



US 85 Corridor Stakeholder Group Meeting #1 Thursday, October 29, 2015

In addition to reviewing the materials provided in the presentation, these are the highlights of the discussion with the Corridor Stakeholder Group.

NEPA Process

- The team is working to figure out how to fit 6 lanes and a cycle track under the existing railroad bridges.

PEL Process

- Yet to be constructed NEPA improvements will be assumed as the existing condition for the PEL existing conditions conceptual analysis.
- If the recommendation for the roadway is to go to 8-lanes, it will operate more of an off-grade expressway, not an arterial. If 8 lanes, the road would likely be 6 lanes of through traffic, and 2 auxiliary lanes.
- Intersection/interchanges won't be built to interstate standards, but will be built appropriate for this type of roadway.
- The PEL study limits go north of County Line Road to take into account the transition in order to reduce bottlenecks. CDOT currently has no plans to go wider than 4 through Bowles.
- Another key issue to consider is making a viable connector route for those who want to go northwest into Chatfield Basin, not necessarily into just to Sterling Ranch. Airport Road is one possibility, but it's in an open space tract (with some superfund sites from Dupont), making it more difficult.
- Other roads (such as Wadsworth) will also absorb additional traffic from Sterling Ranch development – it will not all be solely on US 85.

Roadway and Traffic

- In the section from Louviers to Sedalia, the design is 95% complete, and CDOT is in the process of acquiring ROW. Douglas County hopes to have funding for this project in 2018.
- Sterling Ranch has been approved for one filing of mostly single-family residential. With every new filing, a new traffic impact analysis needs to be performed.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- The width for cycle tracks standards have changed from 8' to 10' since the FEIS was completed in 2002, so that needs to be considered during both studies.
- The C-470 bike path tie-in to any new cycle facilities on US 85 will be considered in the PEL phase, not NEPA.
- Cyclist on the C-470 who cross 85 will likely have sub-grade separated crossing, which will be examined in the PEL. The existing C-470 trail will remain regardless of what happens through this process.

- Any proposed bike/ped underpass under US 85 for the Highline Canal will be roughly 200'. The goal is not to just provide the minimal size needed now, but to think about accommodating future volumes. Various features can be installed to improve safety (e.g. lighting).
- Detached bike and pedestrian facilities provide the most comfort and safety, which is why those are being heavily examined early on.
- There is some conversation about a bike path along Plum Creek, but a lot of property issues exist that make dead ends that needs to be reconciled.

Wildlife

- A wildlife crossing should be considered north of Highlands Ranch Parkway for larger wildlife that has been witnessed in that area recently. So far only small game crossings have been considered, so the team will look into this.

Cross Street Access

- One attendee stated that it's really hard to turn left onto northbound US 85 at Norwood. The team will look at the existing access plan to understand what can be done to improve this. However, a lot of the private accesses and minor collector roads will likely become right in/right out.
- Airport Road has been planned to be another access into Chatfield Basin for some time. ROW is being acquired for this, though the cost to construct the road will likely fall onto the developer. Construction may be accelerated based on their readiness.
- It's important to understand mobility vs. accessibility. Reducing crashes and improving life safety will be a major factor when looking at access.
- A South Metro Fire & Rescue representative stated that their main concern is roadway and business access.
- A church owner is concerned about not having access southbound turning left into their property based on FEIS design. However, that design was from 2002 before the church was built. Part of our job is to understand what needs to change since the FEIS was released in 2002.

Transit

- We don't want to preclude transit through this process, so all options will be explored.
- However, we'd be remiss to build a roadway accounts for a transit element that doesn't come to fruition, so we need to look at what we can control to handle these anticipated traffic volumes.
- The majority of the study area outside of RTD jurisdiction (the boundary currently ends at Highlands Ranch Parkway), so improvements and additional service will require boundary annexation.
- One person asked what the County's authority is to require Sterling Ranch developers to provide the transit improvements. If the developers see the benefits of these improvements, they will be more likely to implement. The County is not going to force the developers to make these improvements though.
- An economic developer working with Sterling Ranch says that they're very interested in all types of multimodal improvements, and have been working with Douglas County staff to see what is feasible.

Key comments provided in the leave behind survey

- Include wide shoulders for emergency vehicle turn-arounds
- Increase CDOT camera saturation
- Founders Parkway to Sedalia should be the next PEL
- Would like to see the Southern Connector built
- Build sidewalks/trails on east side of project to connect trails and sidewalks into Highlands Ranch
- Do not want 4 lanes each direction
- Suggest looking into wildlife underpass as Spring Gulch
- Would like SB access into Grace Presbyterian Church
- Study should look at NS traffic added to the east of US 85
- Suggest extending northern terminus to Mineral
- Improvement suggested at:
 - SB left turn at County Line Rd
 - Pedestrian accessibility to transit
 - Improve interchange with 470
- Improve pedestrian crossings at HRP and Town Center Dr.
- Bike Crossing at 470
- Improve bus stops
- Suggest contacting High Line Canal Working group about new master planning
- Consider soft bottom wildlife crossings
- Make sure any bike/ped underpass is well lit
- Since most of the study area is outside of RTD, improvements would require annexation into the RTD district.
- Sterling Ranch should be encouraged to join RTD.
- A separated bike ped path along the US 85 corridor would be best.