, traffic will move quickly, reducing congestion on city streets and therefore air pollution from cars.

ALTERNATIVE MODES

The majority of comments support alternative modes of transportation. Many suggested mass transit by either bus or rail. There was support for FasTracks. There was also support for bike paths for commuter use. One comment questioned if the proposed high speed rail between the Cities of Fort Collins/Greeley and Pueblo could be connected to a route in the Northwest quadrant.

Roadway alternative suggestions included: an extra lane or two lanes on SH 93; the recommended arterial improvements in the NW Quadrant Feasibility Study; an “eastern alignment” roughly parallel to Indiana and/or McIntyre that terminates at SH 58 or near the intersection of I-70 and SH 58; the recent plan proposed for SH 93 by the City of Golden (The Muller Study) along with a similar plan for Indiana; no one road, but improvements on several roads (Wadsworth Boulevard, Kipling Street, & Ward Road).

WATER

Comments included the possible opportunity to expand the Great Western Reservoir, and concern regarding impacts to the City of Golden’s drinking water due to its treatment center location near US 6 over Clear Creek.

WILDLIFE

Most participants expressed concern for minimizing impacts to wildlife and migration patterns with the project alternatives. There were comments indicating that the mapping of the “Natural Environment” should show golden eagles, the prairie dog relocation site by the Great Western Reservoir, and Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge.

Some attendees indicated sightings of bald eagles near Clear Creek along I-70 and witnessed migration of elk herds on Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge that should be considered.

Some comments indicated that wildlife should not stop progress.



7.1.2 SECOND QUARTER, 2004

The public meeting efforts included several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study. Those opportunities for this quarter were as follows:

Public Meetings:

- Wednesday, April 14, 2004 at Golden, CO
- Thursday, April 15, 2004 at Arvada, CO
- Wednesday, April 21, 2004 at Broomfield, CO

A total of 788 people attended the three meetings. The meetings consisted of an open house with display boards and information for review from 5:00 pm to approximately 8:00 pm. In addition, there were brief presentations regarding the universe of alternatives and comparative evaluations. The majority of each meeting was spent collecting public comment through a facilitated discussion, with records of the comments taken as flip-chart notes and notes taken on a computer by a member of the study team.

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] was set up for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the project team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Several communities requested a small group presentation be given to interested citizens.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the project team via regular mail.

7.1.2.1 SECOND QUARTER, 2004 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

Comments indicate that the effects of transportation improvements should be studied to consider the impacts to natural features in the corridor. Concern was expressed that aesthetics should not be used to eliminate alternatives.

AIR QUALITY

Concerns were expressed about increased traffic volume and the potential for higher ozone levels in Golden. Comments express concern that the City of Golden is situated in a valley where pollution settles.

SAFETY

Concerns were expressed about winter weather conditions along SH 93 including high winds, ground blizzards, and ice. Other safety concerns include the proximity to schools, crossing highways safely, and railroad crossings.

A question was asked regarding how safety models compare.

It was stated that safety and accessibility should not just be for those that drive and have a car.

CRITERIA

Comments were received recommending criteria for analyzing alternatives. Those criteria identified include: quality of life, wildlife, cost effectiveness, residential and business impacts, cost of acquisitions, project cost, wildlife corridors, historic landmarks, structures and places, accessibility, air pollution, noise, aesthetics, open space, school impacts, land use, modes, total gas consumption by all users, north/south traffic movement, east/west traffic movement, need-based criteria, and public acceptance.

A recommendation was made to use previous technical studies of all alternatives as a criterion.



There were statements that the urban fabric/community value criteria needs to be expanded and that the study should incorporate RTD criteria.

It was requested that the project increase the consideration of the human factor to equal that for environmental/biological concerns.

There was a question as to the data source, accuracy and the use of recent data for some data sources.

EQUITY

There were mixed comments regarding the need to share the burden for transportation improvements. Some felt that improvements should be shared between cities and communities; others indicated that the City of Golden would experience the bulk of the impacts while others felt that those neighborhoods/individuals closest to the proposed roadways should have the most input.

The issue of combining alternatives was raised as one way to share to burden of improving traffic flow in the study area.

FUNDING/TOLLWAYS

Comments were mixed on the need for a tollway. Some felt that a tollway should not be built due to the impact on communities and college students, and the increased traffic on local roads. Others felt that a tollway should be built since it would provide for faster commutes, it is funded by those that drive it, and there would be less traffic on the road. Additionally, it was suggested that tollways should not be built if state funding is not sufficient.

There were questions about the need for a toll road and the lack of CDOT funding. It was questioned as to whether the fact that there is no CDOT budget for projects in the area means that a toll road must be selected. A statement was also made that taxes are available so tolling should not be needed.

Additionally, some question the importance of roadway construction when there is a lack of funding for upgrading arterials and other state budgeting issues such as education.

Comments indicated various funding analyses that could be used for comparing projects. The comments include but are not limited to: cost per mile, viability, project cost, compensation for impacts, traffic utilization between a tollway vs. free lanes, property costs. A statement was also made that a separate analysis should be conducted for alternatives that lack funding.

It was suggested that steps need to be taken to maintain free routes if a tollway was to be selected and that the preferred alternative must have identified funding.

There was a question as to whether there are enough people willing to pay for a tollway.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Generally, concerns include pollution, radioactivity, ground contamination south of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge and west of SH 93, and historic mining in the area of proposed alternatives. It was suggested that the Northwest Corridor EIS work with EPA and utilize information from area studies.

IMPACTS

Comments indicate that a more detailed analysis of impacts must be evaluated in the study area. There is concern regarding impacts to: noise, air quality, quality of life/rural lifestyle, topography, recreation, wildlife, communities, archeological sites, open space, drinking water, and geologic features such as coal mines and clay pits. It was also stated that the Northwest Corridor EIS must evaluate which alternative will have the least environmental impacts. There was a request to conduct the EIS using an impartial and on-going analysis of impacts.

It was indicated that a better understanding of acceptable/unacceptable impacts to communities needs to be provided.



It was stated that the APEX Recreational Center is located along some alternatives and potential impacts to this recreational center would impact many people who recreate in the area.

Golden has precedent and the highway would be an unfair invasion of what has been established.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Generally, the comments indicate that the EIS should minimize or eliminate impacts to existing neighborhoods or communities including but not limited to Arvada and Golden. The recommendation should have the least disruption or impact to residents, businesses, and churches. Additionally, it was suggested that transportation improvements should not displace a large number of homes or negatively impact property values.

Concerns indicated that schools and the safety of students must not be impacted. It was stated that the quality of these schools directly contributes to property values, business, and economic growth.

It was stated that open space and recreational opportunities must be preserved in the study area, particularly along Leyden Road.

There is concern that transportation improvements through the City Golden would decrease the small town atmosphere and historical value of the area. A concern was stated that highway improvements would be implemented in Golden and not consider the impact to the historic character of the area.

It was suggested that the EIS consider emergency service impacts for homes, schools, and the larger communities. There is also an interest to minimize the entrances/exits within communities for smoother traffic movement.

PLANNING PROCESS

It was stated that the Northwest Corridor EIS conduct an impartial, fair, and well researched study using sound data. Comments include the need to objectively consider all community concerns and to not consider the interest of one community more than another. A comment indicated that reasonable job is being done for the project.

One comment indicated that there should not be another independent road (a.k.a. E-470). If a major highway is built, it should be by CDOT with full environmental impact mitigation.

It was suggested that the EIS process seems rushed and the fast schedule is questioned. A request was made to better understand the timing of each step in the EIS (DEIS, FEIS, and the ROD). Additionally, caution was offered regarding the MOU and its impact on the process and a feeling that the EIS might have a predetermined outcome.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Generally, comments indicate that the No Action Alternative should be considered as a viable alternative. Concerns include but are not limited to: existence of established neighborhoods; impacts to quality of life and historic character; potential for increased pollution and noise, health impacts, increased growth and sprawl, degradation of community viewsheds, and devaluation of properties.

It was stated that a vote of the citizens in 1989 and 2000 indicated that there no support for transportation improvements.

NOISE

Noise is a concern through the City of Golden, between the mesas, at Iowa Street on SH 93 because of the mountains surrounding the City of Golden. There is concern that increased traffic, including trucks, would increase noise levels. Comments indicate that noise must be kept to acceptable levels.

It is a concern that noise levels would increase on I-70 just south of 32nd Avenue and on the west side of I-70 with increasing traffic since due to the gap in the noise wall. It is recommended that the wall opening would need to be closed if the traffic increases.



NORTHWEST QUADRANT FEASIBILITY STUDY/MULLER STUDY

Comments indicate that the NW Corridor EIS should be coordinated with the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study and the Muller Study.

OPEN SPACE

There were mixed comments about the potential for a highway through open space. Some felt that the natural setting should be preserved while others felt that that the highway should follow areas with less development and fewer established neighborhoods.

ALTERNATIVES

Generally, the comments regarding the universe of alternatives were mixed and included the location and type of facility that should be implemented. Recommendations were given to distribute traffic across the existing roadway system, focus traffic on one facility, improve existing north-south roadways, improve combinations of alternatives, build tunnels, build a tollway, not build a tollway, build the shortest route, provide transit service, do nothing (No Action), or improve roadways with provisions for future transit. Comments also, in some cases, indicated improvements based on the basic geography of the study area: west, central, or east. In many cases, potential impacts were listed as reasons for eliminating alternatives.

Concerns were expressed that the I-76 corridor could accommodate travel from the north Denver area to the mountains and that the solution should fit the specific problems in the study area.

Recommendations were given regarding the width of roadways, need for sidewalks and shoulders, providing easy access, lower speed facilities, higher speed facilities, potential frontage roads with sufficient crossovers, pedestrian friendly access, and elevated or buried high-speed freeways.

Concerns were expressed about the safety of some alternatives based on weather, congestion, high speed, high winds, and wildlife crossings.

It was suggested that combinations of the existing alternatives would seem reasonable.

It was stated that the facility should create the optimum transportation system for Metro Denver, provide non-fee based transportation, and be cost effective.

It was questioned as to how the alternatives relate to existing and future land use, zoning, and planning documents such as comprehensive plans, economic development plans, and parks & open space plans.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Comments indicated that the public meeting questions and answers needed to be published and available for public review, that the web site should be updated with the public meeting information and that the EIS process needs more citizen input. It was also stated that the EIS process look at comments from previous studies and provide a more detail on the evaluation criteria.

There is a concern that some questions were not answered and that the process needs to be impartial.

There was a comment to provide an open process and opportunity for communication.

One comment indicated the feeling that this process is given to a group of hired folks whose paychecks are their only stake in the outcome.

PURPOSE AND NEED

There were mixed comments regarding the need for an improved highway through the study area. Some felt that the highway should be built while others did not. Generally, comments indicated the need to communicate a more detailed explanation of the need for transportation improvements including current and anticipated traffic modeling and if there are system problems. It was also questioned as to whether the highway would cause more traffic and who would use it.

Additionally, it was questioned as to whether the need indicated a new highway or improvements to existing roads.



The issue of improved travel times was raised along with the need to address 20-year transportation needs now.

Concern was expressed about the Notice of Intent purpose statement including the word “connection.”

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND OTHER SPECIES OF IMPORTANCE

Concern was expressed about the ability of threatened and endangered species to potentially impact progress on transportation improvements.

Several species of animals were identified as having the potential to be impacted in the study area. Those species include, but are not limited to: Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse, Prairie Dogs, Deer, Kerstrel and Peregrine Falcons, Owls, Praying Mantis, Eagles, and Elk.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

Comments indicate the need to use the latest traffic, population, and employment growth projections for traffic modeling in the study area. There is concern about the potential for increasing traffic on local roads, creating more congestion, traffic routing, and the potential for negative economic impacts.

Comments indicated that the NW Corridor EIS should be coordinated with other studies, including US 36 and the results of the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study. It was also stated that solutions from the US 36 EIS may impact traffic within the Northwest Corridor study area.

Comments indicated the need to evaluate transportation solutions for areas where current and projected traffic want to travel. These areas include but are not limited to: east of the mesas, Broomfield, Boulder, and other areas to the north. It was also questioned if travelers would travel through the study area if they want to travel north or south of Denver or if traffic signal changes are implemented.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS/GROWTH

Generally, comments indicated that the cumulative effects of transportation improvements should be considered, including population growth, growth limits and policies, water resources, zoning, existing open space, and federal lands.

There is a concern that transportation improvements will encourage a commuter lifestyle along with additional growth and sprawl. There is a concern that communities need to reconsider growth vs. additional transportation.

It was questioned as to whether anticipated future economic development, such as Vauxmont, should be represented in the EIS process.

ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRAVEL

Comments indicated that the Northwest Corridor EIS needs to evaluate and consider transit options, including mass transit, light rail, bus rapid transit, and monorail. It was also suggested that the EIS consider bus service needs for the next 20 years.

It was suggested that the EIS consider travel demand management techniques, such as working out of their homes, bicycling/pedestrian capabilities, and carpooling.

A statement was made that Wadsworth has a railroad problem that would need to be considered in the EIS.

It was stated that there is a need to evaluate options for older citizens and others that do not own cars.

Comments indicated the need to consider potential linkages with FasTracks alternatives, options for providing transit in combination with different highway alternatives including Wadsworth, existing arterials, and new highways.

WATER

There is a concern that transportation improvements and future growth will impact future water supplies.



WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Comments include the need to protect wildlife migration corridors through communities and to limit ecological impacts.

IMPLEMENTATION/CONSTRUCTION

Comments were expressed on the availability of resources for construction, a better understanding of the time-frame for construction and right-of-way purchase, and the need to complete the improvements in a timely fashion to solve the problem.

7.1.3 THIRD QUARTER, 2004

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the project team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the project team via regular mail.

Comments received during the first two quarters of 2004 were reviewed and addressed by study team during the third quarter. This ensures public comments, concerns, questions, and requests are being systematically incorporated into this process.

7.1.3.1 THIRD QUARTER, 2004 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

Comments indicated that homeowners along possible alignments in Arvada are concerned about walls that may need to be constructed adjacent to their homes and the affect on the viewsheds. There is also concern of highway noise near the homes.

Others indicate that a beltway will be an eyesore.

AIR QUALITY

Comments indicate that there is pollution from vehicle travel on Ward Road currently. Residents do not want Ward Road considered as an alternative as they feel it will increase air pollution in the area.

There are concerns about the increase in air pollution if an alignment through the City of Arvada is pursued. Specifically, residents are concerned with the high population contingent of elderly and children who are prone to respiratory ailments and asthma.

SAFETY

Many comments indicate a severe concern that alternatives are being considered along roadways that have schools and that the safety of children should come before the protection of open space and wildlife when reviewing alternatives. Other comments support this with discussion of children who currently ride bikes to school and others who must be bused or be transported in vehicles because of the lack of sidewalks.

Several comments indicate that utilization of SH 93 would be a safer alternative. This was supported by comments indicating that widening SH 93 would improve the safety along this highway, which is one of Colorado's deadliest.

One comment indicated that C-470 has not proven to be safe with so many accidents.



CRITERIA

Comments indicate that screening analysis of alternatives through Ward Road and 72nd should be unfavorable due to affects to wildlife corridors, T & E species, and high population density in the area.

There was the concern that no vibration analysis was considered in the screening process, specifically with regard to heavy truck and bus passage on roadways adjacent to communities.

Several comments express frustration with not having detailed analyses and screening criteria available to the public for review and comment. It is suggested that screening is unfairly biased for political reasons. Requests include placing more of the screening criteria, selection process and results on the web site.

One concern was expressed that cost should not be left for Level 3 screening. The comment indicates that cost should be considered early to eliminate alternatives that are unreasonable given the project budget. Additional screening considerations that should be done early include relocations because this is a primary issue for many residents in the possible corridors (see **Figure 2.2-1**).

There were some questions as to when Level 2 screening was completed, how it was completed, and where the results were posted (see **Figure 2.2-1**).

One comment indicated that Arvada-owned property east of Forest Springs is “open space” and should be evaluated as such in the screening process.

EQUITY

Many comments indicate disappointment that the communities of Arvada and Golden cannot share information and come to an equitable solution. It was suggested that a middle ground be found that is satisfactory to the Cities of Golden, Arvada, Broomfield, and Westminster, and to end the name-calling and finger pointing. Additionally, people are concerned that because agreement cannot be reached, the no build alternative will rule.

Some comments indicate that the road should be built according to the original plan, and that more recent developments should not change the original plan.

An additional suggestion was to save money being spent on the study and use the funds to construct the highway via tunnels under the City of Golden.

One comment indicated that Boulder is being unreasonable and selfish. Another indicated that the City of Boulder will benefit from any alignment and that the further west it is, the less congested it will be for the City of Boulder.

Comments regarding impacts to the City of Golden are clearly divided. Some feel that impacts to the City of Golden will be immense. They indicate that increases in noise and air pollution and impacts to quality of life in the City of Golden will need to be addressed. Other comments indicate that the City of Golden will not be so heavily impacted and that they have had high speed corridors in their historic plans for major thoroughfares.

There were several comments indicating that Arvada carries more than their share of traffic on surrounding roads currently including Wadsworth Boulevard, Ward Road, Indiana Street, McIntyre Street, 64th Avenue, and 72nd Avenue. Comments also indicated that the City of Arvada feels they have a powerful voting block and are determined to be heard despite the Cities of Golden and Boulder.

FUNDING/TOLLWAYS

Several comments state that the cost to remove homes and businesses to construct a highway would be very expensive and cost prohibitive. If the highway were a toll road, the sense is that no one could afford the toll.

People, generally, are not supportive of a toll facility and feel that if the highway is a toll facility, commuters will use city streets rather than the highway.



Comments express concern about cost from a variety of venues. Some are concerned that CDOT has not been able to solve other issues, such as flooding on streets and intersections, yet is willing to spend money for this project. Others indicate that the cost analysis of the alternative corridors should be of prime importance. While still others are concerned about cost from the perspective that relocating families will cost far more than placing the highway through an open area.

One comment indicated that the highway will be out of date before it is completed. It was suggested that widening existing highways would cost less than a new facility.

A few comments focused on taxpayer dollars, and the feeling that money is being wasted on studying this route a second time, while costs keep going up.

Another comment indicated no support for tolls or HOV lanes. This comment focused on public transportation. Park-n-rides (specifically at the SH 93, US 6, I-70 junction), more RTD buses and more bus routes are requested.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Comments regarding impacts as a result of the highway project include the loss of homes and businesses, diminishing property values, and the possible introduction of new crime and safety issues.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

Many comments were received regarding the character of the established communities and the quality of life. The majority of comments described the length of time the residents have lived in their communities, the numbers of schools, churches, and shopping centers that have established, and the comfort and peacefulness that they enjoy. The comments all express concern that the placement of any alternatives through Arvada will destroy the quality of life in Arvada and divide the City. Many are concerned about losing their homes and stated that they may not be able to afford alternate housing. Generally, they oppose any alternatives that may go through Arvada and change the community atmosphere they enjoy today.

RELOCATION IMPACTS

Comments and questions were made regarding the number of homes and businesses that would need to be bought out and relocated to accommodate the Indiana Street/McIntyre Street and Alkire Street/Ward Road alignment options. Some wondered if the homeowners and businesses could be fairly compensated for their loss. Others simply stated that removal of that many homes and businesses could not be adequately compensated.

PLANNING PROCESS

Comments indicate that the process should be expedited so that homeowners and businesses can make decisions about their future. The ongoing process holds uncertainty which keeps them wondering.

Others indicate that the alternatives that go through developed neighborhoods are poor planning and violate the trust that citizens have in their public officials.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Several comments indicate support for the No Action Alternative and state that anything other than utilizing SH 93 is a waste of taxpayer money.

Other comments are concerned that this beltway is serving other communities by providing a roadway for them to access the City of Golden or the mountains through the City of Arvada. These comments are opposed to any alternative and support the No Action option.

NOISE

Generally, the concerns about noise were with regard to Ward Road and indicate that there is a high level of noise currently. It is anticipated that increasing traffic on Ward Road will increase the noise. One individual added that the area is like a bowl and the noise will travel for miles, much like train noise travels currently.



Specific concerns about the Level 3a screening criteria with regard to noise suggest that sound levels at the east side of the Forest Springs community cannot be successfully mitigated without distance due to the presence of homes with walkout basements. The indication is that sound walls could not be built high enough.

Other concerns regarding screening analysis for noise suggest that measurements not be made by number of buildings affected, but rather by number of hours per person. The indication is that people exposed to high noise levels 24 hours a day are substantially more affected than those who are in the vicinity for work only 8 hours a day.

Additional suggestions are that couples living without children and retirees are less tolerant of noise than those with children, because they do not have the day to day activity noise level that young families experience. Therefore patio home communities and those specifically for couples and retirees should be given consideration for the quieter atmosphere that their communities were developed to create.

Comments also indicate that long time residents along Ward Road are disappointed that Ward Road has become a larger facility than the 2-lane road it started out as, and the noise levels have increased commensurate with the roadway development. They do not want any more noise increases along Ward Road.

OPEN SPACE

The majority of comments indicate that residents feel open space along SH 93 should be utilized for the highway before taking homes in communities. Additional support for avoiding communities was stated regarding the trail system within the community between 64th Avenue and 70th Street, which is heavily used.

One comment expressed concern regarding disturbing what is left of the open space along SH 93 for a highway.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

There were many comments regarding the preferred alternative. The overwhelming majority of these comments did not support the use of Ward Road as an alternative for the beltway. The same majority did support use of SH 93 to complete the beltway.

Other general comments included support for using open spaces first and impacting less neighborhoods, churches, schools, and medical facilities in communities.

Several comments express support for the City of Arvada's preferred alignment, referred to as the "Jefferson Parkway" ratified by the Arvada City Council on June 7, 2004, which runs along the western edge of the City of Arvada.

A few comments suggest that the connection between the Boulder Turnpike and US 6/C-470 would serve people well, provide commerce to the City of Golden, minimize congestion, and place the facility where there are already several high-speed roadways.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

About one third of the comments received regarding public involvement focus on advertisement of meetings and notification to the communities. It is felt that the outreach program needs to do more to reach the residents of communities, and include advertisements in the Arvada Report and Arvada Sentinel. Some suggest utilizing the school principals and PTA to provide information through the schools to families. Generally, people would like more types of notification, and have them occur further in advance of the meetings.

About one third of the comments offered thanks to meeting facilitators, presenters, and responders for their efforts in being available to provide information, listen to comments, and have discussion with interested individuals. Many state that they will attend future meetings.

A few comments indicate that they are residents of the study area, but have no knowledge of the study. Likewise, a few comments indicate that they heard about the study for the first time in this quarter.



Several comments asked for more information regarding Citizen Working Groups and how they can become involved. Specific interest was stated for participation in meetings regarding air quality, noise, cumulative impacts, wildlife, open space, traffic modeling, and traffic analysis.

Several requests were made for keeping the web site up to date on public meeting dates, times, and places such that communities can publish information in their homeowners associations' newsletters.

Comments included questions about the EIS process, schedule, review periods, and hearing. It is requested that the EIS be posted on the CDOT web site for public review.

PURPOSE AND NEED

A few comments questioned the need for the beltway completion at all, and did not see the need.

The remainder of the comments regarding purpose and need indicated that the beltway concept should provide a route around cities and communities, rather than through them.

One comment indicated that because all of the alternatives utilize I-70, they cannot possibly meet the project goal of providing efficient movement of traffic around and off other routes.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

All of the comments regarding traffic indicate that there is currently too much traffic on Ward Road. Additionally, the feeling is that utilizing Ward Road for the beltway would cause a bottleneck at I-70 for eastbound and westbound traffic.

One comment indicated that the new traffic light at 58th Street and Ward Road stacks traffic due to the limited time allotment for the southbound Ward to eastbound 58th Street turn movement. It is also nearly impossible to turn left when exiting 60th Avenue.

One comment states that connecting C-470 to I-70 near Ward road would exacerbate the already stop-and-go traffic scenario on I-70 between 32nd Avenue and Kipling Street.

GROWTH

Comments regarding growth in the area were very few but specific. One indicated that they anticipate Denver area growth will be to the south rather than the north, but agrees that residents of the Broomfield and Boulder areas will utilize the beltway. Another suggests that planning for growth thus far has been reactionary rather than proactive, and asks Arvada and all suburbs to plan better to avoid this type of controversy.

One comment from a resident in the 72nd and Ward Road area indicates disagreement with the population data. This individual feels that the population has grown and there are new houses in the area.

One comment suggests that use of SH 93 will allow growth and development along that corridor.

WATER

One comment was received regarding water resources and indicated concern that the Ward Road/Alkire Street option would disrupt a valley of wetlands and ponds.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS



A few comments were received regarding wildlife, and were one of two types. One type of comment indicated concern that the SH 93 alternative would handicap the movement of animals, and that consideration should be given to use of ways to protect wildlife. Constructible solutions are readily available and not extravagantly expensive.

Other comments indicated that the welfare of people should take precedence over the issue of maintaining wildlife corridors. There was question as to why it is acceptable to disturb natural areas to build homes, but not acceptable to disturb natural areas to build highways. Comments state the belief that wildlife adapts when highways are built.



IMPLEMENTATION/CONSTRUCTION

One comment was received stating concern about the noise and air pollution associated with construction activities.

Other construction related comments include residents at 64th Avenue and McIntyre Street who are concerned that there has been constant road construction in the recent past due to development, and want a break from construction activity. They want a chance to become settled and do not want the beltway to come through their area.

HISTORIC ELEMENTS

A few comments were received regarding historical concerns. One stated that the “old mercantile” north of 72nd Avenue and the Menagerie Vet Clinic should not be removed. The City has purchased property north of 72nd, and may apply for part of the property to be registered as a historical farmstead.

Another indicated that consideration should be given to the communities and neighborhoods that have been in place for 50 or more years.

SOCIOECONOMIC

One comment indicated support for possible alignments within the City of Arvada. It is suggested that an alignment through the City might benefit businesses by bringing traffic to them, and offer commuters a closer means of connecting to other cities.

Most comments indicate that alignments through the City of Arvada will have detrimental affects on businesses, residents, churches, and shopping centers of the community.

TUNNELS

A comment was received asking if the option of tunneling under portions of the City of Golden prior to connecting to SH 93 then SH 128 or Indiana Street could still be considered in light of the tremendous number of properties that would be affected with a surface only solution.

ALTERNATIVE MODES

Comments were split regarding high speed rail. Some were not supportive and some clearly are in favor of high speed rail.

7.1.4 FOURTH QUARTER, 2004

The public meeting efforts included several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study. Those opportunities for this quarter were as follows:

Public Meetings:

- Tuesday, October 19, 2004 in Arvada, CO
- Monday, October 25, 2004 in Golden, CO
- Tuesday, October 26, 2004 in Louisville, CO
- Thursday, October 28, 2004 in Broomfield, CO

A total of 1,482 people attended the four meetings. The meetings consisted of an open house with display boards and information for review from 4:00 pm to approximately 7:00 pm. The public were encouraged to talk one-on-one with project members to provide comment and ask specific questions regarding the study area.

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.



Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the project team via regular mail.

7.1.4.1 FOURTH QUARTER, 2004 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

ALTERNATIVE MODES

The majority of comments regarding light rail or rail transit were in support of incorporating it into the transportation network. Comments in favor of light rail or rail transit indicated that it would work well in the SH 93 corridor or along Wadsworth. Some felt the alignment of light rail did not need to follow any of the roadways. There was support for incorporating it into the project, rather than adding it later. Several comments indicated that consideration of FasTracks in a rail transit plan could provide regional connectivity.

Comments not in favor of light rail identified specific locations where it was not reasonable such as the Indiana Street/McIntyre Street right-of-way. There was also indication that transit alone would not mitigate enough traffic impact. Some unsupportive comments indicate that building for transit is simply overbuilding for the problem. There was no support for an elevated transit system.

Comments regarding bus transit were mixed. Some feel buses on highways are dangerous and should not be incorporated. It is also believed that people will still use cars to get to bus stations, so it will not cut down on auto usage. Some feel that buses do not work as people prefer light rail for mass transportation. A few comments indicated support for expanding the bus system to provide benefit to more people and incorporating bus HOV lanes into the highway system.

A few comments express support for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). It was mentioned, however, BRT alternatives do not connect activity centers and would not work as currently described.

There were many comments in support of a freeway alternative, and most indicated that they prefer to combine a freeway alternative with transit to address today's traffic and plan for future transportation needs. A few comments indicating support for a freeway alternative specifically did not support combining transit with the freeway citing reasons of too much land, residential and business impact. One comment indicated a bias toward freeways, and was not in support of a freeway alternative.

A few comments indicated support for regional arterials with either bus HOV lanes or rail transit.

Several comments indicated a desire to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian pathways, systems of interconnected bicycle trails, and bicycle lanes on roadways.

One comment was received asking if bicycle lanes will continue to be considered with the alternatives. It is felt that bike lanes are very beneficial to commuters, recreational users, and tourists and should continue to be considered.

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

A few comments received indicated concern for aesthetics and viewsheds. Specifically, there was no support for elevating roadways or light rail as the visibility will be detrimental. Specifically, if 6th Avenue, SH 93, and/or SH 128 are improved, concern was expressed about the visibility of traffic to surrounding communities.

There was a comment indicating a desire to keep SH 93 scenic or possibly to incorporate the type of engineering design used in Glenwood Canyon.

AIR QUALITY

One-quarter of the comments received regarding air quality expressed concern about the deteriorating quality of the air in Colorado in general. Additionally, it is felt that any roadway alternatives would contribute to particulate in the air.



About half of the comments express concern about worsening air quality in the City of Golden if SH 93 alternatives are pursued. Indications are that existing poor air quality due to topographic constraints will be exacerbated with any increase in traffic through or near the City of Golden.

The remaining one-quarter of comments indicate that increased traffic on Indiana Street, Ward Road, or McIntyre Street will add emissions to the valley and create intolerable air quality.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

Two-thirds of the comments received indicate that any configuration of improvements that involve Ward Road would impact the quality of life of Arvada residents and destroy the community's character. Generally, the concerns range from residential and commercial business disturbance or displacement, to impacts to the more rural activities such as farming, to the disruption to established routes to area churches and schools. Many of these comments include indications of disapproval of consideration being given to wildlife corridors and protected animal species over the well-being of established communities and people.

The remaining one-third of comments was mixed. Some expressed concern for residents of Golden and the change in community character if SH 93 is utilized. Others more generally identified that communities should not be overrun with highways, and that some elderly portions of communities are on fixed incomes and may have no where else to move if their homes are displaced. Some comments indicate concern for decreased property values of homes in the path of alternatives being considered in this evaluation.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

A few comments were received expressing concern about impacts of traffic from construction and that existing infrastructure should be avoided.

CRITERIA

Several comments were received asking for explanation of how alternatives are screened and what kind of weight is given to various screening criteria. Many comments indicated that impact to humans and their quality of life should be more important than birds and animals and wetlands. A lesser number of comments indicated environmental concerns should come first. Some indicated that the focus on whether humans or animals are more important has distracted the process away from addressing transportation issues.

A few comments question the absence of 'cost' as criteria for consideration.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The majority of comments received indicate that the combination of impacts is collectively unacceptable with alternatives involving Ward Road, Indiana Street/McIntyre Street, or Alkire Street. Impacts identified that result in a cumulative effect include loss of homes, depreciation of remaining homes, travel delays, increased air and noise pollution, impacts to the environment, reduced safety to residents and students, economic impacts, cost to the taxpayers, increased traffic on an already overburdened I-70, need for extensive right-of-way, and impacts to wildlife.

Many of the remaining comments indicate opposition to use of SH 93 due to environmental impacts (drinking water, wildlife, air quality), the encouragement of diversion traffic and associated increase in volumes and noise levels of traffic, and the intangible effects on the historic the City of Golden.

A few comments were not specific to any alternative, but more global in nature. They identified the concern that no options should be advanced that affect wildlife, water, people, neighborhoods, radioactive areas, geologic hazards, old gas mines, or steep slopes. Comments also indicated disagreement with the study's lack of attention to the broader societal and environmental issues associated with continued encouragement of single occupant automobile use.

One comment indicated that the cumulative affects of using SH 93 are not substantial. It identified that no individuals would be affected, tunnels could be used for pedestrian/bike and wildlife crossing, and aesthetics would remain predominantly intact with the preservation of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge.



DATABASE

Database comments indicated some double mailings to the same addressee that needed correction. Others notified the project team of new mailing addresses or requested to be included in project mailings. One comment indicated that a single address was receiving up to four of the same mailers with different names of past owners and requested that the address be corrected to include only the current owner's name.

EQUITY

Some comments indicate an understanding that the beltway location was established years ago along SH 93. They cannot understand why other options are being considered rather than following the original plan. The perception is that the decision-makers are being influenced unfairly by those opposed to using SH 93. It is felt that political pressure is driving the final alignment rather than engineering and planning.

Some comments explain that while the community of the City of Golden is considered historic, the City of Arvada is 100 years old, and should be given the same consideration.

Several comments are from homeowners who have lived in the area in excess of 10 years and feel it is unfair that their homes are being considered for removal as opposed to those homes less than five years old that are in the path of the originally planned beltway.

A couple comments from longtime Golden residents indicate support for use of SH 93 as originally intended because the wildlife patterns have reestablished to accommodate that roadway, and the town is already accustomed to the US 6 highway traffic. They say that the environment has already been affected, so any additional change should not be considered a substantial environmental affect. These comments indicate that use of Ward Road or McIntyre Street would introduce a different travel pattern to that community which would have much more detrimental effects.

A couple comments from more recent home buyers in the Golden area feel they have been baited to buy by those who should have informed them that a beltway might come through. The feeling is one of deception and fear of loss of equity in their new properties. One comment continues on to say that homeowners who may lose their homes should be paid market value, should be given the cost of relocation, and should be financed at the same interest rate as their existing home, or reimbursed for the overage.

Some comments indicate that Golden residents feel they have to accommodate the City of Arvada's traffic problems by agreeing to the use of SH 93 for the beltway.

A couple comments indicate that residents in unincorporated Jefferson County may not be fairly represented in this study.

Some comments feel that the Cities of Boulder, Arvada, and Golden need to cooperate in this endeavor. They feel the Cities are not speaking from common sense, but rather from emotion and petty politics.

GROWTH

Several comments indicate a concern that incorporation of a beltway will spur growth in communities that cannot handle much more expansion. Additionally, there is concern about removing established neighborhoods to make room for future growth.

Other comments encourage use of SH 93 to revitalize the City of Golden. They indicate that the City of Golden wants growth and development to spur their sagging economy. The idea is that any selected route should allow for future growth around it, and Ward Road does not allow for this.

There is concern that introduction of a freeway or tollway will add too much commercial growth to the residential areas. Several comments indicate no support for advancing sprawl like what is happening along E-470.

One comment encourages review of the city growth/subdivision plans for the SH 93 corridor to minimize traffic growth. They feel that upgrading the roadways in an incremental fashion would improve safety, avoid major congestion, and discourage new or diversion traffic.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Several comments express concern about the release of plutonium into the air by excavation activities associated with alternatives around Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. There is also concern about disturbing soils east of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge that may still be radioactive.

Other comments indicate that introduction of auto exhaust fumes associated with heavier traffic along routes that currently carry moderate traffic would be detrimental to personal health.

There is concern regarding ground disturbing activities in areas of old mines/subsidence areas, previous landfill areas, and gas storage areas. It is felt that all are potentially very dangerous and that pollutants added to the air will drift east affecting residential communities.

A couple comments support the use of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding areas with the idea that construction cannot contaminate this area any more than it is already. Additionally, it is felt that roadways are constructed through Wildlife Preserves and National Forests all over the country, so why not here.

LAND USE/FARMLAND

There were a few comments regarding land use. One was from a residential real estate representative in the process of platting a development area, and wanted more information about plans east of SH 93 as it may impact the number of homes they are anticipating. One was from a Commercial Real Estate Broker wanting to share alternative alignment information with potential commercial clients.

The remaining few comments were from existing homeowners and prospective home buyers wanting more information about the roadway alternatives relative to their homes or the areas where they were looking to buy.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Many comments were received in support of the No Action Alternative. Reasons for supporting no action included: no need to destroy remaining open space, only regional arterial improvements are justified, there is enough development and people don't want any more, natural terrain features limit highway placement, environment protection is a major priority for the communities, neighborhoods already exist in the region constraining the placement of new highways, all "action" alternatives negatively affect existing quality of life and property values, concern that rising oil prices will curb automobile driving, concern that sufficient water supply is not available to sustain the inevitable growth associated with new or upgraded roadways, traffic doesn't warrant connecting the beltway, the region needs traffic-thinning and a beltway won't accomplish that goal.

The majority of comments in support of the No Action Alternative indicated support for improving existing roads, adding intersections, and widening where congestion is worst.

A couple comments indicate the No Action Alternative is not viable. They feel that the road infrastructure needs improvement of some kind.

NOISE

Overall, comments indicate that the increase in traffic will negatively affect surrounding areas with substantial noise. Some feel that noise modeling cannot accurately evaluate noise levels in a topographically diverse area such as the Golden/Arvada/ Boulder area with mountains.

Some comments express concern that CDOT is not putting sufficient resources into understanding the benefits of alternative, quiet paving techniques. In particular, the use of rubber in paving materials should be considered.



Representatives of all communities indicate that none want increased traffic noise. Many suggest that topography will exacerbate the noise pollution, and that any alternatives should consider below-grade options to limit noise. Others indicate that regardless of the alternative selected, noise abatement needs to be a top priority. One comment suggests conducting sound wave research on sound baffles or walls to find a creative solution to mitigate noise for any alternative.

One comment indicates that use of noise walls will only add to the noise level with the echo effect created along the walls. Homes in direct line with the corridors fear a funneling of noise toward their property.

NORTHWEST QUADRANT STUDY/MULLER STUDY

Many comments were received stating support for the findings of the Northwest Quadrant Study produced by Muller. Proponents of this study agree that there is no need for a beltway and that upgrading existing arterials would accomplish the goal of improving traffic in the northwest quadrant.

Some comments favor the use of the parkway landscaping concept to minimize concrete blight. They feel that CDOT should be liberal in their purchase of rights of way and take enough property to lay out an attractive parkway system that is not overly dense.

One comment stated that the Northwest Quadrant option reasonably balances transportation needs and the needs of the community.

OPEN SPACE

A few comments were received with mixed comments regarding open space. Some indicated that disturbance to open space should be minimized. Use of SH 93 could minimize disturbance to surrounding open space if overpasses and byways are incorporated like on C-470 through Jefferson County. Some expressed concern regarding specific issues such as the Moore Brothers Farm and deed restricted areas, indicating they should not be considered for alternatives.

The remainder of the comments expressed support for use of open space rather than disrupting established neighborhoods and dividing communities. They prefer minimizing impact to populations by using unoccupied space for alternative consideration.

PLANNING PROCESS

Several comments indicate confusion regarding why the completion of the beltway, which has been planned for more than 10 years, is now being reanalyzed.

Several comments state that poor planning has contributed to placing development in the path of potential roadway alternatives and that the solution should strive to minimize impact to the citizens living in the area, not just those traveling through the area. Some comments continue on to indicate that skirting around development in close proximity is not a solution either because it places homes near a major freeway, creating a more urban feel to the community.

Some comments just ask that CDOT make a decision so that future planning can progress with more knowledge. One adds that the process is taking too long, and the study may be outdated by the time it is finished.

Some comments indicate that the process is valid and working because the alternatives that did not make sense have been eliminated. They also feel the process of elimination of alternatives seems balanced.

About one third of the comments received indicate that the amount of money spent on the EIS is unacceptable and wasteful.

Some comments wonder about the timeline and if money is available to build the final alignment. They feel that money is being wasted on the study, and there would not be any funding for construction.

Several comments state a belief that the process is not driving the alternative screening, but rather politics and various influential individuals or families. Some also feel that the end decision has been pre-determined.



A few comments indicate that alignments along Ward Road or McIntyre Street were never planned, and should not be considered now.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

This topic received the majority of comments for this quarter's report (about 1/3 of the total comments).

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicate support for use of SH 93 as the preferred alternative. The reasons for support can be summarized as follows:

- It is an excellent balance of the many considerations;
- It supports the project goal of moving people around the northwest quadrant of the metro Denver area without using arterial corridors;
- It protects the quiet communities;
- It utilizes traffic corridors that are already accustomed to higher speeds;
- It is an efficient connection between the present termination points of C-470 and the Northwest Parkway without directing traffic onto I-70;
- Unlike other areas of the metro area, this alignment will prove to be an efficient people mover that all metro area residents can enjoy without causing sprawl and traffic issues for the immediate neighbors; and
- Utilizing the existing SH 93 corridor will have less environmental impact than using the arterial corridors that are already balancing traffic and environment with existing ponds and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The predominant "least favorite" is the use of Ward Road, McIntyre Street and Indiana Street due to the disruption to closely adjacent developed communities, and lack of evidence of any past consideration of these corridors.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Some comments questioned the lack of consistency in how comments can be received and are being addressed.

A few comments indicated interest in being part of one of the Citizens Working Groups for the project, or asked for confirmation of meeting logistics.

Some comments requested speakers to come to private group meetings and give presentations regarding the project alternatives.

Many comments indicate respondents attended public meetings. Some felt the information and process was clear and congratulated and thanked the study team. Most felt the information was confusing and used too much engineering lingo for the lay person to understand.

Some people complained that the venues for the public meetings were inappropriate and wanted an opportunity for more one-on-one discussion. Others indicated that preparation was not sufficient because handouts ran out and some information was not available to them at the meetings.

Some comments indicate there are too much government involvement and not enough public involvement. Others added that they feel their voices are not being heard at all, and that the project does not listen to what they think. A few continued on to say that they feel powerless to affect the final decision.

A few comments indicated that they were not properly notified and found out second hand about meeting times and places.

Many people who attended the public meetings requested the information be provided on the web site.

One comment indicated they would like full disclosure on the potential or even the appearance of conflict for all involved in the decision making process.



PURPOSE AND NEED

The majority of comments indicate that there still does not appear to be a demonstrated need for this project. Some can understand the necessity for connecting it for convenience, but cannot see a real need.

Those who feel that the purpose is to relieve traffic congestion are in support of the SH 93 option. Those who do not feel there is a purpose opposed use of SH 93.

RELOCATION IMPACTS

A couple comments were received with concern that alternatives through established neighborhoods will cause enormous expense in relocation costs for families.

SAFETY

The majority of comments express extreme concern with alternatives that utilize existing lower speed corridors, such as Ward Road, McIntyre Street and Indiana Street, which are crossed by school children on a regular basis.

Several comments indicate that SH 93 is one of the most dangerous roads in the state and that changes there make sense for many reasons. Some add that wind and snow protection along SH 93 are desperately needed. Others indicate that slope stability is an issue and a landslide hazard study should be conducted to assist in determining how improvements can be made.

Those opposed to SH 93 improvements cite hazardous winter conditions and the foothills geology.

One comment indicates a need for a pedestrian crossing at US 6 and 19th Street in the City of Golden. They indicate approximately 500 students are in need of safe walking routes across this busy street.

Some comments express concern regarding the impact on the delivery of emergency services if lower speed corridors are utilized.

SOCIOECONOMIC

Several comments express confusion regarding the Level 2 screening indication of higher socio-economic impacts along SH 93, and less socio-economic impact along Ward Road and McIntyre Street. Supporting comments state that there are many more established neighborhoods along Ward Road and McIntyre Street (see **Figure 2.2-1**).

Some comments indicate a feeling of bias toward the socially elite with regard to the determination of socio-economic impact.

A few comments express concern regarding impacts to businesses if Ward Road is utilized and many of the residents are displaced.

Several comments indicate that economic evolution should be one of the highest priorities. The destruction of property tax base and businesses (many which would fail if displaced) should outweigh all other priorities.

SURVEY/RIGHT-OF-WAY

One comment received questioned the right-of-way needed for alternatives along SH 128.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

One comment received indicated there is a locally known Bald Eagle roosting location in the project area. The Bald Eagle roosting location is on or just behind the Kelly Trucking Property (62nd and McIntyre Street).

TOLL WAYS/FUNDING

Many comments were received regarding tollways. The opinions are divided about in half.

Those who support tollways feel they are practical and can help fund themselves. They are in support of a tollway along SH 93.



Those opposed to tollways indicate no desire to pay for using roadways, lack of efficiency due to toll booth stops, the need for excessive right-of-way, and feel it is too costly to construct. They express concern that a tollway will push commuters to find “free” avenues to work, including local roads through neighborhoods. Additionally, some state that government should provide for transportation.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

Many comments indicate an understanding that one of the purposes of the beltway is to relieve congestion on I-70. These same comments express confusion in CDOT’s proposal to utilize Alkire Street/Ward Road and Indiana Street/McIntyre Street in that these alternatives would use a portion of I-70 and add to the congestion.

Comments regarding traffic on SH 93 are mixed. Some feel that the volume is excessive, and mixed with weather conditions, SH 93 is very unsafe. Others feel that the volume on SH 93 is not excessive, and therefore improvement efforts and funding should go to roadways on which traffic congestion is an issue, such as Wadsworth Boulevard, I-25, I-76 and I-70.

Residents of the Cities of Arvada and Golden each indicate they do not want any more traffic through either of their communities.

Several comments emphasize their understanding that a beltway should go around communities pulling traffic out, relieving congestion, as opposed to funneling traffic through communities, and adding to congestion.

Several comments indicate that traffic volumes on Ward Road are already excessive and that adding more traffic to that roadway would create a bottleneck for commuters and worsen the local access for residents.

A few comments indicate that use of certain alternatives will isolate their homes. Those who live west of US 6 in the City of Golden feel that improving US 6 in conjunction with SH 93 would cut them off. Similarly, those living west of Ward Road in the City of Arvada feel that improvements along Alkire Street and Ward Road would isolate them from the community.

A couple comments asked about the traffic impact studies of the arterial roadways (58th, 72nd, 80th, 64th, 86th and SH 72). One also expressed concern about the new Cabela’s store introducing more traffic on McIntyre Street and feeding SH 58.

Some specific concerns with regard to circulation include the “backtrack” effect of connecting to C-470 through use of a piece of I-70, the idea that the Northwest Parkway is underutilized, and internal issues regarding accessibility along Ward Road.

One comment supports the use of I-70 between C-470 and SH 58 because the traffic volumes are lower on I-70 through this stretch.

Several comments indicate the belief that commuters will not travel west to a beltway in order to go north or south. They feel commuters will cut through neighborhoods, and the beltway would be under utilized. Some added that in lieu of a beltway, the need is really for a connection from Northwest Parkway to SH 58 in as direct a line as possible.

One comment indicates a more global concern with beltway construction in the use of excessive fuel. The question is whether diminishing worldwide oil supplies should be considered when determining the value of a beltway.

Some comments express concern that traffic modeling is not adequately covering the project area. One comment indicates that modeling needs to be run using 2030 traffic numbers. One comment states that traffic counts along US 6 should be taken when Colorado School of Mines is in session to account for student traffic. One comment indicates that the use of SH 93 as a way to the City of Boulder is misrepresented in the traffic model. One comment states that US 36 should be better represented because it will be affected by the outcome of this study.



TUNNELS

All comments received regarding a tunnel option through the City of Golden express support for the concept. While they recognize the cost implication, they state that this option will mitigate the impact to the City of Golden and if the money must be spent, it should be spent doing the right thing.

VEGETATION/WILDLIFE

About one third of the comments received oppose use of SH 93 due to the impact to wildlife corridors, impact to the natural vista, and the danger due to high winds and white-out conditions for drivers. Some express concern that wildlife will become trapped near populated areas and could be a danger to humans.

The remaining comments express strong opposition to allowing protection of wildlife to take precedence over people. They feel that wildlife adapted to the original construction of SH 93, and would continue to adapt to any other changes. The area is already impacted by the presence of SH 93, and any new impacts can be no worse than those that occurred with the construction of C-470. Some suggest using tunnels for wildlife to cross under the highway. One also suggested that a widened highway is less impactful to wildlife than development would be to both wildlife and humans.

A couple comments stated there is a nesting Bald Eagle to the north end of the project that needs to be avoided. One adds that Red Tail Hawks are present every spring in the open space along Wadsworth Boulevard between 104th and 108th.

A couple comments expressed interest in participating in the Wildlife and Open Space Citizen Working Group.

WATER

One comment expressed concern that alternatives other than those that use SH 93 have too much impact on local homes and water.

A couple comments state that impacts to runoff and existing wetlands and waterways would be unacceptable if additional traffic were routed down McIntyre Street or if a multilevel system were constructed through the City of Golden.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Several comments express frustration with attempting to submit comments via the web site. They indicate that there is difficulty with the link, which displays the comment form for submittal. Those that were able to access the comment form stated that there was not sufficient room to type their entire comment.

A few comments indicate information may be missing from some of the Traffic Volume maps on the web site. Specifically, they state that the local roads are not shown.

A few comments indicated that the web site is not sufficiently kept up to date with the latest project information.

7.1.5 FIRST QUARTER, 2005

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the project team via regular mail.



7.1.5.1 FIRST QUARTER, 2005 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

ALTERNATIVE MODES

A couple comments received regarding use of alternative modes express concern over the continued rise in oil prices and encouragement of automobile use. They support other modes, primarily light rail along major arterials and more buses with more frequent stops. It is also suggested to provide alternative modes to the ski areas from Denver.

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

One comment received expressed concern regarding proposed routes that may affect the beauty of Leyden Valley. The comment encouraged consideration of other routes including the Jefferson County Nature Associations' proposed route to parallel SH 72.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

Several comments were received expressing concern regarding alternatives that would utilize McIntyre Street and/or Indiana Street. They consider use of these roadways a severe detriment to the communities in and around Arvada, and discourage the disruption of the community and way of life. The comments encourage consideration of routes, which will draw heavy traffic away from the heart of the neighborhoods and enable continued safe use of existing routes to schools, parks and open spaces by community residents.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

A couple comments were received expressing concern about the possible use of McIntyre Street/Indiana Street or Ward Road/Alkire Street as the limited right-of-way would cause these alternatives to have major impacts on the neighborhood, both houses and businesses. Both comments indicated that use of SH 93 seems to be a more logical link.

One comment offered a list of many impacts that would occur if Indiana Street and McIntyre Street were used. Those impacts include displacement of homes, impact to wetlands and major irrigation ditches, displacement of the Arvada Fire District training center, destruction of horse properties and stables in the neighborhoods of Fairmount, creating unnecessary risks by placing a major highway only blocks from Fairmount Elementary School, and dividing the Fairmount community. This individual adds that the most compelling argument against 470 on Indiana Street and McIntyre Street is that the infrastructure and rights of way for 470 are already in place on SH 93 and a connection across Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge to the NW Parkway Toll Road.

CRITERIA/SCREENING

Many comments were received with questions regarding the alternatives that have been analyzed to date and which alternatives were remaining. Comments identified statements about which alternatives they had heard either remained or where eliminated, and wanted confirmation. Specifically, the Indiana Street/SH 93 connection, the Ward Road/Alkire Street alignment, and the possibility of an interchange at Church Ranch Road and Wadsworth Boulevard were options in question.

Generally, commenters were reacting to information they heard from neighbors, heard at meetings, read from the web site, or read in a newspaper and wanted clarification.

DATABASE

A few comments were received requesting to be added to the mailing list, or regarding multiple mailings to the same address that needed to be corrected.



EQUITY

Many comments received expressed opinions regarding equal consideration of various communities with the possible alternative alignments. The majority of the comments indicated that using the Indiana Street/McIntyre Street alternative where homes have existed for many years is not fair when development along SH 93 took place with the knowledge that SH 93 would someday be part of the circumferential highway. Several comments add that the influence of well-organized, highly motivated and eloquent people, whose interest is in preventing this part of the outer beltway from being constructed, should not be considered in the analysis of the best alternative.

A couple comments advised that the suggestion of a settlement between the Cities of Golden and Arvada by using the “divide the highway” philosophy is a strategy to use politics to sway the project away from its focus, and should not be given much consideration.

One comment expressed support for the “divide the highway” scenario explaining that utilizing Indiana then splitting and sending a four lane highway down McIntyre Street to SH 58 then over to I-70 would better serve Arvada's needs and could be built to Arvada's liking. Additionally, building a four-lane highway down SH 93 to SH 58 constructed according to the Golden plan would satisfy Golden residents. This would create eight total lanes servicing this area.

GROWTH

One comment expressed recognition of the continued growth in and around Denver and the Front Range, and offered support for construction of the circumferential highway.

One comment specifically identified concern about the additional development included in the Comprehensive Plan for Wheat Ridge, as well as the full build out of the Coors Valley. The feeling is that the areas that continue to grow will feel very little of the impact associated with construction of the Northwest Corridor, and yet will benefit from it.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

One comment requested that this EIS focus its attention on taking traffic around the developed areas, and onto existing SH 93, or proceed with the “no build” plan. They feel that the traffic is moving along nicely and the system currently works.

NOISE

One comment expressed opposition to allowing the Northwest Corridor to be constructed through Golden. The concern is with regard to constant traffic, including truck traffic, and the increase in noise to residential communities that are adjacent to the Golden routes. This comment suggested that the route utilizing McIntyre Street be constructed, or that a tunnel be considered to the intersection of SH 93 and SH 58.

OPEN SPACE

Once comment from a Leyden resident expressed support for use of the addition to C-470, as this would serve more traffic up SH 128 to SH 93. The comment adds that there is a large amount of traffic on SH 93 between the Cities of Golden and Boulder, and this alternative would allow residents of Boulder to use the highway as well. Buying more land and running a highway through Open Space seems unnecessary. They feel there is so little open space in Arvada and it would be a shame to see it tossed aside as unimportant, especially since SH 93 is already set up as a high-volume highway along the foothills.

PLANNING PROCESS

One comment identified the chronology of how the planning process should have occurred for this corridor. They state that the highways, corridors, and interchanges should have been planned first, then the development could occur a reasonable distance away from major highways and busy arterials to provide quieter communities. Ultimately, this comment supports use of SH 93 and minimizing the impact on Arvada homeowners.



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

The majority of comments collected during this quarter expressed individual opinions regarding the preferred alternative for the Northwest Corridor.

Nearly all of the comments received on this topic express support for use of SH 93 as the Northwest Corridor route. One comment adds that their family has lived in the City of Golden since 1929, and still they are supportive of the original circumferential highway route utilizing SH 93. It continues on to say they have crossed 6th Avenue all their lives to visit one another, and would not consider the use of that roadway “splitting” the City of Golden in half. Other comments add that use of any other corridor is a waste of taxpayer money and an unnecessary impact to the environment.

Some comments offered additional preferences, such as the connection from Broomfield to the Boulder Turnpike should be a spur inside the circumferential loop, not a main component of the highway corridor.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Many comments received regarding public involvement requested information to be part of a Citizen Working Group.

Several comments requested speakers at regular meetings of various groups such as a Kiwanis Club, the Northwest Communities Alliance, and a small breakfast club who regularly invite speakers. One request came from a Colorado School of Mines teacher of the National Environmental Policy Act, wanting a speaker for their evening class.

One comment suggested that more of the streets between Indiana Street and SH 93 be placed on the diagrams used in public meetings and on the web site for clarification. Landmarks such as RV high school, Westwoods Elementary Stadium, and the Town of Leyden would assist interested parties in identifying the alternative routes.

SAFETY

One comment requested consideration of the "Least Worst" scenario with regard to safety. There is concern that an alternative through Iowa Street and SH 93 would cause elementary age children to be 50 yards from a six lane freeway, when attending Mitchell Elementary school.

One comment indicated that C-470 has not proven to be safe with so many accidents.

TOLLWAYS/FUNDING

Two comments regarding toll ways and/or funding expressed opposition to incorporation of a tollway on SH 93.

An additional comment offers some reasoning and comparison of toll road usage in the United States. It states that the reason for building the road is to relieve perceived congestion on the existing surface roads. The decision to travel on a toll road vs. existing free surface streets is a price sensitive decision. The N.Y Thruway, Massachusetts Turnpike, Pennsylvania Turnpike, and Indiana toll road all average about three cents per mile, while E-470 and the NW Parkway average over 18 cents per mile. If the toll is too high, very few cars will use the road, and the stated purpose of relieving congestion will not be accomplished. Finally, this comment identifies that residents in Arvada, Golden, and Lakewood will not pay \$5 per trip to shop, dine, or see a movie out of their neighborhood. Therefore, if the roadway can't be free, or have a cheap toll, then it shouldn't be built.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

Several comments were given with regard to traffic analysis. A few indicate that utilizing the SH 58/Ward Road intersection with I-70 would require a rebuild of that interchange, which is currently congested and dangerous. Additionally, because the largest amount of traffic is on SH 93, that roadway should be utilized. These comments indicate that traffic flow on I-70 is currently congested, and adding any traffic to I-70 would create a bottleneck.



A couple comments indicate support for use of Indiana Street/McIntyre Street citing that the City of Arvada has been growing rapidly but has not taken enough responsibility for their transportation infrastructure. It is felt that most of the traffic currently using the corridor has destinations and points of departure to the east of SH 93, and that creating a freeway along SH 93 would draw all traffic from the north and northeast portions of the state through this route placing the sole burden on the city of Golden. Other comments of support indicate that this is a more direct route to I-70 and C-470, and that SH 93 is already too busy.

A couple comments indicate support for use of SH 93 citing that “old town” Golden is a traffic generator including Colorado School of Mines, Coors, Jefferson County Government employees, and vehicles going west to the casino towns. It is felt that highway routes that avoid Golden will only transfer the traffic congestion to new spots and will not substantially improve regional traffic flow. Other supporting comments state that SH 93 is the logical alignment given current traffic counts, current traffic patterns, existing infrastructure, and the fewer number of homes and businesses that would be affected. It is felt that using existing SH 93 would create a true "beltway" around the metro area. One comment in support of SH 93 indicated that their support is predicated on the stipulation that continued access to properties currently zoned commercial will be critical to maintaining the value of those properties in the future.

Specific comments against the use of McIntyre Street/Indiana Street include the reference to projected traffic counts along McIntyre Street/Indiana Street falling well below existing traffic counts along the SH 93 route, and that extending the beltway along McIntyre Street/Indiana Street is not a logical traffic pattern. They indicate that there is no eastbound access to SH 58; McIntyre Street dead-ends at 64th Avenue and would require a right angle turn onto 64th Avenue and then another right angle turn onto Indiana Street, and that building a beltway on this route will add more cars to traffic centers where relief from traffic is what should be done. Ultimately, this commenter feels a beltway should go around a metro area, not through it.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Several comments were submitted requesting maps or updated EIS alternative exhibits through the web site comment page.

Some comments were from new residents or people looking to buy homes in the vicinity of the project corridors. They were requesting information about the status of the alternatives, traffic counts, zoning, and timeframes for future public meetings.

A couple comments requested contact information for individuals involved with the project or those who may be hiring people in positions to assist in working on this EIS.

One request was for meeting minutes from a past meeting. Two other comments expressed frustration with the web site in having difficulty providing input, or not receiving a response from past comments entered through the web site.

7.1.6 SECOND QUARTER, 2005

The public meeting efforts included several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study. Those opportunities for this quarter were as follows:

Public Meetings:

- Tuesday, May 24, 2005 in Golden, CO
- Thursday, May 26, 2005 in Broomfield, CO
- Thursday, June 2, 2005 in Arvada, CO

A total of 798 people attended the three meetings. The meetings consisted of an open house with display boards and information for review from 4:00 pm to approximately 7:00 pm. The public were encouraged to talk one-on-one with project members to provide comment and ask specific questions regarding the study area. In addition, the team hosted a presentation following with a verbal public comment session.



Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the project team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

7.1.6.1 SECOND QUARTER, 2005 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

ALTERNATIVE MODES

The majority of comments regarding alternative modes questioned why the emphasis of the EIS is on highways as a transportation mode. There was interest in mass transit alternatives, high speed trains, and commuter rail alternatives. Several comments asked for innovative approaches for effectively moving people. A few comments also included interest in providing sound and light mitigation options in the models for mass transit.

A couple comments asked if the already voter-approved FasTracks network has been considered in the EIS evaluation. The example was offered of proposing light rail between Boulder and Golden, which could connect to the “Gold Line” between the Cities of Golden and Denver.

A couple comments questioned why the alternative transportation alternatives were scratched.

A commuter rail proponent offered that modeling should be developed to include rail stops/stations, shopping, residential and industrial parks. The model should program in growth and rush hour usages to evaluate the effect.

One comment expressed an interest in incorporating mass transit alternatives on the Kipling Street and Wadsworth Boulevard arterials to the east.

One comment expressed interest in having any roadway options be bicycle friendly.

One comment indicated disappointment at the prospect of an expressway with HOV lanes that will be congested with only those who can afford it.

One comment asked how the EIS is considering the prospect of telecommuting and its effect on the need for more roads, mass transit, and other alternative modes. This person feels that some consideration of traffic reduction due to telecommuting should be considered.

One comment indicated that the development of a beltway kills alternative transportation.

AESTHETICS AND VIEWSHEDS

One comment requested the alignment utilize SH 93 and SH 72, but angles to where it needs to connect in order to maintain the view along Indiana.

Several comments expressed an interest in maintaining open range lands around North Table Mountain and to the west for the residents viewshed along the Front Range. They are interested in maintaining the natural vistas.

One comment indicated that the geology of the area is unique and unsuitable for a highway. A similar comment indicated that the hilly terrain will make screening difficult.

One comment indicated that so much of the view has already been destroyed by SH 93 and the allowed development along that roadway.

One comment expressed concern regarding use of screening options for noise associated with the beltway, and the possibility of graffiti. It suggested the EIS consider earthen berms.



A couple comments questioned how visual impacts would be mitigated in the City of Golden. One suggestion was essentially tunneling the highway with minimal impact ventilation.

AIR QUALITY

A couple comments requested information about studies referenced by project representatives with regard to air quality. There is interest in what work has been done as part of this EIS, and the resulting estimates of toxics and particulate matter for the various alternatives.



Several comments indicated they reside in the City of Golden or in the canyon from the SH 58/SH 93 intersection north and south, for the clean air due to allergy and health issues. They opposed any highway construction for fear of worsening the air quality and their health conditions.

About one third of the comments simply state opposition to the beltway citing it will ruin the air quality in the City of Golden. It was indicated that the pollution levels in the City of Golden are already above the federal limits and that the City of Golden has the highest ozone level in the state. A supporting comment offered that less street lights in a freeway environment will eliminate idling emissions and improve air quality in the City of Golden.

One comment offered that single occupant vehicles are contributing to the poor air quality, and the EIS should encourage rapid transit rail lines and carpooling.

Another suggested that landscaping be provided near developed areas to minimize quality of air impacts.

Another one third of the comments indicated a belief that air quality impact mitigation is not being pursued in this EIS. There are questions as to what, specifically, is being done to reduce air pollution associated with the various alternatives.

One resident expressed concern regarding pollution in the Walnut Creek Valley if the alternate route on the east side of Great Western Reservoir is pursued.

A suggestion was provided to cover the arterials to control pollution and emissions.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

About one half of the comments lodge a protest against putting a freeway through the City of Golden. These indicate that the City of Golden has a small-town feel and a road would disrupt the quiet life. These also cite the cost would be high and would not solve issues of traffic congestion. Additional concerns are destruction of valuable open space and prime horse riding/boarding areas. Other comments opposing the routes through Golden cite the open space, trails, and mountain access are important characteristics that will be affected. An example is made of the Globeville area of Denver and the effect of I-70 on that community.

Many of the comments that expressed opposition to the SH 93 alternative through Golden also indicated opposition to a toll facility as it would force more traffic through downtown Golden trying to avoid the toll road.

Several Golden residents opposing improvement along SH 93 express concern about encouraging sprawl. One comment cites other cities that have removed freeways to control sprawl.

One comment stated they were a prospective home buyer in the City of Golden area, but is holding off until the preferred alternative is determined as development of the SH 93 corridor would destroy what they find appealing about the City of Golden.



One comment stated that CDOT should provide monetary compensation each year to offset the negative impacts imposed on the City of Golden if SH 93 is selected. The reduction in quality of life and additional health endangerment should be compensated by CDOT. It was suggested that the City of Golden could use the funds to minimize negative impacts.

One quarter of the comments oppose developing Indiana Street/McIntyre Street as the high traffic volume should not be routed through the neighborhoods, but rather routed around the community. Other issues include the proximity of schools to McIntyre Street endangering children and polluting the air on the playgrounds due to high traffic volumes. Additional concerns include the number of homes and businesses that would be displaced and the associated economic loss to the community.

Several comments strongly encourage selection of the SH 93 alignment that would primarily cross open space and help to relieve existing congestion along that heavily used arterial. They cite this route would allow drivers to connect directly with C-470 without having to follow a disjointed conduit to the beltway via I-70 (the recently completed “C-470 Extension” to US 6 provides an efficient connection). Additionally, the area along SH 93 has been the recommended alignment in state and local traffic plans for decades. Selecting any other alignment will undo decades of public policy, community planning, and infrastructure development.

Some comments expressed interest in the EIS addressing impact to communities and humans for all of the alternatives. A couple additional comments propose that there is no real analysis of quality of life and community in this EIS process.

One comment stated an interest in the EIS giving consideration to newer communities as well as older communities.

One comment indicated the EIS needs to address mitigation on the impacted homes and communities, and states that these elements have not yet been adequately addressed in the process.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The majority of comments on this topic stated that SH 93 already exists as a regional transportation corridor, and cannot understand why alternatives along Indiana Street and McIntyre Street, which cut through or near large portions of residential areas, are being considered. The feeling is that it would seem preferable to select alternatives with minimal disruption to homes and businesses such as what could be accomplished along SH 93 up to SH 128.

Some people feel it would be preferable to access SH 93 north of SH 128 in order to use unimproved vacant land and to eliminate the cost impact associated with obtaining access and demolition costs through the highly populated area around the Flatiron Crossing mall area.

One comment expressed concern that potential construction may be complicated by local subsidence at coal mines in the area.

Many residents and businesses want to know the impact to their individual properties and specific effects anticipated to property values. They would like the EIS to address the concept of condemning private properties for roadways. It is felt that beltways have a substantial impact on property values and that CDOT and FHWA should pay the property owners for their equity lost.

Representatives and residents of some smaller communities such as Leyden express concern regarding alternatives that would impact their smaller community.

A couple comments indicated that consideration should be made for new communities like the Village of five Parks and that a freeway or tollway alternative along Indiana Street and 86th Avenue would ruin a viable new community.



An example of deciding not to impact homes and residences was provided. They feel we are limiting our thinking if we assume we must complete the beltway around the City of Denver. There are examples of cities in which the natural environment prevented the city from building a full beltway, and the residents have adapted, especially people who live in the areas that lack beltway access. Chicago, which lacks a highway system on the east side of the city due to the lake, is a notable example. Chicago chose (and continues to choose) to protect the aesthetics and lifestyle of its eastern side. We should take that as our inspiration and protect the Northwest Corridor.

A comment was offered concerning the Arvada Air Modelers Airfield. The understanding was that the Airfield could not be moved. However, public meeting mapping showed the field partially covered by an alignment. The individual requested clarification of the alignment and Airfield impact from construction.

One comment indicated that construction of the super highway along US 6 will disrupt existing traffic flow on US 6 and cause months or even years of construction noise and disruption of traffic in the City of Golden. They would prefer to leave US 6 as it is currently.

One comment indicated the study should estimate the impact of the beltway on public transportation and make it part of the study. The study should estimate the impact of the beltway on the amount and type of development. Examples of types of development are: house farms (residential pods) and strip malls (commercial pods), or traditional urban development.

CRITERIA

A couple comments from residents of Leyden stated concern that the EIS is trying to balance the concerns of wetland, wildlife, and model airplane hobbyists with lifetime residents' preferences, which cannot be compared. They request that existing roads be used such as SH 93 and SH 128. There is a concern that nature and animals have more importance than people.

One comment indicated the data seems consistent with DRCOG, however the analysis and use of data is seriously flawed because all criteria for selecting the preferred alternatives are given equal weight.

A couple comments questioned what criteria were used in selecting the latest options.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Comments regarding cumulative effects included a request that any right of way that is chosen address at least a three-lane roadway in each direction (six total) as opposed to just two. It is felt that both I-225 and C-470 were outdated very quickly and this should not happen in NW quadrant of Jefferson County.

Additionally, a couple comments indicated any impact to the City of Golden should have the highest degree of mitigation possible applied. Pedestrian overpasses, tunneling, (cut and cover), sound walls, etc., should all be considered. The cut and cover option is expensive, but it also provides the utmost protection to the City of Golden. The precedent for this option has been set-Seattle WA has a tunnel/cut and cover that is extremely effective. Given the City of Golden's geography, this option needs to be strongly considered, and political pressure needs to be applied by Colorado representatives to the FHWA to achieve funding for this option so the long term cumulative effects are minimized.

Several comments discussed concerns about long term affects on the society and the encouragement in the direction of more resources used, rather than preserving what people value-open space, clean air, quiet, beauty, and wildlife habitat. Similar comments added that the EIS must address impacts such as noise, pollution, etc. and ultimately the long term costs and effects to residences and businesses.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

This topic was one of two major topics receiving the bulk of the comments.

About one-quarter of the comments indicated a belief that the data and analysis are skewed in favor of CDOT, not the communities and neighborhoods affected. Some added that the upcoming analysis should be conducted by an objective third party.



About half of the comments indicated a belief that the data and analysis are thorough and well presented although a bit confusing with the many options presented. Some added that alternatives retained or eliminated are supported by the data and analysis. One comment added that while the analysis was thorough, it was based on the wrong criteria.

The majority of the remaining one-quarter of comments requested information in the form of review and clarification of the analysis of alternatives, made available to the public. They feel that the data and analysis was very difficult to assess because the underlying data and analysis were not presented. The process was described but the meat of the analysis: the inputs, analytical process, and outcome were not shared with the public.

Rounding out the last quarter of comments were some additional specific thoughts, which follow:

There was some question as to the analysis of data, which shows that RC is eliminated due to environmental concerns. Yet, in TB/RB and PC it is proposed to do much of the same as RC.

Several stated their opinion of the data and analysis is that it was probably done too fast for its complexity.

A couple comments indicated that more money is being spent reaching the same conclusion.

One individual agreed with the data and analysis, but stated reluctance to approve a beltway through Golden.

A few specifically stated their opinion that the data and analysis was not good.

One comment indicated that some data shown on public displays was inaccurate and needed to be corrected.

A couple comments indicated that the data and analysis seemed to have changed focus from relieving congestion to providing “connectivity”, and added that the 2025 and 2030 analyses of population in the Northwest Corridor show that area isn’t likely to increase that much because of open spaces.

One individual felt more consideration should have been put towards upgrading arterial roads and improving public transit.

Requests for future analysis included consideration of more reasonable alternatives, alternatives with connections to I-70 for mountain destinations to include major park and ride stations, a major park and ride for FasTracks, pollution, noise, lighting, and traffic needs. Some requested a more balanced approach.

Other future analysis requests included revisiting the alternatives in Level 2 with the environmental impact properly considered and a cost-benefit analysis to determine the total cost per hour of saving in driving time for the various alternatives (see **Figure 2.2-1**)

Generally, the request was for any upcoming analysis to address the overall regional impact – not just a specific community.

Several comments indicated the data should have included past years’ original plan instead of starting as if no plan was there. The analysis and data seemed to support the obvious need and original intent of the NW Parkway that connects SH 93 and C-470 that was intended back in 1983.

A couple comments requested an explanation of the possibilities of the Northwest Corridor at the corner of Pine Ridge and SH 93.

DATABASE

A few comments were received with requests regarding the project contact lists. Two-thirds of the comments were requesting to be added or maintained on the NW Corridor EIS database and to be notified of meetings. The remaining one-third requested to be removed from the database list.



ENVIRONMENT

Several comments were received with regard to environmental concerns. About one-quarter of the comments requested that other aspects of the environment be evaluated as well, including snow mitigation, wind, lighting, animal crossings, quiet zones, historic elements, natural and human elements, and beauty of the complete project. These individuals would also like the analysis to be more clear and available to the public.

About one-quarter of the comments feel that environmental impacts should be the top priority, and should be minimized. Mitigation should be required for all environmental impacts.

An additional one-quarter of the comments indicate the City of Golden is more severely impacted environmentally with the use of SH 93 than any other community. Several continue on to state that if environmental considerations had been given their due attention, SH 93 would not still be considered.

The remaining comments covered a few topics regarding the environment. A couple comments indicated that environmental concerns currently in the process of being removed, such as the coal mined beds and gas wells in the Leyden area should be more clearly shown on project exhibits and information. A couple comments expressed support for alternatives utilizing SH 93 because the road already exists, and therefore new environmental impact is minimized. One comment identified that SH 72 and SH 128 should join with the E-470 extension and then to SH 93 as that would least impact the environment because SH 72 is along the Rocky Flats Industrial Park already.

EQUITY

Comments regarding the equity of the EIS process and alternatives varied. Many comments were submitted giving opinion on this topic.

About one-tenth of the comments indicate that neither Golden nor Arvada should bear the brunt of the improvements. It was expressed that all north-south arterials including Wadsworth Boulevard, Kipling Street, Ward Road, McIntyre Street, Indiana Street, and SH 93 need improvement. Let all communities share the burden of traffic solutions. A beltway is not the answer.

One-quarter of the comments expressed frustration with plans that show C-470 down SH 93 to 6th Avenue. These comments indicate that the alternatives go around Arvada when the traffic is being generated by the City of Arvada, but none go around the City of Golden. These individuals feel that the City of Arvada has some political pull to force their sprawl traffic through the City of Golden.

One individual indicated the only improvement that is palatable is widening SH 93 to four lanes all the way from the City of Boulder to 6th Avenue. This will allow for traffic management and safe and expeditious flow of traffic through this corridor.

Nearly one-third of the comments indicate that obvious accelerated residential development in the City of Golden area north of SH 58 continues to encroach upon the seemingly natural alignment for the Northwest Corridor over the last ten years. This type of city planning should not be rewarded by CDOT in their selection of the alignment. Several of these comments continue on to state that the logistics of making SH 93 the connection for the NW corridor are numerous, including less personal homes and land being condemned. SH 93 is already used as a major north/south route to Boulder. Construction traffic would have room to move and not interfere with the daily lives of the residents that live along Indiana Street & McIntyre Street. These encourage the use of common sense and not politics to make the final decision. Alignments to avoid this new development in the City of Golden would devastatingly impact established communities in Arvada. A few comments add that the City of Golden should work to benefit from this beltway rather than oppose it.

One Golden resident offered that Golden should work with Arvada to solve the traffic problems. Golden has seen nothing yet of the traffic that is along corridors adjacent to I-70. When the traffic does come, Golden will be at a standstill as they will be unprepared to accommodate it. They will continue to build along the roadway so there is no place to go. Then there will be many more homes to be removed. Realistically, now, with mitigation, the City of Golden could be a strong ally to solve the problem. Indiana Street/McIntyre Street will eventually be improved to handle a much greater level of traffic, possibly as a principal arterial.



While we are not pleased with this outcome, we also know that it has been in the planning for years and we are not fighting that. No freeway or Toll Road.

The remaining one-fifth of the comments indicated a belief that the EIS is politically driven and not objective. Real people and communities will be impacted by the results of this process. They expect CDOT to address the needs of the constituents and present a fair and reasonable solution that is supported by real data. Some add that the EIS and feasibility needs to be conducted by a third party with no vested interest in the outcome of the study to insure impartiality.

GROWTH

Comments received regarding growth focused on controlling growth and development particularly along SH 93.

About 20% of the comments expressed concern about the choices under consideration that include more traffic flow on SH 93. Because SH 93 runs along the edge of the Front Range Mountains of Colorado and there is fear that the backdrop of the mountains will be developed. It is preferred to recommend a smaller roadway along SH 93. They feel development should not be a consideration for implementation of the roadway improvements. Some comments continue on to include concerns about development in areas of geologic uniqueness and mine subsidence that are better left alone.

The majority of the comments regarding growth indicated they thought the beltway around metro Denver would delineate the growth area, but rather has helped generate development beyond those boundaries. They are disappointed in the lack of effort to limit growth, and would like to see some limits placed.

Another quarter of the comments support the beltway citing that growth is inevitable and will only get more expensive with time. It only makes sense to complete the NW Parkway through an area, which can support economic development without negatively impacting existing residential and business areas. The route which does that the best is SH 128 to SH 93 and south.

A few comments reference the vision of the DRCOG plan to allocate specific growth to areas in the region. For example, area allocations greater than 10% growth between 2002 and 2030 are Aurora, Brighton, Castle Rock, Commerce City, Denver, Douglas County, and Thornton. These areas are North, South, and East of the Northwest Corridor. Further, the Metro vision plans to have the greatest growth outside of the Northwest Corridor with the intent of using existing infrastructure. Please comment on why the EIS is not considering alternatives that are directly aligned with the 2030 vision for the Metro area.

A couple comments request more information about the growth projections for the Golden area. Some state that the projections are usually based upon historical trends and growth models from an era of local and regional economies. Global economies now affect growth, nature of businesses locally (non-manufacturing now), revenues, and benefits of roadway infrastructures and should be considered.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A few comments were received regarding hazardous materials. They focus on concerns about use of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge due to the potential for disturbing buried hazards that may become airborne and affect humans. A couple other comments indicate that bad soils near US 6 and SH 93 have complicated improvements in the past and express an interest in knowing whether magnesium chloride will be used on the pavements, which will expand the limits of environmental impacts.

LAND USE/FARMING

Two comments were received asking about land use with regard to the uses allowed on Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, and possible alternatives that would remove land from taxable properties cutting into revenues for counties and school districts.



NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Nearly half of the comments received regarding this topic support the No Action Alternative on the basis that the beltway is not needed and that traffic on SH 93 flows fine now. Some add that improving traffic flow, if necessary, can be accomplished without constructing a full beltway.

One comment indicates that no alternatives really seem viable, and that CDOT is forcing the public to choose the No Action Alternative because of a lack of other reasonable alternatives.

Several comments indicate that the environmental impacts are just too great, and therefore the No Action Alternative is preferred. Some comments continue on to include other impacts that further support the need for No Action Alternative particularly the effect on community character and quality of life.

One-third of the comments indicate that CDOT is presenting information about the No Action Alternative only out of process, but that it really is not a possibility. They are convinced that CDOT will do something and that the No Action Alternative is not really an option. They indicate that CDOT is not adequately considering the No Action Alternative in a fair comparison with the “build” alternatives.

One comment indicates that the No Build Alternative is clearly not an option. The opinion is that if CDOT is not proactive in preparing for future traffic, when the traffic comes, gridlock will ensue. This individual is supportive of the beltway.

NOISE

One-quarter of the comments indicate concern about the beltway affect on Golden residents with regard to noise. They feel it is too close in proximity and noise levels at primarily residences in the vicinity will be unbearable. Some add that Federal allowable noise limits have already been exceeded on 6th Avenue.

One-quarter of the comments questioned what kind of noise analyses have been done as part of this EIS, and question if it has been adequately addressed.

One-quarter of the comment requested the use of lower noise pavement on any option considered so as to lower noise levels for adjacent communities. Most add that noise mitigation should be included as appropriate with the final alignment decision. One comment specifically requests the highway be lowered with sloping sound barriers, baffles, and dense plantings to muffle traffic noise for adjacent communities.

The remaining one-quarter of the comments varied among more specific concerns, as outlined below:

- Some requested an analysis of how the geologic formations around Golden may exacerbate noise associated with a freeway alternative along SH 93. One similar comment expressed concern regarding noise impacts west of SH 93, in particular to the U.S.FWS NW Refuge and Boulder City and County Open Space lands.
- One comment supports the beltway on the basis that free flowing traffic will decrease noise levels associated with traffic braking, turning, etc. and keep it moving through the area.
- Several comments indicated opposition to any improvements along Indiana/McIntyre because noise levels will increase and the adjacent residences already have excessive traffic noise.
- A couple comments expressed concern about the noise associated with train whistles in the light of the recent ruling regarding whistle-blowing at roadway crossings.

NORTHWEST QUADRANT STUDY/MULLER STUDY

About two-thirds of the comments received on this topic question why the EIS does not appear to consider the findings of the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study of 2000 or any prior studies. They feel that the results indicating that improvements to the US 6 and SH 93 corridor will do little to alleviate traffic congestion in the northwest quadrant, and that improvements to existing arterials is the only answer.



The remaining one-third of comments suggests that Golden should follow through on the commitment from 40 years ago to preserve the SH 93 corridor for this beltway, and that their opposition is short-sighted and harms their credibility among the communities.

OPEN SPACE



About one-third of the comments suggest that existing roads should be improved, and open space lands should be purchased to provide a substantial buffer to preserve the open space feel west of the communities. This should be done to prevent large development along the Front Range.

One-third of the comments simply state that open space should be preserved and development should not be allowed.

Of the remaining one-third, the majority of comments indicate that the value of open space has not been adequately considered in this EIS and that it needs more analysis.

One comment requested notification of future meetings of the Open Space Citizen's Working Group.

One comment expressed disgust that any of the NW Corridor alternatives would consider taking homes and communities rather than using open space. Most continue on to state that the use of open space available along Golden would least impact the human environment and would be the best solution. One adds that utilizing the property of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge makes good sense.

One comment asked if open space can be condemned to build roads.

PLANNING PROCESS

The majority of comments indicated the beltway should have been built 10 years ago before residential homes were established in Golden. Several indicate that the Golden Major Street Plan from November 1991 favored SH 93 for the northwest route and was supported by the mayor when it was planned. Additional comments along these lines include frustration that Golden knew about the plans to use SH 93 and planned and allowed subsequent development regardless.

Several additional comments indicated that CDOT should plan for the next 25-50 years to minimize congestion and layout a well-thought out project to minimize construction impacts. Some suggested that CDOT investigate how other towns and cities address issues similar to this beltway issue for other possible solutions. Other similar comments request that the corridor should be sufficient for future extensions or changes to avoid this type of controversy in the future.

A few comments asked about the anticipated construction timeline and if that part of the project has been planned out as of yet.

A few comments stated that the EIS should give consideration to newer residential development just as consideration is given to older developments. Additionally, some indicate that CDOT is not planning for the future of the City of Golden and should give the City of Golden's future consideration as well.

One comment indicated that consideration of converting McIntyre Street/Indiana Street into a major arterial was never included in a community planning document, and should not be viable because so many current residents researched the possibility before purchasing homes.

Several comments asked if the affected communities will have the opportunity to vote on the final alignment. They indicate that the EIS is a pre-planned evaluation aimed at supporting development.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Comments regarding preferred alternatives were one of two topics receiving the most input during this quarter.



About half of the comments received support the SH 93 alternative. Of the remaining comments, about one-sixth specifically support improvements to SH 93, but not a full beltway. An additional one-sixth opposes use of SH 93 for a beltway.

About 10% of the comments received specifically oppose the use of Indiana Street/McIntyre Street for the alignment. Another 10% support improvements only along Indiana Street/McIntyre Street, but not the full arterial section. Some add that improvements should be made to Wadsworth Boulevard and Kipling Street as well.

Several of the remaining comments simply want a decision made and to have something built.

Several comments express support for alternatives that would be depressed through the City of Golden, such as under Iowa and 19th Streets.

One comment supports use of Indiana Street/McIntyre Street for the alignment.

One comment supports improvements to I-76 and I-70 as main, high-speed beltways to connect E-470 and C-470

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

About one-third of the comments expressed frustration with the meetings and information presented. They feel they are not being listened to, and the public meetings are simply conducted as a course of duty. One comment added that screening information should have been released to all factions of the public at the same time. Additionally, they would like to know how the public input is included in the analysis according to NEPA guidelines. A couple comments would like Tom Norton to attend some meetings and talk with the public.

One-quarter of the comments requested a speaker for a local association meeting or expressed interest in information about a working group or public meeting.

About one-quarter of the comments expressed appreciation of the staff and professional nature in which meetings have been conducted and support the efforts. Some comments add that the rude behavior of some attendees at meetings is undeserved. One added that attendees should not be so abrasive with the presenters and more open to the findings.

Of the remaining, the majority of comments indicated that the structure of the public meetings is inappropriate and does not enable people to ask their questions and have them answered. Some add that answers that were to be posted on the web site to be available to the public have not been available.

One comment adds that information and progress should be made available regularly, rather than going away for months, then returning with new information and no explanation of how it was developed. One comment requests elimination of the facilitator as this uses too much of the meeting time.

A few comments suggested that improvements could be made to the public meeting displays to clarify information such as the names of various alternatives. They also request additional basic data such as definition of the different types of roadways, how many lanes each has, speed considerations, etc.

A couple comments requested additional information and/or mapping of the alternatives or other project data.

One comment requested auditory demonstration at future presentations.

One comment expressed disappointment with the behavior of the Cities of Golden and Arvada in their newspaper articles with regard to this study. One also added that there should be better management of the rumors and decisions with regard to alternatives that are retained or eliminated.



PURPOSE AND NEED

Nearly all comments received on this topic indicate that individuals do not feel that a beltway is necessary, and do not see the need for improvements. Many feel that improvements to existing roadways are all that is needed.

Some comments indicate a belief that the beltway is being pursued strictly for development purposes and is not actually needed for traffic purposes.

RELOCATION IMPACTS

Several comments expressed concern regarding impacts to residents who may be relocated as part of the final alternative impact. Questions included whether or not residential and business owners would be contacted, how they would be compensated for their homes or businesses, and if they should be considering selling and moving now to avoid the impact.

One comment asked about the impact of potentially relocating Mitchell Elementary School.

ROADWAY/BRIDGE/PEDESTRIAN/BIKEWAYS

Several comments were received which support the inclusion of bike lanes along shoulders of proposed improved routes. Many of those also encourage the incorporation of walking paths.

One comment indicates disbelief in trying to incorporate a walkway along a freeway, as they do not believe anyone would use it.

SAFETY

The bulk of the comment express safety concerns with improvements along Indiana Street/McIntyre Street. The majority of the reasons cited for concern are the presence of schools and children in the immediate vicinity. Other concerns include existing congestion at many of the intersections,

One comment indicated that an individual had already been hit by a vehicle at SH 58 and Washington Street, and any improvements should help make that connection safer.

Several safety concerns for students crossing US 6 or SH 93 were also expressed.

A comment from the Assistant Fire Chief in the City of Golden indicated that consideration must be given to the routes used for emergency response, particularly across US 6 or SH 93.

SCREENING RESULTS

Comments submitted regarding the screening results were predominantly one of two categories. About half indicate support for the screening results and express appreciation of the effort. The other half expressed that the screening results seem forced and unsupported.

There were a few additional comments more specific to the screening process and outcome. A couple questioned why Indiana Street/McIntyre Street was eliminated. Several indicated that no alternatives that have been eliminated at this point should be returned for consideration and to let the decisions to date stand.

The majority of the remaining comments indicate that the screening process is not clear and appears to be done secretly with no justification for findings. They requested to see the screening process that determined which alignments were retained and which ones were eliminated to this point.

SOCIOECONOMIC

A few comments received regarding socioeconomic issues indicated that the City of Golden's economy is already suffering and to force growth upon the City of Golden would not benefit the City of Golden. Comments indicate that more social feasibility analysis should be conducted from a broader perspective of how others perceive the City of Golden. The intangible aspects of the City of Golden and what it provides to its residents and visitors should be evaluated.

One comment stated that assumptions on modeling socioeconomic impacts are not clearly stated.



One comment expressed concern that the findings of the EIS protect the economic interests of the City of Arvada, and eliminate use of Indiana Street/McIntyre Street due to the displacement of neighborhoods.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES



Half of the few comments submitted identified specific species within the corridor. One comment identified there are nesting owls along Van Bibber Creek as well as falcons and hawks. There is also a bald eagle nest at 51st and Flora. One additional comment asked for consideration of the prairie dog colonies as appropriate for the alignments.

The remaining comments all expressed disbelief that the Prebles' Meadow Jumping Mouse is more protected than communities and identified that it is being taken off the endangered list.

TOLLWAYS/FUNDING

Quite a few comments were received regarding tollways and funding.

Two-thirds of the comments received oppose tollways. One reason was that a tollway would favor the wealthy that can easily afford tolls and discriminate those who cannot afford the tolls, but who pay gas taxes for highways. Additionally, comments indicate that the locals will find other means to their destinations and avoid the tollway, even if it is more convenient. One questioned the overall effect that a tollway would have on adjacent non-tollroads.

A few comments support the tollway concept. Some add that pay stations rather than transponders should be used to capture more of the traffic that would and should use the tollway.

Several comments suggested prohibiting trucks and through traffic in neighborhoods. Associated with that, utilize SH 93 for W-470, but allow it to be used freely by local traffic. Create tollway usage for trucks and through traffic to pay for the road, with no assessments on residents or local drivers.

One comment opposed use of government funds on this project.

Several comments indicated the funds should be used to improve 32nd Avenue and Youngfield Street first, or other more immediate needs rather than on the Northwest Corridor.

A couple comments indicated that the ROD should stand for all future endeavors in the northwest quadrant, and thereby not waste any more of the taxpayers' money, which can be used elsewhere. They indicate that they are not concerned with how long the implementation takes to fund.

The remainder of comments were oriented toward the issue of funding. Many requested information for costs of each alternative being considered. Some question whether money is available to fund what results from this EIS. One adds a request for information regarding delay costs if the EIS recommended option is held for 5 or more years to let the traffic numbers catch up. One also adds that funding for mitigation measures should be included in the estimates up front.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

One third of the comments received regarding traffic analysis and modeling indicated that they do not agree with the traffic numbers and some have conducted some analyses for themselves. They request copies of the traffic analyses conducted as part of the EIS for comparison. Some feel the local traffic issues were not given proper weight. All of these comments have issues with the traffic modeling parameters or assumptions.

About 10% of the comments question how the "feeder" roads will be impacted with traffic regardless of the selected alternative.

A few comments expressed concern regarding more congestion through the City of Golden due to more traffic associated with the potential alternatives.



Another one-third of the comments indicated disagreement with the current alternatives because past studies have indicated that a large multi-lane highway is not the answer to the traffic issues, and that the solutions presented all pass at least partially through the City of Golden, which is not where the traffic issues lie.

Several comments offered specific issues in specific areas of the corridor being studied. Such issues included maintaining access to current properties with any alternative selected, addressing the affects of the planned Cabela's development at SH 58 and I-70, providing connections at SH 72 and SH 93, evaluating how ski traffic will use the various alternatives, access to the Airfield and if it will be maintained, access from 52nd Drive onto McIntyre Street, and the effects of FasTracks on the analysis in this EIS.

A couple comments indicated the study area is not large enough. People drive far here compared to Eastern U.S.A and a larger study area is needed to have a comprehensive solution. The FWHA must recognize the difference in driving habits due to regional experience. The best solution will look at a larger area.

The majority of the remaining comments indicated that the natural flow of traffic is on SH 93, and routes through Arvada will only exacerbate already congested roadways. These comments support use of SH 93 for a freeway, but not a tollway.

TUNNELS

A handful of comments were received indicating support for tunneled or depressed roadway construction through the City of Golden primarily to address noise and aesthetic issues.

VEGETATION/WILDLIFE

Several comments were received regarding wildlife and vegetation. The majority of the comments offered information regarding wildlife sightings in areas of the corridor being studied. All of the comments indicated they would like mitigation built into the solution so as to avoid wildlife/traffic conflicts.

One comment asked for notification of any future wildlife working group meetings.

One comment indicated that the presence of wildlife will be negatively affected by any increase in traffic down Indiana Street.

One comment stated disappointment that wildlife considerations outweigh human considerations with regard to use of Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge land over established neighborhoods.

WATER

One comment was received regarding water concerns. The comment indicates that Colorado is effectively out of water and this must be recognized by all governmental agencies. The current drought may or may not be ending, but it is drought not plenty that determines the effective water supply.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

About a dozen comments were received with regard to the web site.

Half of those comments asked that the latest alternatives be updated on the website. Some are having trouble downloading the information about the alternatives from the web site. One comment indicated the link to the attachments on the web site is not working.

Another quarter of the comments asked for maps to be made available via the web site showing corridors and potential rail service, if any.

A couple comments requested a summary of the scoping comments be sent directly to them and asked if they are available on the web site.

One comment requested project information be sent directly to him, and that he receive confirmation of his request via email.

One comment indicated hearing that the tolling studies by Wilbur Smith are available via the Northwest Corridor web site and was unable to locate them.



7.1.7 THIRD QUARTER, 2005

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the project team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

Comments received during the last two quarters of 2004 were reviewed and addressed by FHWA, CDOT, and the study team during the third quarter of 2005. This ensures public comments, concerns, questions, and requests are being systematically incorporated into this process.

7.1.7.1 THIRD QUARTER, 2005 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

ALTERNATIVE MODES

One comment was received inquiring if the Northwest Corridor includes a bicycle path. This individual enjoys the path along C-470 and thinks a path along the NW Corridor would be a good benefit.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

One comment was received indicating opposition to the beltway through the City of Golden. This person requested more information on the progress of the project as it would adversely affect the quality of life in this community.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

One comment was received indicating they are considering buying a home in the Sunrise Ridge Subdivision where nearly half the proposed routes for the beltway are shown to be located. They requested information regarding when the route will be decided, when the construction would begin, and how long construction would take. Additional information requests include the impacts of the McIntyre Street and Indiana Street route and impacts on roads such as 64th Avenue heading from the west toward Ward Road.

DATABASE

One person submitted a request to be included on the mailing list.

LAND USE/FARMING

One comment was received indicating the understanding that the City of Golden is purchasing land west of the current SH 93 alignment with the intention of moving the highway once the purchase is complete to protect homes nearby. The land falls between Washington Street and northward to about 3400 feet south of 56th Avenue. If they move the highway, it would be about 1/4 mile, at its furthest point from the homes east of SH 93. Questions associated with this information include: is there a plan or consideration in the study to move the highway to this new alignment; if they are allowed to move it, who will pay for the extra expense; if it is done, will they be required to turn over the land and highway to CDOT; they can't direct CDOT to build an alternative that wasn't selected, can they; wouldn't a new EIS be needed for that to happen; who would bear that additional expense?



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Several comments were received indicating preferences for the alternatives.

One supported Freeway Alternative FB, citing a logical place would be to route the beltway down an already existing highway on which CDOT has right-of-way. They do not support a tollway, but indicate that no more money should be spent on studies, but rather to proceed with the most economical and sensible route.

One comment requested that CDOT consider other options for the beltway through the City of Golden citing if CDOT would improve SH 93 and connect it to the NW Parkway, there would be much more buy-in from the residents in the Golden area than the current routes.

One comment indicated they recently moved to the Indiana Street/McIntyre Street area to escape a Westminster neighborhood with issues including noise, traffic, congestion, and bad air. They are concerned that any alternatives utilizing Indiana Street/McIntyre Street will introduce the same issues to their new neighborhood. Logic says since SH 93 has already been considered for years and access and rights-of-way have already been established, it should be the chosen route for C-470.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The majority of comments received in this quarter were public involvement comments or questions.

A couple comments requested copies of the DEIS when it is available.

The bulk of the comments were regarding Citizens' Working Group Meetings held in the third quarter either requesting logistical information or indicating notice of intended attendance or absence.

A couple comments requested contact information or a speaker for a small group meeting.

SCREENING RESULTS

Several comments received had questions regarding the remaining alternatives. Some specific comments asked about Ward Road, SH 93, and SH 58 to C-470 and if any were still part of alternatives being considered. The remaining comments requested information on what alternatives remain and how they will affect residents.

TOLLWAYS/FUNDING

One comment was submitted with a tollway question. The individual asked if a toll option is chosen, will SH 93 still exist as a "free" highway, and if so, in what form (i.e. frontage road)?

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS/MODELING

One request was submitted for the algorithms and equations that TrafficCad uses from whomever on the NW Corridor team could provide it.

TUNNELS

One comment submitted questioned why an alternative is not being considered to make the Northwest Corridor highway a tunnel through South Table Mountain. It was indicated that this consideration would alleviate traffic noise while maintaining the beauty of South Table Mountain.

VEGETATION /WILDLIFE

A couple comments were received from the same representative of a property owner along Indiana Street. The property is predominantly a garden, which includes hundreds of varieties of trees, shrubs, and flowers. It attracts birds and wildlife in abundance, and has been on the City of Arvada Garden Tour. The property owner is concerned that this property be preserved and has retained representation.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Several comments were received requesting information through the web site. One asked for current maps, while another cited an error in a posted meeting date.

The remaining comments either requested updated information to be sent via email or identified issues along a corridor that need to be considered.



7.1.8 FOURTH QUARTER, 2005

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the study team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

7.1.8.1 FOURTH QUARTER, 2005 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

AIR QUALITY

About one-quarter of the comment expressed concern about air quality in the City of Golden. Specifically, comments indicated that the ozone level exceeds allowable standards currently, and additional emissions in a topographically constrained area with frequent atmospheric inversion will exacerbate the problem. There was also specific concern regarding air quality in downtown Golden and near Mitchell Elementary School.

ALTERNATIVE MODES

One comment offered suggestions regarding locations where bike lanes should be incorporated. It was suggested that a bike lane be striped on Indiana Street and that accommodations for bikes be made between the Cities of Golden and Boulder.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

One-quarter of the comments requested information regarding the preferred alternatives through the City of Golden and near McIntyre Street and 56th as they are currently looking at purchasing homes in those locations and want clarification regarding the routes and impacts.

DATABASE

Several of the comments were requests to be added to the mailing list for the project or were to provide updated contact information for the project database.

LAND USE/FARMING

One comment questioned if access will be provided from Orchard to 54th Avenue via an existing easement. The issue is related to providing Orchard residents access to 54th Avenue by way of this easement, rather than connecting 52nd to 54th Avenue with the new roadway and having that be the only exit.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Several comments were specifically indicating the individual's preferred alternative. The Freeway Alternative is mentioned as preferred, but without traffic lights. One comment supported the No Action option. A Fort Collins resident expressed support for the beltway as access from Fort Collins to I-70 west.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

One-quarter of the comments were related to public involvement efforts. Golden residents indicated their dissatisfaction with the EIS team and feel their comments have not been heard. They feel they continue to express their opposition to the beltway through the City of Golden, but continue to see the option advanced.

Other comments were requests for additional information, mapping, interviews, or past handouts and meeting minutes from the project team.



TOLLWAYS/FUNDING

A couple comments were made regarding funding. One indicated dissatisfaction with CDOT and their choice of use of public funds for transportation projects. Others requested information regarding how costs are shared between CDOT and municipalities when state projects utilize land within cities. There is also interest in how much it costs to complete a 10-mile stretch of roadway.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

One comment indicated that meetings have not been posted on the web site calendar. This individual indicated that all meetings should be posted and interested parties should be notified of upcoming meetings.

7.1.9 FIRST QUARTER, 2006

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the study team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

7.1.9.1 FIRST QUARTER, 2006 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

One comment questioned the opposition of the City of Golden to the beltway that has been planned for so long. Their concern is for residences and businesses along Ward Road and the residents that are on fixed incomes and may not be financially able to move and afford reasonable housing.

LAND USE/FARMING

One comment indicated that for the widening of McIntyre Street, the access from West 52nd Drive has Jefferson County rights-of-way that have not been explored.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Several comments were submitted regarding public involvement. Specifically, the comments questioned the status of the EIS and if public comments are still being received. Others indicated interest in becoming part of the Wildlife and Open Space Citizen Working Group if it is still active.

One requested a map showing the Freeway Alternative relative to where 470 would cross Leyden Road. The information is being sought with regard to the 80 homes at 72nd Ave and Indiana for an HOA newsletter.

SCREENING RESULTS

A comment from the Colorado Environmental Coalition indicated an interest in 3C screening, specifically why the Indiana/McIntyre alternatives were eliminated, and how land use was considered.

TOLLWAYS/FUNDING

One comment asked if a projection has been made for the cost to erect a bridge across the Union Pacific Railroad if the final route of the highway is the eastern route that heads southwest from Indiana Street, crosses SH 72, and crosses the UPRR rail line.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Several comments were received regarding the web site, a few of which did not pertain to this EIS, but rather indicated confusion about the current E-470 toll road system.



Those specific to this EIS indicated dissatisfaction with the method of response to comments from the EIS team. Their perspective is that form letters are inappropriate and do not address individual's specific issues.

One comment asked if additional public meetings will be held and indicated there are none shown on the web site schedule.

7.1.10 SECOND QUARTER, 2006

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the study team. The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

7.1.10.1 SECOND QUARTER, 2006 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

AIR QUALITY

One comment expressed concern regarding Mitchell Elementary students and their potential health risks with the NW Pkwy expansion through the City of Golden. They are concerned that with CDOT's ROW only 80 feet from the playground of the school, the quality of the air will impact the school children.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

One comment indicated a need for information on the potential development/construction timing of Cabela Drive as it is proposed to join west of the property over SH 58 and the potential new interchange there.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A couple comments were received asking about the status of the EIS, when any upcoming meetings may be occurring, and who the press contact is for the NWC EIS.

SCHEDULE

One comment indicated confusion regarding the length of time it is taking to complete the Northwest Corridor loop. This individual requested information regarding the timeline to completion of the project or projects

SCREENING RESULTS

One comment asked for an update on the EIS for the section from 96th Street to the City of Golden.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

One comment from an HOA representative indicated that the project web site is out of date and that there must be some updated information made available.

7.1.11 THIRD QUARTER, 2006

There were no public meetings during this quarter. Several opportunities for interested citizens to offer comments and review materials during the study were provided. Those opportunities were as follows:

Project Hotline—A project phone number [303-220-2545] is available for individuals to leave voice messages or comments for the study team.

Project Web site—This site offers visitors the opportunity to provide comment via email to the study team.



The project web site is: www.nwcorridoreis.com.

Requested Meetings—Small group presentations continue to be given to interested citizens upon request.

Written Correspondence—Interested citizens were encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the study team via regular mail.

7.1.11.1 THIRD QUARTER, 2006 PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/QUALITY OF LIFE

A couple comments indicated confusion regarding the reactions and comments from Golden residents regarding the completion of the beltway.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

One comment questioned the presence of a PVC pipe near the area of a subsidence pit near the coal mine north of the City of Golden.

DATABASE

One individual asked to be added to the mailing list and to be called to address questions.

WEB SITE COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

One web site comment addressed previous public questions submitted via email and expressed sincerity as to the information provided in return.

One other comment did not pertain to the NWC EIS, but rather requested information regarding paying of tolls on E-470.

7.1.12 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT TRENDS

The type and degree of concerns evolved from the first public scoping meeting in January 2004 to the last public meeting in May 2005. Both the public and study team became better informed about alternatives, transportation concerns, and environmental concerns. As expected, the team received a greater quantity of comments during meetings.

Criteria and screening of alternatives were important throughout the process as well as environmental concerns, especially air quality, noise, community cohesion, and wildlife. Transportation safety and analysis became more important in the middle of the process.

During 2004, the project team hosted a series of three public meetings with approximately 2,750 people in attendance. Viewpoints were consistently expressed throughout the study regarding the criteria and screening process of alternatives.

One series of meetings was hosted during 2005. The public voiced opinions regarding the screening process of the alternatives. They express their views of the remaining alternatives that will be further analyzed in the study. Environmental concerns, particularly air quality, noise, and community cohesion were high in the first two quarters, but dropped dramatically during the second half of the year. The quantity of comments plunge as the study team began to draft the document. Most public involvement comments were inquiries of Citizen Working Groups or the status of the study.

As the study team continued to draft the document, very few comments were received in 2006, 2007, and 2008.