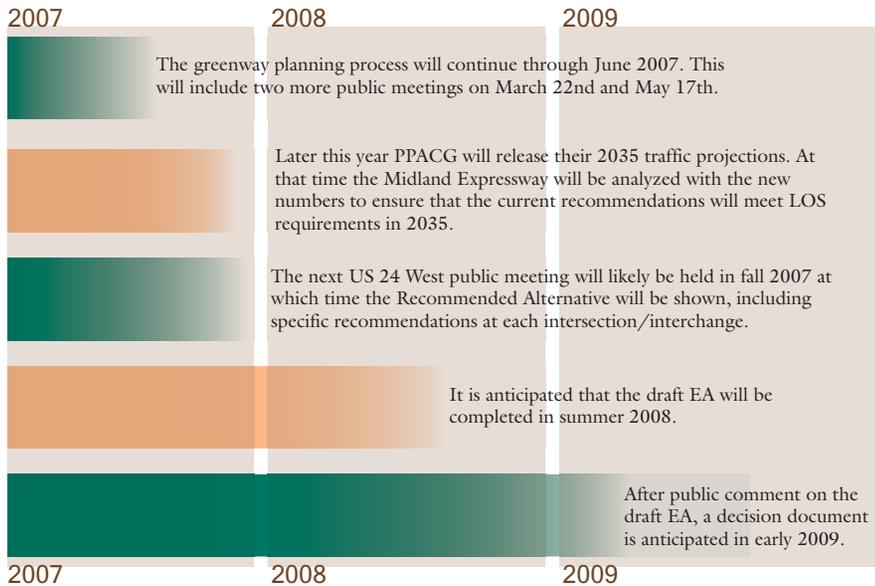


WHAT'S NEXT?



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Project Update - February 2007

The Entryway

WHAT PROMPTED THE STUDY OF US 24?

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) — consisting of representatives from various local governments — identified US 24 from I-25 west as a major corridor with present and future traffic congestion, further, US 24 is included in the regional congestion management system. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) was asked to study short- and long-term strategies to address capacity and safety. CDOT and its consultant team began studying the corridor in 2004, with the first public meeting held in November 2004. The final result will be a plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) of the corridor.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The nine critical issues formed the project's Purpose and Need Statement, the foundation for why the project is being proposed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and CDOT, and will shape the project solutions. The purpose of the US 24 West project is to improve regional and local mobility for current and projected demands for all modes of travel between the present day and 2035, and to reconstruct roadways and bridges to meet current design guidelines and safety standards. The need for the project is to relieve traffic congestion, which is forecasted to worsen markedly between today and 2035.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

The US 24 West planning process kicked off with the November 2004 public meeting where citizens were asked to help identify the critical issues along the corridor. Participants at that public meeting, and local government leaders, identified numerous issues that were then consolidated into nine critical issues for US 24 West.

The Nine Critical Issues Are:

1. Needs of multiple users who have multiple objectives.
2. Corridor aesthetics.
3. Corridor's context and setting including the adjacent neighborhoods and surrounding businesses.
4. Economic viability.
5. Surrounding natural and human environment.
6. Safety, accessibility and mobility.
7. US 24 is a destination and a connector to gateways with other destinations.
8. Coordinated implementation.
9. Effective and fundable solution

A COMMUNITY VISION FOR THE CORRIDOR WAS DEVELOPED USING THIS INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS, WHO HAVE ENDORSED THE FOLLOWING VISION STATEMENT:

“OUR VISION FOR US 24 WEST IMPROVEMENT WILL INTEGRATE INTO THE COMMUNITY FABRIC, WHILE PROVIDING SAFETY, ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY.

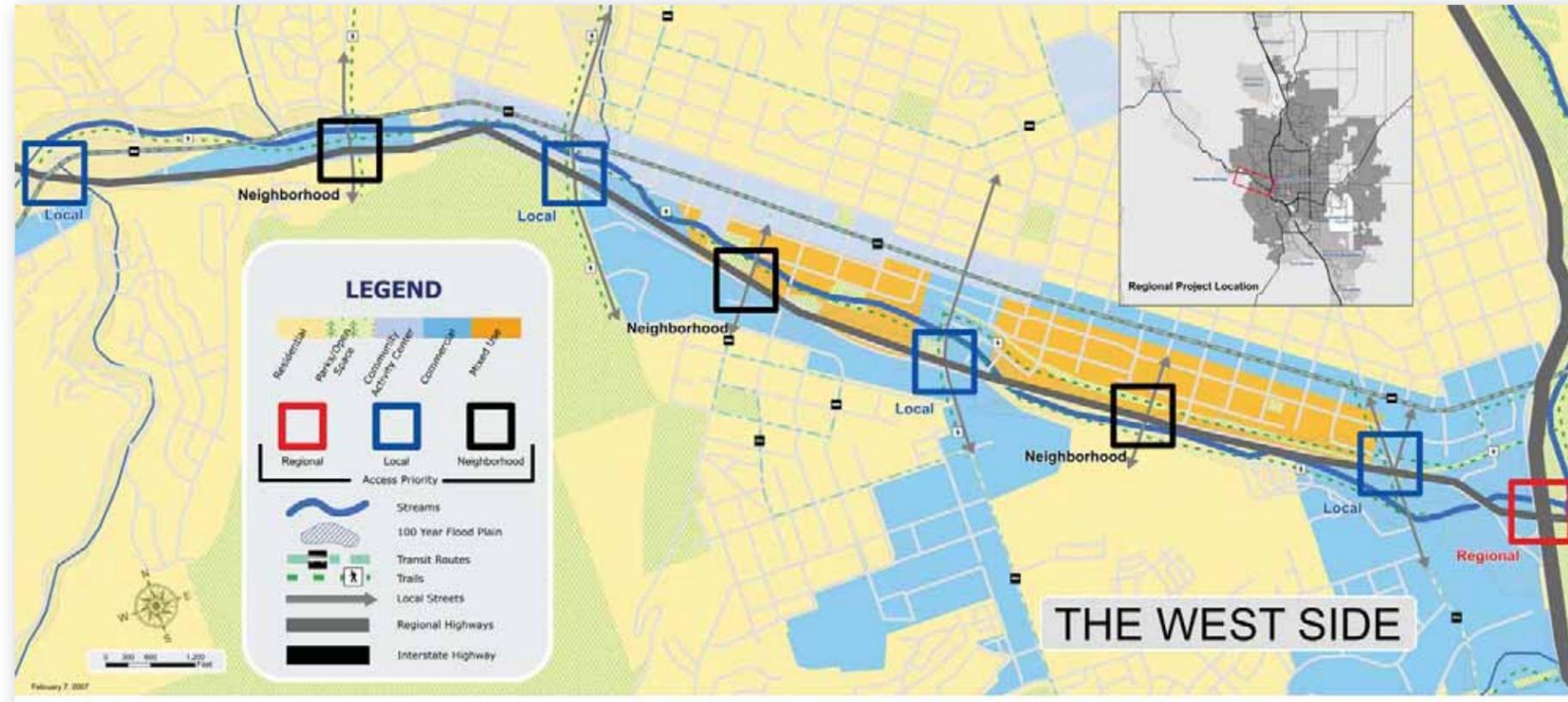
The plan must...

- begin with the existing conditions and current plans for the corridor
- recognize the distinct character of segments along the corridor
- address the needs of the multiple users of multiple modes
- enhance the corridor aesthetics
- provide access to destinations and gateways

The US 24 improvements must...

- protect and enhance neighborhoods and cultural resources
- support economic vitality in the adjacent areas
- avoid and minimize adverse impacts to the natural and human environments
- provide way-finding systems that guide users and that identify the US 24 corridor

Meaningful stakeholder involvement in the US 24 process, as measured by the stakeholders, is necessary to gain endorsement of the improvements and support for coordinated implementation.”



SYSTEMS AT WORK IN THE CORRIDOR

USING THE VISION AND CRITICAL ISSUES AS DIRECTION THE US 24 SOLUTIONS WERE DEVELOPED FOLLOWING THIS PROCESS:

The second public meeting resulted in 360 different ideas on how to reach the vision. Those ideas were evaluated against the critical issues to eliminate ideas that had fatal flaws. From the input received it was clear that a large percentage of participants wanted something done along the corridor to improve mobility, access and safety.

Those ideas were then grouped into seven potential solutions, which were then analyzed against the critical issues and presented to the public for comment and discussion.

Using the analyses of the potential solutions, CDOT and the consultant team developed three alternatives — the Midland Expressway, the US 24 Freeway and the required “no-build” alternative — which were then presented to the public for comment.

THE INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS BASED ON THEIR REVIEW OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE ALTERNATIVES SHOWED STRONGER SUPPORT FOR THE MIDLAND EXPRESSWAY, WHICH BECAME THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

The Midland Expressway improves the Level of Service (LOS) along the corridor by adding lanes, incorporating grade separated interchanges, and improving cross streets and connections with surrounding neighborhoods. Furthermore, the expressway alternative incorporates trail connections, transit improvements, floodplain and water quality enhancements.

The Midland Expressway is

- preferred for its compatibility with the context of the Westside.
- provides the most accessibility at key points on the corridor.
- provides an appropriate balance between the local and regional users.
- satisfies all critical issues.

Altogether there have been nine public meetings, in addition to numerous meetings with government and citizen stakeholders, including property owners along the corridor.

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

CDOT and the consultant team are currently evaluating design options at the intersections and interchanges for the Midland Expressway. The evaluation is based on the critical issues and includes opportunities for non-motorized travel, projected mobility improvements, and the potential impacts to the surrounding environment. The best design options provide the most improvements with the fewest impacts.

There are many systems at work in the corridor, including the roads, the trails, the bus routes, the creek, shops, restaurants, parks and open space. These systems are and must remain interconnected, so a solution for US 24 must integrate with recommendations that help improve water quality, solve flooding, connect trails and improve access to local businesses.

This integrated approach led to the recommended alternative and has also brought forth the idea of a greenway along the Fountain Creek/Midland Trail corridor. Greenways are typically defined as a stretch of land close to an urban area that are kept for community use. In this instance, it could include trails, natural water quality treatments, trees, fountains, places to play and areas to discover. It will also be designed to carry a 100-year flood so surrounding homes and businesses will not be damaged.

The greenway planning process includes meetings with an advisory committee, plus public meetings to gather the community’s ideas for the greenway. The final greenway master plan is expected in June 2007.