

Appendix C11.

Visual Resources





C11. Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum

June 2023

Project Number: NHPP 006A-06
Subaccount Number: 22922

The following project information can be found in **Attachment A** Project Information:

- Introduction and Background
- Project Study Area
- Purpose and Need
- Proposed Action Description

Introduction

This Technical Memorandum has been prepared in support of the Vasquez Boulevard I-270 to 64th Avenue Environmental Assessment. CDOT's 2019 VIA Guidelines (hereinafter referred to as CDOT's Guidelines) apply because the project involves CDOT sponsorship and local agency sponsorship. This visual impact assessment (VIA) evaluates the effects of the Proposed Action on visual resources, following criteria set out in CDOT's Guidelines (available on CDOT's Landscape Architecture (LA) website).

The Vasquez Boulevard I-270 to 64th Avenue Project is located within the City of Commerce City, Adams County, Colorado. Generally, the Project extends along Vasquez Boulevard from just north of I-270 interchange to 64th Avenue. The purpose and goal of the project is to improve traffic operations and safety along this section of Vasquez Boulevard including improvements to the 60th Avenue, 62nd Avenue and 64th Avenue intersections. Vasquez Boulevard lies within CDOT right-of-way while improvements outside of Vasquez Boulevard lie within Commerce City rights-of-way.

VIA Scoping

The VIA Guidelines start with a scoping process to highlight visual resource issues to determine the appropriate level of study for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

VIA scoping findings are documented through CDOT's Visual Resource Scoping Documentation (**Attachment B**), which includes a detailed summary of:

- Visual attributes of the Proposed Action
- Landscape context of the study area



- Issues and regulatory framework
- Level of VIA documentation (and the related scoping questionnaire)

This VIA is being documented as a Memorandum because features of the Proposed Action could have the potential to affect the character and quality of the project areas visual resources. Proposed Action resources that have the greatest potential include:

- The new east-west local roadway connection from Dexter Street to Clermont Street
- The new local roadway connection from Dexter Street to 60th Avenue
- New traffic control medians that will be implemented throughout the study area
- New signals, striping and signage

Elements of the project that could positively enhance the visual environment include:

- New traffic medians could enhance the existing visual character of the project area
- New pavement, signals, markings, and other infrastructure elements could enhance the existing visual character of the project area

VIA Requirements

Responses to the VIA scoping questionnaire resulted in a score of 15 points, which indicates a VIA memorandum is appropriate to support the NEPA documentation.

Area of Visual Effect and Landscape Unit

The Area of Visual Effect (AVE) was established based on defining landscape features and the visibility of improvements from key viewpoints by travelers and neighbors as shown in **Figure 1**. Visual investigations have found that the project includes one landscape unit based on the uniform visual and cultural environment found in the project area.

Inventory and Impact Evaluation

This section documents the extent of visual resources being considered as part of this project and anticipated impacts. **Figure 1: Area of Visual Effect** and **Figure 2: Visual Resource Inventory** provide an inventory of views, viewers and probable impacts as a result provides an overview of these VIA considerations in a format compatible with the accompanying NEPA document.

Figure 1: Area of Visual Effect

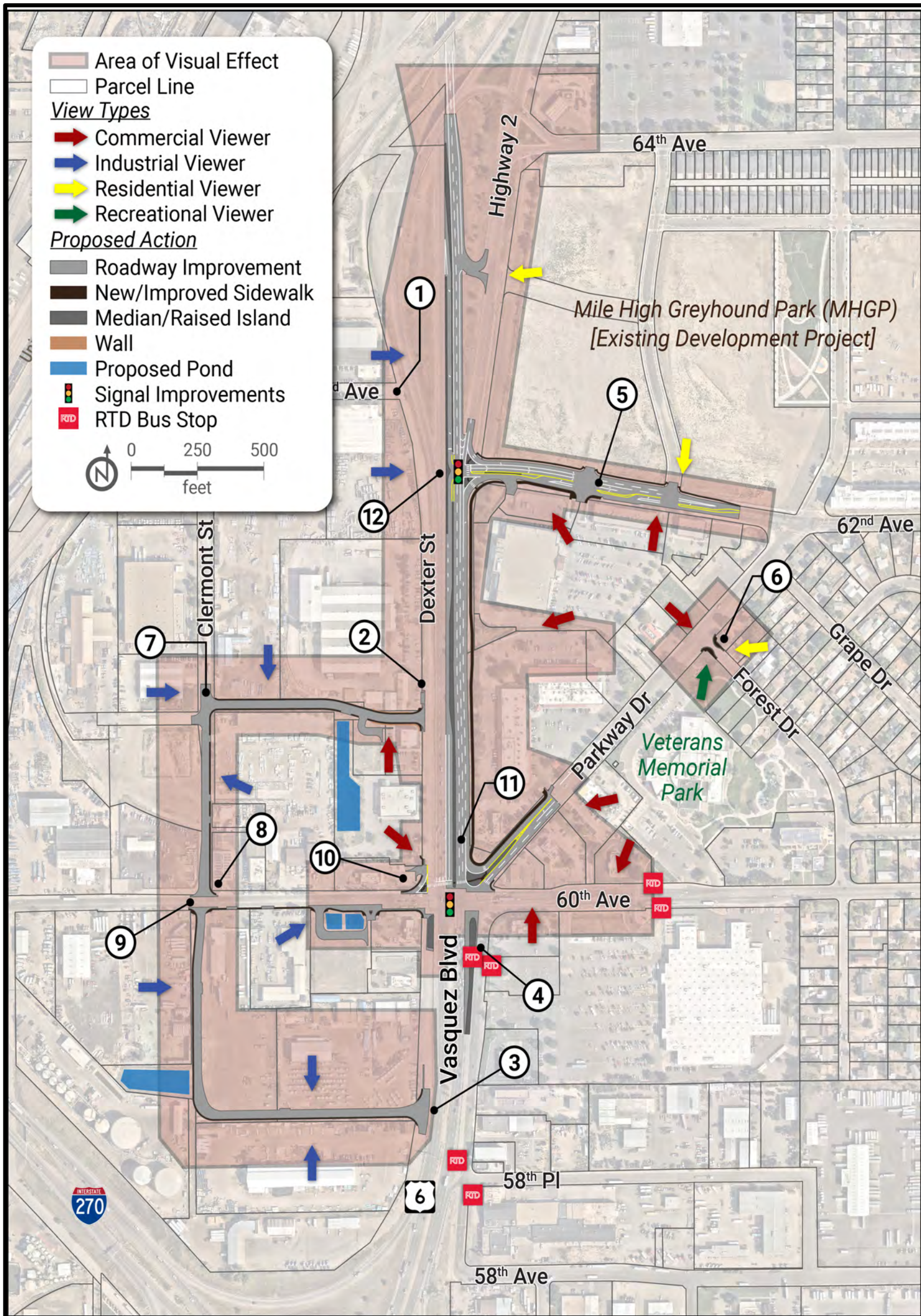


Figure 2: Visual Resource Inventory











	<p>1</p> <p>Improvements: Median and barrier improvements in Vasquez Blvd.</p> <p>Viewers: Travelers and industrial neighbors.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast: improvements due to the replacement of old medians and barriers with new materials and is compatible with the AVE's overall visual context.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate Visual Contrast: construction and temporary signage will have a minor visual impact to neighbors and travelers due to dust, temporary signage, and construction.</p>		<p>7</p> <p>Improvements: New 61st Extension connecting Claremont St to Dexter St.</p> <p>Viewers: Commercial and industrial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast, new road way will slightly change the immediate visual context, impacting an existing industrial yard with a new local roadway connection. New roadway is compatible with the AVE's overall existing industrial and transportation visual context.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a change the areas visual context but matches the industrial context of the overall AVE and its transportation elements.</p>
	<p>2</p> <p>Improvements: New 61st extension connecting Claremont St to Dexter St.</p> <p>Viewers: Commercial and industrial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast, new road way will slightly change the immediate visual context but is still visually compatible with the AVE, replacing an existing landscaped area with a new local roadway connection.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a weak visual contrast the areas visual context but matches the industrial and transportation context of the overall AVE.</p>		<p>8</p> <p>Improvements: New roadway section and improvements to existing Clermont Street.</p> <p>Viewers: Industrial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast, improvements will minimally impact an existing roadway and is compatible with the immediate industrial visual context. Improvements are compatible with the AVE's overall existing industrial and transportation-focused visual context.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a slight change to the areas visual context but is compatible with the industrial context of the overall AVE.</p>
	<p>3</p> <p>Improvements: New street connecting the new southern alignment of Claremont St (South of 60th) to Dexter St.</p> <p>Viewers: Industrial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast. New road way is consistent with the visual context, replacing an existing industrial yard with a new local roadway connection. New roadway is visually compatible with the AVE's existing industrial visual context and transportation focus.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a weak visual contrast to the industrial visual context of the area.</p>		<p>9</p> <p>Improvements: New Claremont St extension (South of 60th) to Dexter St via a new 58th St connection.</p> <p>Viewers: Industrial neighbors and travelers</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast, new road way will slightly change the visual context, replacing an existing industrial yard with a new local roadway connection. New roadway is generally compatible with the larger AVE's existing industrial visual context and transportation focus.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a change the areas visual context but matches the industrial visual context immediately adjacent to the area.</p>
	<p>4</p> <p>Improvements: Cross section improvements at 60th Ave and Dahlia St / Vasquez Blvd.</p> <p>Viewers: Commercial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast. Addition of new turning lanes on 60th Ave are compatible with the transportation and industrial visual context of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a weak-to-moderate visual contrast to the areas existing visual context but is generally compatible with the busy industrial and transportation focused visual environment.</p>		<p>10</p> <p>Improvements: New dedicated right turn lane from southbound Vasquez Blvd to westbound 60th ave. Includes a splitter island / pedestrian refuge.</p> <p>Viewers: Commercial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast, improvements will occur within an existing busy and wide roadway and are consistent immediate areas transportation-focused visual environment. Improvements are compatible with the larger AVE's existing industrial visual context and transportation focus.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a change the areas visual context but matches the industrial and transportation-focused visual context immediately adjacent to the area.</p>
	<p>5</p> <p>Improvements: Cross section improvements along 62nd Ave adjacent to new development that includes future residential and hotel land uses.</p> <p>Viewers: Residential neighbors (new development) and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast, addition of new turning lanes / section improvements on 62 Ave generally matches existing visual context of the area today.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast. Construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a weak-to-moderate visual contrast to the areas existing visual context but is visually compatible with the industrial and transportation focused visual context.</p>		<p>11</p> <p>Improvements: New detached sidewalk located on the east side of Vasquez Blvd that connects 62nd Ave and Parkway Dr.</p> <p>Viewers: Commercial neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast, improvements will occur adjacent to an existing and wide roadway. Additional facility would also provide benefits to the visual environment by adding curb, gutter, and a new pedestrian facility, providing order to the exiting visual context.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a change the areas visual context but matches the industrial and transportation-focused visual context immediately adjacent to the area.</p>
	<p>6</p> <p>Improvements: Curb extensions to facilitate pedestrian connections and access to Veterans Park and the Eagle Point Recreation Center.</p> <p>Viewers: Residential neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Weak visual contrast. Addition of pedestrian improvements is consistent with the exiting residential and commercial visual context of the location.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a contrast to the areas existing residential and recreational visual context but is not a significant departure from the AVE's visual environment.</p>		<p>12</p> <p>Improvements: New traffic signal at Vasquez Blvd and 62nd Ave.</p> <p>Viewers: Residential neighbors and travelers.</p> <p>Permanent Impacts (Visually Compatible): Moderate visual contrast. Addition of new signal is consistent with the exiting residential and commercial visual context of the location. Background views to industrial uses west of Vasquez Blvd could be impacted.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts: Moderate visual contrast, construction equipment, dust, and signage represents a contrast to the areas existing residential and recreational visual context but is not a significant visual departure from the larger commercial visual environment.</p>



Table 1: Visual Resource Impacts

Context/Visual Inventory	Proposed Action Impacts
<p>Landscape Character: the AVE is mostly an enclosed landscape with significant industrial and commercial uses and is in the Front Range Urban Regional landscape context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A six lane CDOT highway /arterial road (Vasquez Blvd/Hwy 6) bisects the study area and includes numerous intersections with local arterial, collectors, frontage roads, and parcel access points are found throughout. • The project area’s visual environment is dominated by heavy and light industrial uses, elevated portions of Interstate 225, large to mediums sized suburban commercial development, vacant areas soon to be redeveloped, and limited residential homes. • Natural landforms in the area are non-existent due to the propensity of heavy industrial uses and extensive human development in the area. • Land cover primarily consists of large parcels that include industrial yards, large storage facilities, distribution warehouses, and industrial offices. Large, suburban-scale development and associated building forms are also in the area and consist of large-format grocery stores, smaller pad sites, and strip malls. • Due to industrial and commercial uses and the extensive transportation elements the visual environment is dominated by heavy volumes of vehicular traffic. • Limited residential uses exist in the area but are primarily located further away from the Vasquez and future improvements. <p>Viewers: Viewers in the area consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelers (private automobiles and large commercial vehicles / trucks). Limited pedestrian and bike travelers are present. • Neighbors consist of commercial and industrial employees, a limited number of residents, and retail customers. 	<p>Permanent Impacts</p> <p>Minimal improvement with new striping represents a minimal change and could improving the look of roadway within this utilitarian visual environment.</p> <p>Improved intersections may improve visual quality by repairing existing damaged roadways and existing infrastructure.</p> <p>Temporary Impacts</p> <p>Dust from construction may cause a negative viewing experience for commercial/residential viewers.</p> <p>Construction signs may contrast with visual quality due to harsh colors and abundance.</p> <p>Construction may cause traffic slowdowns at certain phases creating further obstructions to visual quality.</p>



Context/Visual Inventory	Proposed Action Impacts
<p>Visual Quality: the AVE shows little diversity of the natural landscapes and is dominated by heavy industrial uses and transportation elements. A few background views to the front range can be found but are extremely limited by buildings and transportation elements. The visual quality is heavily impacted by the surrounding industrial environment. Large industrial structures, smokestacks, grain silos, fuel refineries, and corresponding transportation infrastructure all contribute to an in-human scale visual environment. Minimal natural or vegetation is located within the study area.</p> <p>Landscape Composition and Sense of Place: The area is not conducive to the creation of a comfortable human- scale place and is reflective of the utilitarian heavy industrial composition of the study area.</p>	

Mitigation

Throughout this project, interdisciplinary coordination has occurred as the potential for visual impacts has been considered. In accordance with CDOT’s Guidelines, the team has considered options to minimize, and/or compensate for visual impacts.

As an overview, CDOT applies “SMART” criteria to develop effective NEPA mitigation commitments for visual impacts that are financially feasible and can be included in CDOT’s project delivery process.

[Table 2](#) summarizes visual impacts and mitigation measures for inclusion in the accompanying NEPA document.

Table 2: Visual Resources Impact Mitigation

Visual Impact	Mitigation	Responsible Branch	Timing/Phase That Mitigation Will Be Implemented
New Sidewalk Adjacent to Vasquez Boulevard	Where possible provide additional trees along the new facility to create a better visual environment for pedestrians	TBD	When sidewalk is constructed

Attachment A.

Project Information



Attachment A:

Project Information

June 2023

Project Number: NHPP 006A-06

Subaccount number: 22922

Introduction and Background

The Vasquez Boulevard (United States Route 6 [US 6]) I-270 to 64th Avenue project (Project) is located within the limits of the City of Commerce City (Commerce City) in Adams County. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and local agencies including Adams County, the City of Commerce City, City and County of Denver, Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD), conducted a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study in 2018. The Vasquez Boulevard PEL study provided a framework for the implementation of transportation improvements along the corridor between 52nd Avenue and 64th Avenue and along I-270 for a ½-mile north and south of the I-270/Vasquez Boulevard interchange. The Project falls within the limits of the PEL study and is now following the NEPA process to prepare an Environmental Assessment to identify a preferred alternative based on the needs identified in the PEL.

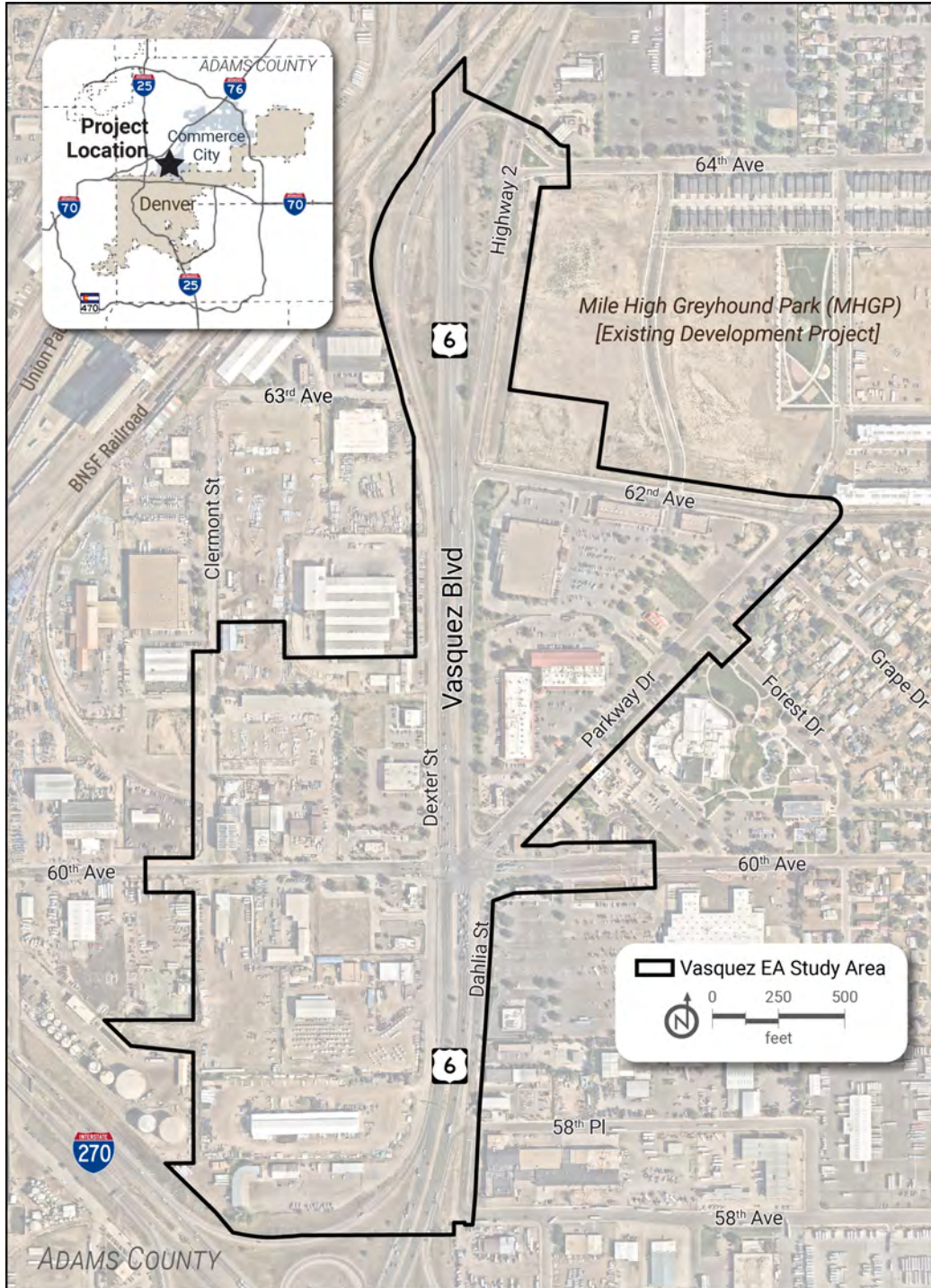
The PEL study identified long-term transportation improvements and evaluated potential projects that could be implemented with available funding as near-term improvements. Potential near-term improvements were identified to improve operations, safety, and connectivity along Vasquez Boulevard, focusing on the Vasquez Boulevard/60th Avenue and Vasquez Boulevard/62nd Avenue intersections. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding, state funding and other sources were obtained for this current Project to construct these near-term improvements along Vasquez Boulevard.

Study Area

The study area extends along Vasquez Boulevard from 58th Avenue (just north of the I-270 interchange) north to the BNSF Railroad bridge. West of Vasquez Boulevard, the study area extends to Clermont Street, between the on-ramp to I-270 and just north of 60th Avenue. East of Vasquez Boulevard, the study area includes Parkway Drive, 60th Avenue and 62nd Avenue. The study area also includes proposed drainage work to an existing water quality pond within the Mile High Greyhound Park (MHGP) property at the corner of 62nd Avenue and Highway 2. Some environmental resources evaluated for the NEPA process may have a slightly different study area depending on specific resource requirements.



Figure 1: Project Study Area





Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Vasquez Boulevard I-270 to 64th Avenue Project is to address the following needs:

- improve operations for vehicles and freight;
- improve safety;
- improve multimodal connections.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action includes improvements at the Vasquez Boulevard/60th and Vasquez Boulevard/62nd intersections, as well as the local street network and multimodal facilities, as shown in [Figure 2](#).

Vasquez Boulevard/60th Avenue

The Proposed Action includes the elements listed below for the Vasquez Boulevard/60th Avenue intersection:

- Only right turn movements to northbound Vasquez Boulevard from Parkway Drive. No access to other roads.
 - All inbound movements to Parkway Drive remain open as they exist now.
- All inbound movements from Vasquez Boulevard/60th to frontage roads remain as they exist now, but outbound movements are restricted.
 - Right turn only from southeast frontage road and all in movements allowed (all movements remain as they exist)
 - Right turn only from northwest frontage road and all in movements allowed (in movements remain as they exist)
 - No movement out from southwest frontage road and all in movements allowed (in movements remain as they exist)
- Two new local road connections to Clermont Street west of Vasquez Boulevard provide full access between frontage roads and 60th Avenue.
- Driveways on 60th Avenue, Parkway Drive and frontage roads remain as currently structures or have minor changes
- Restriping of existing crosswalks and new pedestrian refuges improve safety and accessibility of pedestrian infrastructure
- Corner curb bulb-outs would be added at the Parkway/Forest intersection as a deterrent to drivers who may think Forest Drive is an alternate route to 60th Avenue. The bulb-outs and crosswalk will provide visual indication of Forest Drive as a neighborhood street.



Vasquez Boulevard/62nd Avenue

The Proposed Action includes the elements listed below for the Vasquez Boulevard/62nd intersection:

- New traffic signal required at 62nd Avenue with the Vasquez Boulevard/60th Avenue intersection improvements to provide movements restricted from Parkway Drive to Vasquez Boulevard.
- Traffic signal provides full access to/from 62nd Avenue and Vasquez Boulevard/Highway 2.
- Southbound Highway 2 off ramp remains in existing configuration.
- Southbound traffic on Vasquez Boulevard and the Highway 2 off ramp have continuous green time without stopping at the signal for 62nd Avenue traffic.

Vasquez Boulevard Improvements

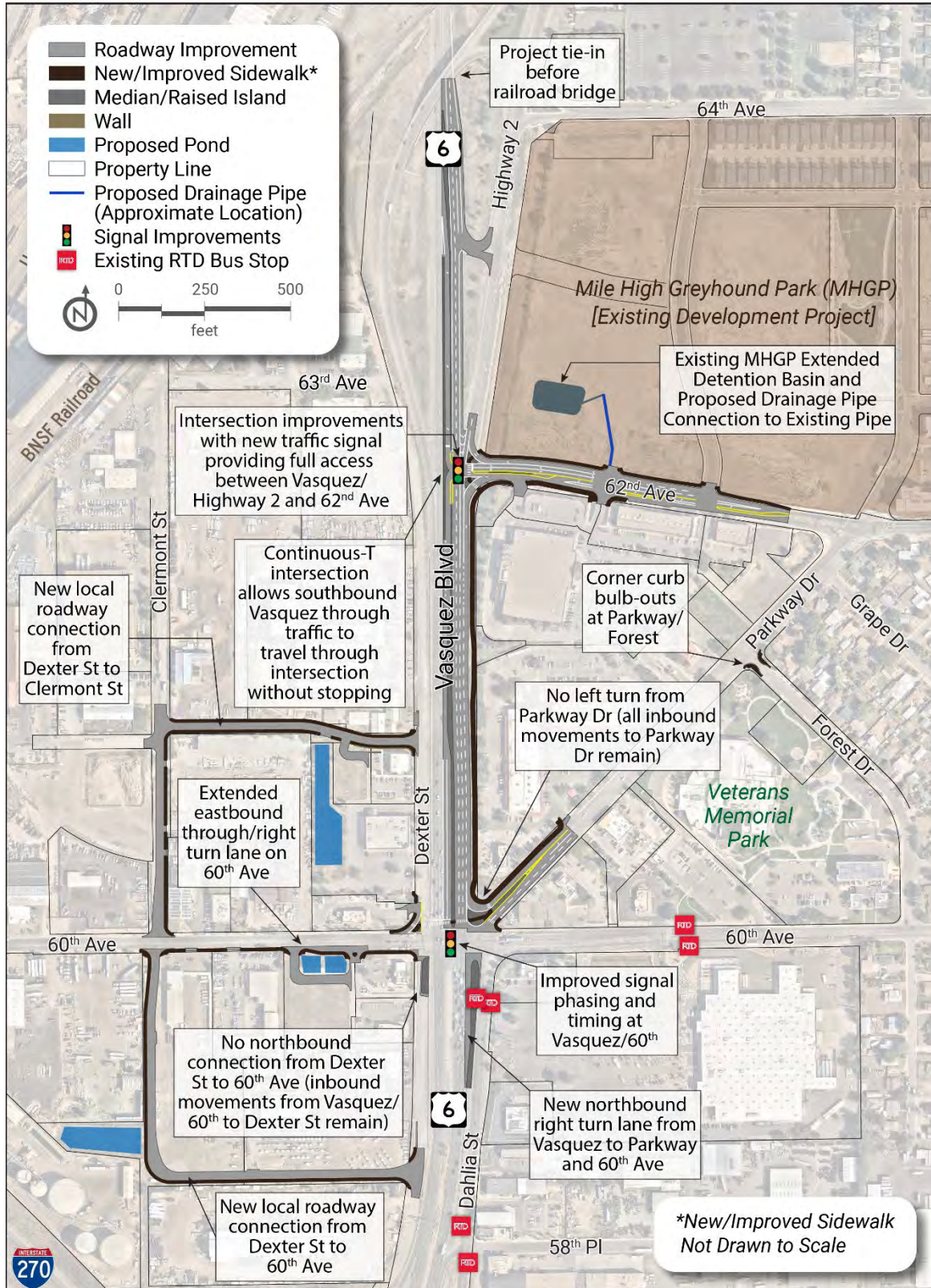
In addition to the improvements at the Vasquez Boulevard/60th Avenue and 62nd Avenue intersections, a portion of Vasquez Boulevard will be reconstructed. The southbound lanes of Vasquez Boulevard will remain as they currently exist (12-foot travel lanes; roadway width varies from 24-feet to 60-feet). Northbound Vasquez Boulevard will be widened a maximum of two feet between 60th Avenue and 62nd Avenue and a maximum of 20 feet north of 62nd Avenue, and the existing median will be modified to add left turn lanes into and out of the new 62nd Avenue intersection. A 10-foot detached multi-use path will be constructed along the eastern side of Vasquez Boulevard, between 60th Avenue and 62nd Avenue.

Local Road Connections

New local roadway connections west of Vasquez Boulevard are part of the Project to enhance the local circulation and pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity of the local street network. The new roadways are two-lane, two-way local roads with the potential for direct property driveway access as approved by Commerce City.



Figure 2: Proposed Action



Attachment B.

Visual Resource Scoping Documentation





Project Information and Visual Attributes

Project Name:	Vasquez Boulevard (US 6): I-270 to 64 th Avenue NEPA and Design
Project Location:	Vasquez Boulevard between I-270 and 64 th Avenue
Author:	Will Wagenlander, David Evans and Associates, Inc
Visual Attributes of Proposed Action	<p><u>West of Vasquez Boulevard:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new local roadway connection will be added between Dexter and Clermont St. This will include acquisition of existing heavy industrial properties, new pavement, signage and striping • A new local roadway connection will be added from Dexter to 60th Avenue. This will include acquisition of existing heavy industrial properties, new pavement, signage and striping • Enhanced highway dividers will be included on the SW corner of 60th and Vasquez Boulevard • A new traffic control median / porkchop will be added to the Northwest corner of the 60th and Vasquez intersection • A new and longer turn lane pocket will be added on 60th Avenue’s eastbound approach to the 60th and Vasquez intersection (to southbound Vasquez Boulevard) • New sidewalks will be added along both new local roadway connections <p><u>East of Vasquez:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Vasquez Boulevard, pavement and marking improvements will be incorporated from just north of 64th Avenue to just south of 60th Avenue • New signal infrastructure will be included at 62nd Avenue • New traffic median will be added along Parkway Drive northeast of the 60th and Vasquez Boulevard intersection • New signing and striping will be included throughout the project area • A bus stop will be improved along 60th Avenue just east of the 60th and Vasquez Boulevard intersection • New corner curb bulb-outs at the Parkway and Forest intersection • New sidewalk will be added between 62nd Avenue and 60th Avenue on the eastside of Vasquez Boulevard



Visual Context

<p>Landscape Observations:</p>	<p>Landscape observations were conducted in two phases. Phase One included a desktop assessment and Phase Two was conducted as a walking site visit. The project is one of Metro Denver’s primary industrial hubs. As such, the landscape character is dominated by heavy industrial business, supportive commercial land uses, and significant large-scale vehicular transportation infrastructure to support industrial uses. Redevelopment of the former Mile High Greyhound Park has begun and is directly adjacent to the project area (east of Vasquez Boulevard). Existing residential neighborhoods (primary single-family homes) are located just north and east of the project area. The only evidence of natural visual resources are expansive background views of the Colorado Front Range to the west and the Veterans Memorial Park, which is located adjacent to the new bulb outs planned at Parkway Drive and Forest Drive.</p>			
<p>Influence of Roadway on Natural and Cultural Environment Settings:</p>	<p>The existing and proposed roadway and specific transportation elements are compatible with the heavy industrial cultural setting of the project’s visual context. Improvements to the built environment’s transportation elements don’t represent a major shift in the area’s visual environment. Roadway improvements will marginally improve the area’s visual character.</p>			
<p>Landscape Context(s) and Development Patterns:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural/ Undeveloped	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban



Policies, Guidelines, and Feedback

Needs for Federal, State, or Local Agency Consultation:	CDOT is making improvements in partnership with the City of Commerce City. Improvements are being funded by federal sources.
Involvement with Federal Lands MOU:	No federal land involvement with project
Involvement with Scenic, Historic District, or Historic Byways:	No scenic, historic, district, or historic byways
Associated Regulations, Policies, or Guidelines:	City of Commerce City Transportation Master Plan: Designated the roadway and the intersections in the project area as areas of "High Level of Concern"
Influence of Agency & Public Feedback:	None currently
Additional Details:	The project area is dominated by industrial uses, supportive commercial land uses and transportation infrastructure sized to meet the needs of large volumes of vehicles and to support large tractor-trailers that support local industrial uses. This has created a functional, yet unappealing visual environment. Long background views of the Colorado Front Range can be found in some locations.



VIA Scoping Questionnaire

Environmental Compatibility

1. Will the project result in a noticeable visual change in the physical characteristics of the existing or future project setting? *(Consider all project components and construction impacts—both permanent and temporary, including landform changes, structures, noise barriers, vegetation removal, railing, signage and construction activities.)* Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?

- High level of permanent change (3)
- Low level of permanent or temporary change (1)
- Moderate level of permanent change (2)
- No noticeable change (0)
- Potential for visual enhancement
- Visually enhancing change to project setting

Assumptions/issues: Proposed improvements will marginally enhance the visual quality of the project area. While aesthetic improvements are not a key element of this project, updating of deficient / ageing transportation infrastructure will lead to a cleaner project environment marginally enhanced by improvements.

2. Will the project complement or contrast with the community visual character? *(Evaluate the scale and extent of project features compared to the surrounding scale of the community. Is the project likely to give an urban appearance to an existing rural or suburban community? Do you anticipate that the public will view the change as positive or negative? Research planning documents or talk with local planner/community representatives to understand the type of visual character local residents envision for their community.)* Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?

- Low compatibility (3)
- High compatibility (1)
- Moderate compatibility (2)
- No visual change or visual contrast (0)
- Potential for visual enhancement
- Visually enhancing to community character

Assumptions/issues: It is anticipated that project improvements will complement the existing industrial and transportation-focused visual character of the area. Improvements may be well received due to the project area’s confusing and convoluted transportation network. Improvements are firmly focused on improving transportation. However, new transportation improvements will replace existing transportation infrastructure that is in poor condition, improving the visual charter of the area.



3. What level of local concern is there for the types of proposed project features (e.g., bridge structures, large excavations, noise barriers, or median planting removal) and construction footprint? *(Certain project improvements can be of special interest to local citizens, causing a heightened level of public concern and requiring a more focused visual analysis.)* Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?
- High concern (3)
 - Moderate concern (2)
 - Potential for visual enhancement
 - Low concern (1)
 - Negligible project features (0)
 - Visually enhancing project features

Assumptions/issues: Structures, large excavations, noise barrier removal, or removal of median planting are not planned as part of project improvements. Improvements could marginally better the project’s visual environment by updating existing transportation infrastructure.

4. Would design changes that could minimize impacts or provide visual enhancement (e.g., landscaping, architectural treatment, color choices) require:
- Extensive changes or redesign (3)
 - Some redesign or minimization measures (2)
 - Few, minimal design options (1)
 - No minimization or enhancement opportunities likely (0)

Assumptions/issues: Aesthetic enhancements of planned improvements would most likely require a small amount of redesign to mitigate impacts and to improve the visual quality of the project and project area.

5. Will this project, when seen collectively with other projects, likely result in cumulative impacts to landscape character, views, or visual quality? *(Identify any projects [both state and local] in the area that have been constructed in recent years and those currently planned for future construction. The window of time and the extent of area applicable to possible cumulative impacts should be based on a reasonable anticipation of the viewing public's perception.)* Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?
- Cumulative impacts likely: 0-5 years (3)
 - Cumulative impacts likely: 6-10 years (2)
 - Potential for visual enhancement
 - Cumulative impacts unlikely (1)
 - No potential for cumulative impacts (0)
 - Visually enhancing project features

Assumptions/issues: Improvements to Interstate 225 are most likely to occur within the next 6-10 years. When combined with the improvements outlined in this project it could result in cumulative impacts to the area’s landscape character and views.



Viewer Sensitivity

6. What is the potential for the project proposal to become controversial within the community or to be opposed by the public or any organized group? (*This can be researched initially by talking with the state DOT and local agency management and local or regional planning staff familiar with the affected community's sentiments as evidenced by past projects and/or current information.*) Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?

- High potential (3)
- Moderate potential (2)
- Potential for visual enhancement
- Low potential (1)
- No potential (0)
- Visually enhancing project features

Assumptions/issues: New east-west roadways will require the acquisition of private property for a new public ROW. This has the potential to create controversy with property owners and possibly the larger community. New circulation patterns and limitations on some vehicular movements also have the moderate potential to create controversy with the public.

7. How sensitive are viewers likely to be to the scale and character of visible project features? (Consider among other factors the number of viewers within the group, probable viewer expectations, activities, viewing duration and orientation. The expected viewer sensitivity level may be scoped by applying professional judgment and by soliciting information from other DOT staff, local agencies and community representatives familiar with the affected community's sentiments and demonstrated concerns.) Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?

- High sensitivity (3)
- Moderate sensitivity (2)
- Potential for visual enhancement for viewers
- Low sensitivity (1)
- Insensitive (0)
- Visually enhancing project features for viewers

Assumptions/issues: Changes suggested by the project are most likely to generate low sensitivity from area viewers. The dominating industrial visual environment is expansive and matches the large scale of area transportation facilities. Any changes to the roadway as part of the project will be minimized by the size of such facilities and associated industrial land uses.

8. Are there applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, policies, or standards that would affect or influence this project?

- Yes, complex Federal/State laws and regulations (3)
- Yes, Federal/State/Local agency policies or standards (2)
- Yes, minor agency policies/planning standards (1)
- No (0)

Assumptions/issues: Yes. Colorado Department of Transportation as well as Commerce City standards will be applied within the project.



9. Will the project change, or visually enhance, the views or character of visually sensitive public use areas, historic properties, or scenic designations? (*Identify proximity and potential visual influence of the proposed project to parks, open space, trails, vistas and protected viewsheds, historic properties, Colorado Byways, Wild and Scenic Rivers and other scenic designations.*)

- Yes, changes would be visually dominant within open views (3)
- Potentially, changes would be partially screened and/or visually subordinate (1)
- Yes, changes would be visually apparent within open views (2)
- Not visible (0)
- Potential for visual enhancement
- Visually enhancing project features

Assumptions/issues: New bulb-outs located at Forest Drive and Parkway Drive are located near Veterans Memorial Park and the Eagle Pointe Recreation center. These improvements will provide for better and safer pedestrian connections and could have the potential to influence views from the park.

10. Will a more detailed visual analysis assist in the screening of alternatives or project design? (*Consider the proposed project features, possible visual impacts, and probable mitigation recommendations.*) Will the project components visually enhance the existing or future project setting?

- Project impacts would likely require complex mitigation (3)
- Minor impacts anticipated (1)
- Project impacts may require standard mitigation (2)
- No impacts anticipated (0)
- Potential for visual enhancement
- Visually enhancing project features

Assumptions/issues: Yes. A more detailed visual analysis would assist in identifying potential mitigation strategies for visual enhancement to the project and project area.



VIA Requirements

Date of Assessment	03.29.2022		
VIA Requirements: Based on initial scoping, collaboration with CDOT, and the VIA Scoping Questionnaire score, this level of analysis and documentation is required:	<input type="checkbox"/> VIA not required (Score 0-9) ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VIA Memorandum (Score 10-19)	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard VIA (Score 20-30)
<input type="checkbox"/> VIA not required (Score 0-9)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VIA Memorandum (Score 10-19)	<i>This project scored 12 on this scoping questionnaire, which results in the need for a VIA Memorandum</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Standard VIA (Score 20-30)			

The level of the VIA can initially be based on the following ranges of total scores:

Score 0 to 9: VIA Not Required

No noticeable visual or physical changes to the environment are proposed; therefore, no further analysis is required. The VIA questionnaire and a project memo may be used to document that there is no effect and to explain the approach used for the determination.

Score 10 to 19: VIA Memorandum

A **VIA Memorandum** addressing minor visual issues, indicating the nature of the limited impacts and identifying any necessary mitigation strategies that should be implemented, would likely be sufficient, along with an explanation of why no further analysis is required.

Score 20 to 30: Standard VIA

A **Standard VIA** is recommended. This technical study will likely receive extensive local, perhaps statewide, public review. It would typically include several visual simulations. It would also include a thorough examination of public planning and policy documents supplemented with a direct public engagement process (usually part of the overall NEPA public scoping and stakeholder involvement) to determine visual preferences.