



**COLORADO**

Department of Transportation

Region 1

I-70 Mountain Corridor Program  
425A Corporate Circle  
Golden, CO 80401

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## **I-70 Floyd Hill to EJMT Westbound Improvements: PLT Kickoff Meeting Minutes**

**August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Genesee Hall, 10am-12pm**

**Easter Seals Rocky Mountain Village, Empire, Colorado**

- Attendees
  - CDOT – Richard Zamora, Steve Harelson, David Singer, Sean Brewer, Kevin Brown, Neil Ogden, Martha Miller, Joe Mahoney, Ron Papsdorf, Matt Cirulli, Emily Wilfong, Stacia Sellers, Lindsey Edgar
  - Silver Dollar Metro District – Lynnette Hailey
  - Clear Creek County – Tim Mauck, Jo Ann Sorensen, Peter Monson, Phil Buckland
  - Gilpin County – Linda Isenhardt
  - Summit County – Scott Vargo
  - Eagle County – Eva Wilson
  - Jefferson County – Steve Durian
  - Town of Vail – Greg Hall
  - Town of Georgetown – Tom Hale
  - Town of Silverplume – Marty Gitlin
  - City of Idaho Springs – Mike Hillman
  - Town of Silverthorne – Mark Leidal
  - I-70 Coalition – Margaret Bowes
  - US Forest Service – Adam Bianchi, Carol Kruse
  - FHWA – Shaun Cutting
  - Did not Attend: CMCA, Central City, Garfield County, Town of Dillon
  - Declined Invitation: Town of Frisco
- Recent Activity & Project Context
  - David Singer covered the recent activities including the past studies and projects conducted since the 2011 Record of Decision was signed.
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- Role of the PLT, Context Sensitive Solutions Process for the I-70 Westbound Improvements
  - David Singer recapped slides and history of the group. David also recapped the tools used by the previous PLT to be used by the new PLT. The PLT will need to consider of the impact to the entire corridor in addition to the impacts within the project limits.
  - David Singer walked the PLT through the corridor's approach for context sensitive solutions. The PLT will champion steps 1 and 2 of the process. Technical experts throughout the visioning and NEPA process will champion steps 3 through 6 in coordination with the PLT.
  - Critical Success Factors
    - David Singer asked the group how visioning be defined as a success.
      - Happy and satisfied stakeholders.
      - Balancing needs versus wants.
      - Meeting future demands of growth.

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- Continuing strong partnerships.
  - Holistic visioning that includes environmental resources.
  - Transparent and clear process for the public.
  - A shared vision can everyone can live with.
  - Maintaining the spirit of past agreements and projects.
  - Address seasonality of economies along the I-70 Corridor.
- Context Statement
    - Add: Westbound improvements have been identified as part of the Corridor's safety and mobility solutions. The goal is to lessen delays caused by peak period volumes. It is also the goal to find affordable solutions that can be implemented in a sensitive environment.
    - Add Interstate 70 is a nationally significant part of the defense network.
    - The group engaged in a conversation about impacts to communities along the corridor. Some members were concerned that improvements ending at Idaho Springs would create problems along frontage roads. Some of the western communities feel that the projects are not geared towards their benefit and the tradeoffs of agreeing to projects on the eastern sections will mean less will be done for their communities.
    - The element of cost should be removed from the context statement and put out as a goal.
    - There is a desire to add a context statement for the role that I-70 has with local communities. I-70 is the lifeline for many local communities along the corridor.
  - Core Values
    - David reviewed the I-70 Core Values and engaged the PLT in discussions about changes or additions that are appropriate for this specific project.
    - Short-term and long term constructability.
    - Financial feasibility.
    - Add brief descriptions for each of the core values for visioning.
- Visioning Workshop
    - Goals & Desired Outcomes
      - The workshops should include the following issues and items:
        - Improvements from the ROD as part of the project but also non-highway items included in commitment documents like the frontage road and greenway near Hidden Valley.
        - Address the ROD commitment to connect the frontage road between Hidden Valley and US6.
        - Include items in the MOUs between CDOT, Clear Creek County, and Idaho Springs.
        - Data and lessons learned from the Eastbound Peak Period Shoulder Lane.
        - Discussion should include bottlenecks and how bottlenecks could move between Idaho Springs, Georgetown, and near the EJMT.
        - Similar deliverable to the Twin Tunnels Visioning Report.

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- Production of a model for future larger I-70 projects.
  - Advance the Preferred Alternative and identify progress with respect to the 2011 ROD.
  - Shared Values.
  - Holistic Views.
- Agenda & Format
    - There will be three series of workshops: Top of Floyd Hill to Veterans Memorial Tunnels, Veterans Memorial Tunnels through Idaho Springs, and West of Idaho Springs. Exact termini to be developed as workshops are conducted.
    - Consider applicable practices and formats from Twin Tunnels Visioning.
    - Recommendation for stakeholders to meet amongst the separate geographies and then meet again to bring the vision together.
    - Criteria will be developed during the workshops. Concepts will be screened against the criteria to move alternatives into the NEPA process.
    - Do not expect to resolve issues best left for NEPA or final design life cycle phases.
  - Participants
    - Stakeholders should be invited and be to the workshop where they have interest or are impacted.
    - Stakeholders agreed that HDR could facilitate. HDR may also produce the final visioning report.
    - Contractors and consultants will be invited through a procurement for technical and constructability input.
  - Resources
    - HDR is the consultant onboard with the CDOT Office of Major Project Development.
- Additional PLT Member Comments For Workshop Consideration:
    - David Singer: Both the EB and WB PPSL are interim solutions.
    - Clear Creek County: There are two areas that need technical support. The vision for Idaho Springs to Empire is already set: a peak period shoulder lane.
    - Clear Creek County: We should try and include items from the ROD as part of the project. If we continue to check off the boxes for highway improvement, we will never get around to completing non-highway items like the frontage road in Hidden Valley. We should add commitments from the eastbound Veterans Memorial Tunnel from the ROD to gives us options for proceeding forward.
    - Silver Plume: Concern about a one lane highway between Silver plume and Georgetown. There are items that are west of Empire that need to be addressed including the climbing lane from Bakerville to the Eisenhower Tunnel. This should include wildlife mitigation.
    - US Forest Service: We need to consider the AGS Study during capacity improvements.
    - US Forest Service: Worried about cross pollination of each workshop group.
    - Eagle: We should have the conversation about affordability versus what we want and what the tradeoffs are.
    - CDOT: Need to make sure there is a forum for local communities to participate.

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- PLT #1 Outcomes:
  - Outcome #1: HDR will facilitate the Visioning Workshops.
  - Outcome #2: CDOT will conduct three series of visioning workshops for each identified segment on Interstate 70: Top of Floyd Hill to Twin Tunnels, Twin Tunnels through Idaho Springs, and Areas West of Idaho Springs. CDOT will ask the PLT for technical team members for each workshop. CDOT will solicit consultants and contractors to assist in the development of alternatives for each segment. The workshops will begin in the Fall of 2016.
  - Outcome #3: The results and alternatives developed in the visioning workshops will be the starting point for a NEPA process that will start in Spring 2017.
  
- Next Steps
  - Outreach
    - The meeting minutes will be finalized and sent out to PLT members with the presentation.
    - A website will be created for a repository for project reports, minutes, agendas, and presentations for stakeholders.
  - Additional PLT Members
    - The meeting minutes will include attendees, non-attendees, and those who declined to join the PLT.
    - Colorado Motor Carriers Association will be invited to join the PLT.
    - Vail Resorts will be invited to join the PLT.
  - Next PLT Meeting
    - CDOT will reach out to the PLT for a check-in once the Visioning Workshops begin.

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### **Reference Materials:**

#### **I-70 Mountain Corridor Record of Decision**

<https://www.codot.gov/projects/i-70-old-mountaincorridor/i-70-record-of-decision.html>

#### **I-70 CSS**

<https://www.codot.gov/projects/contextsensitivesolutions>

#### **I-Twin Tunnels Visioning**

<https://www.codot.gov/projects/contextsensitivesolutions/docs/aesthetics/tunnel-visioning-a-design-workshop-for-the-twin-tunnels>

#### **I-70 Memorandum of Understanding: Clear Creek County, Idaho Springs, CDOT – 1/16/2014**

Mid-Term Projects (> Three Years):

Westbound I-70 PPSL: The Parties agree a Westbound I-70 PPSL project from Twin Tunnels to Empire Junction will be implemented as the mid-term project when funded. Any westbound construction between Empire and Idaho Springs will not exceed the scope of the EB PPSL project. A Westbound PPSL project will minimize infrastructure and throwaway work and implement within existing footprint where feasible and considered an interim improvement. The Westbound PPSL will incorporate peak period toll operations similar to the EB PPSL. The parties will pursue funding opportunities, including the potential of furthering the development of Clear Creek County's Greenway plan. The Parties agree a Westbound PPSL concept meets the definition of non- infrastructure related components under the I-70 Mountain Corridor ROD and the Final PEIS. The Parties acknowledge the FHWA is the responsible agency and has the authority to determine compatibility with the PEIS ROD. FHWA would make such determination after project initiation.

Westbound I- 70 Floyd Hill: Parties agree to investigate funding opportunities to advance improvements as defined in the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS ROD (in total or in part) on WB I-70 from the top of Floyd Hill to Twin Tunnels. Elements include widening to three lanes, improving the design speed of both eastbound and westbound I-70, replacement of the bridge at the bottom of Floyd Hill, interchange reconstruction at US 6 Clear Creek Canyon, and Phase 2 of the Greenway and Frontage Road (CR 314 from Exit 241 to 243). The third lane will be operated as an express toll lane during peak periods.