

APPENDIX A FHWA COLORADO DIVISION PLANNING/ ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES QUESTIONNAIRE

Federal Highway Administration

Planning/Environmental Linkages Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to act as a summary of the Planning process and ease the transition from planning to a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. Often, there is no overlap in personnel between the planning and NEPA phases of a project, so consequently much (or all) of the history of decisions made in the planning phase is lost. Different planning processes take projects through analysis at different levels of detail. Without knowing how far, or in how much detail a planning study provided, NEPA project teams are not aware of and may often re-do work that has already been done. This questionnaire is consistent with the 23 CFR 450 (Planning regulations) and other FHWA policy on Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) process.

The Planning and Environmental Linkages study (PEL Study) is used in this questionnaire as a generic term to mean any type of planning study conducted at the corridor or subarea level which is more focused than studies at the regional or system planning levels. Many states may use other terminology to define studies of this type and are considered to have the same meaning as a PEL study.

At the inception of the PEL study, the study team must decide how the work will later be incorporated into subsequent NEPA efforts. A key consideration is whether the PEL study will meet standards established by NEPA regulations and guidance. One example is the use of terminology consistent with NEPA vocabulary (e.g. purpose and need, alternatives, affected environment, environmental consequences).

Instructions: These questions should be used as a guide throughout the planning process, not just answered near completion of the process. When a PEL study is started, this questionnaire will be given to the project team. Some of the basic questions to consider are: "What did you do?", "What didn't you do?" and "Why?". When the team submits a PEL study to FHWA for review, the completed questionnaire will be included with the submittal. FHWA will use this questionnaire to assist in determining if an effective PEL process has been applied before NEPA processes are authorized to begin. The questionnaire should be included in the planning document as an executive summary, chapter, or appendix.

1. Background:

- a. Who is the sponsor of the PEL study? (state DOT, Local Agency, Other)

Colorado Department of Transportation

- b. What is the name of the PEL study document and other identifying project information (e.g. sub-account or STIP numbers, long-range plan or transportation improvement program years)?

North I-25 Planning Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study

CDOT Project NO: C 0253-219

Project Code: 18215

- c. Who was included on the study team (Name and title of agency representatives, consultants, etc.)?

The study team, including Technical Advisory Committee members, included the following individuals:

- ▶ Monica Pavlik, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- ▶ Larry Squires, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- ▶ Andy Stratton, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 1
- ▶ Jay Hendrickson, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Jon Chesser, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Leela Rajasekar, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Lizzie Kemp, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Steve Hersey, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Steve Olson, CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Carol Parr, CDOT Region 4
- ▶ Jennifer Gorek, CDOT Region 4
- ▶ Karen Schneiders, CDOT Region 4
- ▶ Long Nguyen, CDOT Region 4
- ▶ Emily Silverman, City and County of Denver
- ▶ Fred Sandal, Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)
- ▶ Steve Cook, DRCOG
- ▶ Doug Monroe, Regional Transportation District (RTD)
- ▶ Lee Cryer, RTD
- ▶ Nate Diaz, RTD
- ▶ Karen Stuart, Smart Commute Metro North TMO
- ▶ Jeanne Shreve, Adams County
- ▶ Annette Marquez, City of Brighton
- ▶ Kevin Standbridge, City of Broomfield
- ▶ Daren Sterling, Commerce City
- ▶ A.J. Euckert, Dacono
- ▶ Phil Greenwald, City of Longmont
- ▶ Brook Svoboda, City of Northglenn
- ▶ Gene Putman, City of Thornton
- ▶ Dave Downing, City of Westminster
- ▶ Russell Pennington, Town of Erie
- ▶ Dave Lindsay, Town of Firestone
- ▶ Richard Leffler, Town of Frederick
- ▶ Deb Obermeyer, Metro North Chamber

- ▶ Jennifer Kerr, Broomfield Chamber
- ▶ Stephanie Salazar, Broomfield EDC
- ▶ Andrea Meneghel, CDR Associates
- ▶ Holly Buck, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU)
- ▶ Lyle DeVries, FHU
- ▶ Alex Pulley, FHU
- ▶ Thor Gjelsteen, FHU
- ▶ Chris Primus, Jacobs
- ▶ Keith Borsheim, Jacobs
- ▶ Jim Smith, Larkridge Shopping Center, J. Perlmutter & Company

Executive Committee members included the following:

- ▶ Shaun Cutting, Program Delivery Engineer, FHWA
- ▶ David Beckhouse, Sr. Transportation Program Specialist, FTA
- ▶ Myron Hora, Planning and Environmental Manager, CDOT Region 4
- ▶ Brian Mitchell, City and County of Denver
- ▶ Steve Rudy, Director, Transportation Planning and Operations, DRCOG
- ▶ Lee Kemp, RTD
- ▶ Jim Robinson, Administrator, Adams County
- ▶ Barry Gore, President and CEO, Adams County Economic Development
- ▶ Dick McLean, Mayor, City of Brighton
- ▶ Pat Quinn, Mayor, City of Broomfield
- ▶ Sean Ford, Mayor, Commerce City
- ▶ Charles Sigman, Mayor, Dacono
- ▶ Dennis Coombs, Mayor, City of Longmont
- ▶ Joyce Downing, Mayor, City of Northglenn
- ▶ Heidi McNally, Mayor, City of Westminster
- ▶ Cheryl Hauger, Mayor Pro Temp, Town of Erie
- ▶ Chad Auer, Mayor, Town of Firestone
- ▶ Eric Doering, Mayor, Town of Fredrick
- ▶ Jonathan Perlmutter, J. Perlmutter and Company, Metro North Chamber
- ▶ Howard Gelt, Poisinelli Schughart, Metro North Chamber
- ▶ Stephanie Salazar, President and CEO, Interim Representative, Broomfield EDC
- ▶ Jennifer Kerr, President and CEO, Interim Representative, Broomfield Chamber

- d. Provide a description of the existing transportation facility within the corridor, including project limits, modes, functional classification, number of lanes, shoulder width, access control and type of surrounding environment (urban vs. rural, residential vs. commercial, etc.)

The North I-25 PEL study area roadway network consists of the I-25 spine and the surface street network extending approximately 1 mile east and west from I-25. Study area boundaries extend from US 36 to SH 7 along I-25. The study area includes approximately 12 miles of I-25 in the north metro Denver area.

The boundary also captures the major north/south parallel arterials on either side of I-25, including Huron Street, Washington Street, Pecos Street, and Grant Street. The communities of Brighton, Broomfield, Erie, Federal Heights, Northglenn, and Thornton, as well as portions of unincorporated Adams County, are represented along the corridor. East/west crossroads include 84th Avenue, Thornton Parkway, 104th Avenue, 120th Avenue, 136th Avenue, 144th Avenue, the Northwest Parkway, 88th Avenue, Community Center Drive, and 128th Avenue,

There are seven grade separated interchanges along this length. Three travel lanes are provided in each direction along mainline I-25, with additional auxiliary lanes at interchange ramp connections. The posted speed limit changes within the study area from 55 miles per hour (mph) at the south end to 75 mph at the north end.

RTD provides transit service within the North I-25 PEL Study Area, providing residents in the eight-county Denver metro area with public transportation options. Services within the I-25 PEL Study Area include local, commuter, and regional bus service, Access-a-Ride, and call-n-Ride. Transit routes include those that provide north-south service within the Study Area. Many east-west routes within the study area provide transit service intersecting and interacting with those identified north-south routes.

The study area includes three park-n-Rides operated by RTD: Wagon Road, 104th and Washington, and Thornton at I-25 and 88th Avenue.

- e. Provide a brief chronology of the planning activities (PEL study) including the year(s) the studies were completed.

Prior to the current PEL study, the following planning and NEPA studies were completed in the vicinity of the study area:

- ▶ CDOT completed the North Metro Transportation Study, a major investment study for the North I-25/Northeast Corridor in the Denver metropolitan area in October 2001. The study developed and evaluated multimodal transportation investments to address the needs of the northeast metropolitan area through the year 2020. It identified a 202 foot envelope for this corridor, from US 36 to 120th Avenue.
- ▶ The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) *2035 Regional Transportation Vision Plan* (2011) includes one additional general purpose lane and a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction for the study area.
- ▶ CDOT Region 4 completed the North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in August 2011 and the North I-25 Record of Decision in December 2011. The EIS

evaluated multimodal improvements between Wellington and the Denver metropolitan area to address the transportation needs of the rapidly growing communities along the corridor. The Preferred Alternative includes the addition of tolled express lanes (1 buffer-separated lane in each direction) and enhanced bus service on I-25 between US 36 and SH 7. The Record of Decision provided a NEPA decision and cleared Phase 1 improvements of the Preferred Alternative, including tolled express lanes (1 buffer-separated lane in each direction) in the ultimate configuration on I-25 between US 36 and SH 7.

- ▶ The Regional Transportation District (RTD) completed the North Metro FasTracks EIS in January 2011. This study evaluated transit alternatives between Denver Union Station and SH 7/162nd Avenue in Thornton.
- ▶ CDOT submitted and received a TIGER Discretionary Grant Request from the USDOT in March 2012. The grant requested \$15 million from FHWA to complete the funding package for the I-25 North Managed Lanes Extension and Express Bus project. The grant completed the funding package for a \$44 million investment to provide one new managed toll lane in each direction of I-25 from US 36 to 120th Avenue. The project converts the inside shoulder of I-25 into a new managed lane in each direction using existing infrastructure.

- f. Are there recent, current or near future planning studies or projects in the vicinity? What is the relationship of this project to those studies/projects?
- ▶ Managed Lane on Existing Infrastructure – CDOT and regional partners pursued and received TIGER funding for this project that is currently under construction. The project will build a Managed Lane on Existing Infrastructure on the existing inside portion of I-25 between US 36 and 120th Avenue.
 - ▶ A second ROD for the North I-25 EIS is being completed to include interim managed lanes from 120th Avenue to SH 66.
 - ▶ RTD North Metro Commuter Rail Line – The new commuter rail line is anticipated to be built with RTD’s FasTracks program. The rail alignment will run parallel to I-25 several miles east.
 - ▶ Other fiscally constrained transportation improvements – Anticipated to occur between now and Year 2025 in the Study Area, these improvements are included in the No Action analysis.

2. Methodology used:

- a. What was the scope of the PEL study and the reason for completing it?

The scope of the PEL was to focus on transportation improvements that could be built in the near future and which would not preclude long-range plans. The improvements would be above and beyond what was identified in the North I-25 Final EIS, Managed Lanes on Existing Infrastructure, and the North Metro FasTracks improvements.

Reasons for completing the PEL are to:

- ▶ Identify the multimodal objectives and visions of the jurisdictions in the corridor;
- ▶ Identify existing conditions and future problem areas and issues of importance; and
- ▶ Develop/evaluate a range of multimodal improvements to reduce congestion and improve operations and safety of the highway within the study corridor.

Other objectives include establishing a priority list for planned improvements and estimating costs of improvements.

b. Did you use NEPA-like language? Why or why not?

Yes, we used NEPA-like language to provide the framework for the implementation of the Recommended Alternative as funding is available and to be used as a resource for future NEPA documentation. The use of Purpose and Need and other NEPA-like language provides an opportunity to build upon decisions made in the PEL.

c. What were the actual terms used and how did you define them? (Provide examples or list)

- ▶ Purpose and Need – Identifies the rationale for development of project alternatives and ways to measure those alternatives.
- ▶ Recommended Alternative – Used for the alternative selected for analysis.
- ▶ No Action Alternative – Would add a managed lane to I-25 in each direction between US 36 and 120th Avenue.
- ▶ Environmental Consequences – Discusses the impacts on resources that would be expected under both the No Action Alternative and the Recommended Alternative.
- ▶ Mitigation Strategies – Describes the possible mitigation measures that have been identified to address adverse impacts that would be expected with the Recommended Alternative.

d. How do you see these terms being used in NEPA documents?

These terms will be used in NEPA documents in the same fashion as they were used in the PEL study.

e. What were the key steps and coordination points in the PEL decision-making process? Who were the decision-makers and who else participated in those key steps? For example, for the corridor vision, the decision was made by state DOT and the local agency, with buy-in from FHWA, the USACE, and USFWS and other resource/regulatory agencies.

Key steps in the study process included:

- ▶ Identifying project purpose and need
- ▶ Determining the future design year and the travel demand model
- ▶ Developing alternatives and screening criteria
- ▶ Identifying the Recommended Alternative through evaluation processes
- ▶ Developing a phasing and implementation plan

The primary decision-makers in the study process were from the TAC and the EC members through ongoing meetings throughout the project.

f. How should the PEL information be presented in NEPA?

This PEL is intended to provide the framework and baseline understanding for the implementation of the Recommended Alternative as funding is available and to be used as a resource for future NEPA documentation.

3. Agency coordination:

- a. Provide a synopsis of coordination with federal, tribal, state and local environmental, regulatory and resource agencies. Describe their level of participation and how you coordinated with them.

Please see Section 5.0, Subsection 5.1.5 of the PEL Report, which describes the coordination with federal and state regulatory and resource agencies.

- b. What transportation agencies (e.g. for adjacent jurisdictions) did you coordinate with or were involved during the PEL study?

Coordination occurred with:

- ▶ CDOT Region 4
- ▶ CDOT Region 1
- ▶ Denver Regional Council of Governments
- ▶ Regional Transportation District
- ▶ North Area Transportation Alliance TMO
- ▶ City of Thornton
- ▶ City of Westminster
- ▶ City of Northglenn
- ▶ Adams County
- ▶ City and County of Broomfield
- ▶ City and County of Denver
- ▶ City of Brighton
- ▶ Commerce City
- ▶ Dacono
- ▶ City of Longmont
- ▶ Town of Erie
- ▶ Town of Firestone
- ▶ Town of Frederick

- c. What steps will need to be taken with each agency during NEPA scoping?

The steps to be taken will depend on the type of future NEPA documentation prepared for the project, such as the preparation of a Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) or a series of CatExs, or the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA).

4. Public coordination:

- a. Provide a synopsis of your coordination efforts with the public and stakeholders.
- ▶ CDOT formed the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which included staff from the corridor communities, local, state and federal government agencies, and other regional partners. The TAC met at various times throughout the project—approximately every 6-8 weeks to 6 months—with CDOT to provide technical input for the development of the PEL study. The members of the TAC kept their respective organizations, constituent groups or elected officials on the EC updated. The members of the TAC served as the primary point of communication and provider of information for their respective communities or organizations.
 - ▶ CDOT formed the Executive Committee (EC), which provided input on a range of issues including the corridor vision, alternatives and improvement phasing priorities. The EC was comprised of elected officials or senior-level staff from the corridor communities along with representatives from federal and state government agencies. Meetings were scheduled around key project milestones.
 - ▶ Between November 28, 2011, and December 8, 2011, members of the North I-25 PEL project team from CDOT, FHU, and CDR conducted stakeholder interviews with Adams County, the City and County of Denver, the City of Westminster, the City and County of Broomfield, the City of Northglenn, FHWA, Federal Transit Administration, CDOT, CDOT Region 6, DRCOG, and RTD. The informal interviews explored the views of the individual and his/her constituents both on how to enhance the effectiveness of the effort and on the substantive issues on the study, such as purpose and need, corridor vision, range of alternatives to be studied, public involvement effort, and other potential challenges and issues to be addressed during the study.
 - ▶ On February 2, 2012, CDOT conducted a visioning workshop with stakeholders to confirm the goals and outcomes of the North I-25 PEL Study; to outline operating protocols related to how the dialog is going to work among the EC, TAC, and the public; and obtain initial input on improvement ideas for the corridor, to be discussed in detail at future meetings.
 - ▶ CDOT issued a press release, dated April 23, 2012, to announce the start of the study and to invite the public to an upcoming open house.
 - ▶ CDOT hosted a public open house on May 9, 2012, at the Northglenn Recreation Center, with approximately 34 members of the public attending.
 - ▶ CDOT hosted a public open house on August 27, 2013 at the Adams County Economic Development Office to share information and gather input on the Recommended Alternative and the proposed phasing plan.

5. Purpose and Need for the PEL study:

- a. What was the scope of the PEL study and the reason for completing it?

See Section 1.0, Subsection 1.1. for the scope of the PEL and the reason for completing it.

- b. Provide the purpose and need statement, or the corridor vision and transportation goals and objectives to realize that vision.

Please see Section 1.0, Subection 1.4 of this PEL Report, which includes a statement of project purposes and a need statement in Subsection 1.5.

- c. What steps will need to be taken during the NEPA process to make this a project-level purpose and need statement?

Minimal additional effort is expected to make this a project-level purpose and need statement.

6. Range of alternatives: Planning teams need to be cautious during the alternative screen process; alternative screening should focus on purpose and need/corridor vision, fatal flaw analysis and possibly mode selection. This may help minimize problems during discussions with resource agencies. Alternatives that have fatal flaws or do not meet the purpose and need/corridor vision cannot be considered viable alternatives, even if they reduce impacts to a particular resource. Detail the range of alternatives considered, screening criteria and screening process, including:

- a. What types of alternatives were looked at? (Provide a one or two sentence summary and reference document.)

A range of alternatives that included mainline improvements along I-25 (additional sections of general purpose lanes, continuous acceleration/deceleration lanes, ramp modifications, transit infrastructure, park-and-rides, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Travel Demand Management, and Transportation Systems Management. These alternatives were evaluated based on their ability to meet the I-25 PEL purpose and need. See Section 2.0 of the PEL Study for information regarding the types of alternatives studied.

- b. How did you select the screening criteria and screening process?

The process of developing and screening alternatives took into account the following: state and federal requirements, the purpose and need for the project, the reasonableness of an alternative, ability to avoid or minimize environmental impacts, project goals, and public input. A wide range of components were identified through a comprehensive set of stakeholder interviews, a public scoping meeting, and a technical operational analysis of I-25. The process was developed with input during the PMT, TAC, and EC meetings to sufficiently address the identified and perceived transportation needs of the corridor.

- c. For alternative(s) that were screened out, briefly summarize the reasons for eliminating the alternative(s). (During the initial screenings, this generally will focus on fatal flaws)

In general, all the components eliminated were removed based on their lack of ability to meet the project's purpose and need to provide congestion relief, safety improvements, or

transit ridership. See Subsection 2.7 of the PEL Study to review screened alternatives and the reasons why these alternatives were screened.

- d. Which alternatives should be brought forward into NEPA and why?

The PEL process resulted in a single Recommended Alternative Package, which is comprised of multiple components that can be carried forward individually or as a grouping into NEPA. The PEL provides a prioritized list of components that can deliver benefits in the near term future. The Recommended Alternative and individual components of the Recommended Alternative should be carried forward into NEPA because they are expected to provide transportation improvements in the form of reduced delay, enhanced traffic safety, and expanded transportation options.

- e. Did the public, stakeholders, and agencies have an opportunity to comment during this process?

The TAC and EC were coordinated and given the opportunity to comment at all major milestones/decision points. The public had the opportunity to provide comments and feedback during the initial alternative development process and on the Recommended Alternative and prioritization.

- f. Were there unresolved issues with the public, stakeholders and/or agencies?

No unresolved issues with the public, stakeholders, and agencies are present.

7. Planning assumptions and analytical methods:

- a. What is the forecast year used in the PEL study?

Year 2035

- b. What method was used for forecasting traffic volumes?

Current traffic information was assembled from information provided by the cities of Westminster and Thornton, counts conducted as a part of the North I-25 FEIS effort, and some new counts at locations not previously captured.

The 2010 and 2035 DRCOG Travel Demand Models were used to evaluate the travel markets for the I-25 corridor. The travel market analyses provided information about the types of trips served, traffic levels entering and exiting I-25 at each interchange, and where trips originate that travel through particular roadway segments.

Future-year traffic analyses were developed using Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) and origin-destination information included in DRCOG's 2035 regional travel demand model. Extracted from the regional model and placed into a subarea encompassing the PEL study area, this information formed the basis for a Year 2035 DynusT Dynamic Traffic Assignment computer simulation model of the corridor. The DynusT model provided multiple performance measures associated with the No Action Alternative and roadway infrastructure components, including traffic flow, travel time, and travel speed.

To quantify the location and temporal extent of current traffic congestion along I-25 through the study area, the project team gathered data available from 20 Doppler radar speed sensors located between 58th Avenue and SH 7. CDOT uses the sensors, which are spaced an average of ¾ miles apart, to communicate travel speeds to the public. As a case study on the impacts of non-recurring congestion upon the I-25 PEL corridor, the project team reviewed crash histories for September 2011 days with speed data available.

Traffic modeling analyses of I-25 were conducted to locate bottlenecks and quantify the temporal and spatial extent of their effects on traffic flow for the No Action condition and potential roadway infrastructure improvements. A year 2010 subarea DynusT model was developed and calibrated to replicate observed traffic conditions. A Year 2035 DynusT subarea was developed to evaluate component performance with future growth.

- c. Are the planning assumptions and the corridor vision/purpose and need statement consistent with the long-range transportation plan?

Yes. The project alternatives were all evaluated to determine compliance with the long-range cross sections. See Subsection 2.6 of the PEL Study for additional information.

- d. What were the future year policy and/or data assumptions used in the transportation planning process related to land use, economic development, transportation costs and network expansion?

See Section 3.0 of the PEL Study for additional information.

- 8. Environmental resources (wetlands, cultural, etc.) reviewed. For each resource or group of resources reviewed, provide the following:

- a. In the PEL study, at what level of detail was the resource reviewed and what was the method of review?

Resource	Level of Detail and Method of Review
Air Quality	Reviewed information previously gathered for the area for the North I-25 FEIS and updated the information for any substantive air quality changes that had occurred since the FEIS was prepared. The main air quality consideration is the regulatory status of the Study Area relative to the NAAQS, which primarily determines the needs and requirements for air quality for regional planning.
Environmental Justice	Reviewed information previously gathered for the area for the North I-25 FEIS and updated the information for any substantive changes that had occurred since the FEIS was prepared. Identified any additional minority and/or low-income populations in the Study Area by evaluating US Census data consistent with guidance in the Colorado Department of Transportation's Title VI and Environmental Justice for NEPA Projects – Rev 3. Used Census 2010 data at the block level to identify minority populations. Determined low-income populations using US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income thresholds and income parameters from the American Community Survey (2006–2010).
Floodways/Floodplains	Identified the drainageways by reviewing the North I-25 FEIS and the Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA) designated floodplains. If a discrepancy was noted between the two sources, used the most recent information. Conducted no floodplain modeling as part of the effort in this PEL.

Resource	Level of Detail and Method of Review
Hazardous Materials	Identified sites with potential or known hazardous materials issues by reviewing the North I-25 FEIS hazardous materials data and Modified Environmental Site Assessment (MESA). Reviewed readily available local, state, tribal, and federal environmental agency databases and identified sites with recognized or potential environmental conditions.
Historic Resources	Reviewed information previously gathered for the area for the North I-25 FEIS and updated the information for any substantive changes that had occurred since the FEIS was prepared. Reviewed information collected from sources including lists of properties on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); lists of properties on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties; and lists of local landmarks from communities and counties with local historic landmark programs. Reviewed results of file searches at the Colorado Historical Society for all properties previously surveyed and officially designated as properties eligible for inclusion on the NRHP and for all properties previously surveyed and field assessed as properties eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. Reviewed the field assessment to identify properties with architectural character and integrity that may be potential historic resources, as well as sites that were identified and analyzed in the North I-25 FEIS.
Land Use	Generally identified existing and future land use in the Study Area using municipal and county comprehensive plans and GIS data developed for the North I-25 FEIS. Generally categorized land uses across all jurisdictions in the Study Area into agricultural, residential, commercial (including retail, industrial, office, etc.), and open space/parks. Identified specific land uses along the I-25 corridor based on information from the North I-25 FEIS and a review of 2011 aerial imagery from Google Earth.
Noise	<p>Reviewed information previously gathered for the area for the North I-25 FEIS. Updated this information for the I-25 mainline and up to 500 feet from the mainline. Identified any substantive changes in terms of traffic noise receptors that occurred since the North I-25 FEIS was prepared.</p> <p>FHWA implemented new guidance for noise impacts and abatement for highways since the North I-25 FEIS was completed. On July 13, 2010, FHWA issued a new final traffic noise rule that affects Federal and Federal-aid projects (23 CFR 772). In response, CDOT developed new noise analysis and abatement guidance to comply with the new rule. Therefore, the determination of impacts and the evaluation of abatement actions going forward must follow the 2011 CDOT guidance and may reach different conclusions than those presented in the North I-25 FEIS. However, it is important to understand that because the noise impact thresholds for the most sensitive common noise receptor (residences) did not change under the new guidance, the impact findings from the new guidance should not be dramatically different. It should be noted that the North I-25 ROD was prepared after this change took effect and followed the 2011 CDOT guidance.</p> <p>If the noise level at a receptor is found to equal or exceed the relevant NAC, the receptor is viewed as an impact. For proposed improvements, if the noise level in the future design year at a receptor is calculated to increase by 10 decibels (dB) or more over existing conditions, that is also viewed as a noise impact.</p>
Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Identified existing parks and recreational resources in the resource-specific Study Area by reviewing GIS data; current land use; parks and recreation master plans; information in the North I-25 FEIS; and 2011 aerial imagery from Google Earth.

Resource	Level of Detail and Method of Review
Threatened and Endangered Species / Wildlife Corridors	Used existing GIS data to identify details and characteristics of wildlife resources in the Study Area. Obtained additional inventory details about the resources, such as protection status and presence of species, by accessing the Colorado Parks & Wildlife Natural Diversity Information Source, the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and the US Fish & Wildlife Service websites in March 2012. Used data from the North I-25 FEIS because the two study areas general overlap.
Wetlands	Reviewed delineated wetlands within the Study Area from the North I-25 FEIS. Based additional wetland identification on a desktop review of current wetland and water boundaries. The desktop review determined the extent of wetlands within the Study Area and consisted of reviewing National Wetland Inventory Maps, aerial photography, Google Earth, and topographical maps. Used GIS to digitize new potential wetland areas identified during the desktop review. Determined acreages for each wetland. Required additional field surveys to gather more detailed information regarding the extent and additional characteristics of wetland areas.

In addition, potential right-of-way needs were examined.

- b. Is this resource present in the area and what is the existing environmental condition for this resource?

The above resources were identified in and adjacent to the corridor. Section 4.0 the PEL Report documents resources in the Corridor.

- c. What are the issues that need to be considered during NEPA, including potential resource impacts and potential mitigation requirements (if known)?

Floodplains, air quality hot spots (if required), hazardous materials, historic resources, parks/recreation/trail areas, wetlands, and water quality (MS4 requirements).

- d. How will the data provided need to be supplemented during NEPA?

Depending on the timing of future NEPA efforts, certain resources in the Corridor may require an assessment due to new regulations, additional threatened and endangered species, historic time limits, etc.

- 9. List environmental resources you are aware of that were not reviewed in the PEL study and why? Indicate whether or not they will need to be reviewed in NEPA and explain why.

Farmlands, archaeology, water quality (MS4 requirements). The North I-25 Final EIS did not identify any prime or unique farmlands or archaeological sites in the PEL study area. Water quality (MS4 requirements) was addressed in the North I-25 Final EIS; however, each of the proposed components will have to comply with local and CDOT MS4 regulations at the time of design and construction.

10. Were cumulative impacts considered in the PEL study? If yes, provide the information or reference where it can be found.

Yes, cumulative impacts were considered in the PEL. Subsection 4.12 the PEL Report documents the analysis of cumulative impacts in the PEL Corridor.

11. Describe any mitigation strategies discussed at the planning level that should be analyzed during NEPA.

Section 4.0 presents mitigation strategies for each of the resources analyzed in the PEL. Each of these resource-specific mitigation strategies should be considered and evaluated for applicability during subsequent NEPA phases.

12. What needs to be done during NEPA to make information from the PEL study available to the agencies and the public? Are there PEL study products which can be used or provided to agencies or the public during the NEPA scoping process?

Depending on the timing of future NEPA efforts, certain resources in the corridor may require an assessment due to new regulations, additional threatened and endangered species, historic time limits, etc. Otherwise, information in the PEL can and should be made available for analysis to the agencies and public during NEPA scoping.

13. Are there any other issues a future project team should be aware of?

- a. Examples: Controversy, utility problems, access or ROW issues, encroachments into ROW, problematic land owners and/or groups, contact information for stakeholders, special or unique resources in the area, etc.

The PEL provides a summary of issues and evaluations that should be considered during future project development. Right-of-way needs will require further detailed evaluation during project development.