



Public Meetings Summary #1

August 2016

Two public meetings were held in August 2016. The first meeting was held in Falcon at the Meridian Ranch Recreation Center on August 16. The second meeting was held in Peyton at the Career Technical Education Facility on August 23. Both meetings were held from 5:00 - 7:00 PM in an open house format, with the same information presented at each meeting. Attendees were invited to review study overview and existing and forecasted conditions information, as well as the draft project Purpose and Need. Over 70 members of the public attended the meetings.

Following is a summary of comments submitted by meeting attendees on comment sheets, recorded by open house staff during one-on-one conversations with attendees, and submitted via the project web page, voicemail, and telephone conversations prior to the meetings. This summary includes comments received through September 14, 2016.

Comments

How do you use the US 24 corridor, between Powers Boulevard (SH 21) and Ramah?

- ✘ I live here (10)
- ✘ I work/shop here (2)
- ✘ I commute along corridor (5)

What are your highest priorities for this transportation corridor?

- ✘ Vehicular mobility - congestion and delay (8)
- ✘ Access to properties along the corridor (1)
- ✘ Transit connections (1)
- ✘ Pedestrian/bicycle accessibility and facilities (3)
- ✘ Safety (8)
- ✘ Other (1)
 - » Saving my property and its value

Do you agree with the Draft Purpose and Need for projects along the corridor?

What do you think the purpose of any transportation improvements recommended by this study should be?

- ✘ Better transportation corridor for both local and through traffic.
- ✘ Yes, the project is needed due to population growth which will continue. Improve the traffic flow through the Falcon area.
- ✘ Safety (2)
- ✘ Noise reduction to residents.
- ✘ Yes! Improved traffic congestion/safety.



- ✘ Vehicular mobility, Park N Ride, pedestrian access safety.
- ✘ Traffic flow.
- ✘ Saving people's property values and their land on the southern side of Highway 24. The focus should be to make improvements on the north side of 24 which would not impact all of the homeowners who live on the southern side. The northern side has no homes like on the southern side, i.e. Prairie Vista Meadow.
- ✘ Consider pedestrians.
- ✘ Yes. To help the residents get to where they are going in a reasonable amount of time, without too much delay.

What ideas do you have to reduce traffic congestion, improve corridor and intersection operations, and enhance safety for all users along US 24 between Powers Boulevard (SH 21) and Ramah?

Widening

- ✘ More lanes.
- ✘ Multiple attendees specifically requested increased passing lanes and that they be systematically planned and constructed, including signing so that drivers knew "Next Passing Lane X Miles".
- ✘ Widen towards trail - no one uses it.
- ✘ Focus efforts on the north side of 24. Why would you negatively impact so many on the southern side? That's the side with the majority of the structures. I'm concerned this will be another project that discounts the people that live right there. Look at Highway 25 between Monument and Castle Rock. That should have been widened a decade or more ago. Only now is that a priority.
- ✘ Widen between Garrett and Falcon Highway to start, then to Meridian Road.
- ✘ Add lane northbound and southbound between Garrett and Woodmen.
- ✘ Widen US 24 between Garrett and Woodmen intersection.
- ✘ Would be nice to have 2 lanes each way from northeast of Woodmen south to connect where there are already 2 lanes each way.
- ✘ There will be lots of impacts from widening between Falcon Highway and Woodmen.
- ✘ The highway needs widened through Falcon.
- ✘ In Falcon in the morning to Colorado Springs is bad. Falcon to Garrett needs to have expansion.
- ✘ Widen from Garrett to Judge Orr Road.
- ✘ Four lanes from Garrett to Judge Orr/Stapleton would help greatly. I feel this should have already happened with the amount of housing that has been added to an already stressed area.
- ✘ The worst congestion is between Garret and Woodmen. It would be good to widen until Judge Orr if possible.



- ✘ Please widen the road until Garrett (but to Judge Orr would be great).
- ✘ Extend four lanes to Judge Orr. If this is the only thing you do, do this!
- ✘ Need passing lane just east of Falcon.
- ✘ From Stapleton west should be four lanes ASAP.
- ✘ Top priority: four lanes from Garrett to Elbert Highway.
- ✘ Expand the road from two lanes to four lanes from Garrett Road to at least Elbert Road. The expansion would include the necessary thru lanes and if necessary merge lanes.
- ✘ Four lanes from Garrett to (at least) Peyton.
- ✘ US 24 should be widened no less than four lanes each way from Powers Boulevard out to Peyton, then three lanes each way to Ramah or just past to the county line.
- ✘ Put in passing lanes east and westbound between MP 325 and 327 (between Falcon and Peyton).
- ✘ Add passing lanes for westbound and eastbound US 24 east of Peyton (around MP 332 - 336).
- ✘ Double lanes between Falcon and Peyton would be nice. Congested in morning commute.
- ✘ Don't want widening in Calhan. Buying a home in the next month adjacent to US 24 will be major impacts to the home if widen to four lanes.
- ✘ Widening through Calhan would be very impactful.

Intersections

- ✘ Need better signing informing drivers of upcoming streets (e.g., "Peyton Hwy 1 Mile").
- ✘ Warning lights are great for warning of signals (flashing) and prevent crashes.
- ✘ Flashing yellow light warning about to hit red light helps!
- ✘ More stop lights and traffic calming features.
- ✘ More turn lanes.
- ✘ Throughout the corridor there needs to be more turn lanes and acceleration lanes.
- ✘ Concern about a confusing solution like the Fillmore and I-25 divergent diamond being implemented here.
- ✘ Eastbound at Garrett, people go around to turn right.
- ✘ Issue of people turning right at Garrett - need right turn only here.
- ✘ More turn lanes, signalized intersections or grade separated intersection of Highway 24 and Stapleton and grade separated intersection at Old Meridian/24.
- ✘ Driveways on US 24 near Woodmen/Meridian area need left turn lanes or frontage road for driveways.
- ✘ South to west turn lane badly needed at Meridian.



- ✘ Problems at US 24 and Meridian - merge lane is too short. Needs wider shoulder here because it's really bad in the winter.
- ✘ Need a merge lane from W. Woodmen to turn left on Meridian.
- ✘ Add second lane to Woodmen Road from the west side of Falcon.
- ✘ Woodmen Road should go over US 24 as an interchange with connections to properties via frontage roads.
- ✘ Woodmen headed east at Rio Lane is a problem (it dead-ends on 24). Drivers try to make a left turn into Rio from US 24 and it's dangerous. Maybe lower the speed limit?
- ✘ Eliminate the Blue Gill Drive intersection at Highway 24.
- ✘ Westbound lane at Blue Gill - move access to somewhere else.
- ✘ Move Blue Gill access to Judge Orr.
- ✘ Connect Blue Gill Drive to Judge Orr rather than directly to US 24.
- ✘ Add auxiliary lanes at Judge Orr.
- ✘ At night on eastbound US 24 at Judge Orr, people are sometimes forced into the median to avoid a rear-end crash. Please add a turn lane here.
- ✘ Need turning lane after bridge just east of Peyton.
- ✘ Soapweed Road needs a westbound turn lane instead of turning from passing lane.
- ✘ Need left turn lane on eastbound US 24 onto commercial street in Calhan. Crashes are bad!
- ✘ Calhan Highway needs turn lanes. The existing short turn lane doesn't work well.
- ✘ Since new guardrail was installed at curve just east of Calhan, there is no longer a good shoulder. People used the shoulder as a turn lane. Should move intersection of Harrisville and US 24 300 yards to east to put it on top of the hill. That would also provide room for a turn lane.
- ✘ Need turn lane to access Ramah Wildlife Area.

Multimodal Transportation

- ✘ The new Park N Ride would be very welcome.
- ✘ Adding an east-west crosswalk on McLaughlin would be excellent - between Woodmen and Old Meridian Road.
- ✘ Calhan has a large senior citizen population. Need handicap access and resources. Bus stops and a bus route would be more appropriate than biking.
- ✘ No bikes on roads without shoulders. Need to have shoulders on all roads out here to provide a safe place for people to pull over.
- ✘ Curb and gutter and sidewalks would be nice through Calhan.
- ✘ Continue Rock Island Trail to Constitution.



Speeds

- ✦ Lower speed limits.
- ✦ Step down speed limit near Woodmen/Meridian area and around Stapleton intersection.
- ✦ Lower speed limit coming in and out of Falcon.
- ✦ Reduce speed limit gradually for eastbound US 24 into Calhan. The roadway goes downhill into Calhan and helps people speed into town.
- ✦ Increase speed limit from Ramah to Ramah Reservoir, from 55 mph to 65 mph.

Other Ideas

- ✦ Open Tamlin Road and connect to Dublin near Marksheffel alternate route.
- ✦ Would be great to extend roads throughout the area, including Tamlin.
- ✦ The roads division needs to build North Carefree, Barnes, Stetson Hills and Dublin Boulevards out to the highway with traffic lights/intersections to ease congestion.
- ✦ Realignment.
- ✦ Realign US 24 around Calhan to the south of town.
- ✦ Create a new Meridian connection further to the west side of Falcon.
- ✦ Peyton Junction shopping center needs some type of visual exposure from US 24. It's a historic area.
- ✦ Community signage.
- ✦ Need to have more safety improvements along the corridor since crashes are a real concern.
- ✦ As far as improvements go, please address issues where population and employment growth is happening.
- ✦ Use Homestead Ranch Regional Park. Sitting 9 months because of weather.
- ✦ Please don't forget to repair the road in addition to all these improvements that might be a result of this project.
- ✦ No street lighting! Don't need it because headlights these days are sufficient. Light pollution is already a problem. (Yard lights contribute to this as well.)

Please share your thoughts regarding existing transportation conditions and/or issues along US 24 between Powers Boulevard (SH 21) and Ramah.

Congestion

- ✦ When US 24 goes from four lanes to two lanes at Garrett Road, it gets very interesting during rush hour and even many times during the day due to volume. This is a very unsafe area at Garrett Road.
- ✦ Sometimes traffic cuts through on Garrett to avoid traffic on US 24.



- ✘ Woodmen is too busy to cross and the intersection of Old Meridian and McLaughlin is too dangerous.
- ✘ The congestion on the highway has gotten to a point of frustration for many who travel the road every day. Drivers do not obey the traffic laws; they drive SLOW in the left lane and drive 90 mph in the right lane all the time. I live right off of the highway near Falcon. I see this problem day in and day out.
- ✘ Conditions become unsafe during high volume “road rage” etc. because too many cars now. Some of the projects are 5-10 years late so may want to re-think future plans to cover high volume.
- ✘ During high traffic and road hazards like snow and ice, if you are traveling west from east of Judge Orr, you will not get through Falcon without long delays.

Traffic Conditions

- ✘ Nice thing is there are not a lot of trucks in the morning and that helps with traffic and makes things safer.
- ✘ There is an interesting dichotomy of types of drivers along the corridor. Yuppies in their fancy cars driving fast and old farmers driving slowly.
- ✘ Truckers use US 24 from I-70 to avoid Denver. Get truckers off US 24.
- ✘ Lots of car rollovers happen at the turn south of Garrett.
- ✘ Intersection at Meridian is the worst in this area. All movements are happening! At least there is a light.
- ✘ Meridian bottle neck.
- ✘ Westbound AM big backup at Judge Orr, reverse in PM.
- ✘ U-turns for access to Scott Road are dangerous.
- ✘ From Woodmen Road to Peyton can be deadly during the winter due to snowfall.
- ✘ Passing between Falcon and Calhan can be hazardous or worse. Vehicles drive fast and pass on hills.
- ✘ On August 17, after the PEL Study meeting, my wife picked me up in Calhan. As we approached Ramah she slowed to 55 mph in the 55 mph zone. There are two bridges shortly before Ramah. After crossing the first one, she put on her left turn signal. 200 yards later a large pickup truck passed us on our left just before we turned.

Speed Limit/Speeding

- ✘ Speed limit between Falcon and Peyton (55 mph) is too high for people turning left onto US 24.
- ✘ Need more police presence in Calhan to hold people to traffic laws. Speeding on US 24 through town is a problem.
- ✘ Issue with speeding in Calhan. Town does not ticket or pull people over. State Troopers don't come out.



- ✘ Why the 55 mph speed trap just west of Ramah? Speed limit is 65 mph at city limits on the east side of Ramah.
- ✘ You have to go really fast to pass anyone on US 24.

Access

- ✘ Too many access connections.
- ✘ Tough for side roads to turn onto US 24. No safe breaks in traffic.
- ✘ The problem is all the commuters turning right from Woodmen/US 24 and from Meridian/US 24. The amount of cars will stack up and not allow any traffic from the east to get through the lights at Woodmen and Meridian. If there would be a right turn light that held them back so the flow would be fair that would help. As it is, some cars will turn right on Woodmen, go over to Meridian, and jump back on - as weird as it seems, it is faster.
- ✘ The accesses for two houses on US 24 at Meridian are extremely dangerous.
- ✘ Access concern for property on south side of US 24, just west of Falcon.
- ✘ School buses stop on US 24 in the Peyton and Calhan areas, and in some cases seem to turn onto local streets just further up the road. Can we ask the school districts to consider moving bus stops to safer locations off the highway?
- ✘ A couple attendees noted the "passing lane" at MP 332.2 (Plains Heating and Air Conditioning access east of Peyton). This is only about 1/4 mile in length, so it is not likely intended to be a passing lane. It seems it must be meant as auxiliary lanes for the business access, although it seems to be striped with just regular skips rather than striping appropriate for auxiliary lanes. The fact that there is a crest vertical on the east edge of the 1/4 mile length hides the end of the lane and probably makes drivers believe the "passing lane" continues beyond the crest of the hill the usual 1 mile in length. The attendees also stated anecdotes of seeing large trucks in the left EB lane taking wide turns into the Plains Heating access. This could indicate an inadequate access design for the intended usage.
- ✘ Concerns about driveway access for properties along the corridor (just east of Log Road east of Peyton).

Roadway Features

- ✘ Accel lanes at Woodmen and Meridian are not sufficient.
- ✘ Shoulder is really wide at Judge Orr, so people use it as a turn lane and that's a problem with crashes.
- ✘ Safety improvements at Peyton worked! No fatal accidents since 2010.
- ✘ The access at McClelland (MP 333.8) had very poor sight distance due to the crest vertical curve just west of the intersection.
- ✘ Bridges need repair—they are only on a pile of wood sometimes. Need to have concrete and allow for expansion as well.



- ✘ Check sufficiency rating of bridge on Calhan Highway just south of town. Windmill trucks drive it a lot.
- ✘ No shoulder on bridges near Smith Ranch Road. When people pull out in front of you there's nowhere to go.
- ✘ A lot of truck traffic from I-70 to Colorado Springs. Narrow bridges cause everyone with trailers/equipment to have to move to center of road to get around.
- ✘ Very rough road between Peyton and Ellicott Highway. Needs repaved - not just chip sealed.

Environmental and Community Resources

- ✘ A couple attendees stated they lived near the stretch of US 24 from Constitution to Garrett and that highway noise was significant and a major concern for them.
- ✘ Rental properties along US 24 south of Woodmen (Falcon Vista duplexes) are very popular. People want to live in the area. Congestion will get worse.
- ✘ Property owner of business lot on Rio Lane has experienced major drainage issues over the last 15-20 years (affecting septic system and property value). The development on the north side sent drainage across the highway to the south and it's a major issue for properties along the south side of US 24. There was a meeting with the County 5-10 years ago and nothing has happened, even though the County talked about putting detention on the north side.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Travel

- ✘ Safety of cyclists southbound on US 24 south of Woodmen needs considered.

Please provide general suggestions and comments regarding the transportation study below.

- ✘ Thank you for looking at this.
- ✘ The planned projects are a good step in the right direction.
- ✘ The coordination between Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Peyton, Calhan, and Ramah is very important to CDOT to make this study useful to government and the population that uses this road.
- ✘ Consider how this will impact the property/homeowners on the south side of US 24.
- ✘ There is concern about access from 24 to private land/houses.
- ✘ Frontage road - what is the status?
- ✘ Will US 24 become an interstate?
- ✘ When did US 24 become a US Highway?
- ✘ Would like to see the Access Control Plan on display. Interested in what the typical cross section of a future US 24 east of Peyton would look like. Concerned that if the ROW take was more than roughly 50-feet, water well permitting could be difficult (because the smaller the parcel is, the more difficult it is to get the permit).



- ✦ Would like the Access Control Plan posted on the project web page.
- ✦ Multiple attendees requested that the meeting displays be made available online.
- ✦ Including current and future traffic count displays on the same graphics would be helpful, for comparison purposes.
- ✦ Bridges (and flooding) were priority for previous County Commissioners.
- ✦ Slocum bridge closed (County bridge).
- ✦ Is the mill levy that brings businesses here included in the modeling?
- ✦ Family has been here six decades.
- ✦ Town of Simla will be voting on legal marijuana which could impact highway safety and congestion.
- ✦ Where is an example of a channelized T and what does it look like?