



PUBLIC HEARING MEETING SUMMARY

Date/Time: September 24, 2014, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location: Kearney Middle School, 6160 Kearney Street, Commerce City, Colorado

Attendees: 47

1. INTRODUCTION

The I-70 East Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) project team conducted public hearings on September 23, 24, and 25, 2014, as part of the ongoing community outreach process. Childcare and translators were available to all attendees. The primary purpose of the public hearings was to provide an update of recent EIS study developments, summarize the Supplemental Draft EIS document available for public review, and provide an opportunity for public comment.

The hearings included an open house and a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a formal public comment session. The PowerPoint presentation focused on the Supplemental Draft EIS alternatives, but most of the project information was included on the exhibits in the open house. There were three ways to provide comments at the hearings: (1) verbal comments could be made before the assembled audience and recorded by a court reporter, (2) private verbal comments could be made to a court reporter in a separate room, and (3) comment sheets also were provided for attendees in an effort to solicit written comments about the project. In addition, comments could be emailed or mailed via the postal system after the hearings through the end of the comment period on October 31, 2014. The project team will consider and respond to comments from the hearings as they begin the preparation of the Final EIS. These notes reflect the public hearing held on September 24, 2014.

2. PROJECT INFORMATION

The following subsections briefly describe the project.

a. Project Overview

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose improvements to I-70 between I-25 and Tower Road. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires projects that are federally funded and may have an impact on the environment to be analyzed through a rigorous process that allows the public to comment on the project.

b. Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to implement a transportation solution that improves safety, access, and mobility and addresses congestion on I-70. The need for the project results from several issues:

- Increased transportation demand
- Limited transportation capacity
- Safety concerns
- Transportation infrastructure deficiencies



I-70 East

c. Supplemental Draft EIS Alternatives Evaluated

The Supplemental Draft EIS evaluates the impacts to the project area of three alternatives: the No-Action Alternative, the Revised Viaduct Alternative, and the Partial Cover Lowered Alternative.

The No-Action Alternative includes existing, planned, and programmed roadway and transit improvements in the project area. It would rebuild the viaduct along the existing design without adding capacity, while expanding to the north or south.

In addition to the No-Action Alternative, two Build Alternatives with options are evaluated. The Build Alternatives are:

Revised Viaduct Alternative

- Expansion Options:
North or South
- Operational Options:
General-Purpose Lanes or Managed Lanes

Partial Cover Lowered Alternative

- Connectivity Options:
Basic or Modified
- Operational Options:
General-Purpose Lanes or Managed Lanes

The Revised Viaduct Alternative addresses safety issues with the aging viaduct by removing it and building a new structure that will add capacity, improve access, and increase safety.

The Partial Cover Lowered Alternative removes the existing I-70 viaduct between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard, lowering the highway below grade in this area. It adds capacity from I-25 to Tower Road by restriping and additional lanes. This alternative includes a cover over the highway between Clayton Street and Columbine Street to address environmental, social, and community issues.

Expansion Options refer to the North or South Options of the No-Action Alternative and the Revised Viaduct Alternative. These move the north edge of the highway north or the south edge of the highway south of the existing facility from Brighton Boulevard to Colorado Boulevard.

Connectivity Options for the Partial Cover Lowered Alternative—including a Basic Option and a Modified Option—provide different east-west and north-south street network and interchange configurations within the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood to support a livable, connected, and sustainable city.

Two **Operational Options** for the Build Alternatives are designed to help handle the added capacity from I-25 to Tower Road. These options are General-Purpose Lanes and Managed Lanes.

d. Preliminarily Identified Preferred Alternative

The Partial Cover Lowered Alternative with Managed Lanes Option has been preliminarily identified as the Preferred Alternative by CDOT and FHWA. This alternative would remove the deteriorating, 50-year-old viaduct between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard, rebuild I-70 below grade on the existing alignment, and place a nearly four-acre landscaped cover over the highway between Columbine Street and Clayton Street next to Swansea Elementary School. It also would add managed lanes in each direction of the highway from I-25 to Tower Road to improve mobility. The cover over the highway reconnects the neighborhoods with urban-landscaped areas that could include playgrounds, plazas, outdoor classrooms, and community gardens, all of which have received major public support during community meetings. Feedback provided during the Supplemental Draft EIS public comment period will be considered before formally selecting the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS.

e. Transportation Benefits

Improvements to I-70 have the potential to affect the surrounding transportation system, including other roadways, transit services, rail and motor freight, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. All Build Alternatives will:

- Provide increased capacity and reduce congestion
- Improve safety by widening shoulders and improving interchanges
- Replace aging infrastructure
- Reduce peak-period travel time for I-70 travelers

The No-Action Alternative would not adequately improve the transportation system to meet future needs of the corridor. Congestion would continue to worsen.

f. Resources Evaluated

Detailed studies were conducted to determine the effects of the project alternatives on the following built, natural, and social environmental resources:

- Social and economic conditions
- Environmental justice
- Land use
- Relocations and displacements
- Historic preservation
- Paleontological resources
- Visual resources and aesthetic qualities
- Parks and recreation
- Air quality
- Energy
- Noise
- Biological resources
- Floodplains and drainage/hydrology
- Wetlands and other waters of the U.S.
- Water quality
- Geology and soils
- Hazardous materials
- Utilities
- Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources
- Short-term use and long-term productivity

The project alternatives and design options benefit or impact each environmental resource differently. For example, while all the design options for the Build Alternatives improve transportation conditions,

individual design options impact more properties than others or benefit some resources more than others.

g. Next Steps

The project team will consider and respond to comments from the hearings as they begin the preparation of the Final EIS. During this process, the project team will select a preferred alternative by working closely with local jurisdictions, continuing to engage stakeholders and the public, and holding meetings with various project coordination groups. When the Final EIS is available, the formal comment period and public hearings will provide the community, stakeholders, and agencies an opportunity to comment on the Final EIS. After considering additional public input following the Final EIS, a Record of Decision will be issued by the FHWA that specifies the project that will be built.

3. SEPTEMBER 24 COMMERCE CITY PUBLIC HEARING

Of the 47 attendees at the September 24 Commerce City Hearing, four people provided written comments, 13 people provided verbal comments, and three people provided private verbal comments. The following subsections briefly describe what was presented at the hearing.

a. Summary of Meeting Stations

The public hearing information session was divided into nine different stations manned by staff members and project technical experts to answer questions for attendees. The following stations were included:

- **Welcome—Overview:** This station started with the sign-in table, where attendees signed in and received the evening’s agenda and the Project Snapshot handout. Then they were directed through a series of boards that presented a project overview, information about the I-70 East environmental process, a history of what happened after the public review of the 2008 Draft EIS, and a look at public involvement throughout the 11 years of the I-70 East Project.
- **Project Alternatives Overview:** This station presented a description of the three alternatives evaluated in the 2014 Supplemental Draft EIS—plus all of the potential options. A bird’s eye view of each alternative gave attendees a visual impression of what the alternatives would look like through the western side of the project area.
- **No Action Alternative:** This station presented a map of the No-Action Alternative from Brighton Boulevard to Colorado Boulevard, showing both the North Expansion Option and the South Expansion Option. It also showed Typical Sections—or transverse views—detailing the roadway configuration for both the North and South Options.
- **Revised Viaduct Alternative:** This station presented visuals of the Revised Viaduct Alternative from Brighton Boulevard to Dahlia Street, just past Colorado Boulevard. The Typical Section showed a view of the Managed Lanes Option.
- **Partial Cover Lowered Alternative:** This station presented a map from Brighton Boulevard to Dahlia Street showing the Partial Cover Lowered Alternative with Basic and Modified Options, with a Typical Section depicting the below-grade roadway.

- **Build Alternatives:** The Build Alternatives station showed maps and Typical Sections of the remainder of the project area from Colorado Boulevard east to Tower Road.
- **Preliminarily Identified Preferred Alternative:** This station identified the Partial Cover Lowered Alternative with Managed Lanes Option as the Preferred Alternative. Boards at this station presented the reasons why this alternative has been preliminarily identified. Boards also covered other potential design variations to intersections, frontage roads, the highway cover, and north-south connectivity. They also showed an artist’s drawings of cover uses and neighborhood enhancements.
- **Resources:** The Resources station presented study results of impacts to various environmental resources, including transportation/traffic, environmental justice, relocations and displacements, historic preservation, air quality, visual simulations, noise, drainage, and hazardous materials.
- **What’s Next?:** The last station presented project costs, explained how the High Performance Transportation Enterprise is pursuing innovative financing options, described the Final EIS process, and showed attendees how to stay involved.

4. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. Written Comments

There were four written comments provided on the night of the Commerce City Public Hearing.

#	Comment
1	I support the cover project.
2	I like the idea of having a tunnel. I lived in Swansea for 21 years and this is one of the best ideas I've heard of. It is safe for all of the community. Safe for the children when crossing the street. And plus it will improve the looks of the neighborhood.
3	<p>Don't put in round-abouts; go rounds; they aren't built big enough. People don't see them often enough to know how to use them. What about dividing trucks from cars. Some bridges in the east have trucks take the "low" road & cars if you want to be with the trucks. The majority of car travel goes on the "high" roads. Partial Cover Alt, Basic Option—may be the good fix—helps traffic flow—the people still can mostly live in their area—the school can stay in place.</p> <p>For the people who lose their home or business—give them a good-fair compensation for having to be uprooted, lose their home or business and have to start over somewhere else. You wouldn't want to be put into that situation and be cheated!!</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to see the plans.</p>
4	Colorado Motor Carriers Association (CMCA) supports the partial cover lowered alternative. CMCA strongly opposes any reroute or elimination of Steele/Vasquez Blvd. CMCA conferred with truck movement/access during construction and recommended needed improvements at Colo. Blvd/ I-270 Interchange.

b. Verbal Comments

There were 13 public verbal comments provided on the night of the Commerce City Public Hearing.

#	Comment
1	<p>Good evening. Thank you, CDOT, and the Federal Highway Foundation for the 13 years of process to work with the affected communities to find the right solution for Interstate 70. When the Draft came out [in 2008], Commerce City opposed the realignment alternatives, and wrote a strongly worded letter advocating for a supplemental document and a better approach to find the solution to address traffic and community PACTs. Commerce City actively participated with businesses and residents in a collaborative process to eliminate the realignment alternatives, and to reaffirm a route of the interstate, rerouting the interstate made absolutely no sense from an emergency management, traffic, or cross perspective. We still believe this is the case, and thank the agencies for the Supplemental Draft to acknowledge this is true. Also, support different efforts to revitalize Elyria, Swansea, and Globeville neighborhoods, Brighton Boulevard, and CDOT's effort to mitigate PACTs directly adjacent to the highway.</p> <p>While the Supplemental Draft EIS generally addresses big picture concerns, there are several significant changes the City might have to address in the final EIS before we can endorse the project. Commerce City supports the Partial Cover Lower Alternative, basic lower alternative option with the managed lanes as a preferred alternative. Our support for this alternative is routed within the SDEIS, which finds this alternative provides the best regional economic benefits, provides a significant number of jobs, and offers the best construction value. More importantly, most importantly, it preserves direct and directional interstate access to and from Vasquez Boulevard. This is the only alternative Commerce City and City Council will support. The City opposes moving interstate access from Vasquez to Colorado Boulevard because it has significant impacts to the city residents and businesses. It negatively impacts on truck traffic. Commerce City has a great amount of truck traffic heading from the north-south. It limits Commerce City's economic development opportunity to the benefit of Denver. And there is not adequate traffic analysis on Colorado Boulevard for the modification that eliminates Vasquez. The City has worked collaboratively with Denver and the state to identify alternatives that balance immediate neighborhood concerns, and keeps the interchange open. The City expects these discussions to reflect in the final EIS preferred alternative.</p> <p>Consistent with our previous comment, the City remains concerned with the lack of analysis or recognition of Commerce City PACT within the defined project area. The document fails to discuss the social, economic, or environmental justice, air quality, and noise impacts of associated mitigation within the City at Sand Creek, 50th Street, 56th Avenue, Central Park, Rose Hill, South Rose Hill, and the Stapleton Industrial Park neighborhoods. We also advocate for the City to be actively involved in the construction phasing plan, and approval for detours and changes to the interstate and the state highway within the city limits that may see traffic increases.</p>
2	<p>Everything that our city council and acting mayor said, with added comments from the community point of view.</p> <p>We talk about environment. I-70 destroyed one environment already when it came to a section from the stock show to Colorado Boulevard. And now you want to infringe on Adams County's opportunity that we have for growth, the planning that our city has planned for some of this area. We had input from both Cities' perspective as to the solutions that we came up with in this. And blocking the entrance from Vasquez Boulevard cannot be. We've been there. People are used to coming through there. Yes, work it through as far as what you want to do with the level portion of it. But Adams County people need access; Adams County businesses need access. We have</p>

#	Comment
	<p>shortcuts that people want to come through here. And we have enough participation there from all the cities. Boulder is coming through. And we don't talk about what we're going to do with 270. They're going to increase. Brighton, Thornton, Commerce City, we provide labor to Denver, and people need to get that.</p> <p>Now, we have gone through almost three or four mayors that now really they didn't have any participation in the decisions that they had. Adams County, Commerce City, we had the minimum amount of people there. And what happened? People decided, Okay, that's where it stays. Every time we change our minds—and this is I think the third time if you include Vasquez Boulevard in there—it costs us, the taxpayers, money. Because what are you going to do with 270, and what are you going to do when you start tearing it down? I've gone through three or four, I'm not sure now. And I have a reason to forget, because the trust factor is not there. Directors, we have the money, we got the input, and we feel good. We're ready to build. We're ready to go out there and get the money, the rest of the funds that we need. Now it's costing us money. And all Adams County wants is a fair share of what's happening. We want to compete worldwide with let's say the Olympics, but yet we can't build a road within six years? That's going to be tough. That's going to be kind. And we want that opportunity. Our city has bent backwards. Our county bended backwards, okay? And now we're saying 270 is separated, okay?</p>
3	<p>I'm going to take the opposite position of the last two speakers. I'm speaking because there is a better alternative to the three that have been advocated by CDOT that meets the need and purpose of the project that has not been given serious study by the Colorado Department of Transportation. That option is rerouting to I-70 over 270 and 76, and replacing it in Denver with a surface-level boulevard. I want to be very clear, this is not NIMBYism; there is nothing wrong with interstate highways. What's wrong is interstate highways going through densely populated residential neighborhoods. And as the previous speaker mentioned, that's exactly what happened in Denver, and it's destroyed those neighborhoods and continues to do so.</p> <p>Rerouting along 270 and 76, however, would not be through residential areas. 270, everybody admits, has to be rebuilt; it's a disaster right now. The grant submitted to study rebuilding that has just been rejected by the federal government, which means 270's rebuilding and expansion is at the bottom of the list right now. Rerouting the highway would put it at the top of the list to redevelop it, okay? Every developer that we have interviewed says that building a modern highway such as the highway that goes across Vail Pass or through Glenwood Springs would promote the kind of economic development through southern Adams County and Jefferson County that's appropriate for an interstate highway. That's the kind of development that exists at the Tech Center or at Interlocken, which is commercial development and light business development. It doesn't, I mean, that means jobs and economic development for Commerce City and Adams County at the same time it improves the quality of the neighborhoods through Denver. So it really is a win-win alternative.</p> <p>In conclusion then we just say that what's really unfortunate is that city officials in Commerce City, Adams County have consistently refused to meet with us, discuss this proposal. The point is we have consistently asked elected officials in this area to understand and allow us to promote the development of it to people in this area. They refused to do that. Thank you very much.</p>
4	<p>Hello. Thank you very much for letting me speak tonight. I'm an architect. I've been an architect in Denver for over 30 years, and have been working for the last three years on this project. I worked through the design, the urban design community at the American Institute of Architects, so I'm very familiar with the proposals here today.</p> <p>I'm here to speak against the current PCL proposal or any of the alternatives CDOT has proposed.</p>



#	Comment
	<p>They're shortsighted and ill conceived, and it's a poor plan for several reasons. Environmentally they're going to be damaging. It's cutting every utility through this lowest part of the city. Gas, electric, water, storm drainage, all are going to be cut and rerouted. The drainage is—this is the lowest spot in the city. We're cutting a potentially 40-foot trench lower than the river. And it will dam underground streams that are going through this region now. It will require pumping, surface retention ponds, taking more surface ground area that should be used for development. It will disturb polluted groundwater, and require deep watering, which is expensive, and certainly rain events in a trench like this could have disastrous consequences as was seen in the mountains around here. If one of those rain events happened in this area, imagine the consequences.</p> <p>Physically, we believe that this highway, by widening it, actually reduces access. 46th Avenue is a street now. There are 16 through streets in this area that allow people to get access back and forth underneath it. This will reduce it to four, so it's a highway with limited access on the roadway. The creation of side streets will actually bring traffic into neighborhoods rather than speed through, which would be more damaging. We don't believe that DRCOG models currently reflect current trends, which have been seen to be reducing since 2005, so they have not demonstrated the growth in this portion of the corridor that justify this widening.</p> <p>We believe the widening will degrade the neighborhoods, taking out, removing more houses and businesses, which is unfair to place the burden on a disadvantaged populous. This only looks at cars; it does not solve the transportation needs in the neighborhood. They need multiple modal networks to reduce the demands on the roadways. This design will actually increase the congestion. By improving level of service, it induces more traffic, forcing them into the mousetrap, which is still only one lane, and will not be widened by this project from what I've seen.</p> <p>We believe the toll lane is unfair patently. It allows those who are rich enough to afford to bypass the traffic to get through the areas that are congested, that will remain congested because of the mousetrap.</p> <p>We know too that P3, public-private projects, are going bankrupt around the country. One of the companies you're talking with, they've gone bankrupt in Albuquerque and in other cities. We believe this is a potential disaster for the City as well.</p> <p>We believe the design of the cover is shortsighted. Recall the tunnels that were built at Stapleton that caused backups and accidents frequently in that section. The east-west orientation will keep it in shadow for a good bit of the year. And you recall too the incident at I-25, which is east-west, where a microclimate caused a big pileup. We believe this is potentially going to happen here as well. We believe that in looking at other cities around the world and around the country that more and more of these highways are actually being taken down. Believe it or not, it is counterintuitive, but we believe this can work. Thank you very much.</p>
5	<p>Good evening. Thank you. I'm here representing the Sierra Club this evening. I'm here to actually kind of defend the clean, the air quality act because I think it's very, very important for CDOT to make sure it's in compliance with the air quality act and also, also NEPA, the National Environmental Protection Act. The First Supplemental Draft EIS is inadequate because it fails to assess the impact that emissions from the expanded highway will have on the health of the near-highway neighbors and secondly, compliance with the clean air act by failing to model the ambient concentrations of pollutants that EPA has identified as causing significant threats to public healths—health, excuse me.</p> <p>NEPA requires that an EIS use the best available science to assess all impacts that the project will</p>



#	Comment
	<p>have that significantly affect the human environment. If an EIS fails to disclose significant impacts and fails to consider alternatives and mitigation that can avoid or prevent those impacts, then the EIS is not in compliance with NEPA. In its latest version to the national air quality standards, the EPA identified two pollutants emitted from highways as posing significant risks to human health, PM 2.5—soot and fine particles—and nitrogen dioxide. Because of the significance of the health risks associated with these pollutants, the EPA now requires the states to establish monitors adjacent to highways to monitor public exposure to these pollutants. The health effects research that EPA relied upon to identify emissions from PM 2.5 and NOx from highways as causing significant health risks has since been augmented by additional research more recently showing that highway emissions cause health risks to fetuses, newborns, and the elderly. Because these pollutants present a significant health risk to the communities adjacent to I-70, the air quality technical report prepared for the SDEIS is inadequate because it fails to model the impact that these emissions will have on attainment of the national ambient air quality standards for PM 2.5 and NOx.</p> <p>This omission is particularly egregious because the emission inventory data developed for the PM 10 modeling shows that 50 percent of the PM 10 emitted from the build project alternatives is less than 2.5 micrometers in size, and is therefore likely to cause violations according to the law.</p> <p>I just wanted to point out that a study that Denver Environment and Health did is quite compelling. It shows that people are dying 3.5 years younger in these neighborhoods than in similar neighborhoods in the state. That means that 15,000 residents in these neighborhoods are losing 50,000 years of their lives. So we need to make sure that whatever alternative is finally implemented that these people's health and also our national environmental standards are upheld.</p> <p>Thank you very much. Oh, we'll be writing a longer comment by the way. The Sierra Club will write it probably in cooperation with other environmental organizations, and submit it via email.</p>
6	<p>I'm an urban design architect and a practicing architect in Denver. I've been here since 1984. I worked for the City and County of Denver as a design architect for two and a half years. I was involved in the I-25 widening project between the narrows all the way up to Alameda Boulevard and Sixth Avenue. That was done about nine, ten years ago.</p> <p>I would like to talk about the CDOT project. I'd like to mention a lot of things. The widening of the existing I-70 route, which CDOT has proposed, has numerous fatal flaws. First, it causes the destruction of 20 businesses and 53 residences. It causes a large five-year-long process of detoured traffic and massive detour traffic jams. It cannot be functional nearly as well while it's in construction as a reroute option. It will also, it also has had a large citizen and neighborhood organization resistance. It causes approximately—it doesn't have enough land for a right of way as it is; they're going to have to purchase land. It does not alleviate traffic problems for vehicles headed to the overall northern Colorado region; it does not allow for vehicles on their way to our vacation destinations, such as the mountains and ski resorts, to get around the large Denver traffic snarls. It's going right in the middle.</p> <p>It will likely cause drainage problems because of the depressed areas of the highway. It will likely cause icing problems for the westbound lanes throughout the whole area due to shadows; it will likely cause groundwater buildup due to the retaining walls that are going to be part of the depression. That groundwater is going to be retained, and also will be collecting in polluted ground soils.</p>



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6	<p>The widening proposes only one grass covered area, which is coincidentally near an elementary school. The pictures you're seeing around this room have more than one grassy area, but there's only one promised tunnel, not multiple promises. I'm calling that out because highway projects often include pedestrian and urban design amenities such as landscape areas, pedestrian safety zones, light pollution shielding, and public art. These amenities are often cut in construction to save money and time while building the projects. That's going to happen because we will run over budget with this solution, and they'll cut all the amenities. So forget about the park, forget about the tunnel; it won't be there. In fact, you can forget about the depression because they won't do it because why move dirt when you don't have to? They'll build it at grade and they'll put up isolation walls. We'll have the great wall of Denver.</p> <p>The loop option maximizes the existing 300-foot-wide right of ways of Highway 270 and 76. It can be built without the destruction of 20 businesses and 53 residences. It has little, if any, citizen and neighborhood opposition. It will only be passing through industrial and commercial areas of the cities. It can be built while I-70 still remains operational. That's huge. The limit—it also has enough room to be a 10-lane highway. It can alleviate traffic snarls, and it will provide connectivity for the area of I-70 that right now has currently been missing for 50 years.</p>
7	<p>Thank you. I just want to make it short and sweet. I believe that running the, running I-70 below grade is a good idea. It worked around Washington Park. I'm for the kids in the neighborhood.</p> <p>If you think that you're getting this tunnel as a gift to the neighborhood, you're all sorely mistaken. We need a new school that would be away from this highway. It would be less pollution, it'd be less money, it'd be less money spent trying to mitigate all this pollution and all. If you want some bridges, put the bridges all across streets that go through one side to the other. We don't need to keep separating the neighborhoods north and south. There are, we can use a lot of that money too that's left over from putting this, this park that we don't need—there's a park two blocks to the north, there's a park two blocks to the south. We don't need our kids playing on top of a freeway. Nobody's going to see this park. Nobody's going to see this park when they're driving on the freeway. You're just going to see an embankment you're going under. It's going to be, it's going to be very dangerous. That's why they turned around and took Stapleton's tunnels down years ago. I'm sure a lot of you residents know that. You can't see it when you're coming through it in the morning and the night. People are getting killed in accidents upon accidents happening because of this tunnel. The money that we save on this tunnel can also be used to help mitigate all this extra pollution that's going to go into the residents' houses without making them pay for it out of their own pocket.</p> <p>I'm pretty much finished. I just wanted to bring that up so people have a clear view that this tunnel is not a gift to Elyria and Swansea and Globeville, it's a detriment. I'm sure in the next 10 or 15 years after it's built you're going to see how bad of an idea that was. Denver is going to be, oh, we're so forward thinking at this time and it's going to be so great, and we'll soon find out it's more of a boondoggle. But thank you for your time.</p>



#	Comment
8	<p>Okay. I have lost a lot of sleep over this business because I live at 3330 Bruce Randolph, 10 blocks from I-70. And there are a number of problems. Unless the mousetrap is completely uprooted and changed, this project seems to propose to create the largest start-and-stop parking lot right in what I consider a part of Denver that I love and support. I am objecting to, you know, I'm not saying that Don Hunt doesn't have good intentions. But to uproot 55 houses of Hispanic people because they won't fight back is, I think, immoral. And if we can't do better than that—okay.</p> <p>Also, what in this proposal is going to improve air quality around I-70? Because I am aware of those who say that the air quality is so bad around I-70 that those who live near it expect three years and ten months less life expectancy. Is this not a problem? Is this not a problem? I mean, you know, why do we, why do we think people should be killed early in order to have this coterie of diesel trucks that are, I think, part of the problem. I have heard that, well, if the city council would move, the diesel trucks could be moved to the 270/I-76 area, and this would remove half of the air pollution. And if that were part of the proposal, then it might make kind of sense. But killing people just because it says we're saving jobs, making things nice for the trucking companies, doesn't impress me. Thank you.</p>
9	<p>Hi. I'm a longtime Denver resident. I actually own my parents' house that they bought in 1940 on Elliott a half a block off I-70. I saw I-70 being built, and have owned the house now it is affected by currently. The expansion being proposed is something that we're not in favor of.</p> <p>We really would like to see that study being done because I-76 to 225, that's the original plan that I-70 was supposed to go through in the 1960s, and got diverted through central Denver, and has disturbed north Denver as well as Swansea and all the neighborhoods along the viaduct for the last 45 years, 50 years. That's what we would like to see, that there would be more studies done in moving the highway to the north. There are many cities around the country that have successfully diverted highways going through a large population area. By expanding the highway, it's going to cause more traffic concentrated in a high population area, which could cause all kinds of health issues. I can tell you my father—who never smoked—died from asthma because he lived a half block off I-70. I don't smoke. I kind of sound like I have asthma, but I don't right now.</p> <p>But not only that, I-70 has deteriorated throughout the years. If you drive along it, nothing is kept up. The fences are not kept up. The overgrowth of trees are ridiculous. None of that is kept up anymore.</p> <p>I come from a family of highway people. My grandfather built the Pikes Peak road. My father worked on the Million Dollar Highway, so I know what is involved in the construction of highways and how it affects people. I also don't understand why this would be a less expensive project in the long run, because if you're going to dig a trench down through the middle of the city, you're going to have a lot more maintenance cost 50 years down the road, 60 years down the road than having it diverted out to the north where it already, the highway department already owns the property. They don't have to put, we don't have to buy 50 some homes and 20 some businesses to do this expansion.</p> <p>So that's about all I want to say. Thank you very much.</p>



#	Comment
10	<p>Hi. I have not always lived up in north Denver, but I lived in a more affluent area I guess you would say in Denver where this would not have even been considered. And I just feel like it's really inappropriate of you, because that area that this is going through is a lower socioeconomic group of people who are afraid to speak up a lot of times.</p> <p>I also work as an RN, and I have personally seen small children in asthma attacks. And I have talked to those parents saying, "You know you have to keep your child away from fumes, away from smoke, cigarette smoke, car fumes, that type of thing." And you know how difficult it is to say that to a parent that you know cannot even afford to get their child out of a neighborhood like that? To look a parent in the eye, and have that parent say to me, "I can't move anyplace else. I can't afford anyplace else." And yet you're going to increase the amount of traffic, increase the amount of fumes there? To me that is very wrong. I also don't understand.</p> <p>With this they're also saying that there's going to be toll lanes where people who have the opportunity and the good paying jobs can pay money and go faster and get to where they need to faster, but the people who actually live in that community who are lower socioeconomic would not be able to afford that. I have lived in Chicago where they did have private people, private companies manage the tolls, which is what you guys are talking about. And ask anybody in Chicago what they think of that. And they will tell you that it was a horrible mistake by the government. So please don't do that. I think that would be adding insult to injury to those people who live in that neighborhood.</p> <p>And again, the other health issue, that it's going to decrease my life by three years, I think my three years are just as important to me as they are to you and as they are to anyone in the government that are making this decision. So I would please ask of you, think about doing a study to see what it would do, the impact on the community to move this up to the I-76 reroute. It only makes sense to me.</p> <p>You're going to be spending five years building this, rerouting people on I-70. It's already difficult during rush hour to get through I-70 in that area. Over the five years, it's going to make it even more difficult. I don't agree with that. It's going to be a swimming pool down there. How are you going to address the ice issues in the winter on the tunnel? You know, I just don't quite understand the thinking of it. And I just please ask you guys to consider that reroute. Things don't have to be written in stone. Big business does not need to tell us, as the individuals that are actually paying the taxes, what should be done with that highway. You know, it's, it's sad that we listen to business more so than the people that are actually living there. Thank you for listening.</p>
11	<p>I live in northwest Denver. I won't take anything like four minutes because I'll put some more detailed comments in writing. But I wanted to give some overall comments, one of which started 20 years ago when I worked on a community project with a fellow who went on to become the executive director of the American Association of Transportation Planners who said to me, "They would never design the interstate system today the way they did it in the 50's because it crushed communities." So when I saw the layout for this trench concept, I said, "That won't last long because that's been rethought many times." And so I'm terribly disappointed to know that it's not being rethought, but it's being carried forward.</p> <p>So as a person who was born and raised in rural Colorado where I think we will see some damage out there. When the bridge maintenance funds are used over the course of 20 years, rural Colorado will be the people who will pay for that. But the folks who will pay the dearest price are the folks that live right next door in the communities that we are in right now, and their children are breathing very polluted air. And so I put all that down somewhere else. But highways shouldn't</p>



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	<p>crush community. And there is no reason that this can't go around. The reason they started building the beltways was because they decided it wasn't a good idea to run highways right through communities. And I would just like to say thanks to Baltimore who said, "No, you're not coming through our neighborhood." They began to rethink that. I think that there's time for you to explore other possibilities. But I really think that this expense will not serve the citizens of any part of Denver well at all, and I encourage you to rethink this. And I look forward to communicating more later in writing.</p>
12	<p>Good evening. First of all, welcome to Kearney Middle School. I'm a proud Kearney Bobcat. Born and raised in Commerce City my entire life. So welcome to my old stomping grounds and middle school. I am the State Representative for Commerce City and southern Adams County, so basically all of the southern unincorporated neighborhoods of Adams County, and represent the areas that are being talked about in terms of a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement.</p> <p>I come tonight to advocate my support for the partially lower covered option on the current alignment that is currently being expounded upon or proposed by CDOT. I say that for a couple of reasons. One, I've not heard from anyone in my community that actually has advocated or wants to see the additional traffic that comes with combining two major highways in the metro area. 270 and I-76 already cannot handle the traffic counts that are on those roads. And to think that we can expand and put the additional traffic from I-70 onto those roads I think is a huge problem. The other is that I would like to advocate for the continued access from Vasquez Boulevard onto I-70. That is a major corridor for many Commerce City businesses. Transportation logistics and distribution is a major lifeblood of this community, and we need to make sure that we maintain the proper access.</p> <p>I certainly sympathize with folks that are affected by I-70. But I don't think the answer is, you know, there are areas of Commerce City and southern Adams County that are just as economically disadvantaged, just as diverse ethnicity-wise as those areas of Denver. The answer is not to advocate for putting, removing one burden from one disadvantaged community onto another. I've personally walked those neighborhoods that abut next to I-76. I think some of the comments that suggest that there are no residents or there's not as many residents in those corridors I think is misguided because I've walked them and talked to those folks. And they already experience the challenges of living next to a highway. And to advocate for increasing that traffic flow, increasing the environmental concerns I think is something they are particularly concerned about.</p> <p>So I certainly want to advocate my support for the partially lower covered option. I think it is the best option that's currently being addressed by CDOT. And Commerce City recognizes that too. That's why we have early on advocated for the partially lower covered option so we can do some work to reunite those neighborhoods that are traditionally divided by I-70. Thank you for your time tonight. Appreciate your time.</p>



#	Comment
13	<p>Good evening. I'm a resident of Adams County. I'm here to lend support for the proposed I-70 plan, and to oppose a reroute of I-70 up to I-270 and I-76. Adams County Economic Development, as a member of the North Area Transportation Alliance, supported a letter of opposition to the reroute last year, and a letter of endorsement for the proposed plan as it currently has been presented. I find it ironic that the group that proposes for the reroute would wish on the citizens of Adams County the ills that they wish to get rid of in their own neighborhood. And I also sympathize with them, but that is not the solution, to simply move the problem to somebody else's neighborhood. Adams County residents are very aware of the proposal. And we're not on record for having opposed the reroute because no one has proposed it as the preferred alternative. But there are communities that will oppose it, and there are businesses.</p> <p>The area that's along 76 and 270 is wrought with landfills, with a wastewater treatment plant, a river, a creek, canals, and a lot of businesses. A refinery. I know that SunCor probably would not want to have a bigger, wider, closer highway to the refinery for safety reasons, so we don't find that it's a viable alternative at all to the I-70 plan. We lend our endorsement to the currently proposed plan. Thank you.</p>

c. Private Verbal Comments

There were three verbal comments made privately and recorded by a court reporter on the night of the Commerce City Public Hearing.

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1	<p>As an urban planning architect for the City and County of Denver, I was assigned to the I-25 widening and drainage improvement project from 2002 to 2004. I also worked on the Union Station Master Plan and the Colfax Master Plan while working at the City and County of Denver. I've been licensed more than 22 years as an architect, and I've served on the AIA Colorado Urban Design Committee. Highway project expansion plans often include pedestrian and urban design amenities such as landscaped areas, pedestrian safety elements, light pollution shielding, and public art. These amenities are often cut in construction to save money and time while building the project.</p> <p>The widening of I-70 proposal CDOT is proposing includes an 800-foot tunnel with a park area above and several smaller tunnel/park crossings over the highway. It also includes lowering areas of the roadway more than 21 feet below the existing grade. The loop also has an existing right-of-way large enough for a 10-lane highway throughout. The loop option better serves to alleviate overall Northern Colorado traffic by providing a way around the central congested areas of Denver. The loop option better serves travelers heading east and west of Denver by taking it away from the city center. The loop option improves the neighborhoods and commercial community with continuity that has been missing for 50 years where the viaduct has been existing.</p> <p>A plaza/boulevard would be a new replacement in the area vacated by the I-70 viaduct. And the loop option needs no conductivity amenities such as a tunnel/park space, as little residential areas would be affected by the new highway.</p> <p>You can find more information regarding my comments outlined in elements of a study performed by unitednorthmetrodenver.com. You can also see other options at reimaginei70.com.</p>

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2	<p>One of my biggest concerns about the alternatives that they have chosen, which is the underground construction, is that it is taking a lot more money to construct such a big highway than to use that money for resourceful construction around the neighborhood.</p> <p>The other thing that I'm very concerned of is that there is local businesses there that are going to be very affected and homes that are also going to be forced to be moved because of the highway construction that is going to be taking place. It just seems that it would make more sense for them to do a rebuild of the highway basically just the way it is with a couple of more security walls to hold in some of the noise barrier and some of the particles that I think that there's a lot of people that are concerned about versus the underground choice that they're having because I think that the particles are going to be there regardless of how we choose the highway.</p> <p>If we choose the highway underground, the particles are still going to move up with wind or traffic, so they'll still be in people's homes and inside of their houses or businesses. And if you build the highway up above, the particles are still going to come down and are going to be inside the people's homes and businesses and ground.</p> <p>So, I think that one of the biggest concerns was the research for the alternative route was something that I believe that should be researched a little bit more deeply.</p>
3	<p>I personally think as well that this project that they are about to do or considering doing kind of sucks. First of all, to build a bigger highway in a residential area I think is not good because they're going to be taking out a lot of people's homes as well as the businesses as well that are around there. There are people that have been living there, in the neighborhood—or their neighborhoods—have been living there for quite a long time, and I don't think it's right that, you know, just because they want to build a bigger highway that they push everybody out for the highway. I think they need to build it just the way it is now, just three lines in each direction and leave it at that.</p> <p>To build a boulevard, there's a lot of traffic that's going to be going through the—or actually through our—residential area as well. And so I don't think that that's really an option.</p> <p>As well as the underground, I think that the underground highway that they want to—or are looking at building as well—is not good either just simply because of all the pollution as well is going to be staying underneath that. And to build something on top of it like playgrounds or whatever they want to build on top of it is not good either because that's very unsafe to have children playing on top of the highway.</p>