



Finding of No Significant Impact for Powers Boulevard (SH 21)

between Woodmen Road and SH 16 in Colorado Springs, Colorado



Colorado Department of Transportation

CDOT Project Number STU R200-109

Project Control Number 13589

December 2010



STU R200-109
Project Control No. 13589

**POWERS BOULEVARD (SH 21)
BETWEEN WOODMEN ROAD AND STATE HIGHWAY 16
IN COLORADO SPRINGS (EL PASO COUNTY), COLORADO**


FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Submitted Pursuant to:
42 USC 4332 (2)(C) and 49 USC 303

By the

**US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
and the
Colorado Department of Transportation**

Submitted by:

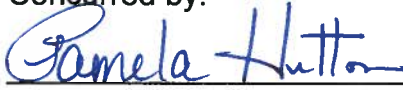


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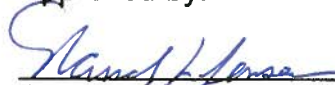


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For John M. Cater
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Date

A Federal agency may publish a notice in the Federal Register, pursuant to 23 USC 139(l), indicating that one or more Federal agencies have taken final actions on permits, licenses, or approvals of a transportation project. If such notice is published, claims seeking judicial review of those Federal agency actions will be barred unless such claims are filed within 180 days after the notice, or within such shorter time period as is specified in the Federal laws pursuant to which judicial review of the Federal agency action is allowed. If no notice is published, then the periods of time that otherwise are provided by the Federal laws governing such claims will apply.

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APPENDICES (on an attached compact disk)

Appendix A Public Outreach Materials

March 2010 Postcard Regarding Updated Information on the Project Website
 June 2010 Postcard Announcing the Public Review Period and EA Availability
 June 2010 Press Release Announcing the Public Review Period and EA Availability
 June 7, 2010 Meeting Notice (posted at 2 mobile home parks)
 Summary of Paid Newspaper Advertisements (13 ads in 5 newspapers)
 July 6, 2010 Press Release Extending the Public Review Period

Appendix B Public Hearing Documentation

Display Boards
 Transcript of the Public Hearing (8 submittals by 7 speakers)
 Comment Forms Received at the Public Hearing (7 forms received)

Appendix C Public Comments Received Outside of the Public Hearing

Comments Received by Electronic Mail (21 messages)
 Comments Received by U.S. Mail (4 letters)
 Comments Received by Telephone (3 messages)

Appendix D Powers Boulevard EA (with corrected page 4-52) and Technical Appendices

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COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BMPs	Best Management Practices
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CO	carbon monoxide
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
I-25	Interstate 25
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
ppm	parts per million
ROW	right-of-way
SH	State Highway (e.g., SH 16, SH 21, SH 83)

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other stakeholders, prepared the Environmental Assessment (EA) for Powers Boulevard (SH 21) between Woodmen Road and SH 16 in Colorado Springs that was published by FHWA in June 2010. The public comment period for the Powers Boulevard EA began on June 7, 2010 and ended on July 9, 2010.

The Powers Boulevard EA examined the transportation needs of this corridor through the year 2035. The EA's Proposed Action would convert the existing expressway into a freeway for the 11 northernmost miles of the 17-mile study area that is highlighted in **Exhibit 1-1**. The EA recommended roadway improvements between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway, which is the entrance to the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport. The Proposed Action also includes right-of-way preservation to accommodate future improvements on the six southernmost miles of the corridor between Milton E. Proby Parkway and SH 16.

The Powers Boulevard EA was approved by FHWA on May 4, 2010. The EA evaluated the following environmental issues and resources:

- traffic congestion and access
- social, economic and land use impacts
- community quality of life (noise, air quality, parks, visual character)
- construction impacts
- water resources
- ecological resources
- Native American consultation
- other resources and issues
- cumulative effects

The EA also identified the actions that would be undertaken to mitigate adverse impacts from the Proposed Action.

1.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

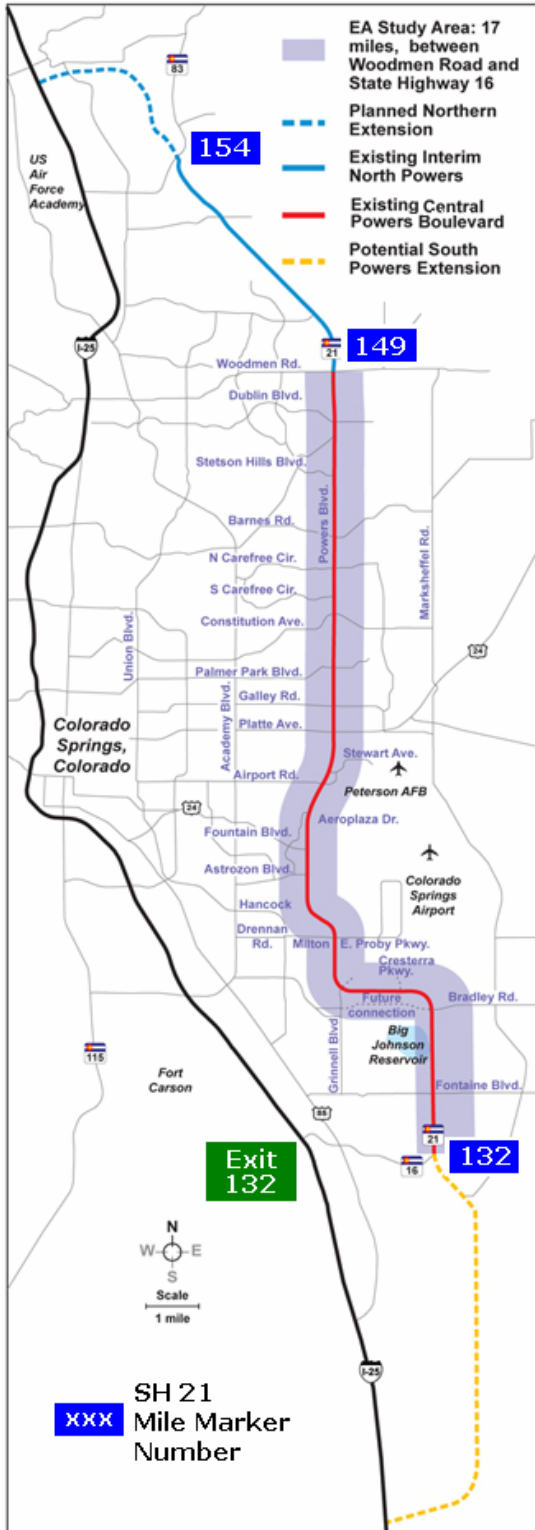
Powers Boulevard is an existing expressway that was built by the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County and the Metropolitan Expansion District (METEX), after beginning as a two-lane unpaved road. It became a state highway (SH 21) in 2007. Today, Powers Boulevard is the transportation backbone for fast-growing, eastern Colorado Springs. It has six through lanes between Woodmen Road and Airport Road, and four through lanes from Airport Road to SH 16, plus various turn lanes and merge lanes at intersections.

FREEWAY VERSUS EXPRESSWAY

A **freeway** is a divided highway with full control of access. Mainline traffic on a freeway encounters no signalized intersections because traffic on intersecting roads crosses the highway at overpasses or underpasses, where turning movements occur. Posted speed limits of 55 to 75 miles per hour are common on freeways. An example of a freeway in Colorado Springs is I-25.

An **expressway** is a divided highway with partial control of access. Expressways may have driveways and at-grade intersections, although these are usually less numerous than on ordinary "arterial" roads. Speed limits on expressways are commonly in the range of 40 to 55 miles per hour. An example of an expressway in Colorado Springs is the existing Powers Boulevard.

Exhibit 1-1. Study Area



Powers Boulevard Corridor Components

SH 21 north of Woodmen Road:

- Is referred to informally as North Powers Boulevard
- Is planned as a freeway between Woodmen Road and I-25, and is currently an expressway between Woodmen Road and SH 83 (as an interim condition); no highway exists between SH 83 and I-25
- Was the subject of a separate EA in 1999, and **is not included** as part of the May 2010 EA for “central” Powers Boulevard

SH 21 between Woodmen Road and SH 16:

- Is referred to informally as Central Powers Boulevard
- Exists as an expressway, 6 lanes north of Airport Road, 4 lanes south of Airport Road
- Is the subject of the May 2010 Powers Boulevard EA
- SH 21 ends where it meets SH 16 (Mesa Ridge Parkway), at approx. mile marker 132

Proposed Action:

- Upgrade the existing expressway to a freeway for 11 miles from Woodmen Road (approx. mile marker 149) to Milton E. Proby Parkway (approx. mile marker 138)
- Preserve right-of-way for future freeway, for 5.8 miles between Milton E. Proby Parkway (approx. mile marker 138) and SH 16 (approx. mile marker 132)

Potential Future Powers Boulevard Extension south of SH 16:

- Is referred to informally as South Powers Boulevard
- A Corridor Feasibility Study in 2000 identified a potential route for future extension of Powers Boulevard from SH 16 to I-25 near Pikes Peak International Raceway
- **Is not included** in the May 2010 EA for central Powers Boulevard, and is not funded in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan
- No road exists, and there is no State Highway designation



The existing Powers Boulevard expressway runs parallel to the region's only freeway, Interstate 25 (I-25), at varying distances of up to six miles away from I-25. The southern terminus of Powers Boulevard today is at the junction with SH 16, which is approximately mile marker 132 on SH 21. The Powers Boulevard interchange at Woodmen Road is about 17 miles to the north, at approximately mile marker 149. The highway continues northward for another five miles to its current northern terminus at SH 83 (approximately mile marker 154).

Moving Forward, the region's adopted 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, indicates that Powers Boulevard will be connected directly to I-25, by upgrading the existing expressway north of Woodmen Road and extending the highway to the northwest from SH 83. The existing and planned portions of Powers Boulevard north of Woodmen Road were the focus of a separate EA in 1997 and a FONSI in 1999. Those previously studied portions are not included in the May 2010 EA for "central" Powers Boulevard.

At the south end of Powers Boulevard, travel to I-25 is accommodated today by SH 16, an existing four-lane, east-west expressway that connects to I-25 at the western gate of Fort Carson. Regional planners have identified a potential corridor for a future extension of Powers Boulevard southward from SH 16 to I-25 at approximately I-25 mile marker 122 (site of the Pikes Peak International Raceway). However, this "South Powers" extension was not funded in the fiscally constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. The May 2010 EA for central Powers Boulevard did not evaluate any potential improvements south of the existing SH 21.

The *City of Colorado Springs Major Thoroughfare Plan* designates Powers Boulevard as a future freeway (City of Colorado Springs, 2006). Today, Powers Boulevard is:

- a State Highway (SH 21)
- a route on the National Highway System
- a State Strategic Corridor
- a truck route

A number of key facilities important to the regional economy rely heavily on Powers Boulevard as a main transportation route. These facilities include the Colorado Springs Airport, two hospitals, three military bases (Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, and the U.S. Air Force Academy) and a significant commercial corridor.

The nature of trips carried by Powers Boulevard has changed over time, and this will continue in the future. The change in the roadway's function over time is summarized as follows:

- The road initially carried predominantly local trips because its length was short and few regional trips were generated by adjacent land uses.
- As the road was extended both to the north and the south, it began to carry an increasing number of longer, regional commuting trips. It became an alternate route for avoiding congestion on Academy Boulevard.
- After the past decade of rapid commercial development, the expressway now carries a large number of local shopping trips in addition to the regional commuting trips. Some motorists have begun to use parallel routes to avoid congestion on Powers Boulevard.
- In the future, with an improved northern connection to I-25, Powers Boulevard will likely see an increase in longer, regional trips.



The current regional and local transportation plans applicable to the Powers Boulevard corridor all depict this roadway as a planned freeway, as follows:

- *Moving Forward*, the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (PPACG, 2008), depicts 11 miles of Powers Boulevard as a freeway between Woodmen Road and SH 16.
- *The City of Colorado Springs Major Thoroughfare Plan* (City of Colorado Springs, 2006) depicts Powers Boulevard as a freeway between Woodmen Road and SH 16. The City's Comprehensive Land Use Map is consistent with this assumption of transportation infrastructure.
- *The El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan* (El Paso County, 2004) depicts Powers Boulevard as a freeway between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway, and as an expressway with interchanges between Milton E. Proby Parkway and SH 16, where it joins a proposed South Powers expressway continuing southward to I-25.

The county's *Major Transportation Corridors Plan* includes Powers Boulevard interchanges at Grinnell Boulevard, Bradley Road, Fontaine Boulevard, and SH 16. This plan was adopted prior to the development of the EA for the Colorado Springs Airport Business Park. The business park's EA, approved in 2005, calls for an additional interchange to serve a planned new roadway that will be called Cresterra Parkway.

All of the above plans call for Powers Boulevard to be upgraded to a freeway between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway, with interchanges planned at major intersecting roadways between Milton E. Proby Parkway and SH 16. A freeway design will allow access only at grade-separated interchanges, thereby increasing capacity, and will accommodate free-flow traffic at a consistent speed of 60 miles per hour or higher. All of these plans were developed with public and agency consultation, through ongoing regional and local planning processes. In particular, *Moving Forward*, the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, is the formal outcome of the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process that is required under Federal regulations.

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

This document is organized into seven chapters that contain the following information:

Chapter 1, above, provided background information regarding Powers Boulevard.

Chapter 2 summarizes the EA, including the project's purpose and need, alternatives considered, Proposed Action, No-Action Alternative, and a summary of its environmental impacts and proposed mitigation.

Chapter 3 identifies one clarification to the EA that has been determined to be needed based on consideration of all public and agency input received.

Chapter 4 describes the public outreach efforts undertaken to solicit comments on the EA, presenting the 110 comments received from 38 commenters, and providing a written response to each comment.

Chapter 5 describes public agency coordination efforts that were undertaken and presents the one agency letter and three resolutions of support that were received.

Chapter 6 presents the formal conclusion of this report, which is FHWA's Finding of No Significant Impact.

Chapter 7 presents references that are cited in the preceding chapters.

Four appendices to this FONSI are contained on a compact disk that accompanies the written report:

- **Appendix A** presents documentation of the public outreach efforts that were undertaken to solicit public comments on the EA.
- **Appendix B** presents documentation of the June 23, 2010 Public Hearing that was conducted regarding the EA.
- **Appendix C** contains the full text of comments that were received during the review period by mail, e-mail, and messages on the project's telephone hotline.
- **Appendix D** contains the approved EA (modified to include one corrected page based on the clarification that was discussed in Chapter 3) and its Technical Appendices.



CHAPTER 2 – SUMMARY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the EA that was approved by FHWA in May 2010. The chapter addresses the following aspects of the project: project purpose and need for action; alternatives considered; description of the No-Action Alternative; description of the Proposed Action; summary of impacts and mitigation; Section 4(f) *de minimis* findings; and project implementation. Public and agency involvement are described in Chapter 4 of this document.

2.2 PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to reduce current and future traffic congestion on Powers Boulevard between Woodmen Road and SH 16, consistent with the corridor needs as identified in local and regional long-range transportation plans, and to accommodate connections with the region's planned transportation network.

2.3 NEED FOR ACTION

Today, Powers Boulevard is congested for about six miles, between Barnes Road and Airport Road. With continued development along the corridor, traffic forecasts for 2035 indicate that 11 miles of Powers Boulevard will be extremely congested, between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway. As discussed below, population growth in the eastern part of the Colorado Springs Metropolitan Area will increase traffic on Powers Boulevard. As a result, current congestion levels will worsen dramatically and spread throughout the corridor, causing travel times to grow by approximately 19 minutes on the 17-mile corridor. This would be an important regional congestion problem due to the role of Powers Boulevard in connecting the region's various east-west arterials and planned future transportation system connections. These topics are discussed in more detail below.

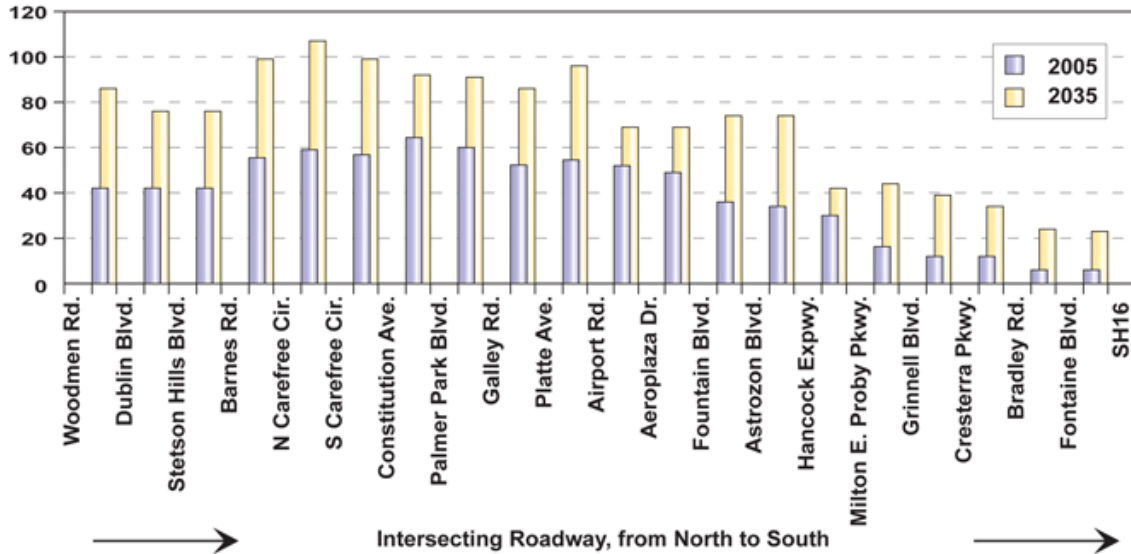
Corridor Population

Rapid urban development will likely continue in eastern Colorado Springs and El Paso County. Powers Boulevard is the primary north-south roadway serving the growth that has occurred near it. Residential development surrounded Powers Boulevard between 1985 and 2005, and intense retail development has occurred since the late 1990s. New businesses are under construction and remaining parcels have all been zoned and/or platted for development. The population along central Powers Boulevard (i.e., between Academy Boulevard and Marksheffel Road, from Woodmen Road to SH 16) was approximately 172,000 in 2005, and is projected by PPACG to grow to 263,000 by 2035, an increase of 53 percent.

Increased Traffic Volume

In the baseline conditions (traffic counts taken in 2004-2005) volumes on Powers Boulevard ranged from less than 10,000 vehicles per day at the south end of the corridor, between Fontaine Boulevard and Mesa Ridge Parkway, to just under 65,000 vehicles per day in the north central portion of the corridor between Constitution Avenue and Palmer Park Boulevard. **Exhibit 2-1** indicates average weekday traffic volumes for the baseline conditions and year 2035 between major cross-streets for each section of the corridor.

Exhibit 2-1. Powers Boulevard Traffic Volumes, Baseline and 2035
(vehicles per day, in thousands)



Future traffic volumes were projected using the PPACG Regional Travel Model, with the assumption that no capacity improvements would be made on Powers Boulevard. Traffic growth will vary by location, increasing everywhere by a minimum of 40 percent and more than doubling near the northern and southern ends of the corridor. As a corridor-wide average, traffic volumes are expected to increase approximately 88 percent by 2035. In the most heavily used portions of the corridor, volumes will increase by about 50,000 vehicles per day (CDOT, 2009a).

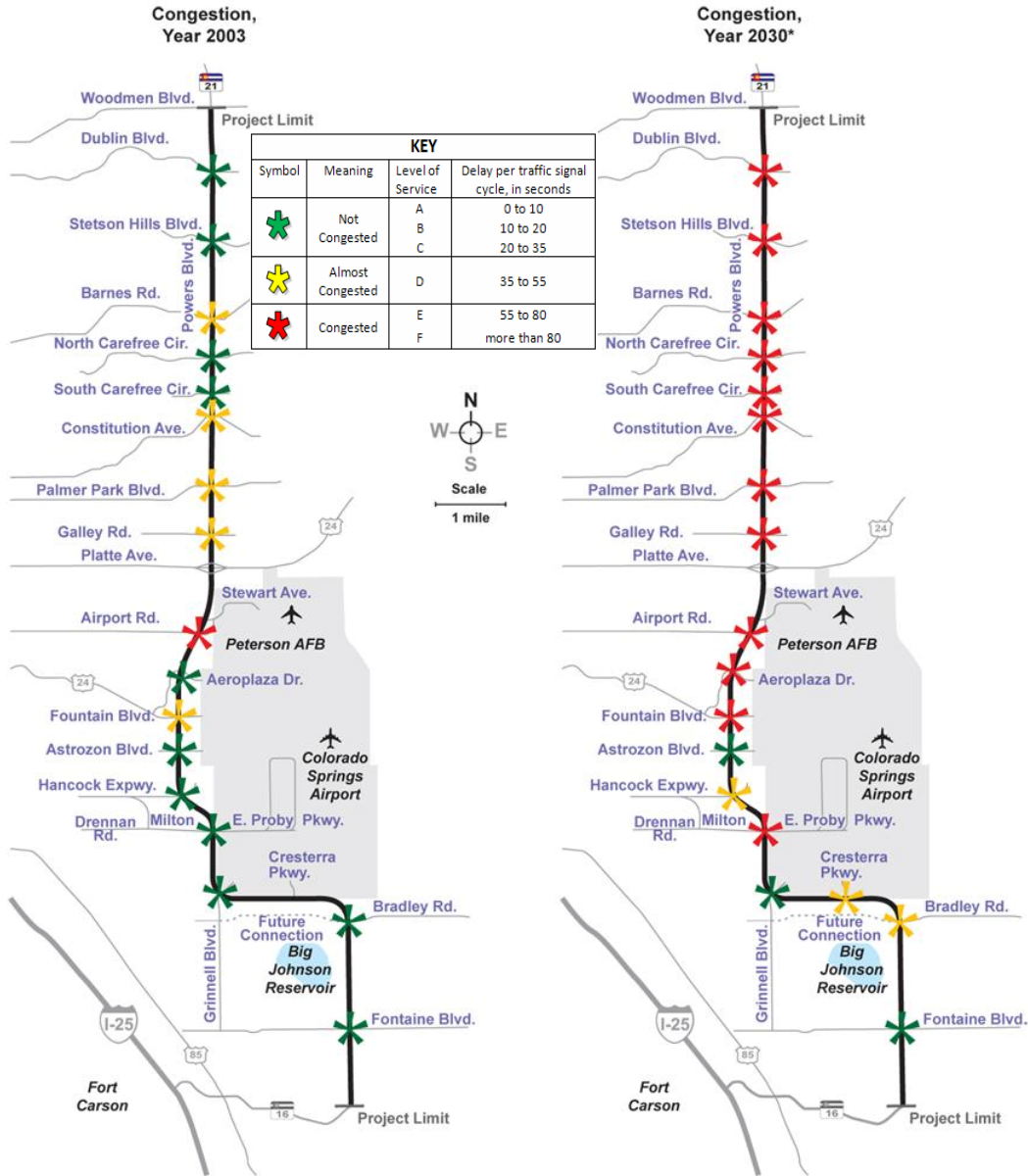
The highest projected volume, 107,000 vehicles per day, would occur between North Carefree Circle and South Carefree Circle. This volume is comparable to the amount of traffic on I-25 in the vicinity of downtown Colorado Springs.

Congested Intersections

As an expressway – with existing at-grade signalized intersections spaced typically one mile apart and in some cases more closely – Powers Boulevard does not have the capacity to handle the projected year 2035 volumes that are identified in **Exhibit 2-1**. Some portions of Powers Boulevard are already nearing or over capacity during peak commuter periods. Increased traffic demand by 2035 will cause major deterioration in the traffic Level of Service during peak periods, and congestion would spread to additional hours of the average weekday. Delays for mainline traffic on an expressway occur due to signalized intersections, where through-traffic sits idle as left turns are made or when cross-street traffic has the green light.

Exhibit 2-2 illustrates the baseline and future severity of congestion by intersection. Of 15 existing signalized intersections, one (Airport Road – Stewart Avenue entrance to Peterson Air Force Base) was congested in the baseline year. Of the existing 15 signalized intersections, 12 will be congested by 2035. Thus, the percentage of these intersections that are congested will have increased from 7 percent to 80 percent, a difference of 73 percent. Additionally, three currently unsignalized intersections south of Milton E. Proby Parkway are likely to be signalized in the future but would not be congested.

Exhibit 2-2. Congestion Severity by Intersection



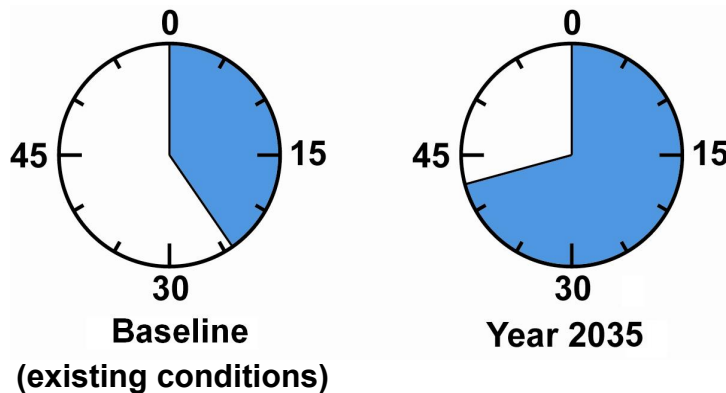
**As is explained in Appendix B of the EA, congestion was initially projected for 2030. In subsequent review after adoption of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, a traffic forecast sensitivity analysis determined that these conditions were reasonably representative for 2035.*

Increased Travel Time

Delays due to congestion at intersections increase travel times. With no delays, driving the 17-mile central Powers Boulevard corridor at 50 miles per hour would take just over 20 minutes. Instead, the trip took about 24 minutes in 2005, due to delays at traffic signals. By 2035, assuming no capacity improvements are made on Powers Boulevard, the same trip will take

approximately 43 minutes, or about 19 minutes longer, an increase of 79 percent. **Exhibit 2-3** depicts these travel times.

Exhibit 2-3. Travel Time Needed to Drive the Powers Boulevard Corridor during Peak Period, in Minutes



Additional traffic demand due to future regional growth will greatly increase the amount of travel delay routinely experienced on Powers Boulevard.

Accommodating Connections with the Region’s Planned Transportation Network

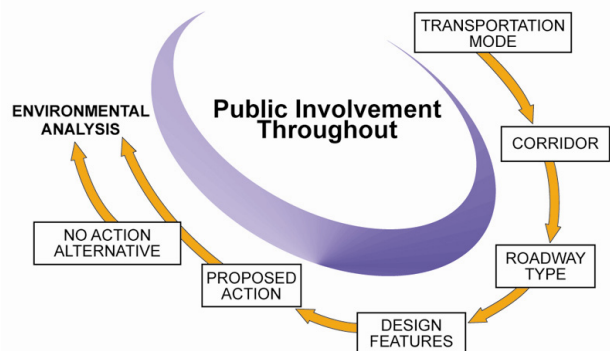
Exhibit 2-2, presented earlier, showed that there are 17 existing intersections, one grade-separated interchange and one planned new intersection (Cresterra Parkway) along Powers Boulevard in the 17 miles between the existing Woodmen Road interchange and SH 16. As the region’s second busiest north-south roadway after I-25, Powers Boulevard serves as the transportation backbone for eastern Colorado Springs. An important part of its function is to link to major arterial cross-streets to provide connectivity with the regional roadway network.

As part of meeting the project need, a proposed action alternative will require maintaining direct access for most, but not necessarily all, of the streets that currently have direct access. The type of access that is prudent for any existing or planned connecting street will depend upon the function of that street as well as the type of facility that is recommended for Powers Boulevard.

2.4 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Proposed Action was developed by CDOT and FHWA through a process that identified, evaluated, refined, and eliminated potential transportation actions, with continuous input from Powers Boulevard users and stakeholders as well as local, regional, state, and federal agencies. This process is illustrated in **Exhibit 2-4**. The first four steps in this process led to the development of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action and the No-Action Alternative were then carried forward for impact evaluation in the EA.

Exhibit 2-4. Key Steps in the Alternatives Development Process



Three distinct screening stages were developed for the Powers Boulevard EA alternatives analysis, including qualitative and quantitative technical assessment. Upon completion of each screening level, public meetings were held to present the screening recommendations and to solicit input from the public on the alternatives. The results of the process are summarized in Exhibits 2-5, 2-6, and 2-7.

Exhibit 2-5. Results of Transportation Mode Analysis





Transportation Mode Considered	Result of Analysis
<u>Rail Transit Technologies</u> Light Rail Personal Rapid Transit Heavy Rail Monorail Commuter Rail Magnetic Levitation Diesel Multiple Units Subway Electric Trolley (Streetcar)	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - these modes would reduce future traffic on Powers Boulevard by only 2 to 5 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate future congestion. This would not meet the project’s purpose and need.
<u>Rubber-Tire Transit Technologies</u> Bus Rapid Transit Express Bus on High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes Express Bus Service Local Bus Service	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - these modes would reduce future traffic on Powers Boulevard by only 2 to 5 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate future congestion. This would not meet the project’s purpose and need.
<u>Congestion Management Strategies</u> Ramp metering Carpool programs Park and Ride Lots Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities/Programs	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - these strategies alone would reduce future traffic on Powers Boulevard by no more than 5 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate future congestion. This would not meet the project’s purpose and need.
<u>Roadway Improvements</u> Additional general purpose lanes Additional turn lanes Signal improvements Interchanges/overpasses	 CARRIED FORWARD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS because: - these improvements would add enough roadway capacity to accommodate projected 2035 corridor travel demand. This would meet the project’s purpose and need.

Exhibit 2-6. Results of Corridor Analysis


Corridor Considered	Result of Analysis
<u>Marksheffel Road</u> Upgrade existing arterial to a freeway, two miles east of Powers Boulevard	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - this option would reduce projected traffic on Powers Boulevard by only 5 to 15 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate congestion. This would not meet the project’s purpose and need.

Exhibit 2-6. Results of Corridor Analysis (continued)






Corridor Considered	Result of Analysis
<u>Banning-Lewis Parkway</u> Build planned new roadway as a freeway, three to four miles east of Powers Boulevard	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - this option would reduce projected traffic on Powers Boulevard by only 5 to 15 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate future congestion. This would not meet the project's purpose and need.
<u>Prairie Falcon Parkway Express Toll Road</u> Build new high-speed 200-mile toll road roughly from Pueblo to Fort Collins, about 8 to 20 miles east of Powers Boulevard	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - this option would reduce projected traffic on Powers Boulevard by less than 5 percent; this would not take enough traffic off of Powers Boulevard to alleviate future congestion. This would not meet the project's purpose and need.
<u>Powers Boulevard</u> Increase roadway capacity	 CARRIED FORWARD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS because: - this option would accommodate future travel demand (both local and regional trips) while improving peak-period travel speeds and travel times. This would meet the project's purpose and need.

Exhibit 2-7. Results of Roadway Type Analysis

Roadway Type Considered	Result of Analysis
<u>Enhanced Expressway</u> Provide: - more through lanes; - grade-separated interchanges at high-priority locations; - additional turn lanes at remaining signalized intersections.	 ELIMINATED from additional evaluation because: - this roadway type would leave remaining at-grade intersections extremely congested, due to heavy left turn movements. - traffic queues at cross-streets would impair access to adjacent businesses. - the total width needed for through lanes, left turn lanes, and right turn lanes at intersections would result in more right-of-way impacts to adjacent properties in the vicinity of intersections. This would not meet the project's purpose and need.
<u>Freeway</u> Convert the existing expressway to a freeway, allowing access only at grade-separated interchanges.	 CARRIED FORWARD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS because: - this roadway type could accommodate future Powers Boulevard year 2035 travel demand while improving peak-period travel speeds and travel times in comparison with current conditions. This would meet the project's purpose and need.

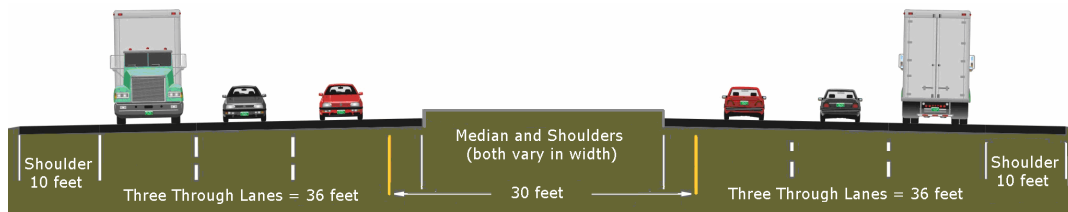
After a thorough consideration of traffic operations and other associated effects, it was determined that the enhanced expressway would not meet the project's purpose and need.

The final step in the alternatives development process determined design concepts such as interchange types, alignment, and other features (e.g., location of frontage roads, turnaround ramps, underpasses and overpasses with no access, etc.). This extensive process involved numerous meetings with interested parties and resulted in the concept design details that are reflected in the Proposed Action. For details, see Appendix D, Alternatives Screening Report, and Appendix E, Context Sensitive Solutions Report, of the EA.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No-Action Alternative provides a benchmark for comparison with the Proposed Action. In the No-Action Alternative, no capacity improvements would be made to address the purpose and need of this EA. Routine maintenance would occur to keep the existing lanes in operable condition. Other than the two existing grade-separated interchanges at Woodmen Road and Platte Avenue, the expressway and its signalized intersections are at grade and would remain so. **Exhibit 2-8** shows the lane configuration and right-of-way that exists today and that would remain under the No-Action Alternative for a six-lane section of the expressway.

Exhibit 2-8. Typical Cross Section of Powers Boulevard Existing 6-Lane Expressway North of Airport Road*



* South of Airport Road, the existing expressway is similar but has a four-lane cross section.

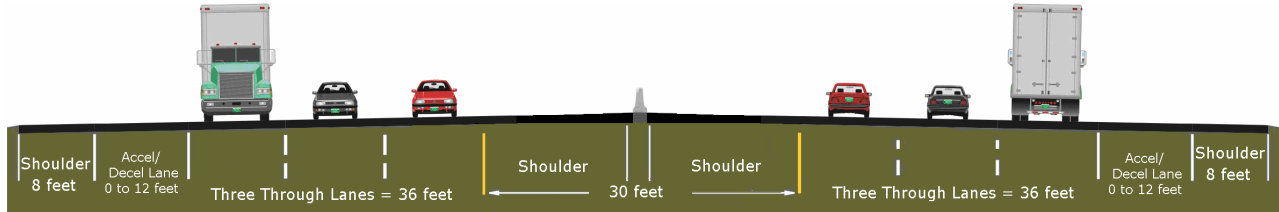
2.6 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action would modify Powers Boulevard as follows:

- Reconstruct the existing expressway as a 6-lane freeway for 11 miles between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway (entrance to Colorado Springs Airport), as shown in **Exhibit 2-9**.
- Build new grade-separated interchanges at the following 11 cross-streets: Dublin Road, Stetson Hills Boulevard, Barnes Road, North Carefree Circle, Constitution Avenue, Palmer Park Boulevard, Galley Road, Airport Road, Fountain Boulevard, Hancock Expressway/Zepellin Road, and Milton E. Proby Parkway.
- Obtain right-of-way to accommodate future interchanges for a freeway on the existing 5.8-mile stretch of Powers Boulevard between Milton E. Proby Parkway and SH 16 (see **Exhibit 2-10**). Future environmental studies would be needed as a prerequisite for any construction projects south of the Powers Boulevard interchange at Milton E. Proby Parkway.

The major highlights of the Proposed Action were described above in general terms. More details are provided in **Exhibit 2-11** and the text that follows it. **Exhibit 2-12** depicts proposed interchange configurations and number of lanes at various locations.

**Exhibit 2-9. Lane Configuration for 6-Lane Freeway
North of Milton E. Proby Parkway**



**Exhibit 2-10. Lane Configuration for a Freeway
South of Milton E. Proby Parkway**



Exhibit 2-12 indicates that a relatively simple diamond interchange is proposed at Milton E. Proby Parkway (entrance to the Colorado Springs Airport). In consultation with airport officials, this configuration was designed to be compatible with a future loop configuration (to be built by others) if needed to accommodate growth at the airport and its adjacent business park. The Proposed Action would not preclude the potential future upgrade at this location.

As part of the Proposed Action, all arterial streets that cross Powers Boulevard would be reconstructed as needed to accommodate on and off ramps and frontage roads, where provided.

Several cross-streets that currently have direct access from Powers Boulevard would no longer have direct access under the Proposed Action. These locations of the eliminated accesses are shown in **Exhibit 2-11**. They include, from north to south:

- South Carefree Circle (between North Carefree Circle and Constitution Avenue)
- Waynoka Road (south of Constitution Avenue, on the east side of Powers Boulevard)
- Victor Place (south of Constitution Avenue, on the west side of Powers Boulevard)
- Omaha Boulevard (south of Palmer Park Boulevard, on the east side of Powers Boulevard)
- Aeroplaza Drive (between Airport Road and Fountain Boulevard)
- Astrozon Boulevard (between Fountain Boulevard and Hancock Expressway)
- Triple Crown Way (north of Hancock Expressway, on the west side of Powers Boulevard)

Exhibit 2-11. Summary of the Proposed Action and the No-Action Alternative

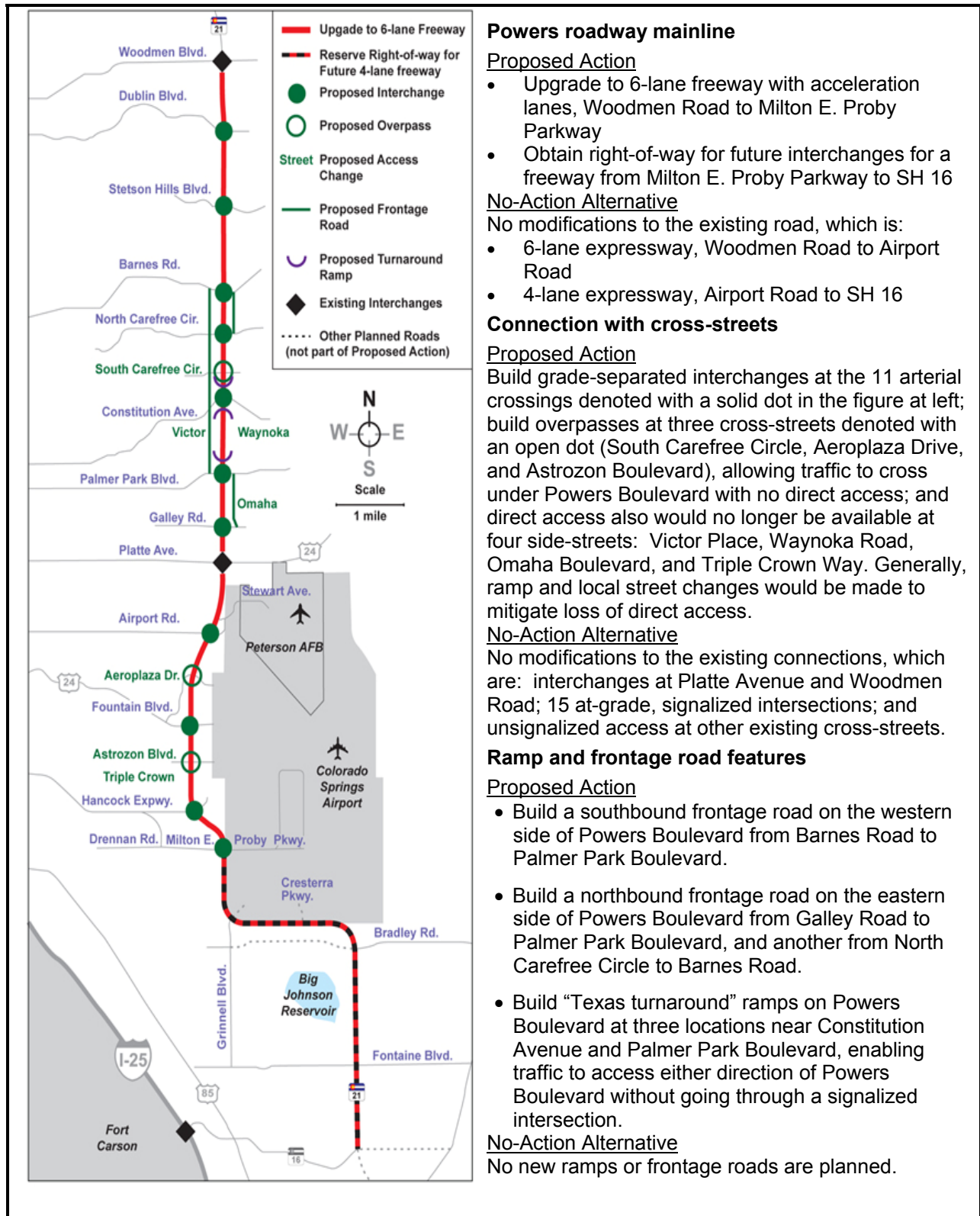
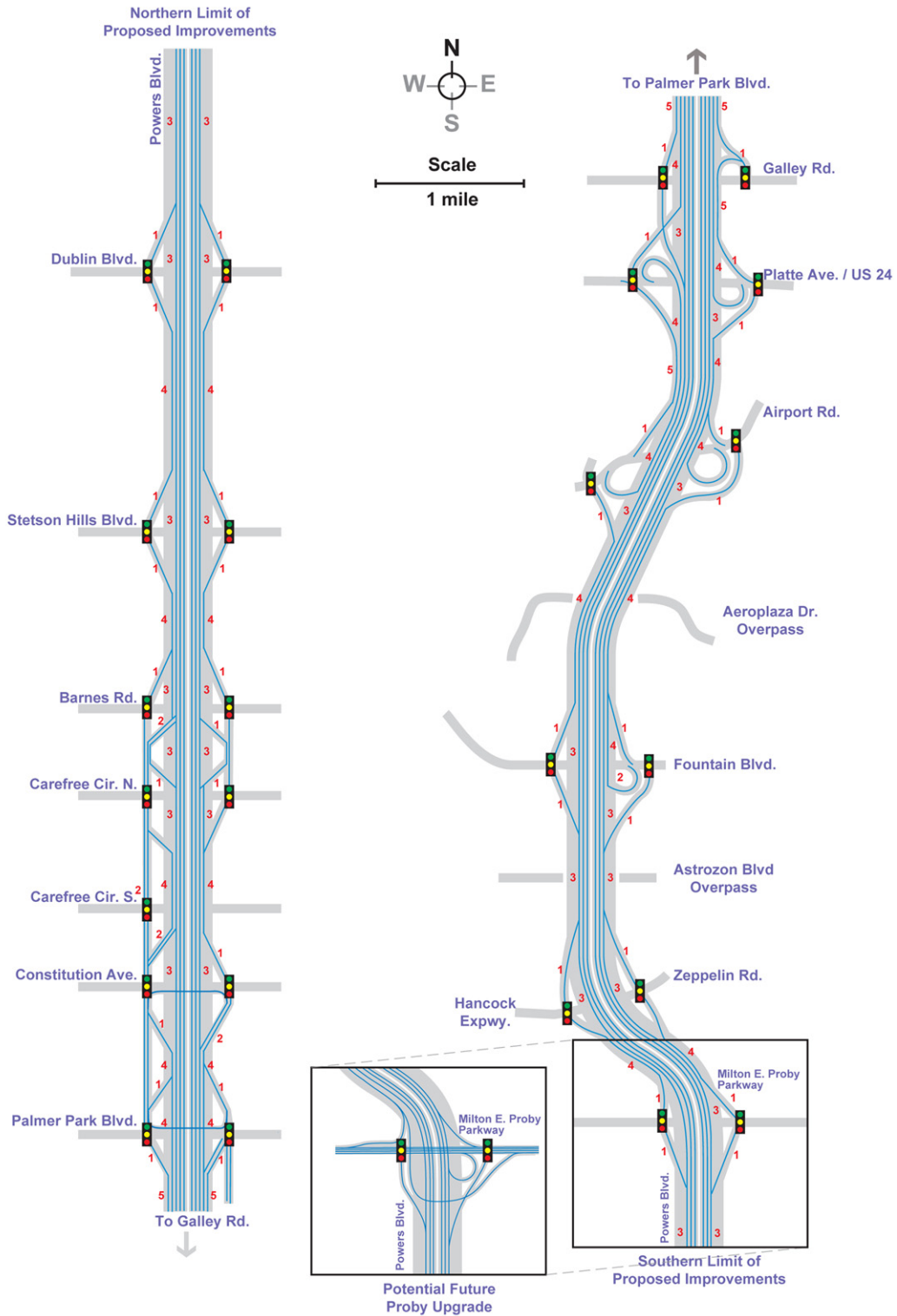


Exhibit 2-12. Number of Lanes and Interchange Configurations for Proposed Action



As is indicated in **Exhibit 2-12**, it would still be possible to cross Powers Boulevard at South Carefree Circle, Aeroplaza Drive, and Astrozon Boulevard. For the other affected accesses, motorists would need to use frontage roads or other local streets to get to or from the nearest major cross-street with a Powers Boulevard interchange. Local access to frontage roads is proposed at various locations (e.g., Safeway shopping center north of Constitution Avenue; Victor Place businesses), and may be considered at other locations in final design if CDOT determines that it is feasible and prudent to do so.

Special free-flow “Texas turnaround” ramps would be provided at three locations along the corridor. This type of ramp allows freeway motorists traveling in one direction to access a destination on the other side without having to make two left turns at the cross-street intersections, thus improving traffic flow at the interchange. Turnaround ramps would be provided in the few locations where there is sufficient demand for this movement:

- North of Constitution Avenue, serving southbound to northbound turns
- South of Constitution Avenue, serving northbound to southbound turns
- North of Palmer Park Boulevard, serving southbound to northbound turns

The Proposed Action will accommodate east-west pedestrian travel across Powers Boulevard by including sidewalks meeting Americans with Disabilities Act design criteria at the new interchanges, as well as overpass or underpass locations. At Stetson Hills Boulevard, this includes accommodation of the Stetson Hills Trail. The Proposed Action includes grade-separated crossings of Powers Boulevard for three planned trails: a bicycle and pedestrian overpass for the Rock Island Trail; a Sand Creek Trail underpass that would accommodate equestrians; and a bicycle and pedestrian underpass at East Fork Sand Creek.

Additionally, CDOT will coordinate with the City of Colorado Springs Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services to ensure that a new East Fork Sand Creek bridge on Aviation Way and the Powers Boulevard interchange for Hancock Expressway and Zeppelin Road are designed to accommodate a proposed north-south Powers Trail.

Right-of-Way Preservation

The cross section shown in **Exhibit 2-10** is for a future freeway on the 5.8 miles of south of Milton E. Proby Parkway. Based on current growth projections, the capacity of the existing four-lane expressway is adequate to meet traffic needs there through the year 2035. Therefore, the Proposed Action does not include roadway improvements south of the proposed interchange at Milton E. Proby Parkway. However, it is prudent to preserve the right-of-way that would be needed to accommodate the type of facility and the anticipated transportation network connections that are reflected in the region’s adopted long-range transportation plan. Therefore the Proposed Action includes approximately 78 acres of right-of-way preservation between Milton E. Proby Parkway and SH 16, including land on both the east and west sides of Powers Boulevard. No land would be needed from the Airport Open Space or the Bluestem Prairie Open Space. The needed right-of-way varies in width and is concentrated around locations of existing or planned at-grade intersections, to accommodate future interchanges.

2.7 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

This section summarizes the impacts and mitigation that are contained in Chapter 4 of the EA. Key project impacts are discussed first, followed by a detailed listing of project impacts and mitigation.

It is important to note that the project design has been developed only to a conceptual level and provides enough detail to assess likely project impacts. In the final design of each piece of the overall Proposed Action, CDOT will look for ways to further minimize adverse impacts.

The key project impacts anticipated from the Proposed Action are:

- Traffic Congestion and Access – Traffic congestion would be greatly reduced. Grade-separated interchanges would be constructed at 11 major cross-streets. Direct access to Powers Boulevard from three cross-streets and four side-streets would be rerouted to other streets and, in some cases, frontage roads.
- Social, Economic, and Land Use – Right-of-way impacts include displacement of 17 businesses and 47 residences, including one minority-owned business and five Hispanic households. No disproportional impacts to minority or low-income populations are foreseen.
- Community Quality of Life – Traffic noise would increase for adjacent residential areas. Seven noise walls are proposed. No air quality concerns are anticipated. There would be negligible impacts to trails, parks, or recreation. The freeway would be more visible than today's expressway due to elevation over cross-streets.
- Construction Impacts – Congestion would increase in construction zones, resulting in traffic delays. Construction of each grade-separated interchange could last for two years. Traffic flow and access to businesses from cross-streets would be maintained during construction. Noise and dust likely would be noticeable at nearby homes and businesses. Materials and fuels would be consumed by construction and wastes would be generated. Temporary detours or closure of trails may be required. Best Management Practices would be implemented to manage stormwater during construction.
- Water Resources – Stormwater runoff volume would increase due to the increased amount of impervious surface area, but mitigation measures would likely improve water quality. Floodplains would be minimally affected, not diminishing their beneficial values.
- Ecological Resources – 260 acres of grassland would be converted to highway use. Total wetland impacts would be 0.12 acre. No effects to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species are anticipated. The freeway would act as a barrier and wildlife would have difficulty crossing the facility.
- Cultural Resources – Only one historic property (Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad) is present, and use of land from this site would result in no adverse effect to the resource. No known archaeological resources would be affected.

Exhibit 2-13 provides more detail regarding impacts of the Proposed Action, comparing them to conditions with the No-Action Alternative, and identifying the mitigation measures that CDOT will undertake in conjunction with project implementation. These mitigation measures would not occur with the No-Action Alternative.

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Traffic Mobility and Access</p> <p>- Traffic congestion and travel time</p>	<p>Due to continued urban growth, traffic on Powers Boulevard would increase by about 40,000 vehicles per day (an 88% increase) and would be much more congested than it is today. The time needed to travel the corridor would increase by 19 minutes, from 24 minutes today to 43 minutes in 2035.</p>	<p>Traffic on Powers Boulevard would increase by about 60,000 vehicles per day (a 126% increase), but would be less congested than it is today. The 17-minute time needed to travel the corridor would be 7 minutes less than the current (baseline condition) travel time of 24 minutes.</p>	<p>Improved Level of Service and reduced travel times are beneficial effects. No mitigation is necessary.</p>
<p>- Traffic south of Milton E. Proby Parkway</p>	<p>South of Milton E. Proby Parkway, traffic volume would approximately triple, increasing by up to 30,000 vehicles per day, but traffic Levels of Service would remain acceptable.</p>	<p>South of Milton E. Proby Parkway, where no improvements would be made, traffic volume would approximately triple, increasing by up to 30,000 vehicles per day, but traffic Levels of Service would remain acceptable.</p>	<p>South of Milton E. Proby Parkway, Powers Boulevard would operate at acceptable Levels of Service, and no mitigation is necessary.</p>
<p>- Business access on cross-streets</p>	<p>No change to business access on cross-streets is anticipated.</p>	<p>For safety reasons, continued use of some existing business access points on cross-streets would not be possible. Seven cross-streets will have their access to Powers Boulevard modified, as listed on page 2-9.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action includes modification of cross-street business access points to provide reasonable access to all affected properties.</p>
<p>- Cut-through traffic on Rio Vista Drive, west of Powers Boulevard between North Carefree Circle and Constitution Avenue</p>	<p>Increased congestion on Powers Boulevard is likely to increase cut-through traffic on this neighborhood street.</p>	<p>By relieving congestion on Powers Boulevard, the Proposed Action is likely to reduce cut-through traffic on this neighborhood street.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action includes a southbound frontage road along the west side of Powers Boulevard in this area. This may further help to reduce the through-traffic on Rio Vista Drive.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Traffic Mobility and Access (continued)</p> <p>- Direct access to Powers Boulevard</p>	<p>No change in access to Powers Boulevard is anticipated.</p>	<p>Grade-separated interchanges would be constructed at 11 major cross-streets. Direct access to Powers Boulevard would no longer be available at three cross-streets and four side-streets.</p>	<p>Alternative access will be available via other streets. In some locations, the Proposed Action includes frontage roads to carry local traffic to the nearest grade-separated interchange. Three Texas turnaround ramps will be built to help motorists cross and access the freeway. Local street connections would be built in some locations.</p>
<p>Social, Economic and Land Use Considerations</p> <p>- Neighborhoods</p>	<p>No households or businesses would be displaced.</p> <p>No minority households would be displaced.</p>	<p>23 duplexes (46 households) would be displaced from Gunshot Pass Drive. With over 160 other homes in the neighborhood, a substantial residential area would remain. One household in Canterbury Mobile Home Park would be displaced. No neighborhood would be newly divided or fragmented.</p> <p>Hispanic households account for 5 of the 47 residences that would be displaced.</p>	<p>CDOT will follow the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way acquisitions.</p> <p>If needed, CDOT will provide a qualified translator to assist in acquisition and relocation.</p>
<p>- Businesses</p>	<p>No businesses would be displaced.</p> <p>No minority-owned businesses would be displaced.</p>	<p>17 businesses, 8 of them vehicle-related, would be displaced. Nearby businesses and neighborhoods are not dependent on these businesses. Two cell phone towers would be displaced.</p> <p>One minority-owned business would be displaced.</p>	<p>CDOT will follow the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way acquisitions.</p> <p>If needed, CDOT will provide a qualified translator to assist in acquisition and relocation.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Social, Economic and Land Use Considerations</p> <p>- Businesses (continued)</p>	<p>Existing roadway capacity would limit the amount of traffic that can conveniently access Powers Boulevard's commercial areas.</p> <p>Visibility to local businesses from the roadway would not be affected.</p>	<p>Improved mobility would increase the geographic area from which customers can conveniently travel to Powers Boulevard commercial areas.</p> <p>Visibility from the roadway would be reduced for some businesses and enhanced for some others. Views across the freeway would be blocked by grade-separated interchanges.</p>	<p>Improved mobility to commercial areas is a beneficial effect. No mitigation is necessary.</p> <p>CDOT will provide appropriate signage to ensure that motorists are aware of how to access upcoming developments that may be difficult to see in advance of an exit.</p>
<p>- Land use</p>	<p>The No-Action Alternative would be inconsistent with adopted regional land use plans which reflect Powers Boulevard as a freeway.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action is compatible with adopted regional transportation and land use plans. It would not induce growth or change planned land use.</p>	<p>No mitigation is necessary.</p>
<p>Community Quality of Life</p> <p>- Traffic noise</p> <p>(Also discussed below for Construction Impacts)</p>	<p>Due to increasing traffic, the number of areas experiencing traffic noise impacts would increase from five areas affected today to 11 areas affected in the future.</p>	<p>Noise would increase due to increased traffic, new lanes closer to adjacent properties, and elevation of Powers Boulevard over cross-streets. The number of areas experiencing traffic noise impacts would increase from five today to 22 affected in the future.</p>	<p>Noise walls are proposed at seven locations to protect 246 residences and one day care playground.</p>
<p>- Air quality</p> <p>(Also discussed below for Construction Impacts)</p>	<p>Congested, bumper-to-bumper traffic will produce excessive idling emissions. Cleaner vehicle emissions will largely offset growth in vehicle miles traveled. The region is expected to meet existing national air quality standards.</p>	<p>The freeway would accommodate more vehicles, but they would operate at higher, more efficient speeds. Projected worst-case micro-scale concentrations of carbon monoxide would be comparable to No-Action conditions and would meet national air quality standards.</p>	<p>Reduction of congestion-caused vehicle idling is a beneficial effect. CDOT will comply with ongoing State initiatives to use greener, sustainable methods of operation and to reduce greenhouse gases where possible.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Community Quality of Life (continued)</p> <p>- Trails, parks, recreation, & open space</p> <p>(Also discussed below for Construction Impacts)</p>	<p>Increased traffic on the Powers Boulevard expressway would strengthen the effect of the roadway as a barrier to non-motorized travel (bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians). No new trail crossings would be provided by CDOT.</p> <p>No land would be acquired from any park, trail, or open space.</p> <p>Two public recreation facilities would experience traffic noise levels at or above 66 decibels: the High Chaparral Open Space and a planned community park.</p>	<p>Converting Powers Boulevard to a freeway would further strengthen the effect of the road as a barrier to non-motorized travel.</p> <p>Land totaling 1.2 acres would be acquired from the Skyview Sports Complex and 0.02 acre from the Cherokee Ridge par-3 golf course. However, this land is not actively used for recreation.</p> <p>The High Chaparral Open Space and the planned Southeast Community Park would experience higher noise levels (74 decibels and 69 decibels, respectively) with the Proposed Action, due to the higher traffic volumes that would pass by. However, traffic noise would not impair the intended recreational uses of the facilities.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action includes construction of an overpass for the Rock Island Trail and underpasses for the Sand Creek Trail and East Fork Sand Creek Trail. Interchanges would accommodate at-grade crossing for the Stetson Hills Trail and for arterial street sidewalk users. CDOT will coordinate with the City of Colorado Springs to accommodate a Powers Trail (not part of the Proposed Action) along Aviation Way.</p> <p>There would be no impact to a recreational use. CDOT will follow the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way acquisitions.</p> <p>Noise mitigation for the affected sites was considered but was not determined to be reasonable and feasible. The open space has very limited active use in noise areas, and the planned park can be designed by others to locate noise-sensitive uses away from the freeway.</p>
<p>- Visual character</p>	<p>Urban development will continue to consume vacant grassland, giving the corridor a more urban visual character.</p>	<p>Adding pavement for ramps and frontage roads will make Powers Boulevard more visually apparent.</p>	<p>CDOT developed and will follow a uniform set of design guidelines (August 2003) to produce consistent aesthetic standards for interchanges, noise walls, streetlights, and other freeway features.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Community Quality of Life (continued)</p> <p>- Visual character</p>	<p>No changes in existing roadway lighting are anticipated.</p>	<p>Existing roadway lighting may need to be moved. Lighting patterns would be changes, especially in the vicinity of new interchanges such as the Airport/Stewart interchange near Peterson AFB and the Colorado Springs Airport.</p>	<p>CDOT will prepare lighting plans that balance safety and aesthetics with the need for energy conservation, minimization of light pollution, and compatibility with aviation-related concerns on the adjacent Peterson AFB and the Colorado Springs Airport.</p>
<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>- Traffic and access issues</p>	<p>Routine maintenance would occur on the existing expressway, causing short-term lane restrictions and temporarily increased congestion.</p> <p>Routine maintenance activities would cause minimal diversion of expressway traffic onto local streets.</p> <p>No restrictions to business access are likely to occur.</p> <p>No effects on emergency response times are anticipated.</p>	<p>Construction of each grade-separated interchange would result in lane restrictions and increased congestion for an extended period. Each project could last up to 24 months.</p> <p>Some cut-through traffic on local streets (e.g., Rio Vista Drive, Tutt Boulevard) may result in response to congestion in construction areas.</p> <p>Access to some businesses would be shifted or temporarily restricted during certain construction activities.</p> <p>Construction delays would degrade response times for emergency service providers.</p>	<p>CDOT will require the existing number of through lanes to be maintained open to traffic using carefully planned construction phasing. The public will be provided with advance notice of any restrictions. This will be addressed in CDOT specifications for any construction project(s).</p> <p>During construction, CDOT will request that the Colorado Springs Police Department and Colorado State Patrol provide extra enforcement on streets likely to experience cut-through traffic.</p> <p>Traffic management plan development will take into account the access needs of property owners during construction. CDOT specifications will require business access to be maintained and signed.</p> <p>Emergency service providers will be given advance notice of activities that could reduce response times.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>- Traffic and access issues</p> <p>(continued)</p>	<p>No effects to transit service are anticipated.</p>	<p>One bus route that crosses Powers Boulevard using Galley Road could experience trip delays due to construction. Bus stops near Powers Boulevard could be inaccessible during construction.</p>	<p>CDOT will coordinate with the transit provider to provide advance notice of planned construction activities. Bus stops may be temporarily relocated and will be re-established at the end of project construction.</p>
<p>- Construction noise</p>	<p>Routine maintenance activities such as overlays, winter sanding and subsequent street cleaning generate limited noise.</p>	<p>Construction would generate temporary noise impacts from various types of equipment, lasting up to 24 months at interchange locations. Most construction would occur during daytime hours, but some nighttime construction would likely be necessary.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, sound walls planned as permanent mitigation will be installed as an early phase of work. CDOT's contractors will be required to use noise blankets, temporary noise barriers around stationary equipment, and muffling devices on heavy equipment as necessary to comply with City Code. The public will be notified in advance of any high-impact construction activities and any planned nighttime construction.</p>
<p>- Construction dust and exhaust emissions</p>	<p>Routine maintenance activities such as overlays, winter sanding and subsequent street cleaning generate limited fugitive dust emissions.</p>	<p>Dust and emissions from construction equipment would be generated throughout the up to 24 months that construction occurs at each interchange location.</p>	<p>All construction activity will be conducted in accordance with Colorado Air Quality Control Commission requirements. The Fugitive Particulate Emissions Control Plan will require the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors will be required to use dust suppression techniques (such as wetting or application of dust palliative compounds) to control fugitive emissions within permitted levels.

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>- Construction dust and exhaust emissions</p> <p>(continued)</p>	<p>Routine maintenance activities often utilize trucks or other equipment that produces exhaust emissions, including diesel exhaust.</p>	<p>Diesel vehicles, compressors, and other construction equipment would generate various exhaust emissions throughout the duration of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trucks carrying fill material will be either wetted down or covered with tarps to prevent the blowing of dirt and dust from the trucks. • The disturbed area for any haul roads will be minimized, and haul roads will be wetted to suppress dust. • Fills, cuts, slopes and other exposed areas will be re-vegetated and mulched within a reasonable time after disturbance. • Off-site tracking of mud and debris will be minimized by using appropriate vehicle tracking pads. <p>CDOT will require contractors to maintain their construction equipment in good operating condition to minimize exhaust emissions from diesel vehicles, compressors, and other heavy machinery.</p>
<p>- Soil erosion, stormwater management and water quality</p>	<p>Substantial exposure of soils to erosion is not anticipated.</p> <p>Construction-related fuel spills and other water pollution would be minimal.</p>	<p>Soil disturbance, material stockpiles, and other aspects of construction would result in sedimentation.</p> <p>Construction-related fuel spills and other pollutants could occur over the course of the 18 to 24 months of construction at any given location.</p>	<p>Each construction project will develop a Stormwater Management Plan. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to avoid, minimize, and mitigate erosion.</p> <p>BMPs will be used to prevent, minimize, and clean up any spills or other water pollution.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>- Consumption of resources</p>	<p>Maintenance consumes minimal resources in comparison with new construction. However, routine replacement of aging materials would occur (e.g., signs, luminaries, guardrail).</p> <p>Minimal waste material would be generated.</p>	<p>Rock products, lumber, fuels, and asphalt would be used for construction. Obtaining these resources typically results in environmental effects outside the project area (e.g., quarries).</p> <p>Waste material would be generated from demolition of structures and old pavement. These wastes would hasten the consumption of capacity at area landfills.</p>	<p>Offsite production processes (e.g., quarrying of rock products needed as construction materials) are governed by environmental regulations and are not under the jurisdiction of CDOT. Contractors have a financial incentive to minimize use of materials.</p> <p>CDOT will encourage its contractors to recycle or reuse waste materials. Soil excavated from one part of the project will be used as fill elsewhere on the project to minimize import or export of materials.</p>
<p>- Trails</p>	<p>No disruption to trail crossings of Powers Boulevard is anticipated.</p> <p>No disruption to other nearby trails is anticipated.</p>	<p>Construction activities would disrupt use of the Stetson Hills Trail that crosses Powers Boulevard, as well as numerous Powers Boulevard crosswalks for bicyclists and pedestrians at arterial cross-streets.</p> <p>The north-south Homestead Trail, at the edge of anticipated construction for the Barnes Road interchange, may experience temporary restrictions or detours.</p>	<p>Traffic management plans for each construction project will include accommodation of detours and crossings for bicyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p>The City of Colorado Springs and the Trails and Open Space Coalition will be given advance notice of any activity that could temporarily impair the use of any trail.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Water Resources</p> <p>- Water quality</p> <p>(also addressed above for Construction Impacts)</p> <p>- Floodplains</p>	<p>Because the No-Action Alternative would not affect the amount of paved surface on Powers Boulevard, the amount of stormwater runoff would not change.</p> <p>Increased traffic on Powers Boulevard would result in a modeled 17% to 42% increase of various water pollutants, such as sediment and heavy metals.</p> <p>Maintenance of Powers Boulevard would not affect floodplains.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action would construct 180 acres of additional impervious surface area, increasing the amount of stormwater runoff by an estimated 47%.</p> <p>The increased traffic volumes with the proposed freeway are expected to increase the various water pollutants from the roadway runoff by 24% to 62%.</p> <p>Widening the roadway at drainage crossings would reduce the amount of floodplain acreage in three drainages, affecting a total of 13.9 acres. The modified structures at Sand Creek's main channel, East Fork, and Center Tributary would be designed to ensure no increase in the base floodplain elevations. The Proposed Action would not impair the natural and beneficial values of any affected floodplain.</p>	<p>Stormwater detention and other permanent BMPs including extended dry detention basins will be incorporated into the project to meet MS4 permit requirements (either achieve a 100% water capture volume or remove at least 80% of the average annual loading of total suspended solids).</p> <p>Due to the BMPs noted above, stormwater quality is expected to improve. For example, an estimated 27% net reduction in sediment loading in comparison to the current conditions is expected.</p> <p>The project design will adequately address floodplain impacts. No additional mitigation is proposed.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
Ecological Resources - Grasslands	The No-Action Alternative would not change existing ecological conditions along the corridor, which are poor and declining due to continuing, intense urban development.	It is estimated that 260 acres of grassland abutting the existing right-of-way would be converted to highway use. Much of this grassland is already highly disturbed.	No mitigation is proposed.
- Wetlands	The No-Action Alternative would not consume any wetlands.	Wetlands totaling 0.12 acre (0.10 jurisdictional) would be lost at three locations.	CDOT will prepare a Wetland Finding Report as required by Federal regulations. Compensatory mitigation for this impact will be provided. It is anticipated that this may occur through use of credits from CDOT's wetland bank in Limon.
- Riparian habitat	The No-Action Alternative would not consume any riparian habitat.	1.33 acres of riparian habitat would be lost along East Fork Sand Creek.	In accordance with Colorado law, CDOT will avoid, minimize and mitigate riparian impacts in consultation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.
- Migratory birds	The No-Action Alternative would not disturb any birds' nests.	Widening of the Powers Boulevard bridge over East Fork Sand Creek would disturb Cliff Swallow nests. A raptor nest and other bird nests in the Windmill Gulch also would be within range of possible noise disturbance due to construction activity.	Surveys for nesting birds will be conducted on a project by project basis, where determined to be warranted by the CDOT Biologist. No more than 7 days prior to construction, a survey will be conducted for nesting birds in the shortgrass prairie, riparian, and wetland habitat, including bridge structures. Outside of the breeding season, inactive nests may be removed to prevent birds from using them while construction occurs.

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
Ecological Resources - Migratory Birds (continued)	(see impacts described on previous page)	(see impacts described on previous page)	If occupied nests are identified, no construction work would take place within a buffer area recommended by the Colorado Division of Wildlife until the young have fledged.
- Vegetation	The No-Action Alternative would have minimal effects to roadside vegetation.	Adjacent to the Powers Boulevard bridge over East Fork Sand Creek, plains ragweed plants (the rare but not endangered <i>Ambrosia linearis</i>) would be harmed by construction activity.	Prior to construction, rare plants will be delineated and protected with temporary fencing to minimize disturbance. The area affected by construction will be restored to provide an opportunity for the plants to reestablish themselves.
- Noxious weeds	Routine weed control would be practiced.	Soil disturbance during construction would provide an opportunity for the spread of noxious weeds, including species that are regulated by the Colorado Department of Agriculture and El Paso County. The spread of noxious weeds can adversely affect native ecosystems including threatened or endangered species and their habitat.	Disturbed areas will be minimized and will be re-vegetated promptly with native species. A Noxious Weed Management Plan will be prepared and implemented, including updated mapping and identification of existing noxious weed populations (see EA Appendix K). Any tamarisk or other A-list noxious weeds found on CDOT right-of-way in the construction area will be eradicated. The plan will also include topsoil and equipment management and interagency consultation with affected stakeholders.

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Ecological Resources (continued)</p> <p>- Wildlife</p>	<p>Increased traffic will make the existing expressway even more of a barrier to animal crossing than it is today. For example, traffic will double between Milton E. Proby Parkway and Fontaine Boulevard, around the Bluestem Prairie Open Space.</p>	<p>In developed portions of the corridor, traffic will increase even more with the Proposed Action than with the No-Action alternative, increasing the barrier for animal crossing. However, south of Milton E. Proby Parkway, traffic is expected to be comparable to that of the No-Action Alternative.</p>	<p>In project design, CDOT will accommodate highway crossing by small mammals in the design of bridges and culverts that convey drainage, especially for Sand Creek and its tributaries. The Sand Creek trail crossing will provide a dry pathway under Powers Boulevard while water flows in the adjacent creek.</p>
<p>Cultural Resources</p> <p>- Historic resources</p>	<p>No historic resources would be affected.</p>	<p>113 feet of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad grade would be used for highway right-of-way. Additionally, the Proposed Action includes construction of an overpass across Powers Boulevard to accommodate a proposed trail at this location.</p>	<p>No mitigation is proposed. The SHPO has concurred that there would be “no adverse effect” to this historic resource.</p>
<p>- Archaeological resources</p>	<p>No archaeological resources would be affected.</p>	<p>The project would not affect any known resources of archaeological significance.</p>	<p>If any resources are discovered during construction, the CDOT archaeologist will be consulted and appropriate actions taken.</p>
<p>Native American Consultation</p>	<p>No cultural resources of interest to Native Americans would be affected.</p>	<p>The project would not affect any known cultural resources of interest to Native Americans.</p>	<p>If any Native American resources are discovered during construction, consultation with the affected tribes will occur and appropriate actions taken.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Other Resources and Issues</p> <p>- Hazardous materials</p>	<p>No disturbance of hazardous materials would occur.</p> <p>No structures would be demolished.</p>	<p>Seven vehicle-related businesses, including three gas stations with underground fuel tanks, would be acquired for right-of-way. During construction, contaminated soils, groundwater, or other materials may be encountered.</p> <p>47 homes and 14 commercial buildings (17 businesses) will be demolished. When clearing structures, there is always the possibility that asbestos, lead paint, or other hazardous materials may be encountered.</p>	<p>Prior to property acquisition and construction, CDOT will conduct a Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment. If contaminated materials are found, CDOT will remove and properly dispose of them, following appropriate safety procedures, for the protection of the construction workers, the public, and the environment.</p> <p>Prior to property acquisition and construction, CDOT will conduct a Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment. Specification #250 from the Colorado Highway Specifications (2005) will ensure that any hazardous materials encountered during construction are identified, handled and disposed of properly. These specifications will provide for the protection of the construction workers, the public and the environment.</p>
<p>- Paleontological Resources (fossils)</p>	<p>Routine maintenance activities would not affect fossils in the project area.</p>	<p>Based upon previous finds in the project area, there is potential to encounter fossils during construction of the Proposed Action, especially during excavation activities in the Dawson Formation.</p>	<p>Once construction plans are finalized, a qualified paleontologist will review them to determine the scope of any needed construction monitoring. If any sub-surface fossils are encountered during construction, the CDOT staff paleontologist will be notified immediately to assess their significance and make further recommendations.</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Other Resources and Issues (continued)</p> <p>- Paleontological Resources (fossils)</p>	<p>(see impacts described on previous page)</p>	<p>(see impacts described on previous page)</p>	<p>Prior to construction, CDOT will undertake collection of a statistically valid, representative sample of the contained invertebrate fossils at University of Colorado Museum fossil locality 2003081.</p>
<p>- Energy</p>	<p>Increased traffic congestion would result in additional energy (fuel) use when vehicles are idling. Fuel consumption during the six busiest traffic hours would increase 117% between 2005 and 2035.</p>	<p>Due to improved traffic flow, fuel consumption during the six busiest traffic hours would increase by 106% between 2005 and 2035. Compared with the No-Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would save 5,000 gallons of gasoline per day.</p> <p>Construction activity to implement the Proposed Action would result in energy use equivalent to 37 million gallons of gasoline.</p>	<p>CDOT will abide by any applicable energy conservation mandates, and will work with its contractors to encourage energy-saving construction methods and materials (e.g., modern, efficient highway lighting) and limit idling by construction vehicles when possible.</p>
<p>- Utilities</p>	<p>Ongoing maintenance, upgrades and additional utility infrastructure would occur, resulting in minimal disruption to Powers Boulevard traffic.</p>	<p>A large number and wide variety of utility lines would need to be relocated to accommodate the Proposed Action. A utility corridor separate from the highway right-of-way is proposed between Galley Road and Platte Avenue, east of Powers Boulevard, due to various roadway design constraints in this area.</p>	<p>Opportunities to minimize utility relocation will be further explored during project design. Utility relocations will be required prior to construction to minimize any potential for disruption of service as a result of constructing the Proposed Action</p>

Exhibit 2-13. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation (continued)

Resource	Impacts of No-Action Alternative	Impacts of Proposed Action	Mitigation
Other Resources and Issues (continued) - Soils	No maintenance activities involving excavation are planned.	When soil and rock are excavated during construction, issues that may be encountered include expansive soils, shallow water tables, and material unsuitable for use as fill elsewhere on the project.	Standard soils testing would be done to identify issues that would potentially affect design or construction. Materials unsuited for use as fill would be removed to appropriate disposal sites in accordance with established safety procedures.

2.8 SECTION 4(f) DE MINIMIS FINDINGS

The Powers Boulevard Proposed Action is expected to use small amounts of land from three Section 4(f) resources (pursuant to the 1966 Department of Transportation Act, 49 U.S.C. Section 303, as amended):

- An historic site, the railroad grade of the former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (113 feet of the railroad grade affected)
- The Cherokee Hills Golf Course property, a public facility owned and operated by the Cherokee Metropolitan District (0.02 acres affected)
- The Skyview Sports Complex, operated by the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department of the City of Colorado Springs (1.2 acres affected).

Recognizing that these were Section 4(f) resources, CDOT made extensive efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to them when developing a conceptual design in the alternatives development process. However, it was concluded that the need to acquire small parcels of land from the railroad grade, golf course, and the sports complex for highway right-of-way would be unavoidable.

When the likelihood of impacts was identified, CDOT consulted with the agencies having jurisdiction to determine how the resources would be affected by the Proposed Action. Through these efforts, it has been determined that the use of the land needed for highway right-of-way will have no adverse effect on the historic resource and will not impair the recreational use of the golf course or the sports complex.

Based on this consultation, FHWA made *de minimis* findings for each of the three Section 4(f) resources that would be affected by the Proposed Action. FHWA approved the *de minimis* finding for the historic railroad on January 7, 2009. FHWA findings regarding the golf course and the sports complex were documented in a letter dated October 21, 2009. Complete documentation of Section 4(f) impacts and consultation was included in the EA and its appendices.

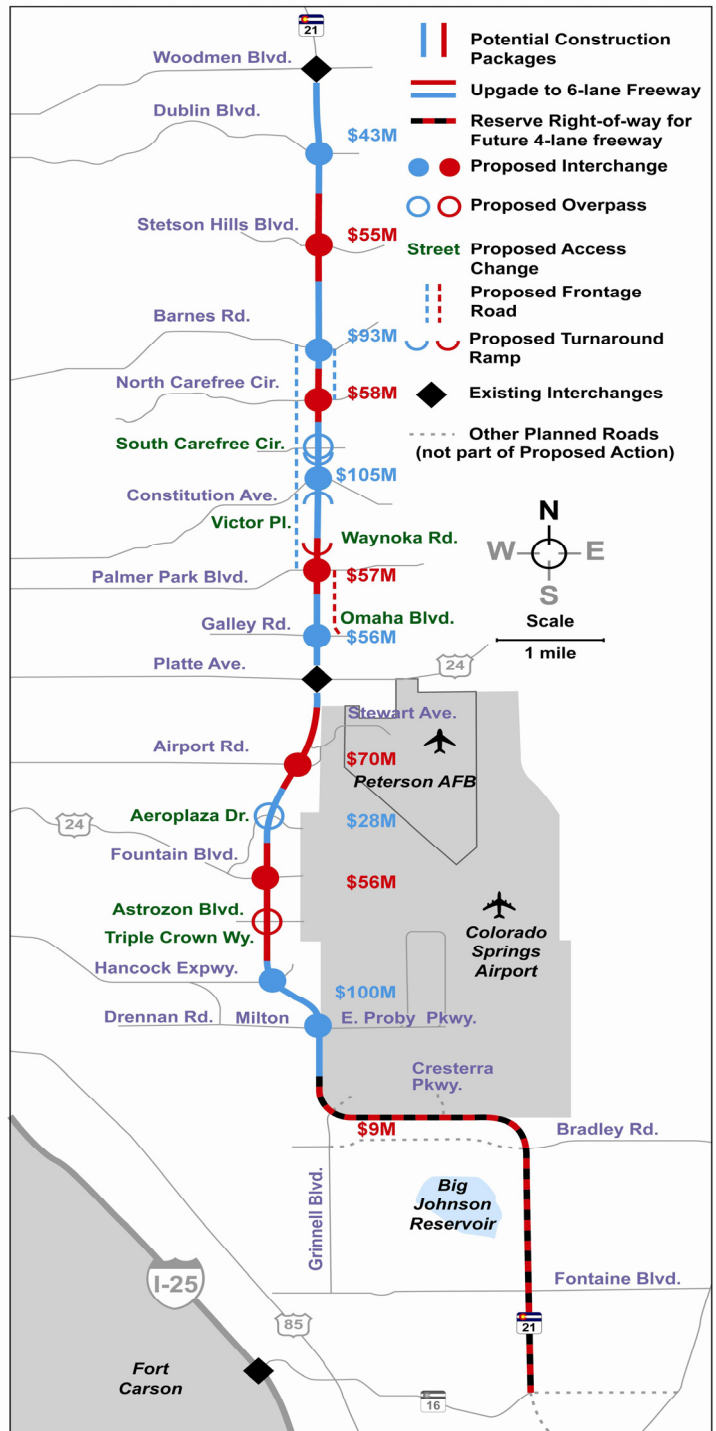
2.9 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The estimated cost of the Proposed Action, including design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction, is constantly subject to change in response to economic conditions and assumptions regarding when and how the project would be built. The adopted, fiscally constrained PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan includes \$1.1 billion for the entire Powers Boulevard corridor from I-25 (North Powers Extension) to SH 16. This figure was the estimated cost for improvements to both North Powers and Central Powers Boulevard, in inflated, “year of expenditure” dollars. The adopted, fiscally constrained PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan fully funds the Proposed Action.

The PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan assumes that the Powers Boulevard improvements will not be constructed all at once, over a brief period of time, but instead, will be built in stages that are commensurate with federal and state funding that will become available gradually over time. Because the Proposed Action is complex with regard to construction issues, such as access changes, frontage roads, and drainage, it was examined by project engineers to identify a number of separate construction packages that could be built independently and provide benefit to the public until an adjacent package could be constructed.

Exhibit 2-14 identifies the construction packages that could be built individually or in groups to implement the Proposed Action between now and the year 2035. The costs are expressed in 2007 dollars. The total cost for the 11 construction packages plus the right-of-way preservation package (south of Milton E. Proby Parkway) is \$730 million.

Exhibit 2-14. Potential Construction Packages and Costs for the Proposed Action





Future funding availability will play a major role in determining when the overall project begins, as well as the priority and schedule under which the segments can be implemented. However, it is anticipated that a high-priority segment would be an interchange serving Airport Road and the main entrance into Peterson Air Force Base. Although no portion of the Proposed Action has been designed in enough detail to allow immediate construction, the Airport/Stewart improvements could be built using an approach called Design/Build delivery.

Beyond this first construction package, there is too much uncertainty to predict a detailed construction sequence or schedule. The air quality analysis prepared for this EA assumes that the freeway will not be open for use by 2020, but would be open by 2025. This is consistent with PPACG's air quality analysis for the Regional Transportation Plan. Appendix A of the Powers Boulevard EA includes a letter documenting concurrence with the project's conformity findings by the Air Pollution Control Division of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

CHAPTER 3 – CLARIFICATION(S) TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Most of the 110 public comments received were opinions, suggestions, or questions regarding the Proposed Action. However, four commenters requested a total of ten specific modifications to the EA:

- Comment #32 – According to the commenter, the EA “inexplicably” does not address aircraft noise. “You must address it.”
- Comment #37 – “Concerning the neighborhood you plan on destroying, you state that the view from Powers is of inconsistent fencing. In fact, it is of old growth trees.”
- Comment #38 – “You state that the area you plan on destroying contains the plant ‘morning glory’, which you call a noxious weed. In fact, morning glories are not listed a noxious weed for El Paso County.”
- Comments #49, 51, and 53 – A commenter requested analysis of the noise, socioeconomic, and air quality impacts to his specific neighborhood.
- Comment #50 – A commenter stated that the Noise Technical Analysis is “flawed” and “incomplete”.
- Comment #52 – A commenter requested detailed maps showing each proposed interchange and its reach of construction.
- Comment #56 – A land development firm proposed that specific language promising additional access for its commercial development be added to the EA. Additionally, the developer stated that the EA was “misleading” because major roadway improvements producing an enhanced expressway should have been included as part of the No-Action Alternative.
- Comment #82 – The commenter stated that 2003 traffic and congestion data were outdated and that newer data should have been used in the EA.

A response to each of the above comments is provided in Chapter 4, identified by the comment numbers listed above. On the following pages, CDOT and FHWA clarify the EA in response to Comment #38.

Consideration of Comment #38 led to the determination that Exhibit 4-30 on page 4-52 of the EA contained some erroneous information about noxious weeds found in the Powers Boulevard corridor. The correct information was contained in EA Appendix K, Ecological Resources Technical Report, but had not been summarized correctly in the EA.

The following two pages present the original version of page 4-52 with the incorrect information and the revised version of page 4-52 which provides the correct information.

ORIGINAL VERSION OF PAGE 4-52

Areas highlighted in red indicate content requiring correction.



revenues for the benefit of public education. Land to the east of this property (formerly part of the Banning-Lewis Ranch) was annexed in the 1980s for future urban development.

South of Fontaine Boulevard, to SH 16, the land on both sides of Powers Boulevard has been or is being developed into residential areas, so there are few remaining native ecological resources along this southernmost mile of the corridor.

Existing Conditions Corridor-wide: Noxious Weeds

Throughout all 17 miles of the Powers Boulevard central corridor, various species of noxious weeds were observed in a field survey. The species that were observed are listed in **Exhibit 4-30**. Noxious weeds displace native species, which reduces the ecological value of land. They also threaten the stability of the ecosystem by consuming scarce water and nutrient resources, and by reducing species diversity and wildlife habitat. Road corridors often serve as conduits for seeds, thereby aiding the spread of noxious weeds.

The State of Colorado and El Paso County both maintain noxious weed lists that identify species that are their highest priority for control (Colorado Department of Agriculture, 2009; El Paso County, 2009). Seven of the 13 species listed in Exhibit 4-30 are on one or both of these lists.

Exhibit 4-30. Noxious Weeds Present in the Powers Corridor

Weed Species	Ecosystem	Presence within Corridor
Canada thistle (S,C)	Wetland, riparian	East Fork Sand Creek, Windmill Gulch
Musk thistle (S,C)	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Diffuse knapweed (S,C)	Riparian, shortgrass prairie	Sand Creek
Tamarisk (S)	Wetland	East Fork Sand Creek
Russian olive (S)	Riparian	Sand Creek
Common teasel (S)	Riparian, shortgrass prairie	Windmill Gulch
Common mullein (S)	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Field bindweed	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Pale smartweed	Wetland	East Fork Sand Creek
Curly dock	Wetland	East Fork Sand Creek, Sand Creek
Yellow sweetclover	Riparian	Sand Creek
Siberian elm	Riparian	Sand Creek
Morning glory	Riparian	Sand Creek

(S) = One of the State's top priority weeds. (C) = One of El Paso County's top priority weeds.

REVISED VERSION OF PAGE 4-52



revenues for the benefit of public education. Land to the east of this property (formerly part of the Banning-Lewis Ranch) was annexed in the 1980s for future urban development.

South of Fontaine Boulevard, to SH 16, the land on both sides of Powers Boulevard has been or is being developed into residential areas, so there are few remaining native ecological resources along this southernmost mile of the corridor.

Existing Conditions Corridor-wide: Noxious Weeds

Throughout all 17 miles of the Powers Boulevard central corridor, various species of noxious weeds were observed in a field survey. The species that were observed are listed in **Exhibit 4-30**. Noxious weeds displace native species, which reduces the ecological value of land. They also threaten the stability of the ecosystem by consuming scarce water and nutrient resources, and by reducing species diversity and wildlife habitat. Road corridors often serve as conduits for seeds, thereby aiding the spread of noxious weeds.

The State of Colorado and El Paso County both maintain noxious weed lists that identify species that are their highest priority for control (Colorado Department of Agriculture, 2009; El Paso County, 2009). The weed species present in the Powers Boulevard corridor that are on one or both of these lists are identified below in **Exhibit 4-30**.

Exhibit 4-30. Noxious Weeds Present in the Powers Corridor

Weed Species	Ecosystem	Presence within Corridor
Canada thistle (S,C)	Wetland, riparian	East Fork Sand Creek, Windmill Gulch
Musk thistle (S,C)	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Diffuse knapweed (S,C)	Riparian, shortgrass prairie	Sand Creek
Tamarisk (S)	Wetland	East Fork Sand Creek
Russian olive (S)	Riparian	Sand Creek
Common teasel (S)	Riparian, shortgrass prairie	Windmill Gulch
Common mullein (S)	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Field bindweed (S)	Shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor
Downy brome ("cheatgrass") (S)	Riparian, shortgrass prairie	Disturbed areas in the corridor, Windmill Gulch

(S) = One of the State's top priority weeds. (C) = One of El Paso County's top priority weeds.

CHAPTER 4 – PUBLIC OUTREACH, COMMENTS RECEIVED, AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

CDOT and FHWA made the EA available online and in a number of local libraries and public offices on June 7, 2010, which initiated the 30-day formal review period. CDOT and FHWA publicized the availability of the EA through the public outreach efforts described below in Section 4.1. The public review period was originally to have concluded on July 6, 2010, but was extended to July 9 at the request of El Paso County. During this time, comments were received from 38 persons, as detailed in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

4.1 PUBLIC OUTREACH

CDOT conducted extensive public involvement and outreach during the course of the EA, as summarized in Chapter 5 of the EA. A pre-release of public information effort was undertaken, consisting of briefings to local governments, a major update of the website, and the mailing of postcards to some 19,000 addresses along the Powers Boulevard corridor advising the public to be watching for the upcoming release of the EA.

CDOT publicized the official release of the EA for public review with an announcement on the project website, a second mailing of 19,000 postcards, a press release distributed to local media, and a series of 13 paid advertisements in five local newspapers. As additional, specialized outreach, a meeting notice was posted at the clubhouse bulletin boards at the Meadows and Canterbury Park mobile home communities on the day before the public review period began. Prior to the start of the review period, copies of the EA and its appendices were placed at six libraries and four government offices in the Colorado Springs area, as well as at the CDOT Headquarters building in Denver. These locations were publicized on the project website and in the news release that was distributed to the local media (newspapers, radio and television stations). Copies of the postcards, ads, meeting notice and press releases are provided in Appendix A to this FONSI.

The Public Hearing was held on Wednesday, June 23, 2010, at Sand Creek High School on North Carefree Circle, just east of Peterson Road. This was a location relatively central to the corridor and was the suitable public venue located as close as possible to the Gunshot Pass Drive neighborhood where 46 of the project's proposed 47 residential displacements would occur.

The hearing was scheduled from 6:00 to 9:00 pm with an open house format that allowed citizens to ask questions one-on-one to members of the project team (i.e., engineers and environmental staff). The open house format included the use of 38 display boards briefly describing the EA process, Proposed Action, and environmental impacts. These display boards were subsequently posted online at thepowerslink.com so that persons unable to attend the hearing would have access to this information during the public review period. Copies of the display boards are provided in Appendix B to this FONSI.

At 7:00 pm, CDOT staff made a short presentation, after which attendees were given the opportunity to address the assembly using a microphone connected to the room's audio system.



Photo taken during the Open House portion of the Public Hearing: the project team used display boards to communicate details of the EA process, Proposed Action, environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation.

A certified shorthand reporter recorded these formal proceedings, and was also available before and after the formal proceedings to accept oral comments from any attendee wishing to use this service (although none took advantage of this opportunity). The project team also provided an interpreter onsite to accept any comments in Spanish, and there was also no demand for this service.

The meeting was attended by 41 members of the public, along with 25 others including staff of various government agencies, two city councilmen, a State Transportation Commissioner, and one television reporter on assignment. Eight members of the Project Team (CDOT and consultant staff) set up and conducted the hearing and answered public questions. A list of the attendees is included in Appendix B to this FONSI.

4.2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

As noted above, 38 individuals submitted comments during the review period. Five individuals made two submittals apiece, thus resulting in a total of 43 comment submittals. These submittals consisted of the following:

- 21 electronic mail messages received through the project website.
- 8 oral comments made at the Public Hearing, documented in the hearing transcript.
- 7 written submittals made on comment forms completed and collected at the hearing.
- 4 letters received by U.S. mail.
- 3 submittals of official comments recorded on the project's telephone hotline.

Each submittal was reviewed by the project team in an effort to characterize the key concerns expressed by the commenters, with the following tallies:

- 22 commenters primarily asked questions or made suggestions, rather than expressing specific concerns.
- 9 commenters submitted general statements of support for the project.
- 8 commenters submitted general statements of opposition to the project.
- 7 commenters focused on right-of-way acquisition; homeowners typically asked to have their home purchased quickly by CDOT, or were concerned about impacts to their property value, while owners of commercial property did not want their land to be purchased.
- 4 commenters urged that revisions be made to the EA, as was discussed in Chapter 3.
- 3 businessmen expressed concerns about the need to maintain access to their commercial property.
- 3 homeowners expressed concern about noise, air pollution, or construction impacts in their neighborhood.

If they are summed, these numbers exceed 43 submittals because some individuals commented on more than one topic.

After the public review period ended, each submittal was examined and was split up into one or more separate comments, depending on the topics addressed, resulting in identification of 110 discrete comments. Each of these comments was given a separate Comment Number.

Responses to 93 of the comments are presented in **Exhibit 4-1**, on the following pages. The exhibit is organized alphabetically according to the last name of the commenter. The response to Comment #56 is a placeholder entry, indicating that there are additional comments and responses that are addressed separately. This placeholder entry refers to a Letter of Objection from the Nor'wood Development Group. Section 4.3 addresses this letter, which is considered to contain an additional 18 comments.

For reference, Appendix C to this FONSI contains all 43 submittals in their original format, i.e., not split up into separate comments as interpreted by the project team.

Exhibit 4-1. Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Anagnostou, Roslyn (telephone message)	1	I'm calling about the noise and pollution on Powers Boulevard and I want something to be done about it. And it's unbearable and it's very, very unhealthy.	Page 4-19 of the EA confirms that your block of Gunshot Pass Drive is already impacted by traffic noise, due to the existing expressway. With the No-Action Alternative, traffic behind your house will double and traffic noise would increase slightly, but your home would not be acquired. No exceedances of National Ambient Air Quality Standards are expected, as discussed in EA pages 4-22 through 4-27, with further detail provided in Appendix I, Air Quality Technical Report. With the Proposed Action, traffic and noise would increase even more, but your home would be purchased for highway right-of-way in the future when funding becomes available.
Anonymous (letter)	2	Who are the stupid idiots that keep insisting Powers Blvd should be a freeway?? They should have thought 20 years ago to build a freeway further east. How many jobs and businesses will be lost if this goes thru?? 95% of Coloradans suffer from OSBS. That's Oxygen Starved Brain Syndrome!!!! Get real, you [EXPLETIVE]!!!	Page 2-8 of the EA indicates that the need for Powers Boulevard as a city bypass was foreseen in regional plans as long ago as 1964. Chapter 3 of the EA discusses other major north-south roadways east of Powers Boulevard that were considered as alternatives. Page 4-13 of the EA indicates that the Proposed Action would displace 17 businesses that have an estimated total of 375 employees. Jobs may or may not be lost since many of the businesses could move to a new location in the same project corridor.
Barnes, Yvonne (e-mail)	3	As a 12 year resident, I have seen the area grow into a neighborhood, where you can walk to the local store and church or take a bike ride to the dentist, doctor, or other accessible stores and services. Making Powers into a freeway will take that freedom away, you will be forced to get in your car and drive.	All current locations for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the existing expressway will still be available with the Proposed Action. Additionally, the Proposed Action includes three new trail crossings of Powers Boulevard at: Rock Island Trail, Sand Creek Trail, and the East Fork of Sand Creek. The Proposed Action would not force anyone to drive.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Beckett, Audrey (oral comment at Public Hearing)	4	What is the estimated cost of the improvements, and what's the source of funding for those improvements?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. As is stated on page 3-18 of the EA, the estimated cost of the Proposed Action is \$730 million, in 2007 dollars. Federal and State highway funds would pay for the project. Page 3-17 of the EA indicates that the project has funding identified in the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Through its planning process, PPACG determines the funding sources to be used.
Bessa, Jan (telephone message)	5	I live on Gunshot Pass, in one of the town houses that will be affected by Powers and I can't wait. Because I am a tax payer just like everybody else and I can't use my backyard nor can anybody sleep in one of my bedrooms that faces Powers because of the noise. It's just getting worse and worse.	Page 4-19 of the EA confirms that your block of Gunshot Pass Drive is already impacted by traffic noise, due to the existing expressway. With the No-Action Alternative, an 88% increase in Powers Boulevard traffic is expected by the year 2035. With the Proposed Action, your residence and 45 other properties on Gunshot Pass Drive adjacent to the freeway would be acquired for right-of-way. A noise barrier would be constructed in this location and is forecasted to reduce traffic noise by 6 decibels.
Bessa, Jan (telephone message)	6	A lot of times you have fumes in the house irregardless whether you keep the windows closed or not. It is just horrific.	Traffic on Powers Boulevard behind your house is forecasted to approximately double with the No-Action Alternative, and would increase even more with the Proposed Action, as depicted on page 4-5 of the EA. No exceedances of National Ambient Air Quality Standards are expected, as discussed in EA pages 4-22 through 4-27, with further detail provided in Appendix I, Air Quality Technical Report.
Bessa, Jan (telephone message)	7	And we need to get out of these [duplexes]. There are 46 of them eligible and as soon as funding comes available whether it's for the whole project or not, they need to get us out of these town houses. It's becoming a health issue for a lot of us that live along here. It's just so loud. I am paying taxes on a place I hate to even be at. I can use half my house. And I really would like to see these homes be bought out very, very soon.	CDOT will follow the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way required for the Proposed Action. With the Proposed Action, your property and 45 others adjacent to the freeway would be acquired for right-of-way. Page 3-19 of the EA indicates that funding availability is highly uncertain at this time. Funding availability will determine when it will be possible to begin right-of-way acquisition on Gunshot Pass Drive.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Bessa, Jan (telephone message)	8	And they need to do Powers also because it is a safety issue to drive Powers as you well know anybody that's driven it. Hang on! There used to be a sticker years ago that said "Pray for me, I drive Academy." Now I think they should say "Pray for me, I live along Powers and also I drive Powers."	Chapter 1 of the EA indicates that the purpose and need for the project is to reduce current and future congestion. The Proposed Action will be designed in accordance with all applicable safety standards.
Bessa, Jan (letter)	9	I am unable to use my backyard due to the noise from traffic 24/7 on Powers Blvd (State Highway 21)... It's also "too loud" to sleep in one of my bedrooms.... At times my house shakes/vibrates due to the large volumes of trucks and traffic volume.	See response to similar comment above, #5, from Jan Bessa.
Bessa, Jan (letter)	10	I also am unable to open my windows due to the fumes (health issue) from the traffic as well as the noise from the traffic..... I can't even leave my patio door open at all – backyard Powers too loud and I don't enjoy the traffic fumes!	See response to similar comment above, #6, from Jan Bessa.
Bessa, Jan (letter)	11	When funds are available, these townhouses need to be acquired ASAP. We're all living in "LIMBO" and are very tired of it.	See response to similar comment above, #7, from Jan Bessa.
Bessa, Jan (letter)	12	My house is also unsellable due to Powers and the noise.	See response to similar comment above, #7, from Jan Bessa.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Chenevert-Pfeiffer, Diane (e-mail)	13	My home is located across the street from the homes that will be demolished when the Powers expansion is implemented. I have two concerns about this: 1. What are the potential adverse health effects for my family and me if we are breathing the dust and other materials that will be stirred up in the process of demolishing the homes on Gunshot Pass Drive?	Potential adverse health effects are not known, but efforts will be undertaken to minimize dust and other materials as is documented in the EA. CDOT has conducted an air quality analysis for the Proposed Action and no exceedances of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards are expected. Page 4-63 of the EA indicates that, "Before construction begins, CDOT will inspect and test for asbestos, lead-based paint, and hazardous material on any bridges, buildings, and other structures that would be disturbed or demolished. Appropriate remediation will take place if any hazardous materials are identified." Additionally, page 4-27 indicates that all construction activity would be conducted in accordance with Colorado Air Quality Control Commission requirements. Page 4-39 discusses the Best Management Practices that will be used to mitigate dust and other emissions during project construction.
Chenevert-Pfeiffer, Diane (e-mail)	14	2. I am concerned that the plan will significantly reduce my property value. What is the anticipated impact on my property's value with having a freeway in my backyard? Is there any plan for compensation for me and my neighbors for this loss?	The EA does not speculate with regard to changes in property value. The Proposed Action includes a recommended noise barrier that would benefit your property. The Proposed Action would also eliminate the extremely congested traffic conditions that are projected on Powers Boulevard.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Chenevert-Pfeiffer, Diane (e-mail)	15	I was curious as to what other alternatives have been considered. 1. Why has expanding Powers Blvd. been deemed the best alternative? 2. Are there other arteries further East that would be more beneficial in the long-run to convert into a freeway (since the city continues to expand to the East)? 3. By utilizing one of these other arteries further East, could the demolition of homes and businesses be avoided? It seems to me that demolishing so many businesses and homes will be very costly, not to mention inconvenient (to say the least) to the property owners.	The evaluation of alternatives is summarized in Chapter 3 of the EA, and is detailed in the document's Appendix D, Alternatives Development, Screening, and Evaluation Report. Providing additional roadway capacity two or more miles distant from Powers Boulevard would not divert enough traffic away from Powers Boulevard to bring its projected future congestion to acceptable levels. It is correct that right-of-way acquisition is a large part of the project cost. The right-of-way discussion on pages 4-12 and 4-13 of the EA details the numbers of homes and businesses to be displaced with the Proposed Action. Additional detail is provided in Appendix G, Right-of-Way Technical Report. During final design, CDOT will continue to examine ways to reduce property impacts. Any property acquisition needed will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.
Cherne, Terry (oral comment at Public Hearing)	16	What (how much traffic) is I-25 carrying now?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. Around Bijou Street, in central Colorado Springs, where there is an automated traffic recorder, I-25 typically carries about 110,000 vehicles per day (total two-way volume) on an average weekday. On the busiest days of the year, this number can reach as high as 125,000 vehicles per day. At its busiest time, during the evening peak, the six-lane freeway carries a two-way total volume of 9,000 to 10,000 vehicles per hour.
Dalby, Richard (Public Hearing Comment form)	17	Since 1982 I have had 75 – 80 feet of our property taken by METEX and CDOT. Each time property has been taken we lost dollars and value. We do not wish to lose any more property. Please take this request into consideration as to future needs along Powers Boulevard.	The EA identifies anticipated "worst-case" impacts based only on conceptual design. During final design, CDOT will endeavor to further avoid and minimize impacts. CDOT will follow the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way required for the Proposed Action.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Falkenstine, Barry (Public Hearing Comment form)	18	As a former highway engineer, I don't understand why highway departments are still thinking the same way they have for 50+ years. A project of this magnitude is not warranted just to save a few minutes of time only for people at rush hours. It is good it gets congested, people slow down!	Page 1-7 of the EA indicates that with the No-Action Alternative, it would take an estimated 43 minutes for peak-period commuters to travel the 17-mile Powers Boulevard corridor in the year 2035. This is an average travel speed of 24 miles per hour, which is slower than the speed limit on most residential streets in the region. This level of congestion would result in increased cut-through traffic on side streets and increase air pollution emissions in neighborhoods. The project purpose and need are described in Chapter 1 of the EA.
Falkenstine, Barry (Public Hearing Comment form)	19	The only things Powers Blvd. needs are some sound barriers, extended acceleration lanes, drainage improvements, paved shoulders, properly timed signal lights and a lower speed limit.	These suggested improvements are all part of the Proposed Action, except for traffic signals and lower speed limits on Powers Boulevard. The conclusion of Chapter 3 (Alternatives) was that neither the No-Action Alternative nor the Enhanced Expressway Alternative would meet the project's purpose and need.
Falkenstine, Barry (Public Hearing Comment form)	20	I have been on the Texas style service roads being proposed, they are confusing and dangerous. Improved safety is not an argument. You could build the safest highway there is and people would still kill themselves and others because of excessive speed, drunk driving and distractions. A freeway will increase speeds and accidents.	Chapter 1 of the EA indicates that the purpose and need for the project is to reduce current and future congestion. The Proposed Action will be designed in accordance with all applicable safety standards.
Falkenstine, Barry (Public Hearing Comment form)	21	Improve Marksheffel before Powers.	The PPACG Fiscal Year 2008 through 2013 Transportation Improvement Program includes funding in each of the next several years for engineering studies for the widening of Marksheffel Road from Black Forest Road to the eastern gate of Peterson Air Force Base. This project is being undertaken by the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority. Marksheffel Road is not planned as a freeway, and Chapter 3 of the EA indicates that a freeway on Marksheffel Road would not substantially relieve traffic congestion on Powers Boulevard.



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce (e-mail submitted by Stephannie Finley)	22	On behalf of our 1600 members, the Greater Colorado Springs Chamber supports the improvements set forth in the Proposed Action. Traffic congestion today causes problems for businesses along Powers, and for the region's airport. Improvements to the corridor are essential to the future vitality of Powers.	Thank you for your comment.
Haas, Daniel (e-mail)	23	I would like to suggest that the Milton E. Proby portion be considered at this time due in large part to the fact that that street is currently under construction for a completely new road. The intersection at Powers is currently closed and would therefore have less of an impact on traffic.	Indeed, the City of Colorado Springs is currently constructing a major new roadway that will replace the current Milton E. Proby Parkway with a high-speed expressway. The existing road will be used for access to local neighborhoods. Close coordination between CDOT and the City is underway because the City's project affects the State Highway (Powers Boulevard is SH 21). According to their project website, http://www.buildproby.com/schedule , the City plans to complete its project by October 2011. CDOT does not have funds programmed for design and construction of Powers Boulevard in the vicinity of Milton E. Proby Parkway at this time.
Hasbrouck, Timothy (e-mail)	24	Make Powers into a Freeway.	Page 3-13 of the EA describes the Proposed Action, which would change the existing Powers Boulevard expressway into a freeway between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	25	First, I do not agree with destroying my beautiful, quiet neighborhood for something nobody wants or needs.	Chapter 1 of the EA explains the need for the action. Powers Boulevard improvements have been long identified as a high priority in the regional planning process that has extensive public input. CDOT's analysis concludes that the Gunshot Pass Drive neighborhood would have noise impacts. The Proposed Action would include construction of a noise barrier to mitigate for traffic noise impacts.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	26	If you want to improve traffic flow, this town needs a decent east-west freeway. Platte or Fountain Rd are good choices and you would only have to tear down some of the worst, crime-ridden parts of the city.	The East-West Mobility Study completed by the City of Colorado Springs in 2002 specifically recommended upgrading Powers Boulevard to a freeway between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway because Powers Boulevard provides key linkages for east-west route.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	27	<p>Second, having said that, I see necessary improvements to your plan.</p> <p>a) I see no accommodations for pedestrians. Especially if your "frontage road" is the current Rio Vista, you must widen the sidewalks to allow two wheelchairs to pass comfortably.</p>	The proposed southbound frontage road would be immediately adjacent to Powers Boulevard. No changes to Rio Vista Drive are proposed. Any new bridges and access roads will include sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians. Any new signalized intersections will be designed to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	28	b) Especially if you plan on destroying Safeway (the only grocery store on the west side of Powers), a pedestrian overpass must be built in the vicinity of North or South Carefree. It must also allow at least two wheelchairs to pass and must fit with the current European theme of the businesses.	The Safeway store at the intersection of Powers Boulevard and Constitution Avenue (northwestern quadrant) would remain intact. No adverse impact to existing sidewalks in the area is anticipated. Pedestrian crossing of Powers Boulevard will be accommodated at both the North and South Carefree Circle interchanges with sidewalks, crosswalks and appropriate signalization.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	29	Third, as I will essentially be living on an on-ramp/frontage road, car radio noise must be controlled. I expect a noise ordinance to be strictly enforced. If not, the constant "thump, thump" from gang members will shake our homes and prohibit sleep and enjoyment of our properties.	The City of Colorado Springs has a noise ordinance and enforces it to the extent that their budget circumstances allow. The Proposed Action includes a recommended noise wall 15 feet high to reduce noise for the houses along Gunshot Pass Drive.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	30	Finally, I will do all I can to prohibit you from turning my beautiful neighborhood into a slum. Please respond.	The Proposed Action would alleviate Powers Boulevard congestion, thus reducing pressure for cut-through traffic on Rio Vista Drive. CDOT would acquire 46 duplexes on Gunshot Pass (but not the Debra Henry residence) that are impacted by noise today, and construct a noise barrier there for the benefit of the neighborhood.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	31	Turning Powers into a freeway will not lessen congestion- it will increase it because it will just drain traffic from I-25. Trucks and other through-traffic will choose Powers instead of going through the city. You will be turning a great neighborhood into a slum.	Diversion of trips from I-25 is already taken into account by the PPACG Regional Traffic Model that was used to forecast traffic volumes for the Powers Boulevard EA. As shown on page 4-6, CDOT's forecast of future traffic operations shows uncongested conditions in 2035 with the Proposed Action. See responses above to related comments #25 and #30. CDOT will work with the City and the neighborhood to design the noise barriers to meet current aesthetic recommendations.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	32	You acknowledged that the neighborhood near Powers has a noise level that is already very close to the threshold.	More precisely, the EA indicates that the Gunshot Pass Drive houses immediately adjacent to Powers Boulevard are already impacted by traffic noise, meaning that noise levels there already exceed the 66-decibel threshold. Those 46 homes will continue to be impacted (noise will increase slightly) with the No-Action Alternative. The Proposed Action includes construction of a noise barrier in this location.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	33	In addition to the additional heavy vehicle traffic, the planes (which follow the road) will more often fly directly overhead of my house. You acknowledge that there is considerable airplane noise, but inexplicably decide not to address it. You must address it. All of these issues will raise the noise level well beyond what is livable!!	Page 4-18 of the EA indicates that noise from aircraft operations and various other sources is "intermittent and highly variable" and thus cannot be predicted. Aircraft noise is further discussed on pages 4-84 and 4-85, with regard to cumulative impacts. CDOT and FHWA noise abatement efforts address the noise from roadways, not other sources of noise outside of their jurisdiction.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	34	You should not make an off/on-ramp on North Carefree. No one will mind driving to Constitution to access the freeway, just put a light at the intersection. Having off-ramps at both Constitution and North Carefree is going too far. People who live near North Carefree do not want to live on an on-ramp.	The project purpose and need as stated on page 1-1 states that improvements should accommodate connections with the region's planned transportation network. The PPACG 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (http://ppacg.org/transportation/regional-transportation-plan) shows a major role for North Carefree Boulevard to provide east-west mobility between Powers Boulevard and US Highway 24 to the east. Please see the plan's executive summary, page E-19. The Powers Boulevard Proposed Action is consistent with this plan.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	35	If you must widen Powers, widen it towards the businesses and less towards the homes. There is only a useless golf course behind those businesses which can be used for parking, if needed. A golf course is not more important than a citizen's home!	Numerous alternative alignments were considered for each portion of the roadway. The many alternatives that were considered in the Barnes-to-Constitution area are documented on pages 20 to 26 of EA Appendix D, the Alternatives Development, Screening, and Evaluation Report. A golf course is a recreational facility. Impacts to residential, recreational, and commercial properties were all considered during the analysis of alternatives.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	36	You state that if the homes you plan of destroying had more blacks or latinos, you would probably not be able to destroy them. Perfect example of discrimination.	For clarification, the actual statement made in the EA (page 4-15) is: "Based on review of Census data and interviews with households and businesses that would be displaced, there would be no disproportionate impact to minority or low-income populations." Additional information regarding minority and low-income populations in the corridor is provided in Appendix F, Environmental Justice Technical Report. The Appendix explains Presidential Executive Order #12898.
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	37	I noticed several falsehoods in your report. Concerning the neighborhood you plan on destroying, you state that the view from Powers is of inconsistent fencing. In fact, it is of old-growth trees. You seem overly concerned with the view motorists have of the mountains instead of the well-being of the people who live in the neighborhood. Freeways are not supposed to be scenic-watch the road!	Page 2-12 of the EA indicates that: "The expressway has no publicly provided noise barriers, and privacy fences behind adjacent subdivisions are inconsistent in design." This is a true statement. Indeed there are some trees that were planted at Gunshot Pass Drive households when the subdivision was built in the early 1980s, but most ecologists would not characterize these as old growth trees. The statement on page 2-12 was general characterization of the corridor and does not address any specific block or neighborhood. The visual assessment for this EA includes discussions of views both to and from the roadway. Please see Appendix J, Visual Resources Technical Report, for additional information.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Henry, Debra (e-mail)	38	You state that the area you plan on destroying contains the plant “morning glory”, which you call a noxious weed. In fact, morning glories are not listed a noxious weed for El Paso county.	Page 4-52 of the EA did not indicate that morning glory is listed as a noxious weed by El Paso County. However, thanks to your comment, it was determined that the EA incorrectly listed this plant as a noxious weed. A clarification to the EA is needed so that Exhibit 4-30 will list only the nine species from page 13 of Appendix K, Ecological Resources Technical Report. The exhibit instead erroneously lists 13 “weedy and non-native species” that are discussed on pages 16-17 of that appendix. In this FONSI document, see Chapter 3, Clarification(s) to the Environmental Assessment.
Henry, Roger and Debra (e-mail)	39	As you can see from our address [on Gunshot Pass Drive, west of Rio Vista Drive], we are directly affected by your proposal. We strongly urge you to consider widening Powers on the east side between the Constitution and North Carefree intersections. Instead of destroying people's homes, lives, and neighborhoods, you would only have to knock down some businesses which include the following: a defunct and empty video store, a defunct and empty supermarket, a defunct and empty restaurant, a few chain restaurants, and a couple bank branches. None of these could possibly be described as vital. Please reconsider! I do not want to live on an offramp and have my neighborhood turned into a slum due to poor choices.	Numerous alternative alignments were considered for each portion of the roadway. Where additional right-of-way would be required (especially near proposed interchanges) consideration was typically given to shifting the alignment to the east, to the west, or expanding slightly in both directions. The many alternatives that were considered in the Barnes-to-Constitution area are documented on pages 20 to 26 of EA Appendix D, the Alternatives Development, Screening, and Evaluation Report. During final design, CDOT will continue its endeavor to further minimize impacts. CDOT will follow the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way required for the Proposed Action.
Hernandez, Jose (oral comment at Public Hearing)	40	West of the airport, there are some dry creeks, and you say water's going to be more going there. Is there a plan to fix those areas?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. CDOT will ensure that the drainage system for the freeway infrastructure meets all applicable water quality requirements and that it is compatible with other local and regional drainage systems with which it connects. However, CDOT would not be making any drainage improvements outside of its own right-of-way.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Hernandez, Jose (oral comment at Public Hearing)	41	What's the plan there for the noise wall for that area [west of the airport]?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. Page 4-20 of the EA indicates that noise barriers are recommended to protect residential areas both north and south of Airport Road. On that page, Exhibit 4-12 identifies them as Golden Acres and the Brant Hollow Apartments. Page 4-21 indicates that the wall north of Airport Road would be 8 feet tall and the wall south of the interchange would be 15 feet tall. Design of the noise barriers will take place concurrently with the final design process for Powers Boulevard improvements. Each wall would be approximately one third of a mile long. These walls would be provided as part of the Proposed Action but not with the No-Action Alternative.
Hernandez, Jose (oral comment at Public Hearing)	42	Regarding speed (on westbound Airport Road, east of Powers) if you are coming at 65 miles an hour and take the right to Airport, how are you going to stop people going 60 all the way through to Martin? 'Cause that's the way it is on Platte. On Airport, they have an elementary school within a block.	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. A traffic signal would exist at the eastern end of the interchange, which would slow or stop freeway traffic exiting to go eastbound, except when that signal gives green time to those motorists. As on any other city street, speed limit signage and local police enforcement will be needed to control speeding. These actions would be in the jurisdiction of the City of Colorado Springs.
Hernandez, Jose (oral comment at Public Hearing)	43	And on your study, does property value go up or down?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. The EA does not speculate with regard to changes in property value. The Proposed Action includes recommended noise barriers that would benefit some areas, and would also eliminate the extremely congested traffic conditions on Powers Boulevard that would result with the No-Action Alternative.
Jamison, Larry (Public Hearing comment form)	44	I own a business on Victor Place. I feel that it will be necessary to complete the extension of Victor Place from at least Palmer Park to Constitution before starting on Powers Blvd. This will allow my customers easier access to my location during construction.	Construction staging details have not been determined, but provision of a frontage road in advance of mainline construction is a possible approach for such cases. During construction, CDOT will coordinate its traffic control plan to maintain as much access to businesses as can safely be provided.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Kallberg, Tyson (e-mail)	45	I drive Powers everyday and yeah it can back up in some areas but you can usually get through pretty quick. I've had no problems there. After reading about everything, just the construction at the intersections will be a traffic nightmare for years. I don't want to deal with that and I'm sure alot of people don't want to either. Don't you think that maybe you should have done this years ago when it was not busy and before all those businesses were there? I think it is a waste of tax money and a waste of people's time who will have to deal with the construction by finding different ways around it.	Chapter 1 of the EA indicates that traffic volumes on Powers Boulevard will increase 88% by the year 2035 under the No-Action Alternative. The exhibits on EA pages 1-6 and 1-7 indicate that future congestion will be substantially worse than that which is experienced today. Capacity improvements to Powers Boulevard are a high regional priority identified and funded in the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Page 4-38 of the EA discusses the Traffic Management Plan that would be prepared for each Powers Boulevard construction project to maintain safe traffic flow and access throughout construction.
Krueger, Ray (oral comment at Public Hearing)	46	What will the posted speed limit be for the freeway - 65 or 60 miles per hour?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. The posted speed limit will be determined in final design. The travel time projections reflected in the EA (e.g., page 4-16) assume an average travel speed of 60 miles per hour.
Krueger, Ray (oral comment at Public Hearing)	47	I'm concerned about safety where on-ramps and off-ramps occur too closely together. Has CDOT done that elsewhere in Colorado?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. The proposed spacing of on and off ramps is in compliance with CDOT design standards for all state highways. Additionally, analysis was done to ensure that vehicles could safely maneuver when entering and exiting the freeway.
Krueger, Ray (email)	48	Suggestion: Add appropriate xeriscape areas to replace concrete areas not used for paving. Maintenance will be minimal after 1-2 years of occasional watering and the view will be "softened" and heat reflection/absorption will be abated. This may be in your plan but not obvious from the scale and viewpoint of your maps.	The Proposed Action has only a conceptual design at this time. Page 4-77 notes the need to minimize the impervious surfaces associated with roads, and states that CDOT water quality mitigation efforts will be consistent with this approach. Page 4-33 notes that landscaping should be low-maintenance, requiring minimal ongoing watering, and should maximize use of native vegetation. It references Section 4.12 of the EA where xeriscaping is further discussed. Location, design and maintenance responsibilities for any landscaping will be determined during final design.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Matsuura, Troy (e-mail)	49	We know that one of the major impacts that a freeway has on surrounding areas is noise, and the document goes to great lengths discussing this issue. The document acknowledges that traffic noise will increase for adjacent residential areas, but the analysis is lacking key information regarding proposed drive surface and noise impacts to specific areas. Only 17 locations were incorporated into the traffic noise model. I would like to see a specific impact analysis to the neighborhood in which I reside (the Cottages at Ridgeview - between Dublin and Stetson Hills, westside of Powers Blvd) particularly to the homes that have an unobstructed acoustic path to the proposed Freeway. This neighborhood is not even mentioned in the entire EA document. A detailed analysis of the neighborhood and proposed mitigation is important to the residents here.	In the EA's Appendix H, Noise Technical Report, page 9 lists the 17 locations where noise measurements were taken, and three of the 17 were between Dublin and Stetson Hills, west of Powers Boulevard. Pages 43 and 44 of the report are graphics depicting the 12 locations where future noise was modeled, the predicted noise contours, and the locations where potential noise mitigation was analyzed. Noise was also analyzed for the east side of Powers Boulevard. The western edge of the neighborhood is about 600 feet away from Powers Boulevard, and your address is nearly a quarter-mile from the existing expressway. Pages 43 and 44 of the Noise Technical Report show that your neighborhood is well outside of the 66 decibel contour where noise abatement would be considered. The EA does not refer to every single neighborhood by name, but instead identifies receptor locations that are generally representative of similar nearby areas. Conditions for the Cottages at Ridgeview were measured at the point labeled M1 (see results, page 9) and were modeled for future conditions using point R10, "Residences east of Tutt Boulevard" (see page 25).
Matsuura, Troy (e-mail)	50	Furthermore, the Noise Technical Report is flawed in its description of pavement type. Pavement type and tires are major factors in determining noise levels on a roadway, and to not conduct an analysis on a concrete drive surface is inadequate. Until the "additional research" is completed to determine the impact of pavement and tires of noise levels, this report in my opinion is incomplete. Further research, additional models, and examples from other similar projects should be included in the report for completeness.	Pavement design has not been completed for the Proposed Action, which has only a Conceptual Design at this time. Pavement selection will be based on life cycle costs, traffic demand, and safety considerations, among other things. Therefore, the noise analysis was conducted using the model's default parameter for pavement type, which is an average for typical asphalt and concrete pavements.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Matsuura, Troy (e-mail)	51	In addition to the noise analysis, I would like to see the socioeconomic impacts to my neighborhood as well as the entire Stetson Hills residential neighborhood. Specific concerns include impact to property values for homes in the Cottages at Ridgeview subdivision.	The EA does not speculate with regard to changes in property value. Regarding economic impacts, no homes or businesses would be displaced north of Stetson Hills Road. With the Proposed Action, the area would benefit from increased mobility in comparison with the No-Action Alternative. This would save travel time for all neighborhood residents who use Powers Boulevard. Access to nearby businesses will remain open during construction.
Matsuura, Troy (e-mail)	52	A detailed map showing the proposed interchanges (particularly at the Powers/Dublin intersection and Powers/Stetson Hills intersection) and the reach of construction is something that is not included in the report that is crucial for my family in the assessment of this project.	Conceptual design drawings that indicate the configuration and reach of construction for those specified interchanges (and all others) are included in the EA's Appendix H, Noise Technical Report. Please see page 43 and 44, as referenced above in the response to your question regarding noise modeling. More detailed maps are available online at the project website, thepowerslink.com.
Matsuura, Troy (e-mail)	53	Finally, as with the noise analysis concerns mentioned above, I would like to see the air quality model analysis results for my specific neighborhood.	Much of the air quality analysis required for an EA is regional in nature, not location-specific. However, for carbon monoxide (CO), future concentrations were analyzed for the intersection expected to represent worst case conditions due to high traffic volumes and congestion. For the Powers Boulevard corridor, this was the interchange at Constitution Avenue, several miles south of the Ridgeview neighborhood. Future CO concentrations at Constitution Avenue in 2025 and 2035 are not expected to exceed 6.0 parts per million (ppm) under worst-case conditions for an eight-hour average, compared to the Federal health standard of 9.0 ppm for an 8-hour average. With less east-west traffic and less congestion at the Stetson Hills and Dublin cross-streets, it is reasonable to expect that future 8-hour average CO concentrations there would be below 6.0 ppm. Additional detail of this analysis is found on pages 9, 21, and 22 of Appendix I (Air Quality Technical Report) of the EA.



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
McCoola, Brian (Public Hearing Comment form)	54	I fully support the proposal to convert Powers Boulevard to a 6 lane freeway with construction of 11 interchanges. I would be in favor of the schedule being moved up. Constructing the Airport Road interchange by 2015 and no others until after 2020 is too long a time. With this schedule it will be 20 years before the project is completed and usable.	This comment is interpreted as support for the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action could be implemented sooner than 2025 if funding becomes available.
McEwen, Allayne (e-mail)	55	Yes - widen Powers Boulevard. I would LOVE to be able to get through the Springs more quickly. I hope that there are plans in the future to connect Powers to Northgate Blvd. or Baptist Rd. Highway 83 is too slow too often. I use I-25 to Interquest to Powers.	This comment is interpreted as support for the Proposed Action. Regarding a connection, the Regional Transportation Plan calls for connecting Powers Boulevard to I-25 just south of the existing Northgate Interchange (Exit 156). That connection has been examined in two previous environmental assessments (North Powers, then I-25) and is well outside of the project limits for this Proposed Action.
Nor'wood Development Group (letter)	56	A three-page letter of comment and objection was sent to CDOT via Certified Mail. The letter contained multiple comments.	The letter is not well-suited for response in this table as it is more complicated than the other comments addressed here. Please see separate response following this exhibit.
Pfeiffer, Jon (oral comment at Public Hearing)	57	What is your anticipated implementation date? When do you foresee shovels hitting the ground? Based on the implementation of the plan date, what money's going to be financing this project at that time?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. Page 3-18 and 3-19 of the EA indicate that there is potential for the Airport/Stewart interchange to be built within the next several years. As for the rest of the corridor, the adopted PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan reflects the assumption that it would not be improved before 2020 but would be open to traffic by 2025. Page 3-17 of the EA indicates that the project is fully funded in the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Page 151 of the plan indicates that a combination of Federal, State, local and private funds would pay for Powers Boulevard improvements. Through its planning process, PPACG determines exactly what funding sources will be used.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Pfeiffer, Jon (oral comment at Public Hearing)	58	Outside of the average motorist benefitting from the project in general, do you have an estimated number of citizens that are immediately affected, or impacted by the corridor project, itself? What I mean is by the sound walls going up, for instance, the first row or two of houses behind that, as well as the houses that will be bought up and put under to make room for the corridor so you have that particular number of immediately impacted citizens? And then is there a special procedure to deal with those individuals, and what procedures [will be used] to inform those folks that their houses may need to be taken, or they'll be immediately impacted by the noise barrier? At this point, have you made the determination of the number of homes that will be taken?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. Page 4-14 of the EA indicates that 47 residences and 17 businesses would be displaced with the Proposed Action. CDOT will follow the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way acquisitions. Page 4-22 of the EA indicates that seven proposed noise walls would provide a benefit for 246 residences and one day care playground. The need for abatement is analyzed based on impacts to first-row receivers. In cases where first-row receivers can benefit from mitigation, other receivers benefitting from the mitigation are also counted. The December 2002 CDOT Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines are followed to determine what properties are affected by traffic noise and whether or not noise abatement measures would be reasonable and feasible. The guidelines can be accessed online at the CDOT website, as follows: http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/environmental/noise/guidelines-policies/cdot-noise-guidelines-dec-02.pdf/view
Rocks, Mike (Public Hearing comment form)	59	Please update your mapping to show the existing curb and median for Village Inn on S. Carefree Cir. I've been told it is to remain w/out modifications.	The conceptual design displayed on the Powers EA website now reflects the correct configuration. The website was updated within a few days following receipt of this comment. Changes to the conceptual design are possible when the project undergoes final design. [Note: same comment was received from Luke Travins, comment #73].
Schmidt, Kevin (oral comment at Public Hearing)	60	Regarding several sections of Powers Boulevard, but mostly the section between Stetson Hills and Barnes, the grades are so steep currently that traffic slows down to about 35 or 40 on the uphill and goes 70 on the downhill. Are there plans to mitigate the grades at all and make it easier for people to maintain the speed limit in those areas?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. The Proposed Action will be designed with grades appropriate for a freeway (e.g. typically 4% or less). Powers Boulevard would be elevated at most interchanges, including both Stetson Hills Boulevard and Barnes Road, which will help to address this concern. The design speed and the posted speed limits for the freeway will be determined in final design, but are expected to be at least 60 miles per hour.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Steder, Sandy (letter)	61	<p>I purchased my first home in 1999 at 6182 Gunshot Pass Drive. [At a public meeting in 2001, I] saw that my house was in the area targeted area to be taken through eminent domain. I was told then that this would probably be a ten (10) year project. My home was built in 1983, and it is ready for some major repairs such as a furnace, water heater, roof, carpet, windows and doors. I am concerned with investing a large sum of money in a home that is scheduled to be destroyed even in ten (10) years. My realtor indicates (because of the stigma from the Powers Boulevard Project) homes within the Gunshot Pass designated area are much lower and are not selling unless you take a signifiacnt lower value. My understanding is that this project is at the final stages and has a possibility of being funded at least partially. I would like some consideration given that the homes along Gunshot Pass are considered as a top priority and bought out as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Page 12 of the EA's Appendix G, Right-of-Way Technical Report, states that "A limited amount of Early Acquisition may occur, dependent upon availability of funding from the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority, local governments, and other sources. Consideration will be given to landowners with certain circumstances that meet established criteria as hardship cases." CDOT will follow the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, for all right-of-way required for the Proposed Action. The construction schedule will be determined by funding availability, which is uncertain at this time.</p>
Stephens, Bruce (e-mail)	62	<p>Can't go to the meeting in July. Can you tell me what is going on with the Powers expansion? Is it going to start and if so what year? Has the federal govt given the money yet? Your email response will be appreciated.</p>	<p>The following e-mail response was provided on June 23:</p> <p><u>"What is going on:</u> The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Administration (FHWA) have completed and approved the Environmental Assessment (EA) document that describes the Powers Boulevard Proposed Action and its anticipated environmental consequences. The Proposed Action would change the existing expressway to a freeway, with 11 new interchanges and the inclusion of frontage roads in some locations. The complete document is available for review online at thepowerslink.com, and at various public libraries.</p> <p>A public hearing is being held TONIGHT at Sand Creek High School from 6pm to 9pm so that folks can ask questions and learn about the project. It is also an opportunity for people to make comments for the</p>

Stephens,
Bruce
(continued)

formal record, if they so choose. Our public comment period is underway and will go through Tuesday, July 6. Comments can be submitted by letter, e-mail, and even telephone as is detailed on the project website.

You stated that you can't go to the meeting in July. CDOT has no public meetings scheduled in July. Tonight's meeting is the final meeting of our public involvement process.

After the public review period ends on July 6, CDOT and FHWA will review and consider the comments received, and later this year will prepare a document indicating whether or not the project would be eligible to receive federal construction funds.

Is it going to start and if so in what year? No construction would happen any time soon. The project has not been designed in sufficient detail to be constructed, but only in enough detail to be able to determine how it would function and what the likely environmental impacts would be. In other words, there are no final engineering plans that any contractor could build from at this time. Surveying would be needed, along with final design, utility relocations and right-of-way acquisition, before construction could begin. Current regional plans do not provide funding for these efforts for a number of years. Specifically, page 3-19 of the EA indicates that the current adopted PPACG Regional Transportation Plan assumes that there would be no freeway by 2020 but some of it would be open by 2025.

Has the federal govt given the money yet? No. The project will not be eligible to receive federal funds until after the decision document is prepared later this year. However, even then, no likely federal funding is anticipated any time soon. The funding picture is extremely uncertain right now. The most recent big federal transportation act ("SAFETEA-LU") expired last fall and Congress has been too busy with other priorities to debate a new seven-year bill. Many expect a new bill to be passed in 2011. Also, the recession has put a major damper on State highway funds. Federal and state monies are likely to be major funding sources for the Powers Boulevard project."



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Stevens, Dave (oral comment at Public Hearing)	63	Where does this section of Powers fit into the overall scheme for Powers including the north and south connectors? Why do the middle section and make it a freeway if you're not connected on either end to I-25? Who's making the plan to say, all right, the north end will be done in this year, the south end will be done in this year, and then we do the middle? Are you going to try to do the whole thing at once? Which piece has priority funding? What private funds might be involved? If you got funded for a million dollars, where would we go? Is the central segment competing for funds against the north and the south?	This question was asked and answered at the Public Hearing on June 23, 2010. At its northern end, Powers Boulevard is connected to I-25 via Interquest Parkway, but a direct freeway connection is planned within the upcoming decade. At its southern end, Powers Boulevard is connected to I-25 by State Highway 16. There is independent utility in upgrading to a freeway for central Powers where the traffic volumes are highest and other alternatives do not meet the project purpose and need. Project priorities and funding are determined by the designated metropolitan planning organization, which is PPACG. CDOT provides information and recommendations to PPACG as part of the regional planning process. For more information, please see the <i>Moving Forward: 2035 Regional Transportation Plan</i> at the website, http://www.ppacg.org .
Stockton, Tiffany (e-mail)	64	My husband, Stuart, and I are in full support of this project proposal. We travel Powers often, and he uses it every day commuting to and from work. The biggest headache is the traffic lights and the other drivers going 15 mph below the speed limit or crossing several lanes of traffic to make a left turn when they were in the right lane. If all exits were to the right, the left could be freed up for thru traffic, like the interstate. I'm just sorry this wasn't approved when Powers was being constructed. Would've saved a lot of money and imposition.	With the Proposed Action, all freeway exits and entrances would be from the right side. Left turns would be made from freeway exit ramps onto arterial cross-streets. The improvements will be designed to meet current safety standards.
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	65	Regarding Woodford Manufacturing on Waynoka Road... (1) Woodford would like to minimize the amount of taking for ROW.	The EA identifies anticipated "worst-case" impacts. CDOT will endeavor to further avoid and minimize impacts in final design.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	66	(1, continued) We need to understand what parking will be taken, how close to future Waynoka ROW parking can be placed, and with landscape requirements, how much parking will they lose? Please provide specific engineering requirements that justify the relocation of Waynoka.	The Proposed Action exists only as a conceptual design at this time. CDOT staff is always available to meet with any property owner and/or the property owner's representatives to review the Powers Boulevard conceptual design and to address any other questions. An initial meeting between CDOT and Mr. Thomas took place on July 28, 2010. To minimize right-of-way acquisition, Powers Boulevard north of Palmer Park Boulevard is being expanded to the east. The northbound on-ramp would basically abut existing Waynoka Road. Space between the on-ramp and the local road is needed for safety and maintenance access. This configuration can be viewed online at: http://207.57.248.87/images/pdf/maps/07-PalmerPark.pdf
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	67	(2) What is the schedule for this segment of Powers? [between Constitution Avenue and Palmer Park Boulevard]	As is indicated on page 3-19 of the EA, no schedule has been set. The prioritization and timing of construction packages will depend on the availability of funding, as determined by PPACG. The current, adopted regional long-range transportation plan reflects the assumption that the improvements would not occur before 2020. Please see the earlier response to Comment #57.
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	68	(3) We are making plans for expansion to the south with additional buildings and parking. Can you make assurances there will be no more need for additional ROW? How far into the future?	The EA identifies anticipated "worst-case" impacts. CDOT will endeavor to further avoid and minimize impacts in final design. Right-of-way impacts to the two adjacent Woodford parcels are shown on map #4 of 12 in the back of EA Appendix G, Right-of-Way Technical Report. At this early point in the design process, it is estimated that the Proposed Action would require 0.713 acre for the roadway and another 0.269 acre for water quality, both from the northern parcel (#54061205001), and 0.668 acre from the southern parcel (#5406303001). These estimates are subject to change in the future when surveying is done and the final design is prepared.
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	69	(4) Will there be parking allowed on Waynoka? We now have a problem with overnight truck and tractor parking.	Waynoka Road is a city street not under CDOT's jurisdiction. This parking issue is a traffic operations matter that should be addressed to the City of Colorado Springs.



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Thomas, Parry (Public Hearing comment form)	70	(5) We need to retain as much property as possible including the football field for future expansion. We request water quality ponds go elsewhere – not on our property.	Individual water quality detention areas will be determined as part of final design, likely many years from now. The location for potential detention areas was based on topography and access for maintenance.
Thomas, Parry Public Hearing comment form)	71	(6) In the future this property could be residential since it adjoins residential and a golf course. What is the process for requesting a second wall?	There is no process for requesting noise mitigation to benefit potential future receptors. Mitigation is considered for receptors that exist prior to completion of the FONSI. Following approval of this Powers Boulevard FONSI by CDOT and FHWA, landowners should take projected future freeway noise into account when planning new development along this corridor. Please see CDOT’s website for further information about traffic noise policies and procedures. The website is: http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/environmental/noise .
Tobias, Lawrence (Public Hearing comment form)	72	The freeway plan is the plan that needs to be approved. The planned over- and underpasses at the designed locations will provide the most efficient flow of traffic. They have done a good job of keeping to a minimum the displacement of homes and businesses in the corridor. This project needs to start as soon as possible when funding is available.	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action will be implemented as funding becomes available. For information about the funding outlook, please see the earlier response to Comment #57.



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Travins, Luke (e-mail)	73	Your website shows the elimination of curb-cut access to our property at 5710 S. Carefree. I have been told by my Property Association Manager (who spoke with Drew Holton) that the aerial map renderings on the website are outdated. I was also told that the existing entrance on S. Carefree will remain. If this is truly the case I am formally asking you to update the website and other public materials with the new plan that shows the correct access to our location.	The conceptual design displayed on the Powers EA website now reflects the correct configuration. The website was updated within a few days following receipt of this comment. As you know, the design appears at the following web address: http://207.57.248.87/images/pdf/maps/05-SouthCarefree.pdf [Note: same question was asked by Mike Rocks, another representative from the same business].
Tripp, Terry (e-mail)	74	I like the freeway plan and think that you could get the most bang for the buck by using stimulus money. North and south connections should be made with I-25 to smooth out the flow and reduce east west traffic flow from the end of the Powers project	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action is currently planned to be implemented with state and federal highway funds. The PPACG will determine project priorities. Funding for previous "stimulus" programs has been allocated, and it is unknown if there will be additional stimulus programs in the future.
Wall, Edmund (e-mail)	75	Will Powers be paved and restriped between Dublin and Platte soon??? Road is worst in the state considering amount of traffic. Medians are a disgrace. Looks like a keep C/S ugly policy is in effect. Please reply.	This response was e-mailed to Mr. Wall on June 29, 2010: "Powers Blvd. is scheduled to be resurfaced from Platte to Woodmen in summer 2011."
Wall, Edmund (e-mail)	76	No doubt upgrade is NEEDED AND SOON.	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action will be implemented as funding becomes available.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Whited, Susanne (e-mail)	77	Please be sure to plan for possible future rail service along this route. Colorado Springs will have to eventually wise up and fund a decent transportation system and it would be nice if land was already appropriated.	Rail alternatives were considered in the EA, but did not meet the projects' purpose and need. However, the Proposed Action does not preclude future transit improvements. The current PPACG Regional Transit Plan calls for future rapid transit on Academy Boulevard sometime after 2035. A regional study of potential transit corridors considered Powers Boulevard but elected to place the transit infrastructure investment along Academy Boulevard instead. (Rapid Transit Feasibility Study and System Master Plan, City of Colorado Springs, 2004).
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	78	EA Comments: Great report. Very thorough and easy to read.	Thank you for your comment.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	79	Timing: This study is great, but construction needs to start ASAP. I hope the planning and funding will be sooner than later because usually growth in this area far exceeds predictions.	Project implementation will depend upon funding availability, as is discussed on pages 3-17 to 3-19 of the EA, in Section 3.5, Building the Project. Please see the earlier response to comment #57.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	80	Texas turnarounds: I think they are great and should definitely be included in the plan.	Three turnaround ramps are proposed, as indicated on page 3-13 of the EA.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	81	Signalized diamond ramps: I think every effort should be made to minimize the amount of traffic lights in order to reduce congestion at on and off ramps and frontage road intersections.	The Proposed Action balances the need for mobility with the needs to maintain safety and access to nearby businesses. To reduce the number of signals further, roundabouts were considered, but they were not able to fit within the tight right-of-way available in most locations.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	82	EA Release: I think there needs to be more visibility to the public in regards to information on this project. I've been following the website for months and months and was told the EA would be posted by March. It wasn't posted in March. I asked and was told it would be Spring. I kept checking throughout March, April and May and it was never posted. Basically gave up. Checked it yesterday and found out it was posted early June for 1 month review and I only had a short amount of time to review the document. Recommend an email distribution with communication so we know when updates are posted to the website.	Thank you for your suggestion. Thirty days for public review is standard for environmental assessments. For the Powers Boulevard EA, the comment period was extended for several extra days, as is discussed in Chapter 4 of this FONSI. We will add your name to the project mailing list for future project updates.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	83	Alternatives: I agree with all of the assessments and reasoning for eliminating alternatives. The No Action Alternative shouldn't even be considered except as a formal requirement!	The No-Action Alternative is indeed required under Federal regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act, as it provides a basis for comparison of the impacts, both positive and negative, from any "action" alternative(s).
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	84	Additional comment: Please add a FAQ to the site and the answer as to why it has/is taking so long to make Powers a freeway when there is already congestion.	This suggestion will be considered. The reality of modern fiscal constraints is that the community has many transportation needs that cannot be met due to limited funding. Please see the PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (at ppacg.org) for analysis of existing congestion, expected growth in travel demand, and how planned transportation improvements are limited by fiscal constraints. Also, please see the earlier response to Comment #57.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	85	Complaint: Some of the data in the EA was in regards to studies of congestion in 2003. This is far outdated and shouldn't have been included as a current level of traffic congestion.	The Powers Boulevard traffic analysis was initially prepared in 2004, using 2003 data, and was drafted in 2005. Traffic forecasts were re-analyzed in a sensitivity analysis in based on a new PPACG traffic model in 2008 and it was verified that the future congestion forecasts were still valid. Updating baseline congestion levels was determined to be an unnecessary expenditure as it would not have changed the analysis of alternatives or environmental impacts regarding the future conditions.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	86	Complaint: Also there was only 1 public meeting. By the time I checked the site, the meeting had passed. I would like more than 1 meeting for those of us who cannot make the one and only meeting and there needs to be more public awareness of this meeting - not sure if this was advertised to news stations or other means than the website, but that should definitely be addressed.	Chapter 4 details the extensive outreach efforts that were undertaken to foster public review and comment for the Powers Boulevard EA. CDOT's publicity efforts included the following: postcards mailed to 19,000 addresses along the Powers corridor; a press release distributed to newspapers, radio, and television stations announcing the start of the EA review period; paid advertisements in five newspapers; and a media alert reminding the press of the Public Hearing; as well as the posting of the review period and Public Hearing information on the project website. All of the Public Hearing information materials were posted online so that persons who missed the hearing could access all the material during the public comment period.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	87	Speaking of which, I just noticed the website "newsletters" that were mailed out as part of the public involvement process. Who were they sent to? I never saw or heard of one! But I would surely like to get them!	Newsletters were mailed to persons who signed up to receive them at any of the many public meetings that occurred earlier in the EA process. The mailing list at one time totalled about 1,400 names. Copies of the newsletters were provided to you in July 2010 in response to this e-mail request from you, and we have added your name to the mailing list for future project updates.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	88	I can't wait until Powers is a freeway!	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action will be implemented as funding becomes available. For information about the funding outlook, please see the earlier response to Comment #57.

Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	89	Question: Where can we get more information regarding the North and South sections of Powers (North Powers EA that completed in 1997 and South Powers feasibility study that completed in 1999)? Previously there may have been website links but I cannot find them anywhere currently on the site.	Both of those studies were completed prior to today's standard practice of posting documents on the Internet for public review. The North Powers EA was led by the City of Colorado Springs, while the South Powers Feasibility Study was prepared by PPACG. Copies of both documents are available at the offices of CDOT Region 2 in Colorado Springs. Please call (719) 634-2323 to make an appointment.
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	90	I'd like to know when the construction for North Powers is expected to be completed.	Funding availability will determine the answer to this question. As was widely reported earlier this year, the Colorado Springs City Council is working with Copper Ridge, a private development that wants to build the road with private funds in exchange for future tax considerations. Please contact the City of Colorado Springs Public Works/Engineering Department for additional information. A good way to keep up to date on the funding plans for North Powers is to monitor short- and long-range transportation documents produced by PPACG (online at http://www.ppacg.org).
Wright, Austin (e-mail)	91	The freeway speed limit should definitely be AT LEAST 65 mph. 55 mph is not adequate for a 6 lane freeway that has no traffic signals. To keep traffic flowing smoothly in a large city where the roadway section is completely straight, 65 mph is more than adequate! Don't fall into the trap of leaving speed limits low - look at the larger city freeways that are straight, they are always at least 65 mph.	Appropriate speed limits will be determined in final design. The future travel times reported in the EA (17 miles traveled in 17 minutes, page 4-6) reflect an estimated travel speed of 60 miles per hour, but 65 mph may be possible in some locations. The importance of Powers Boulevard in connecting to the existing arterial street network resulted in some proposed interchanges being spaced less than one mile apart. For safety, it may be necessary to have lower speed limits in these sections.



Exhibit 4-1 (continued). Public Comments and Responses Regarding the Powers Boulevard EA

Name	#	Comment, Question or Suggestion	Response
Young, Eric (telephone message)	92	I think it makes sense, instead of so much confusion.	Thank you for your comment.
Zeitler, Bernd (e-mail)	93	This is [EXPLETIVE]. We don't need that [EXPLETIVE]. We need JOBS not roads, you [EXPLETIVE].	Page 4-15 of the EA indicates that the Proposed Action would generate jobs for construction workers, equivalent to 600 additional jobs for a ten-year period. The project's purpose and need are described in Chapter 1 of the EA.

Comment #56 in the preceding table refers to the letter that is discussed in the following section.

4.3 LETTER OF OBJECTION FROM NOR'WOOD DEVELOPMENT GROUP

A "Letter of Comment and Objection" was submitted on June 30, 2010 by the Nor'wood Development Group, which has major commercial land holdings along the Powers Boulevard corridor. It was noted in Exhibit 4-1 that: "The letter is not well-suited for response in this table as it is more detailed than the other comments addressed here." This Section 4.3 presents the Nor'wood letter in its entirety and provides responses to the statements that were interpreted as specific comments by CDOT and FHWA. These statements have been underlined by CDOT, and were not underlined in the original Nor'wood letter. Similarly, line numbers were added by CDOT to help the reader locate the comment to which each response corresponds. There were no line numbers on the original Nor'wood letter. The letter and the responses are provided on the following pages.



N O R ' W O O D

June 30, 2010

**Via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
and Via Email (theLink@wilsonco.com)**

Wilson & Company
5755 Mark Dabbling Boulevard, Suite 220
Colorado Springs, CO 80919-2200

Re: Letter of Comment and Objection
To Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment

Gentlemen:

1..... The draft Powers Corridor Environmental Assessment (EA) has been reviewed.
2..... Nor'wood Development Group wishes to express our ongoing concern and current objection to
3..... the EA as currently proposed. Our objections are:
4.....

5..... First, the traffic projections used to support the alleged need for a freeway are overly
6..... aggressive and likely overstate future traffic, especially as other currently planned north/south
7..... arterials are improved and/or built to the east.
8.....

9..... The EA's conclusion that these other arterials would only reduce traffic on Powers
10..... Boulevard by 5% to 15% is subject to significant doubt, and alternative traffic modeling
11..... methodologies do not support this conclusion. If the other arterials relieve even a marginally
12..... larger amount of traffic (i.e., in the 25% to 30% range, as other modeling methodologies may
13..... suggest), then improving Powers Boulevard to an enhanced expressway per the METEX
14..... agreement could well handle the projected traffic volume, contrary to the conclusion summarized
15..... in Exhibit 3-6 of the EA. Additionally, the "Proposed Action/No Action" analysis in Exhibit 3-
16..... 10 is defective and misleading since the "No Action" alternative used for the EA is to make no
17..... improvements to Powers Boulevard. Powers Boulevard is currently planned as an enhanced
18..... expressway per the METEX agreement. The appropriate "No Action" alternative is to maintain
19..... the status quo and improve Powers Boulevard as an enhanced expressway pursuant to the
20..... currently existing and legally binding METEX agreement. Since an enhanced expressway will
21..... accommodate significantly greater traffic volume, using the current configuration of Powers
22..... Boulevard as the "No Action" benchmark artificially escalates projected traffic congestion and
23..... the purported need for a freeway.
24.....

25..... Even accepting the traffic projections in the EA, they only marginally support a freeway
26..... configuration over an enhanced expressway. Given the estimated \$730 million cost of this
27..... project and the marginal need for it (even if you accept the EA's traffic projection), the project
28..... cannot be justified on any rational cost-benefit analysis.

111 South Tejon Street, Suite 222, Colorado Springs, CO 80903 * phone 719 593-2600 * fax 719 633-0545

**CDOT/FHWA RESPONSE
TO NOR'WOOD LETTER, page 1**

Lines 6-7: Traffic projections for Powers Boulevard were based on the PPACG Long Range Transportation Plan network, which reflects addition of new north/south roadways to the east.

Lines 10-13: Traffic modeling for the Powers Boulevard EA was based upon output from the PPACG regional traffic model, which in turn uses PPACG's approved socio-economic projections for population and employment. Consistency with these assumptions is required under Federal regulations relevant to the EA. A letter of concurrence with CDOT's approach was received from Mr. Craig Casper of PPACG on November 3, 2009 and is included in Appendix A of the EA.

Lines 18-20: CDOT was not a party to the agreement between the METEX special district and the City of Colorado Springs, which required the developer to pay for the road as a condition of development approval. Powers Boulevard became a State Highway in 2007. No outside party can modify a State Highway without CDOT's approval, and no such improvements by others are reasonably foreseeable. The METEX District met its obligations for roadway improvements and recently filed dissolution papers in order to go out of existence. To the best of our knowledge, no party is legally bound to "improve Powers Boulevard as an enhanced expressway," beyond the road's current configuration. However, Section 7(a) of the METEX agreement, entitled "Additional Improvement" states that "additional improvements to Powers Boulevard... (including lengthening or expansion, and grade-separated interchanges) may eventually need to be provided..."

For purposes of preparing an EA under the National Environmental Policy Act, any capacity improvements to Powers Boulevard would constitute an action alternative. Therefore, CDOT and FHWA disagree with the suggestion that the No-Action Alternative should "improve Powers Boulevard as an enhanced expressway..."

Lines 27-28: The determination of a Proposed Action in an EA is based on consideration of the project's purpose and need, in accordance with NEPA regulations. Decisions about planning and funding transportation improvements are made through the federally mandated regional transportation planning process by PPACG, the designated metropolitan planning organization, based on transportation needs and a wide variety of other community planning considerations. Improvements to Powers Boulevard are included in the approved PPACG 2035 Regional Transportation Plan.



Wilson & Company
June 30, 2010
Page 2

Re: Letter of Comment and Objection to
Powers Corridor Environmental Assessment

29..... Second, the "Estimates of Economic Losses Proposed Reconfiguration of Powers
30..... Boulevard to a Limited Access Freeway" prepared by David Bamberger & Associates dated May
31..... 2, 2005 (a copy of which has been provided to CDOT), suggests the EA grossly understates the
32..... adverse economic impact of the project on existing and future retail centers along the Powers
33..... Corridor, with the resulting significant loss of property values and City and County sales and
34..... property tax revenue. The comment on Page 4-8 of the EA that "no property would be deprived
35..... of reasonable access" fails to even address, let alone properly analyze, this extremely significant
36..... adverse economic impact.

37.....
38..... The marginal need for this project over an enhanced expressway (even if the EA's traffic
39..... projections are accepted), its staggering cost, and any realistic analysis of the economic losses to
40..... existing and planned retail centers along the Powers Corridor (and resulting losses of tax
41..... revenues), mean this project is simply not justifiable under any rational cost-benefit analysis.

42.....
43..... This is reflected in the number one recommendation of the Value Engineering Study
44..... dated January 2004 for the Powers Corridor that parallel corridors be improved to the extent that
45..... an enhanced expressway is viable in lieu of a full freeway. Since the right-of-way is already in
46..... place for an enhanced expressway, the cost of that alternative would be minimal, compared to
47..... the proposed freeway. The EA, as currently written, simply ignores the number one
48..... recommendation from the Value Engineering Study.

49.....
50..... Third, while the EA mentions the METEX District, it ignores the intergovernmental
51..... agreement executed when METEX was formed which specifies that the ultimate configuration of
52..... Powers Boulevard will be an enhanced expressway. The proposal to change Powers Boulevard
53..... to a freeway would be a direct violation of the express requirements of the METEX
54..... intergovernmental agreement between the City, County and affected property owners concerning
55..... the ultimate configuration of Powers Boulevard. The EA needs to address the potential
56..... consequences of violating the METEX agreement, including potential legal challenges.

57.....
58..... Lastly, we have met several times with CDOT and City of Colorado Springs Staff to
59..... review our access limitation concerns. Upon our last meeting on April 13, 2010, a consensus
60..... was reached on how our concerns for future access to the Powers Corridor would be reserved.
61..... This included additional language in the EA to preserve the option of future alternative access,
62..... an agreement between the City and CDOT for implementation and regulation of alternative
63..... access, and an agreement between the City and property owner that defines funding and extent of
64..... agreed to access.

**CDOT/FHWA RESPONSE
TO NOR'WOOD LETTER, page 2**

Lines 29-31: The Bamberger report was reviewed for CDOT by a leading regional economist (with a PhD in economics), who found some of the assumptions to be unreliable based on an earlier study by Krager and Associates, Inc. ("Land Use Impacts of the Powers Boulevard Corridor Project," April 2005). We understand that these and other reports on the topic were privately funded and produced, with no public process or agency review during their development.

Line 32: Exhibit 4-7 on page 4-12 of the EA shows how congestion with the No-Action Alternative would dramatically shrink the market area for businesses in the First & Main area, which is a key Nor'wood commercial center along the Powers Boulevard corridor. In contrast, the Proposed Action would expand the market area compared to today's conditions, thus providing an opportunity to increase potential sales and associated sales tax revenue.

Lines 33-34: Potential loss of property tax revenue is discussed on page 4-14 of the EA.

Lines 34-35: CDOT stands by its commitment that no property would be deprived of reasonable access. Some access limitations or changes may occur during construction to maintain public safety. A variety of frontage roads, turnaround ramps and new street connections are included in the Proposed Action to ensure this outcome.

Line 41: Taking into account the value of time saved by motorists every day for many years with the Proposed Action, compared to bumper-to-bumper congestion with the true No-Action Alternative, the leading regional economist concludes that the project would result in a very high net positive value.

In comparison, the Krager and Bamberger reports omitted any mention of positive value to society from these massive time savings. Conserving fuel also is a valuable benefit for society. Please see page 4-66 of the EA for a discussion of this topic.

Lines 47-48: In the Value Engineering Study, regarding the recommendation cited, the Review Board's comments specified that, "It is not accepted to implement the expressway alternative." The VE study was an effort that focused on finding ways to save costs, based on the early proposed concept. A total of 33 brainstorming ideas were considered. Of these, 14 were either accepted as is or accepted with modifications, and the other 19 were not. The recommendation noted was actually not #1, but number 01-095. The commenter is incorrect to characterize it as being of higher priority or importance than other recommendations. It was discussed first due to the way the report was organized, as it did not fit readily into any other category of recommendations.

Lines 50-52: See earlier response to lines 36 to 41 (METEX acknowledgement that "additional improvements to Powers Boulevard... may eventually need to be provided...").

Lines 55-56: As noted previously, CDOT was not a party to the 1986 METEX agreement. Powers Boulevard became a State Highway in 2007. No part of the METEX agreement applies to, obligates or constrains CDOT's decisions regarding this project.

CDOT/FHWA RESPONSE
TO NOR'WOOD LETTER, page 2
continued

Lines 59-64: CDOT met with Nor'wood representatives not only on April 13 but also on multiple prior occasions to hear the developer's concerns and requests for additional access. In the various meetings, CDOT consistently explained that the EA was to be based on a conceptual design for the purpose of assessing probable environmental consequences. The Proposed Action will progress to a final design in the future when individual construction projects are funded.

A large number of design details are not known at this time and will be determined in the future when additional information is available. It is premature for CDOT to lock in any specific design details, including the developer's access requests, outside of the context of designing an entire construction project. The specific design effort will take into account ongoing development, traffic demand, geomorphology/soils and land survey data. CDOT understands that development will occur along Powers Boulevard and the Proposed Action in the northbound direction identified in the EA may need some modifications. These might include options such as a one-way frontage road with access to and from the frontage road, or other options appropriate for traffic and land use needs.

On April 13, 2010 CDOT indicated the agency will consider the preparation of intergovernmental agreements and the potential incorporation of access requests in final design. However, the agency did not agree to any consensus language for insertion into the EA, which had already been completed and approved by the Regional Transportation Director on the day before this meeting.

Based on conversations with Nor'wood prior to April 13, the approved EA contains three separate sections of wording to address the developer's concerns:

- Page 3-11 of the EA
- Page 3-15 of the EA
- Addendum A to Appendix B, Traffic Analysis Report.

Provide below are the passages from the EA and excerpts from the Appendix.

EA Page 3-11: "...there is an ongoing dialogue between CDOT and a major developer regarding access on the eastern side of Powers Boulevard between Barnes Road and Constitution Avenue. The developer is interested in further exploring the feasibility of a northbound off-ramp to South Carefree Circle. Some decisions regarding specific access accommodations would need to be made in final design, possibly a number of years in the future."

EA Page 3-15: "Local access to frontage roads is proposed at various locations (e.g., Safeway shopping center north of Constitution Avenue; Victor Place businesses) and may be considered at other locations in final design if CDOT determines that it is feasible and prudent to do so."

[Please see continuation on next page]

CDOT/FHWA RESPONSE
TO NORWOOD LETTER, page 2
continued

Lines 59-64 (continued):

EA Appendix B, Traffic Analysis Report, Addendum A, under the heading of “Developer Request for Access Changes”. This addendum includes two pages (pages A-2 and A-3) discussing the developer’s access requests.

In lieu of reprinting the full two-page discussion, which includes description of the Proposed Action and the developer’s requests, here are two excerpted paragraphs of relevance:

“The requested modifications are not entirely new but instead represent the outcome of a continuing dialogue between CDOT and the developer over the course of the EA. Based only on preliminary analysis it appears that it may be possible to accommodate these modifications. However, before any decision can be made regarding the requested modifications, more detailed evaluation would be needed regarding traffic operations, safety, right-of-way and costs.

Based on current funding projections, it may be a number of years before the design for this section of Powers Boulevard begins. Also, CDOT’s needs and the developer’s needs may change over the years prior to the beginning of final design. At this time, none of the requested modifications are specifically included in the Proposed Action, but CDOT will further consider their feasibility in final design.”

For additional information regarding the potential for intergovernmental agreements, please see the response to line 71. That response is provided on page 4-39.



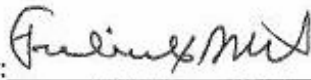
Wilson & Company
June 30, 2010
Page 3

Re: Letter of Comment and Objection to
Powers Corridor Environmental Assessment

65..... Our objection is based on current EA wording for preservation of future alternative
66..... access options and consensus agreements not completed. In particular, Page 3-15 does reflect
67..... consensus wording for preservation of alternative access as discussed during the April 13th
68..... meeting.
69.....
70..... Our position of objection remains until the consensus items of EA wording and the
71..... requisite intergovernmental agreements are complete.

Sincerely,

Nor'wood Development Group

By: 
Frederick A. Veitch
Vice President

**CDOT/FHWA RESPONSE
TO NOR'WOOD LETTER, page 3**

Lines 66-67: It has been noted previously that language was added in several parts of the EA and its appendices to acknowledge the developer's concerns and to state that design details will be addressed in final design.

Line 71: CDOT will be happy to continue working towards development of an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Colorado Springs. A framework for our further interagency discussions is documented in a recent exchange of letters between CDOT and the City of Colorado Springs. Those two letters appear on the pages which follow. We thank you for your comments and look forward to working with the Nor'wood Development Group in the future.

The letters on the following two pages pertain to the response to line 71 immediately above.



ENGINEERING

September 13, 2010

Dave Poling
Region 2 – North Program Engineer
Colorado Department of Transportation
1480 Quail Lake Loop, Suite A
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

RE: Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Poling: *Dave*

The City of Colorado Springs supports the Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment (EA) which identifies the need to upgrade Powers Boulevard from Woodmen Road to Drennan Road/Milton E. Proby Parkway as a limited access, grade separated freeway. A resolution of support for the EA from the Colorado Springs City Council was voted on and approved at their June 22, 2010 meeting.

The EA identifies the need for frontage roads along portions of Powers Boulevard to minimize neighborhood impacts while maintaining business access. In the area of Constitution to South Carefree, the City desires consideration of a one-way northbound frontage road similar to the proposed southbound frontage road identified in the EA. We are requesting this consideration as long as it does not significantly increase the cost of the Project in the immediate area and as long as freeway operations are not negatively impacted.

This additional consideration would be based on whether the City has ownership of right-of-way for the frontage road which could be deeded to CDOT and which will have been acquired in accordance with Federal Highway Administration guidelines. Along with this consideration, the City will encourage land development and redevelopment in this section of Powers Boulevard to accommodate the northbound frontage road as a future alternative, and access to the frontage road will be allowed as long as it does not knowingly impact on-line operations or create an unsafe or operational problem for the frontage road.

Sincerely,
Cam McNair
Cam McNair, PE
City Engineer
City of Colorado Springs

CC: Steve Cox, Interim City Manager
Nancy Johnson, Assistant City Manager
Nick Kittle, Public Works Team Leader
David Krauth, City Traffic Engineer



STATE OF COLORADO

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Region II – North Program
1480 Quail Lake Loop Road – Suite A
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906
(719) 634-2323
FAX - (719) 227-3298



September 17, 2010

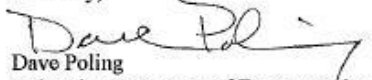
Mr. Cam McNair
City of Colorado Springs Engineer
30 S. Nevada Ave., Mail code 452
Colorado Springs, CO. 80901-1575

Subject: Powers Boulevard Environmental

Dear Cam,

Thank you for your letter dated September 13, 2010 to CDOT identifying the need to look at different access options for northbound Powers Boulevard between Constitution. and South Carefree. CDOT understands that land development will occur along Powers Boulevard and that the proposed action in the northbound direction identified in the E.A. may need some modification to include a one-way frontage Road with access to and from the frontage road. CDOT and developer needs may change over time prior to CDOT starting final design in this area. At the time of final design CDOT will consider the feasibility of a one way frontage road and other access modifications as long as freeway operations are not negatively impacted and it does not create an unsafe or operational problem for the frontage road.

Sincerely,


Dave Poling
Colorado Department of Transportation
North Program Engineer

CC: Mark Andrew, Resident Engineer
Lisa Streisfeld, Regional Environmental Manager
Don Garcia, Powers Corridor Manager



CHAPTER 5 – AGENCY COORDINATION

The EA was sent to various local, state, and federal agencies for review just prior to the beginning of the public review period. As summarized in the EA, these agencies were consulted throughout the NEPA process and received progress updates at major milestones: scoping, purpose and need, alternatives, identification of the Proposed Action Alternative, and publication of the EA.

This coordination effort resulted in receipt of one letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and three resolutions of support adopted by the PPACG (the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization), City of Colorado Springs, and El Paso County. These documents appear on the following pages.

Specifically, the following documents are provided:

- June 21, 2010 letter from Larry Svoboda of EPA to Mr. Douglas Bennett of FHWA, indicating that, “our review of the EA for Powers Boulevard did not raise any significant issues or concerns with the Proposed Action, and EPA does not plan to submit comments on this document.”
- June 9, 2010 PPACG Board of Directors resolution of support for the EA and the Proposed Action. After adopting the resolution in June, the PPACG Board also voted to ratify it at their meeting of July 14, 2010.
- June 22, 2010 Colorado Springs City Council resolution of support for the EA and the Proposed Action.
- July 8, 2010 El Paso County Board of County Commissioners resolution of support for the EA and the Proposed Action.

Also presented is a letter of support dated January 10, 2010 from the Colorado Springs Airport Advisory Commission, reflecting action taken at their meeting in December 2009. This occurred prior to the formal public comment period for the EA, but the Commission requested that their comments be included as part of the official record.



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

1595 Wynkoop Street
DENVER, CO 80202-1129
Phone 800-227-8917
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

JUN 21 2010

Ref: 8EPR-N

Douglas Bennett, Acting Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration, Colorado Division
12300 W. Dakota Ave, Suite 180
Lakewood, CO 80228

Re: Environmental Assessment for Powers
Boulevard (SH 21)

Dear Mr. Bennett:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 has received the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Environmental Assessment (EA) for Powers Boulevard (State Highway [SH] 21). The proposed project would upgrade the Powers Boulevard expressway to a 6-lane freeway between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway, and obtain right of way for future freeway construction from Milton E. Proby Parkway to SH 16. The upgrade is needed to address current and future traffic congestion on the existing expressway.

In the agreement between the EPA and FHWA, dated August 28, 2000, EPA agreed to advise FHWA within 15 days of receipt of an EA whether EPA: (1) will have no comments on the document; (2) will have comments within the review period; or (3) will have serious objections to the Finding of No Significant Impact. This letter is to inform FHWA that our review of the EA for Powers Boulevard did not raise any significant issues or concerns with the proposed action, and EPA does not plan to submit comments on this document. We do note that EPA, FHWA, and the Colorado Department of Transportation have engaged in discussions regarding water quality impacts from impervious surface runoff and appropriate level of analysis and discussion for post-construction mitigation measures as a part of our quarterly interagency coordination meetings. The issues raised in those discussions are applicable to Powers Boulevard as well. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Molly Brodin of my staff at 303-312-6577.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Svoboda".

Larry Svoboda
Director, NEPA Compliance and Review Program
Office of Ecosystems Protection and Remediation



Printed on Recycled Paper



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Don Adley
Military Community Representative

Commissioner Lee Olson
Colorado Transportation Commission

Executive Director
Robert MacDonald

**RESOLUTION BY
THE PIKES PEAK AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SUPPORTING THE STATE HIGHWAY 21 (POWERS BOULEVARD)
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

June 9, 2010

WHEREAS, Title 23, Section 134, and Title 49, United States Code, as updated by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century of 1998, require each urban area to have a comprehensive transportation planning process that results in transportation plans and programs consistent with the planned development of an urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the aforementioned legislation, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) was designated by the Governor of the State of Colorado as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the PPACG acts to meet the transportation planning and programming requirements of Title 23 and Title 49, United States Code, and for formulating policies, plans, and programs necessary to the planning process for transportation, land use, and air quality management; and

WHEREAS, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments has reviewed the provisions contained within the State Highway 21 Environmental Assessment; and

WHEREAS, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments believes there is a critical need to complete the approval process for the State Highway 21 Environmental Assessment and to expedite the implementation of the recommendations contained within the State Highway 21 Environmental Assessment,

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the PPACG Board of Directors endorses and recommends approval of the Environmental Assessment of State Highway 21 through the Pikes Peak Region by the Federal Highway Administration, so that the needed improvements can begin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PPACG Board of Directors supports the findings in the Environmental Assessment that states that the affects of the improvements will not be significant and endorses the mitigation recommendations as identified therein.

Agenda Item 4A
Page 1

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PPACG Board of Directors recommends that each of its member governments participate in the process by providing comments to the Colorado Department of Transportation concerning the State Highway 21 Environmental Assessment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PPACG Board of Directors, acting for and on behalf of its affected local governmental units, hereby recommends that each local government endorse and accept the State Highway 21 Environmental Assessment and ask that they request the implementation of the improvements to State Highway 21 as outlined in the Environmental Assessment.

RESOLVED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments this 9th day of June 2010 at Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Wayne W. Williams
Chair

ATTEST:



Jim Ignatius
Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 99-10

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED
ACTION TO IMPROVE POWERS BOULEVARD FROM WOODMEN
ROAD TO MILTON E. PROBY PARKWAY AS DETAILED IN THE
POWERS BOULEVARD ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

- WHEREAS, Powers Boulevard is an extremely important transportation facility in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region; and
- WHEREAS, improvements to Powers Boulevard are needed to relieve existing traffic congestion and to accommodate future travel needs both along the corridor and east/west through the City of Colorado Springs; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed improvements are consistent with the City's Intermodal Transportation Plan and the Moving Forward 2035 Regional Transportation Plan; and
- WHEREAS, the City encourages the Colorado Department of Transportation to use available materials, methods and best practices that will provide the highest and best mitigation of negative impacts caused by the improvements to Powers Boulevard, including noise impacts to existing neighborhoods, designated Open Space, City Park land and the environment; and
- WHEREAS, the Colorado Department of Transportation has prepared an Environmental Assessment for the proposed improvements, consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, and with extensive public involvement; and
- WHEREAS, the findings of the Environmental Assessment were presented to the City Council on June 22, 2010.

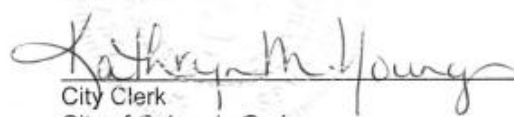
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:

That City Council supports the Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment prepared by the Colorado Department of Transportation.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado this 22nd day of June, 2010.



Mayor
City of Colorado Springs

ATTEST:


City Clerk
City of Colorado Springs

Bocc

RESOLUTION NO. 10-279

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY OF EL PASO, STATE OF COLORADO**

**Resolution to Support the Colorado Department of Transportation Powers
Boulevard Project Environmental Assessment**

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Environmental Assessment for Powers Boulevard is to reduce current and future traffic congestion on Powers Boulevard between Woodmen Road and State Highway 16; and

WHEREAS, Powers Boulevard is on the National Highway System and is now State Highway 21; and

WHEREAS, Powers Boulevard is becoming more congested and nearing capacity today with the prediction that traffic volumes and driving times will double in many areas by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action, which was developed through a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach and extensive public involvement, would change existing Powers Boulevard from an expressway to a freeway with interchanges; and


WHEREAS, the Powers Environmental Assessment must be completed to receive federal funding; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action calls for 6 to 8 lanes with grade separation at every intersection which considers current and future social, economic and environmental impacts along the corridor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of the County of El Paso hereby supports the Colorado Department of Transportation Powers Boulevard improvement project Environmental Assessment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dennis Hisey duly elected, qualified member and Chairman, or Amy Lathen, duly elected, qualified, member and Vice-Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, is hereby authorized to execute this Resolution on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners.


DONE THIS 8th day of July, 2010 at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

ATTEST

 By: Robert C. Balink
 Robert C. Balink, Clerk and Recorder

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO**

By: Dennis Hisey
 Dennis Hisey, Chair

ROBERT C. "BOB" BALINK El Paso County, CO
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AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION

January 7, 2010

Mark Andrew, North Program Resident Engineer
Colorado Department of Transportation
1480 Quail Lake Loop, Suite # A
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Dear Mr. Andrew:

Over the past several years, the Colorado Springs Airport Advisory Commission has consistently shown its support for projects that would increase mobility in the Pikes Peak region and improve access to the Colorado Springs Airport. This includes the ongoing efforts to develop Powers Boulevard into a limited-access freeway.

The Airport Advisory Commission originally commented on the Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment process in November 2003 and reaffirmed its support for the project in September 2005. As the final Environmental Assessment is nearing publication, the Commission appreciates this opportunity to again express enthusiastic support for the development of the Powers Corridor as a freeway.

As you know, our airport management team is working hard to ensure the long-term viability of the Colorado Springs Airport through a series of concurrent initiatives that include expanding air service, developing the Cresterra Business Park, improving general aviation facilities on the Airport's west side, and providing for the growth of the military mission at Peterson Air Force Base. All of these efforts are contingent upon an efficient regional transportation system that facilitates ease of access to the Airport.

As development activity in Colorado Springs recovers from the economic downturn and returns to a period of intensified growth, the impact on the overburdened roadway system will continue to worsen. The proposed Milton E. Proby/Academy Boulevard improvements will provide some relief; however, this connection to I-25 will be too far south to serve as the primary route between the Airport and the fast-growing market areas in the north and northeastern quadrants of Colorado Springs. We continue to believe that one of the few practicable solutions to this problem is a long-term commitment to developing the Powers Corridor as a freeway.

Accordingly, at its December 15, 2009 meeting, the Airport Advisory Commission reaffirmed its support for the development of the Powers Freeway. In addition, we have asked the Colorado Springs City Council to support our position in this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Walter D. Miller
Chairman
Colorado Springs Airport Advisory Commission



CHAPTER 6 – FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FHWA has determined that the Proposed Action, described in Chapter 2 of this document, will have no significant impact on the environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the analysis presented in the Environmental Assessment for Powers Boulevard (SH 21) between Woodmen Road and SH 16 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and consideration of public and agency comments on the EA. The EA is contained on the attached disk in Appendix D of the FONSI.

After evaluation of the EA and public and agency comments, FHWA and CDOT determined that the EA adequately and accurately describes the Proposed Action and discusses the purpose and need for the project, environmental issues and impacts of the Proposed Action, and the appropriate mitigation measures as summarized in Exhibit 2-13 of this FONSI. The EA provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. FHWA and CDOT take full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached EA and the information provided in this FONSI.



CHAPTER 7 – REFERENCES

- City of Colorado Springs. 1997. Environmental Assessment: Powers Boulevard Extension North, Woodmen Road to I-25.
- . 2004. Rapid Transit Feasibility Study and System Master Plan.
- . 2006. Major Thoroughfares Plan. Retrieved April 14, 2009 from <http://www.springsgov.com/Files/mtp-09112006.pdf>.
- . 2008a. City of Colorado Springs 2020 Land Use Map, approved as Ordinance No. 08-188. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from http://www.springsgov.com/Files/Landuse2020_11x17.pdf.
- . 2008c. City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from <http://www.springsgov.com/Page.aspx?NavID=537>.
- Colorado Department of Agriculture. 2009. Noxious Weed List. Retrieved February 6, 2009 from: <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/Agriculture-Main/CDAG/1174084048733>.
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). 2008. Colorado Economic and Demographic Information System. Retrieved April 28, 2009 from <http://www.dola.state.co.us/cedis.html>.
- Colorado Department of Transportation. 2009a. Traffic Analysis Report for the Powers Boulevard Environmental Assessment between Woodmen Road and SH 16. See Appendix B to the EA.
- El Paso County. 2004. Major Thoroughfares Plan. Retrieved August 17, 2008 from http://adm.elpasoco.com/NR/rdonlyres/892CAFE2-7726-4351-933C-66AA8E28DE59/0/report_final2.pdf.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG). 2000. South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study.
- . 2008. Moving Forward: 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from <http://ppacg.org/transportation-section/regional-transportation-plan>.

