

Appendix C12.

Archaeological Resources





COLORADO

Transportation

Division of Transportation Development

Environmental Programs Branch
2829 W. Howard Place
Denver, CO 80204-2305

TO: Basil Ryer/Austin Curry

FROM: Greg Wolff

DATE: February 28, 2023

RE: Archaeological assessment: Vasquez Boulevard- I-270 to 64th Avenue Environmental Assessment (SA 22922)

I have reviewed the Proposed Action Alternative presented in Appendix A of the Environmental Assessment document for the Vasquez Boulevard- I-270 to 64th Avenue transportation improvements project, located within the limits of the City of Commerce City in Adams County. In addition, I have conducted a review of cultural resources databases including the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's Compass database, CDOT Cultural Resources Program project files, aerial imagery, and other relevant data.

Because the entire project study area (Figure 1 in Appendix A) is characterized by extensive disturbance from prior road construction and decades of development and redevelopment, prior archaeological survey of the project location has been limited and associated with ancillary development activities. Only one isolated prehistoric archaeological artifact (5AM37) has been previously documented within the project study area. Reported in 1950, the artifact was found in a secondary (displaced) context and was collected at that time. This location has been subsequently disturbed by decades of highway construction and maintenance, in addition to adjacent development. Two 19th century trails (5AM130 and 5AM132) and an earlier expeditionary route (5AM126) passed through this general vicinity, but their actual routes are not specifically known, nor has any evidence of them been documented in the project area. None of these prehistoric or historic archaeological resources are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Due to the widespread disturbance from prior road construction and adjacent development, there is no demonstrated potential for significant intact archaeological deposits within the area of potential effect (APE) from activities associated with the Proposed Action Alternative (Figure 2 in Appendix A). As a result, additional archaeological survey is not necessary.

No archaeological sites listed on or eligible for the NRHP are located within the APE. In the event archaeological remains are exposed during any phase of construction associated with the project, the CDOT Senior Staff Archaeologist will be contacted to evaluate the discovery and coordinate appropriate Section 106 compliance actions with the SHPO and other agencies or entities, as necessary.



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.

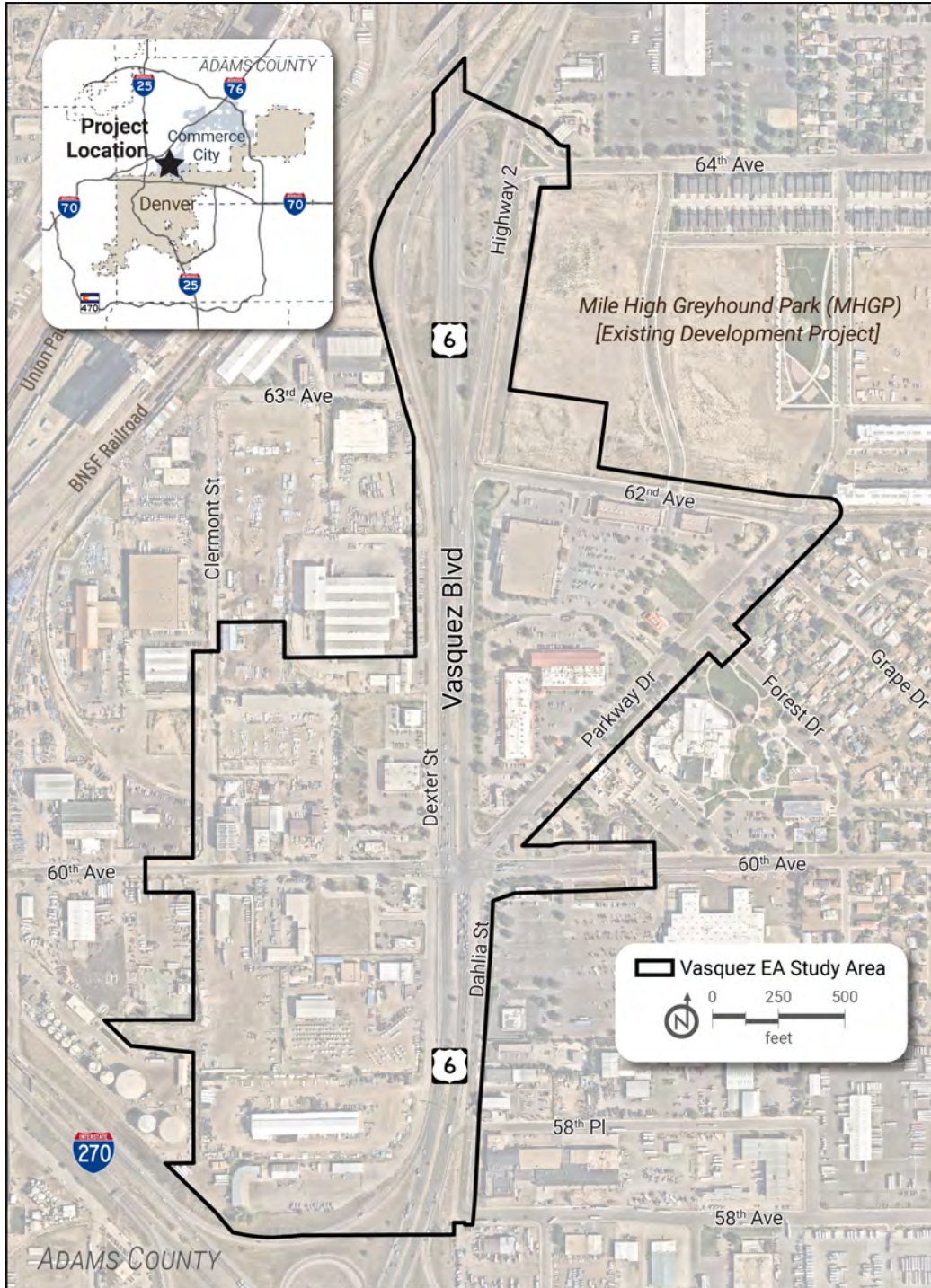
The PEL study identified long-term transportation improvements and evaluated potential projects that could be implemented with available funding as near-term improvements. Potential near-term improvements were identified to improve operations, safety, and connectivity along Vasquez Boulevard, focusing 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

