



WestConnect Coalition PEL

Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, December 19, 2016

7:30 am – 9:30 am

Dakota Lodge - 14422 W. Ken Caryl Avenue Littleton, CO 80127

DRAFT Agenda

1. Introductions and Agenda Review
2. Presentation and Discussion: Overview of Public Input and Key Themes
Goal: Steering Committee understanding and discussion of public input
3. Presentation and Discussion: Draft Level 1 Screening
Goal: Review and agreement on Draft Level 1 Screening
4. Update: Environmental Scan Report
Goal: Understanding of environmental issues identified in the corridor
5. Closing and Next Steps
 - TWG Meeting #9 – January 19, 2017
 - Steering Committee #4 – 2017



WestConnect Coalition PEL

Steering Committee Meeting Summary

PROJECT:	WestConnect Coalition PEL Study
PURPOSE:	Steering Committee Meeting
DATE HELD:	December 19, 2016 (7:30 am – 9:30 am)
LOCATION:	Dakota Lodge, Ken Caryl Avenue, Littleton, CO
ATTENDING:	Kelly Larson (FHWA); Stephen Harelson (CDOT), Neil Ogden (CDOT), Ron Papsdorf (CDOT), Jordan Rudel (CDOT), Jana Spiker (CDOT), Jordan Rudel (CDOT), Paul Jesaitis (CDOT); Shakti (Lakewood), John Padon (Lakewood); Bill Ray (Jefferson Parkway); Marc Williams (Arvada); Dan Hartman (Golden) Alex Ariniello (Superior), Sandy Pennington (Superior); George Gerstle (Boulder); Kevin Standbridge (Broomfield); Donald Rosier (Jefferson County), Casey Tighe (Jefferson County), Steve Durian (Jefferson County); Ed Peterson (Colorado Transportation Commissioner, District 2); Joe Hart (DEA), Leah Langerman (DEA); Jonathan Bartsch (CDR), Taber Ward (CDR)

Jonathan Bartsch, CDR Associates, welcomed the group, reviewed the agenda and the attendees introduced themselves.

Summary of Discussion:

1. Updates

- Notice to Proceed has commenced with Flatirons on Phase 1 of the C-470 work. Flatirons has already initiated the work and has begun putting barriers down.
- Golden and CDOT were recently awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant for design of two wildlife crossings in Golden. The bike/pedestrian trail will likely be enhanced at the same time. Design will begin in early 2017. Funding has yet to be identified for construction.

2. Overview of Public Input and Key Themes

- Leah Langerman (DEA) reviewed the key themes identified in the public input process.
- Participation for November's telephone town hall and open house meetings included:
 - Telephone Town Hall, November 9: 50,000 calls made, nearly 800 participants during peak attendance, and over 150 participants engaged for duration of the call
 - A number of people called in to state their interest and join the mailing list.
 - Open house at Rocky Mountain Metro Airport, November 15: approximately 15 members of the public attended
 - Open house at Ken Caryl Ranch House, November 16: approximately 30 members of the public attended

- Open house at Golden Community Center, November 17: approximately 85 members of the public attended
- A public meeting location closer to the north end of the study corridor will be pursued instead of the airport location for the next round of public meetings. The meeting may fall in the summer, which could open the possibility of holding a meeting at a Boulder Valley School District school. However, attendance at public meetings generally declines during summer break.
- In addition to the involvement opportunities listed above, all meeting graphic displays were made available online in a video with explanatory text/audio.
- Comments received at the meetings, during phone conversations, and through email and the web page were compiled and distributed (see handout for details).
 - Many people mentioned safety as the top priority. The majority of comments stated agreement with what was presented, so no changes are required to the Purpose and Need based on public comments.
 - Public concerns expressed regarding existing conditions included aggressive driving, truck traffic/operations, wildlife, bicycle safety, congestion points, geometric conditions, lack of lighting, limited transit service, weather, and noise.
 - Ideas proposed for improvements:
 - C-470 Segment: widening, eliminate weaves, grade separations for trails and wayfinding, consider light rail service, park-n-Ride enhancements
 - Golden Segment: focused on implementing the Golden Plan, improving other intersections similar to US 6/19th, making bike connections, mitigating existing noise
 - US 93: additional capacity improvements, additional transit service, safety improvements, intersection improvements, preservation of view sheds and visual resources
 - Overall, very few comments were received regarding Jefferson Parkway and the public focused on the WestConnect project which was positive.
- A presentation was made to the Boulder County Commissioners on December 8th (see handout).
 - The intent of this presentation was to provide an additional opportunity for involvement of northern corridor users. The presentation was made at a public hearing and open to the public, but no members of the public attended. The meeting was recorded and placed on the Boulder County web page consistent with their standard practice.
 - Commissioners questions and the summary of comment themes provided by County staff focused on safety and intersection improvements rather than additional capacity improvements, and preservation of visual resources.
- The Public Comment Summary will be placed on the CDOT and Coalition web pages so people who missed the meetings can see comments and people who gave comments can see they are being heard.
- Jonathan asked the group if there are any concerns about the public comment or process.

- Some Steering Committee members noted that, as expected, there are different philosophies and different concerns along the corridor, particularly the CO 93 segment. There are different needs for different communities.
- Members also noted that it is extremely important to respect local plans as the Coalition moves forward.
- Generally, Steering Committee members were satisfied with the public input process and pleasantly surprised by how informed the public was. Others were encouraged that the community wants to do something to provide safe, reliable and connected transport.
- This project is meeting a public need and concern. The Steering Committee noted that the project is moving in the right direction and has touched a positive nerve with people living in this area.

3. The Steering Committee discussed funding for the potential projects emerging from the PEL:

- Concern was expressed that there has been no query into whether or not the public wants to pay for recommended improvements. Does the community want ‘this’ AND are they willing to pay for it? There is no statewide funding solution at this time.
- If there really is an appetite to do something, is the Coalition willing to take action to form a group to create a taxing authority (RTA) to pay for it? What would this vision be?
- It was noted that it is too early in the study to start looking for funding because recommended improvement projects have not yet been identified.
- Across Region 1, there are a lot of needs, including I-70 West and I-25 South. Projects are looking for funding and getting “shovel-ready”. There is a tremendous amount of competition for funding. If there is a federal infrastructure program, likely only “shovel- ready” projects will be competitive.
 - “Shovel-ready”: There are many definitions. One is that 30% of the design is done. At 30% CDOT could consider a design-build contract. Some other projects have already completed the NEPA phase.
- As part of the competitive process, it will be important for the SC to come to agreements around prioritization of alternatives. As projects move forward, cost will need to be part of the criteria -- what can be done with current resources and what projects need additional funding?
- New Federal funding may likely encourage public-private partnership funding. Smaller projects may be considered with state and local funding. BUT, if we segment too much and focus just on smaller project improvements, we are going to miss the bigger project opportunities to leverage P3 funding.
- Subsequent study steps will consider packaging of different scenarios to determine funding opportunities, and to what degree P3 funding can be used.

4. 2040 Traffic Volumes: Ask Joe for key points on this discussion

- Joe Hart (DEA) presented three graphics to the group with daily travel forecasts. The graphics represent predicted traffic volumes with and without Jefferson Parkway.

- At the south end of the corridor along C-470, traffic volumes are anticipated to increase by 50-60% within the 2040 planning horizon.
- The greatest corridor volume is along C-470 south of I-70 where daily traffic is 90,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and anticipated to increase to over 146,000 vpd.
- Through Golden, traffic volumes are anticipated to increase by about 30%, reaching about 50,000 vpd by 2040. There is not a significant difference with or without Jefferson Parkway.
- Traffic volumes on CO 93 to the north of Golden are anticipated to increase by up to 40% with traffic volumes reaching about 28,000 vpd by 2040.
- Jefferson Parkway volumes are estimated at about 12,000 to 16,000 vpd.
- Jonathan asked the group for thoughts and observations concerning traffic volumes; comments and questions are outlined below:
 - With C-470 volumes nearly doubling, it seems like toll lanes may be viable in the future.
 - **Question:** Do volume estimates take into account the people that will change their routes due to congestion? **Answer:** Diversion is included in the model. Drivers are already diverting from C-470 to Kipling, Wadsworth and Indiana during peak periods. The models consider differing volumes by time of day, and also expanding peak period. People make decisions on what route to take based on time of day.
 - **Question:** How does the model reflect commercial traffic (i.e. trucking), which is likely to increase from internet sales and online orders. Will this skew hours and increase traffic flows? **Answer:** Truck traffic is included in the model but no detailed discussion regarding internet sales and truck traffic. There is definitely a trend toward more commercial traffic due to sales online, i.e. Amazon.
 - **Questions:** Are you going to look at travel time reliability, such as on-time arrival 90% of the time. Look at Kipling and secondary roads. CDOT reports this metric and would be important to show in this project. **Answer:** Reliability is a good metric. There have also been discussions about recurring traffic congestion due to traffic and how to measure impact to traffic from accidents in corridor.

5. Environmental Scan Update:

- Technical Working Group (TWG) members are now reviewing the Environmental Scan. CDOT reviewed an earlier draft and edits are incorporated into the version being reviewed by the TWG. When these comments come back after the holidays we will be incorporating edits and then making the document available to Steering Committee.
- Major topics addressed in the Scan include:
 - Land Use
 - Visual Resources Analysis - This is the first time visual resources have been documented to this level in a PEL Study. This report will set a precedent for PEL visual assessments. Close coordination occurred with CDOT on this section.
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Noise Receptors/Mitigation

- Hazardous Materials
- Cultural and Paleontological resources (e.g. Dakota Hogback)
- Wetlands
- Wildlife Movement – how does wildlife move and where do collisions occur?

6. Draft Level 1 Screening Process: (see handouts)

- The draft concept development list includes the ideas suggested during the alternatives workshop and additional ideas provided in public comments.
- In addition to the alternative concept development list, a separate list was created to document improvements suggested by the public or agency staff that will not be evaluated because they do not meet the Purpose and Need, would require programmatic or policy decisions, or they are outside CDOT and local agency control.
 - Noted that some of these concepts are moving forward under other efforts – i.e. wings on plows, maintaining bike trails.
 - ACTION: Determine and document which of these other efforts that are not included in the PEL Level 1 Screening are moving forward elsewhere. Use simple, parenthetical explanation.

7. The Draft Level 1 Screening Matrix was reviewed (see handout).

- Results were summarized as “retained,” “retained as an element” or “eliminated”, with comments explaining reasons for retaining or eliminating each improvement concept.
- Each of the three segments was further broken down into: Highway; Intersection/Interchanges; Multimodal elements; Corridor Management; and Technology.
- Vehicle to infrastructure technology is being considered, i.e. fiber optics along the corridor. Fueling stations for alternative fueled vehicles was also mentioned. However, there is not enough information yet for modeling traffic volumes based on future technological improvements. It is uncertain 1) what will traffic impacts be and 2) how long will it take to roll out a significant number of autonomous vehicles in the vehicle mix (5 or 20 years?).
- It is very helpful in these discussions to have the CDOT road maintenance staff input, especially on CO 93. Need intelligent infrastructure to help road maintenance.
- It was noted that the six general purpose lanes in Golden stands out as a concern. How does this honor the Golden Plan’s four lanes?
 - The six lanes come into play and are appropriate if volume triggers as part of the MOU are reached. It was noted that the 2040 traffic volumes do not meet the target threshold.
- Jonathan noted that the Draft Level 1 Screening is a milestone, and asked the group to indicate support for the Level 1 Screening.
 - **The Steering Committee unanimously supports the Draft Level 1 Screening and it is advanced.**

8. Alternative Development Process Next Steps

- The next steps in the alternatives development process will be to take the concepts that are retained or retained as an element and mix and match to make alternative solutions for improvements. It will look at low-end vs. high-end investment, vs. heavy on transit, safety, etc.
- Technology concepts will be evaluated through their own set of criteria – these concepts are emerging and continuing to change. It will be important not to preclude these technologies as projects result in the next few years and some of these technologies may evolve and become more feasible.
- The Level 2 screening evaluation criteria will be finalized after comments are received on the Environmental Scan, so the environmental criteria are properly acknowledged.
- There is a concern that because so many concepts have been retained, the TWG will have a hard time getting their hands around the projects and packaging the alternatives.
 - Since some of these concepts are only applicable at one/two locations, these will be mixed and matched to meet needs as identified in the traffic analysis.
 - TWG members present vetted this screening and feel comfortable with next steps.

9. Steering Committee Actions

- ACTION: The Steering Committee moves to extend an invitation to an RTD representative to the Steering Committee. RTD will be contacted for technical input as needed.
- ACTION: SC members will review and comment on the MetroVision Plan as it impacts this process and funding for this corridor. (It was noted that the MetroVision Plan does not always match with regional/local land use and planning efforts.)