



MEETING SUMMARY

Westbound I-70 Mountain Corridor - Concept Development Process

Project Leadership Team (PLT) Meeting

Thursday, November 17, 2016

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Main Lodge Conference Room - Easter Seals Rocky Mountain Village

Agenda

Time	Agenda Topic
1:00 pm – 1:15 pm	Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review
1:15 pm – 1:45 pm	<p>Presentation and Discussion: CSS Process Overview, Roles and Project Outcomes</p> <p>Goal: PLT understanding and support of WB I-70 Mtn Corridor process, project team and stakeholder roles, schedule and desired outcomes</p>
1:45 pm – 2:30 pm	<p>Presentation and Discussion: Context Statement, Core Values and Critical Issues</p> <p>Goal: PLT review and discussion of WB I-70 Mtn Corridor context statement, core values and identification of additional critical issues</p>
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	<p>Discussion: Study Area and Technical Team Formation</p> <p>Goal: Determine the study area limits and outline the Technical Team</p>
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	Next Steps and Closing

Meeting Summary

Introductions, Agenda Review and Process Guidelines

Jonathan Bartsch, CDR Associates, welcomed the PLT members and facilitated introductions. Jonathan outlined the process guidelines and standards moving forward and requested feedback from the group. The ‘ground rules’ included:

- Use and implement the CSS Process as we develop the WB I-70 Mountain Corridor
- Work within the parameters of the ROD, 2014 MOU and other agreements
- Agree on and work toward a specific project scope
- Focus on advancing feasible concepts into the NEPA process
- Communicate effectively by raising issues and concerns early and directly
- Collaborate among and between teams and stakeholders – this is not a competition.
- Agree to consistent participation of PLT and TT members, not responsible to backtrack if meetings are missed. In fairness to the entire group, the process will keep moving forward.

Additional suggestion from PLT member:

- Focus on context-sensitive design as part of the CSS Process.

The group agreed to use these guidelines, as presented above, to guide the process.

CSS Process Overview, Roles and Project Outcomes

CSS Process Overview

CSS Procedural Process - This project will follow the I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS Process structure, as agreed upon in previous efforts, and work deliberately through the various CSS stages. The CSS stages are defined below:

1. Define Desired Outcomes and Actions
2. Endorse the Process
3. Establish Criteria
4. Develop Alternatives or Options
5. Evaluate, Select and Refine Alternatives or Options
6. Finalize Documentation and Evaluation Process

The Project Leadership Team (PLT) will meet throughout the process to discuss issues and ensure that the process is being followed faithfully.

The Technical Teams (TT) will provide technical input on specific segments.

The Issues Task Force (ITF) will provide expertise and guidance on specific issues (e.g. geotechnical experts discuss landslides).

One idea presented is to start with Segment 1 and use this as an example moving through subsequent Segments.

PLT Feedback:

Numerous members of the PLT asked clarifying questions regarding the outcome of the Context Development process and what the purpose of the effort is. Discussion included:

Q: Why don't we just use the improvements in the ROD – why are we doing this? A: It is important to look again at this, there have been some changes since the ROD and CDOT wants to get agreement among this group (PLT) that if there are concepts that DO NOT make sense to advance into NEPA; this is a forum to get at that.

CDOT wants to go through this exercise because the ROD only chose capacity, location and mode. It did not specify more design related items such as alignment, profile and cross section. For example, we know the Floyd Hill landslide is an issue, but the ROD did not specify how the highway should be designed to address it. CDOT wants the PLT to weigh in on feasible choices, deal-killers and suggested alternatives. For example, from a 30,000 foot level, do we modify the US 6 interchange? How? We are NOT looking at the final design of alignment that will be done later, but rather at the level of a magic marker on an aerial photo to 'conceptually' develop the options, rather than more refined analysis.

There was continued discussion among the group about “what are we doing in this process? What is the outcome and level of detail for this concept development process?” Some of the reoccurring themes and questions are outlined below:

Q: Is this a visioning process or a concept development process? What is the difference? What is the level of detail we are working toward during this time frame? We need to understand what we are doing regarding the CSS and how it is related to subsequent and future processes. A: Originally we used the word “vision” – now, concept development. The goal is to ferret out issues in an open forum prior to NEPA. We are working on a level of detail similar to the visioning process done for Twin Tunnels.

Q: How does this relate to NEPA process? A: This is the pre-NEPA CSS Process, similar to Twin Tunnels project. When we start NEPA, we reinitiate CSS (Steps 1 – 6) for the next phase. However, much of this work will be carried into NEPA process even though we are obligated to reexamine it at that time. The expectation is that this Concept Development Process will streamline the NEPA studies. CSS ties all of this together. We do not want to initiate the NEPA process with alternatives that are not 'feasible' from a technical, political and/or financial

perspective – this is too inefficient and time consuming. We would like to agree first on a concept and narrow down the ‘feasible’ alternatives -- that is what we are doing now.

Q: We need to “look beyond the guardrails” and take into account the “context” and the “range of interests that are involved.” For example, on Floyd Hill, what are we going to do with difficult interchanges, what happens to greenway, how do we handle recreation impacts on rafters? How do we ensure that we are not just thinking about alignment of a road from an engineering perspective?

A: The Concept Development Process will incorporate the range of interests typically defined during a CSS process. This is likely to include recreational interests, effects to natural resources, etc. Further, the TT needs to be made up of interdisciplinary groups that take a range of issues into consideration when developing a concepts or determining fatal flaws. The PLT and TT are convened during this process to look beyond the guardrail. The process will result in a Concept Development document – this will be a list of things that are outside and inside the guardrail including, but not limited to, frontage road, interchange configurations, impact on rafters and recreation, anglers, etc. A range of issues will all be included and examined in discussions of the alternatives at the technical level.

Q: Is 4-6 months enough time? How many TT and ITF meetings will we need per segment? It does not seem realistic to accomplish all of this with only three TT meetings per given segment. Segment 3 is uncharted territory and 4-6 months does not seem like a reasonable time scale for a TT to come up with feasible concepts to send to NEPA.

A: The idea is to be really high level in terms of developing concepts -- ex: widen to 3 lanes assuming full standards -- this process is not drilling down into a design level of detail. Right now we are developing concepts and we will then start to drill down deeper into alternatives during the NEPA phase.

The PLT can add more meetings if necessary. The number chosen on the PowerPoint slide (3) was arbitrary and an initial place to begin the conversation. The PLT will guide and design these process requirements. We need enough time to help us narrow topics that are in ROD. The goal is to identify a range of alternatives to save time and money in the next steps. **The process is flexible** and we can add more meetings if necessary.

Project Teams and Roles (see PPT presentation):

Project Leadership Team (PLT) – In subsequent meetings, the idea is to send information to primary representatives. The PLT will align with the CSS process and offer guidance and issue resolution. If there is disputes among TT members – this rises up to PLT to solve issues.

Technical Teams (TT) – Includes stakeholders, CDOT, FHWA, Consultants and Contractors, HDR, THK, CDR. The TT serves as segment and technical experts.

Issue Task Force (ITF) – Identified by the PLT and TT. Serves as specific issue experts.

PLT Feedback:

Q: The process needs to be multi-disciplinary, is there anyone in this group here to represent the environment? A: The TTs will be interdisciplinary. Everyone on the PLT will need to look at the TT list and to figure out who may be missing. The PLT is not the decision-making group, the PLT makes sure that process is on track and if there is something that the TT can't work through, it is elevated to PLT to help with process to get issues unstuck.

Project Outcomes:

1. Advance a range of feasible concepts into NEPA, including identification of fatal flaws.
2. Get Agreement on:
 - Corridor Context Statement
 - Core Values
 - Critical Issues
 - Criteria

These agreements are for this life cycle phase and may be modified in the NEPA process

3. This concept development phase is not a part of NEPA. Alternatives will need to be reexamined during the NEPA process and it is important not to pre-judge level of environmental documentation required.

There may be modifications to these outcomes as we move forward into NEPA.

Group Feedback:

Q: Who endorses modifications once you get into NEPA?

A: This process will be just like what we did for Twin Tunnels and PPSL: We will have a CSS process for each phase of the project. There will be a PLT and TT that we would hope would be the same PLT and TT for the NEPA phase as for this concept development phase. So, if there are modifications to concepts developed during this phase, those will be discussed with the PLT and TT during the NEPA phase.

2011 Record Of Decision (ROD):

Gina McAfee led a discussion of the Record of Decision (ROD). Highlights include:

These are the highway improvements developed in the ROD Minimum Program that are specific to this segment. You can find them on page 5 of the ROD. These are the highway

improvements that can be made before a decision is made in 2020 regarding whether or not any improvements in the Maximum Program can be advanced.

Specific Highway Improvements

- Six lanes capacity from Floyd Hill through the Twin Tunnels (now the Veterans Memorial Tunnels)
- Empire Junction interchange improvements
- EB auxiliary lane from EJMT to Herman Gulch
- WB auxiliary lane from Bakerville to EJMT
- Bike trail from Idaho Springs to US 6
- Frontage road from Idaho Springs to US 6

Other Highway Projects

- Truck operations improvements in non specified locations
- Interchange improvements at Georgetown, Downieville, Fall River Road, Base of Floyd Hill

This ROD was for programmatic improvements -- a high-level NEPA process that made a decision about mode, capacity and general location. Everything else is left for Tier 2 process – we are beginning this process.

The topics we will discuss in this process could include, as examples:

- Six lanes capacity from Floyd Hill through the Twin Tunnels (now the Veterans Memorial Tunnels)
 - o The ROD doesn't define width or profile or anything else
- Empire Junction interchange improvements
 - o There is no definition in the ROD around these improvements.

PLT Feedback:

- On Page 4 of the ROD there are a number of additional improvements including: shuttle service, truck movement and the expansion of the use of existing infrastructure.
- Peak Period Shoulder Lanes are also permitted by the ROD and we should explore this concept as they are a great tool.

Response: Yes, these non-infrastructure strategies are listed on page 3 of the ROD. There may be more examples of strategies that fit in this category that we could consider during this process. RoadX improvements are an example. The PPSL project was classified as “expanded use of existing transportation infrastructure in and adjacent to the corridor.

What else? What other commitments are implied or linked to this project?:

- CDOT unfulfilled obligations – Idaho Springs
- Bike/Pedestrian – Fall River Road
- CR314 realignment
- Completing Waterwheel Park in Idaho Springs
- MOU – talks about the bike trail between Idaho Springs and Hidden Valley
- Frontage road between Floyd Hill and Hidden Valley
- AGS – cannot preclude this option
- RoadX – integrate technology.

PLT members are encouraged to send a list of relevant agreements regarding I-70 in Clear Creek County. These are in addition to those included in the Record of Decision (Section 106, ALIVE, SWEEP).

A list was received by Jo Ann Sorensen on 11/19/16 and included below.

CR 314 and Greenway Bike/Pedestrian Trail IGA between CCC and CDOT dated June 24, 2012– Exhibit A includes the commitment to build “approximately two miles of frontage road and Greenway construction or reconstruction between eastern Idaho Springs (I-70 Exit 241) and the Hidden Valley/Central City Interchange (Exit 243). To be built before, or in conjunction with, any additional capacity improvements . . . between Floyd Hill and Idaho Springs. (Details in the attachment.)

MOU between CCC, Idaho Springs and CDOT dated 011614 – Reiterates commitment to the CR314 and Greenway construction described above. Also discusses prioritization with CCC & IS for the use of excess revenue from the operation of the EB PPSL at such time as it exists; explore continued opportunities for noise abatement at Lawson; keep and maintain free, general purpose lanes in at least the same state of repair as the pay-for-use lanes. Also acknowledges that all projects are subject to local permitting requirements.

MOU between FHWA, CDOT and HPTE dated April 22, 2014 – Agreement to provide CCC with the results of the ongoing assessment of the EB PPSL. Reassess the toll facility in 2020 in conjunction with the ROD reassessment. Establishes limits for the use of the toll facility (which were recently amended).

2014 MOU:

- MOU signed in January 2014 MOU between Idaho Springs, Clear Creek County and CDOT
- Relevant to this Process
 - Agreement to a Westbound I-70 PPSL project from Twin Tunnels to Empire Junction.
 - It will not exceed the scope of the EB PPSL project.
 - WB Floyd Hill project would include widening to three lanes, improving the design speed of both EB and WB, bridge replacement at the bottom of FH, interchange reconstruction at US 6 and Phase 2 of the Greenway and Frontage Road (CR 314 from Exit 241 to 243)

- CDOT will continue to explore demonstration opportunities for noise abatement at Lawson
- None of these can preclude the preferred alternative

Context Statement, Core Values and Critical Issues

Kevin Shanks led a discussion about the CSS process, outlining the context statement, core values and critical issues identified at the previous PLT meeting.

Concept Development Process - See handout:

This process is completely flexible. To structure and design the process, information was brought forward from the PPSL project and the PLT meeting #1. It was noted that this is a working document that can be changed.

- Measures of success – (based on what you all talked about at the last meeting)
- Core values
- Strategies – these are specific ideas that are legitimate ideas and we are capturing them. When we get to the TT we will talk about these in more depth.
- Critical issues
- Criteria

You will also find definitions for all of the Core Values listed.

PLT Feedback:

- Q: Can we put measures of success in one of the evaluation categories? A: they will be worked into the evaluation criteria
- There are two types of measures of success: Binary - yes vs. no or a 1-5 ranking (80% or 20% of success)
- Q: There are no Criteria that speak to technical issues around the landslide at Floyd Hill. A: There is always the potential to add more issue-specific criteria.
- Q: The “historic context” definition needs to be changed. A: Will use the Section 106 definition.
- Q: Need to change the definition of “sustainability” – every ‘sustainability’ conversation looks at: economy, community and environment. Can we use these three? A: Yes, we will change this definition to reflect this need.
- Q: We need to talk about “carrying capacity” for our world-class recreation destinations in the context section. Need to bring up that we are delivering people to world-class destinations that many of us in our communities don’t visit. It’s great to open up the funnel but where do we put the cars and people? A: Carrying capacity is also a critical issue – the

concern is about carrying capacity to the point that it will diminish our ability to provide world-class definition. Our strategy would ask: how do we provide access? Do we need to be more aggressive about managing, multiple access points and looking at carrying capacity?

- Recreational management will be addressed much more aggressively in front range urban-wildlands interface. Get ahead of this and think of infrastructure, access (i.e. transit) – need to think about carrying capacity.
- This is a sustainability issue – must come straight through the sustainability line. Make sustainability the recreation experience.
- Context section – Instead of saying “respects” say “enhances” and “protects.”
- Make this broader than just Clear Creek County? Instead say “accessed by I-70 corridor”?
- Need some clarity – There are a lot of other activities happening at other meetings (i.e. I-70 coalition) – this process cannot solve all of these issues. This cannot become a black hole, but we need our improvements to improve future mobility in and out of the corridor.

Study Area and Technical Team Formation

Study area – defining the segments in relation to context, geography, politics and the ROD.

Suggestion: Segment 3 should end at the end of Empire interchange. From the end of Empire interchange to the EJMT, the question is “what” will happen, not a “how” question. How do you want to do some sort of vision process for the rest, it is not the same thing. How do we want to approach “Segment D” (west of Empire)?

Q: Doesn’t the ROD constrict the segments we can examine. It could be operational improvements or minimum program. We are going to talk about Empire to the tunnel. We are really focusing on construction of the ROD and minimum program.

Segment Discussion

- Segment 3 should end at Empire and Empire West is Segment D. Empire Junction is IN SEGMENT 3.
- Why are we segmenting these?
- Is this construction phasing?
 - NO. This is NOT construction phasing at all, just geographic and contextual segments.
 - This will help us look at constructability and timing – this is a huge issue and a reason to do the concept development process
 - Segment 1 does not mean constructed first – it’s just geographic.
- Politics are local. The issues in Idaho Springs aren’t the same as Floyd Hill but there is overlap. If we look at them all, great, but all neighborhoods have different political issues. Don’t lose sight and don’t pit neighbors against neighbors.
- Under the umbrella of CSS – we all need to keep in mind that we need to look at context of specific areas

Proposal 1

Look at Segments 1 and 2 as proposed and then Segment 3 to Empire Junction, Segment 4 is West of Empire Junction. We will convene different TTs for each segment. There is considerable overlap for TTs on each segment.

Feedback from PLT on Proposal 1:

- USFS will have the same person on all three tech teams, it would be easier from a resource allocation to have one TT
- Could we merge the segment TTs but keep in mind the context?
- Could we have one technical team but look at all the different issues?

Proposal 2

- Let's form one TT and talk with TT to manage and to work through segments up to Empire. Segment 4 is different. Then we will come back to the PLT to endorse process.
- We will start with one TT and define major tasks re: context, overlap, values.

The group agreed to Proposal 2 moving forward.

PLT Homework

- 1. Respond to Doodle Poll re first Tech Team Meeting: 12/5, 12/8, 12/12**
- 2. PLT to send TT suggestion to Taber and Jonathan to ensure a multi-disciplinary group.**

Attendees:

Ben Acimovic – CDOT; Chuck Attardo – CDOT; Jonathan Bartsh – CDR; Adam Bianchi – USFS; Allan Brown – EST; Kevin Brown – CDOT; Matt Christensen – Kiewit; Stephen Cordts – Flatiron; Lynnette Hailey – City of Black Hawk and I-70 Coalition; Tom Hale – Georgetown; Steve Harelson – CDOT; Mike Hillman – City of Idaho Springs; Mitch Houston – CC School District; Lizzie Kemp – CDOT; Carol Kruse – USFS; Dennis Largent – Atkins; Kelly Larson – FHWA; Steve Long – HDR; Joe Mahoney – CDOT; Andrew Marsh – City of Idaho Springs; Tim Mauck – Clear Creek County; Gina McAfee – HDR; John Muscatell – Clear Creek County; Cindy Neely – Clear Creek County; Neil Ogden – CDOT; Ron Papsdorf – CDOT; Jo Ann Sorenson – Clear Creek County; Tracy Sakaguchi – CMCA; Stacia Sellers – CDOT; Kevin Shanks – THK; Bob Smith – CDOT; Scott Stetson- Flatiron; George Tsiouvaras – TSH; Taber Ward – CDR; Jeff Wilson – WSP-PB; Richard Zamora – CDOT