



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT:	23982-23929 I-70 West Vail Pass Safety and Operations Improvements
PURPOSE:	Combined Project Leadership Team (PLT) and Technical Team (TT) Meeting #30
DATE HELD:	August 15, 2022
LOCATION:	Online Google Meet Meeting
ATTENDING:	<p>Karen Berdoulay, Resident Engineer, CDOT Region 3 John Kronholm, Project Manager, CDOT Region 3 Matt Figgs, Project Manager, CDOT Region 3 Patrick Chavez, CDOT I-70 Operations Danielle Neumann, DNR Stephanie Gibson, FHWA Marcus Dreux, USFS Ben Gerdes, Eagle County Robert Jacobs, Summit County Greg Hall, Town of Vail Dick Cleveland, Town of Vail Larissa Read, ERWSD Shannon Anderson, Bicycle Colorado Tracy Sakaguchi, Colorado Motor Carriers Randal Lapsley, R S & H Dan Logsdon, R S & H Sam Stavish, CIG Mary Jo Vobejda, Jacobs Jim Clarke, Jacobs Pat Hickey, Jacobs Amy Hopkins, Jacobs Loretta LaRiviere, Jacobs</p>
COPIES:	Attendees

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

1. Introductions & Meeting Purpose

- a. Karen introduced the attendees at today's meeting.
- b. Mary Jo said today's agenda will review work completed since the last PLT/TT meeting, an update on Construction Package #4 design, a construction and public involvement update, an overview of the budget challenges, and the project schedule and next steps.

2. Review of Work Completed Since the Last Technical Team (TT) Meeting

- a. The three revisions for CP #2 have been submitted and are finalized.
- b. The CP #3 final plans submitted to CDOT on August 1st are being reviewed.
- c. The reevaluation for the new embankment areas has been submitted. The designers are looking to put embankment in areas of future construction packages.
- d. CP #4 60% plans have been submitted for review.
- e. Wetland mitigation plan for MP 182.6 is being finalized and will be submitted to the Corp in the next few weeks.

3. Construction Package 4 Design Update

- a. Dan said the key design elements of this construction package include:



- EB Auxiliary Lane MP 185.6-190.2 which is from approximately the upper truck escape ramp to the top of the Pass
- WB curve corrections at MP 186 and 188
- An addition of an updated Vail Pass truck parking area
- Wildlife Underpasses/Fencing will include two large underpasses at MP 187.3 and 188.3 and four smaller mammal crossings throughout the length of the project
- CDOT ITS Backbone Relocation (MP 185.7-189.3) is currently in the westbound shoulder. Improvements are being proposed to increase capacity in a common trench to improve some of the issues that are there now.
- ITS/Safety Improvements
 - Variable Speed Limit Installation at eastbound MP 185-190
 - EB Remote Closure System MP 180. This will be similar to what was done in CP #1 at the Vail Pass Rest Area.
 - A dynamic curve warning system eastbound MP 186 on the downhill curve in the Narrows area.

b. CP #4 Design Schedule

- The 60% plan review was held on July 27th and comments were received from CDOT, the contractor, and other stakeholders.
- We are continuing design for the 90% plan review in November and design revisions will be made for the final design submittal in January 2023
- Project advertisement will be in the February/March 2023 timeframe
- Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring/Summer 2023

1. Marcus asked you mentioned the ITS is going to get increased capacity. Can you tell us what will be increased?

Dan said we are replacing the fiber in-kind. The existing users are CDOT ITS, Comcast who leases fiber from CDOT ITS, and Zayo who have an agreement with CDOT ITS to use their spare conduit. Currently, the conduits are full which increases the challenges for construction phasing. The proposed upgrade will add four conduits for future capacity. There will be two spares for future upgrades or users.

4. Construction Update

- a. Matt said work continues on Construction Packages 1 & 2 and we have just started work on Construction Package 3. The main component of that package is the westbound bridge.
- b. One of our big activities has been retaining wall construction. The fill walls (MSE) are the historic cruciform panel walls which match the existing walls. The trail will be on top of these walls. We have followed the Aesthetic Guidelines and they will be stained to match the existing color.
- c. There are two pedestrian crossing bridges over Black Gore Creek and the foundations and abutments are under construction. The abutments are aesthetic dry stack rock form liners that have been approved by the landscape architect. The prefab steel truss bridges are under fabrication and will be delivered to the site by the end of September for installation.



- d. The rough grading of the trail south of Black Gore Creek is almost completed. With input from the landscape architect, we are starting to feather the slopes to blend in with the natural terrain. Landscape boulders and logs have been added in bare spots to break up the open areas. Reseeding and stabilization will start south of the creek in the next few weeks and the final landscaping will be done in a future package.
- e. Matt said they had a site visit with the USFS on August 3rd so they could see how the landscaping was looking.

Marcus said they were very impressed with the work, the BMPs, limits of disturbance, the amount of work and the safety of the operation.

1. Shannon said it looks amazing! Are you still on time to be finished by the end of fall?

Matt said yes, there have been a few delays in concrete deliveries because of driver shortages which impacts the shotcrete walls and concrete pours. But I don't anticipate the trail being opened this year because we will finish just as the snow starts flying so it will be next year before it is fully open.

5. Public Involvement Update

- a. Sam said the Copper Triangle was on August 6th. We received positive feedback for the efforts to limit the work on the day of the event and that the path was swept. The Triple Bypass is August 20th and have met with them and expect that event to go well.
 1. Shannon said she received two calls from bikers about work happening on Sunday and the vehicles parked on the trail which were hard to maneuver around.

Sam said it's helpful to get that feedback on the ripple effect. The decision was made to work on Sunday to minimize construction activity during the big event on Saturday. We will make sure to let the team know they should minimize the number of vehicles on the path this next Sunday. If you get future calls, please direct them to the project hotline: 970.688.8223 and the project email: CDOT_WVailPassAuxLanes@state.co.us
- b. Sam said weekly emails continue to be a great way communicate. Right now, we're up to 658 email recipients with an open rate of 50% which is far above the industry average of 20%-30% for these type of emails. We are doing more contextual and design emails with photos of the week to keep the interest up. We are getting 2-3 messages or comments every week. The most common topics are lane closure questions and suggestions, and questions about the rec path. We also receive comments and questions about other CDOT projects along I-70 which we respond to with information for those projects.
- c. In the last week there was a letter to the editor in the Vail Daily from a biker who gave some very good feedback on his experience on the trail. We followed up with him via email and we are working on adding a couple of messaging signs he suggested about riding single file and there being bubble strips ahead and he did a follow up message in the Vail Daily about our response to him.
1. Marcus said for a public information thing maybe you could talk about the big "why", why CDOT is building the rec path in the first place because it's a good story to tell, and when the MOU for ebikes is completed, we may want to address the use of ebikes on the path too.

Sam agreed an explanation about the "why" for the trail is a good topic for future communications.

Karen said that is good information that people need to hear about ebikes, but she's not sure she wants this project to be the one to tackle it.



2. Shannon said there needs to be signage that specifies which class bikes are allowed. She feels it should just be Class One because pretty soon we will see mopeds on the path.

6. Overview of Budget Challenges

- a. Karen said we wanted to provide an overview of the budget challenges and the reason I am bringing this up is we are looking at different ways to develop a solution for the budget issue. As you can imagine, we developed an estimate for this project in the fall of 2019 and the market has changed significantly since that time. Our funding was based on that estimate for the grant and the matching funds for the grant. We have funded all the work to date, the remaining work is a lot of the more substantial and which includes the 3rd lane and wildlife crossings. We do have the funding for both bridges. We have some money towards the remainder of the work, but we do not have the full amount. The team has been working on how much we think it will cost. Even at the lower end, we were significantly over budget.

We are looking at enhanced value engineering to see what we can do to meet our overall goals and maybe cut out the fat. We still have to meet our aesthetic and environmental mitigation requirements. We are also looking at the potential to cut scope. Last year we were able to add that second bridge, and we brought in \$40 million for that, so we have added value to the project, but we have to figure out if there are things to cut and still meet our overall safety and operation goals.

We are also looking for funding opportunities and grants to add funds to the project. We are facing an uphill battle and we're hitting it from a bunch of different directions. We're trying to get a good feel for the estimates to better understand what each scope of work costs, to understand what we think it originally cost, where are we at now, and ask if there are ways to refine it to still meet our overall goals.

We're in a tricky position and we don't want to hit this team with big changes later. We wanted to let you know this is something we are working through as a team and working with CDOT leadership and FHWA on this. We have been incorporating a lot of value engineering throughout the project, but the market has changed so much since fall of 2019 that any savings we thought we had found are gone and we are instead hit with more cost increases. If you have any great partnership ideas we would be open to anything.

Our goal is to have solutions by October, so we have some time. Our plan right now is to finish CP #4 by March of 2023 and then we have until fall of 2023 for the eastbound bridge work and our commitment right now is to finish the work by the end of 2025. We might add another package of work that we can pull out for later funding and hopefully do that work later.

1. Mary Jo asked if the new federal funding would offer any opportunity for additional money for this project?

Karen said that is a good question and something we have asked internally. The challenge is there are other projects CDOT has and will try to get funding for, and, in a way, it could be considered double dipping because we are going back for funding to cover the same scope from the original grant. But that is a conversation we are talking to CDOT leadership and FHWA about. As with the other grant programs FHWA is overseeing, they have recognized this is a national issue and they have said they have additional funds for certain grant programs because they know everyone is struggling to complete their work with the original grant amount. That has not happened yet for INFRA but we're hoping that could happen. We're going to have to get really creative and the team is committed to working through this and hoping to meet as much of the original scope as possible.



2. Larissa thanked Karen for the update and said anyone who is doing any sort of project is aware of the cost and delay challenges. Can you clarify that CP #3 is fully funded, CP #4 is partially funded, and CP #5 is still a question mark?

Karen said CP #3 is complete and awarded but we might refine some of that package. We're trying not to change what was already awarded but it's on the table. For example, if we aren't going to build the auxiliary lane, we wouldn't need the detour pavement. CP #5 is also fully funded but there is discussion that if we don't build the third lane, do we really need to replace the bridge that is structurally deficient and is on the Bridge Enterprise list? We're not pulling back anything now, but it is something that has been discussed.

CP #4 is partially funded at approximately 30%-40% so more funding is needed, and this is where we are focusing our value engineering efforts. Again, we are required to build the wildlife crossings if we add the third lane.

3. Greg said the overall project was the third climbing lane so not to build that doesn't seem like something you can do.

Karen said the project goal is safety and operations improvements and that is the highest priority. We agree with you the climbing lane is the most visible thing and is the project. It is the most visible and will have the most significant impacts in improving operations by having less full or partial closures. But it is hard for me to cut the westbound curve improvements because those are the crash hot spots, so there is significant benefit to doing those. We haven't found our way through this yet, we trying to strategize everything we can. It's a huge challenge for the team right now.

4. Marcus asked if you anticipate any changes to the earth work now or in future packages that he should be aware of?

Matt said for CP #3 most of the dirt that is coming out is associated with the walls and bridge so as far as constructing those future embankments for the later phase of the third lane, we may not change the plan we presented to you at this point because the only thing we looked at would be the detour paving and there isn't that much earthwork that comes out of that.

CP #4 is a major export package, and we are working through value engineering and scope refinement to try to figure out what can we do with some of that dirt. It is a big cost driver on that project, and I don't believe we've talked through what our plan is with you yet because we haven't finalized it yet.

The CP #2 dirt is all going to the rest area project. They should be mobilizing their prime contractor in the next few weeks. We have delivered about 12,000 yards of material that is stockpiled up there for their future embankment. Once they have their final wetland purchase permit, they will be able to start moving the wetland material. They will haul it over to our site above the maintenance shed and then we can start that restoration work this fall. We will haul more material to the rest area in September and then they can start placing their embankment.

5. Stephanie asked if given the inflation and issues going on with costs, are you using just historic costs for your estimates or are you adding an inflation factor?

Karen said when we originally did the estimate in 2019, we did include inflation factors and at that point we were using historic pricing. We did a major project cost estimate review that double checked and verified our estimate at that time based on market conditions. Our current estimates for future packages are varied.



We have the added complexity that all the work to date in CP #1,2 & 3 have been with our CMGC contractor, Kiewit. But we are nearing maxing out their contracted amount, so we are planning to go out for design-bid-build for some of the remaining work. With each of these future packages we are developing both historic estimating with our internal EMA team and also working with Kiewit. We are also including contingencies and potential future inflation and trying to watch the market and capture that for when we know the remaining packages are going to add to determine the best bang for our buck for delivery for each of the packages.

7. Schedule and Next Steps

- a. Mary Jo said we have not changed the schedule, but you now have a better understanding of why there may be changes to the Construction Packages.
- b. The SWEEP ITF Meeting #10 on August 22nd will review the MP 185-190 Map Book.
- c. The PLT/TT Meeting #31 on September 12th will be a site visit and more details will be coming soon.
- d. As we discussed, CP #4 90% design submittal is planned for Nov 14th and the final submittal is planned for January 2023. There is the potential of changes to this package, and we will be letting you know as decisions are made.

1. Greg asked if the final submittal for CP #4 has to be fully funded. Will the 90% have some alternatives to see where the funding comes in?

Karen said we can make the final decision on what is included as late as March 2023, but we are trying to make our financial decisions by October. The FOR will probably include everything, and between our 90% design and add set will be when things are pulled out. It's a lot easier to pull things out than add them in. It might entail adding a CP #6 for the things we may want to cut. Since we are doing construction until 2025, it would give us more time to look for funding.

- e. CP #5 submittals begin in January with a plan for final design in July 2023.