

I-70 & Kipling Interchange Planning Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study
Public Meeting #1 Summary
4/25/12

Public Meeting #1 was held on April 25, 2012 at the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center (4005 Kipling Street, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033). The meeting was held from 5:00 – 7:30 PM in an open house format. Approximately 40 members of the public attended, along with 15 agency and consultant staff members. Following is a summary of project comments submitted by attendees on comment sheets, via email and during telephone conversations, and recorded by open house staff during one-on-one conversations with attendees during the meeting. This summary includes comments received through May 8, 2012.

EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

- Too many speed limit changes southbound. (2 comments)
 - Keep consistent speed on Kipling Street. The existing speed on Kipling changes from 35 mph to 45 mph in a very short distance.
- Intersections and traffic signals should be revised to improve progression (2 comments)
 - It takes three and four light changes to get through the intersections.
- All light flow-times need lengthening all directions and turn arrows need to function all hours of the day and night (not be restricted), including 38th Ave.
- Existing conditions are poor due to congestion.
- I-70 is congested near Youngfield and diversion on 38th, 44th and Kipling St. is evident around 5pm weekdays.
- The ramp meter at the on-ramps at the Kipling and the Wadsworth interchanges work well. There should be more of that – like on the westbound on-ramp at Kipling.
- On- and off-ramps back up for long distances. (5 comments)
 - Traffic backs up on I-70 westbound at the Kipling exit, also at Kipling & 49th.
 - Traffic exiting I-70 westbound at Kipling and then attempting westbound turn on 49th constantly slow traffic (3 comments)
 - Need to prohibit westbound turn onto 49th.
 - Causes back-ups on ramp for northbound Kipling traffic.
 - Vehicles getting off I-70 to Kipling Street are blocking vehicles getting on I-70, and also blocking through lane traffic on Kipling Street due to the short signalized intersection. Consider using a traffic camera at the intersection to enforce.
- Difficult to merge onto I-70 eastbound.
- Eastbound on-ramp metering has caused vehicles to stop and not be able to get up to speed, resulting in a high number of crashes.
- Getting off of I-70 westbound is a problem (2 comments)
 - Westbound I-70 to Kipling right lane has large back-ups.
- Wadsworth expectancy leads people to Kipling.

- Issues exist with traffic blocking the South Frontage Road intersection. Northbound cars pull into the intersection when the light is green, but the next signal (eastbound ramps) is red. (2 comments)
 - There is a short distance between the traffic signals at the south frontage road intersection and the I-70 eastbound ramps intersection traveling northbound on Kipling Street. Northbound traffic frequently runs the red light and nearly causes severe angle crashes, probably because the northbound motorists see the ramp intersection signal green for northbound traffic and do not pay attention to the northbound red indication at the frontage road. This is a concern regarding short signal spacing and perhaps the need for programmable signal heads at the I-70 eastbound ramp intersection.

EXISTING ROADWAY FEATURES

- Signage needs improved (9 comments)
 - Lane signage at the exit needs improved.
 - The sign at southbound Wadsworth to I-70 east and west is misleading. It states the right lane is for westbound I-70 only and is a continuous lane and also is the correct lane to go east on I-70 without a lane change.
 - Kipling Street southbound has poor signage indicating laneage (through versus turn lanes for eastbound on-ramp).
 - Need signage at 44th eastbound on-ramp to note accel lane ends unexpectedly.
 - Need to remove the “stay right except to pass” sign.
 - Need to install signs warning of heavy traffic ahead approaching westbound off-ramp.
 - People from westbound I-70 off-ramp don’t see the sign to get to the center right turn lane to go to westbound 49th Ave/I-70 Frontage Rd. Maybe another sign should be added where vehicles exit the I-70 westbound off-ramp.
 - Need signage to show that accel lane ends for the eastbound I-70 ramp merge at Ward Road.
 - Need a sign to prohibit blocking of South Frontage Road intersection.
- Accel and decel lanes/turn lanes are too short (6 comments)
 - Eastbound on-ramp doesn’t have enough acceleration distance (2 comments)
 - Collector/Distributor with cloverleaf ramps might help with ‘short’ ramps.
- At Wadsworth/I-70, the westbound on-ramp acceleration lane is too long.
- Sight distance is horrible approaching the westbound off-ramp.
- The entry ramp from Kipling to eastbound I-70 is way too short, and the cars want to move immediately across traffic to get to eastbound I-76 (2 comments)
 - The solution: 1) End the far left westbound lane of I-70 at the Carr St overpass. This lane causes more problems on westbound I-70 when it and the exit lane for Kipling end at the same time (5 lanes into 3 all at once). 2) Move all the concrete barriers from the slight curve just after eastbound I-70 and Kipling, to where that westbound lane was to just past the Carr St overpass, another slight curve (need to extend 2 highway signs as well). 3) Now do a lane shift on eastbound I-70 and the far left lane is now what used to be the shoulder of eastbound I-70, the barrier is where the westbound shoulder line

was and the westbound shoulder is where the westbound lane was. You now have the far right lane of eastbound I-70 to do as you wish. * Extend the on-ramp from Kipling to eastbound I-70 all the way to the exit lanes of Wadsworth.

- TxDOT provides on-ramps side-by-side with frontage roads. This would be a sensible approach to the weave problem on the north side of the interchange.
- Interchange needs more lanes to handle capacity during peak hours.
- Do not widen I-70. It's not needed if people would drive better.
- Need to keep up lane painting more frequently.

ALTERNATIVE MODES

- Maintain and improve bike and pedestrian connections.
- Trail and bike lanes will be great for walking and bicycling - would use it to access destinations.
- There is significant need to make changes to the roadway and bike/pedestrian facilities because this area has significant traffic and is not an environment that supports safe multimodal transportation.
- Need better marked crosswalks.
- Enforce pedestrian crossings if not at crosswalks.
- Schools should educate students to cross at crosswalks.
- Buses result in a backup on Kipling, maybe pullouts would help.
- Signing and electronic boards are important to communicate access to rail.
- Direct connection to Ridge Station needs to be clarified with interchange project.
- Live Well Wheat Ridge is a community initiative working to create healthier environments to reduce obesity. We focus on land use and transportation decisions to support access to healthy food and increase access to multimodal environments. Live Well Wheat Ridge could provide walking audits to document barriers to safe pedestrian environments in the study area. We will contact you if we schedule one in the study area. We could also give you feedback on current uses in the study area. For example, at 44th and Independence is the Jefferson Center for Mental Health. There are also several neighborhoods in the study area that have significant access issues due to I-70 and the interchange.
- Concern about walkability to reach grocery and retail that sells healthy foods.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Fire department north of Gold Line – potential emergency service response issue
- Switching cars at Coors Glass blocks the road – potential emergency service response issue
- Arvada Fire Dept. trucks turn off lights and siren when they encounter congestion at the interchange.
- Arvada Fire Dept. would like access to more I-70 cameras to view accidents. TOC coordination could benefit dispatch.

- Arvada FD signal pre-emption – compatibility older per-emption equipment with newer signal equipment
- Arvada Fire Dept. responds to high number of call from hotels in the northwest and southeast quadrants.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Concern regarding added traffic to Independence and possibly diverting traffic to Miller to balance north-south travel.
- Concerned about any increase in traffic and noise that could result from the new interchange and the negative impact that could have on the character of the neighborhood – keep with the Wheat Ridge 2020 vision and don't harm the residential/rural/small town nature of the area. Don't let what happened to 44th and I-70 happen here (more noise, light pollution and concrete).
- There has been a need for improvement for years, I hope it is improved.
- A multi-level interchange, like at I-25 and I-70, would work well at I-70 and Kipling.
- There should be more concrete noise walls along roads.
- CDOT should educate the public about driving in the correct lane. The left lane should be for fast drivers traveling long distances, the middle lane should be for trucks (all going 50 mph), and the right lane should only be for drivers immediately entering or exiting the freeway.
 - Staying in the correct lanes should be regulated by CDOT.
 - There should be a lot of multi-lingual signs about which lanes to drive in.