

Advisory From:



I-70 East

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MEDIA ADVISORY

CDOT Response to CoPIRG Report Released Jan. 19, 2016

The Facts:

I-70 East has seen no significant safety or capacity improvements in the 50 years since the highway was constructed.

I-70 East doesn't function efficiently as a highway today with 2016 traffic volumes and will only get worse with the volumes we expect in the future. Today, I-70 is congested up to 10 hours a day and carries up to 220,000 vehicles per day.

If CDOT does nothing, this problem will grow a lot worse. It could take up to 65 minutes to travel just 12 miles on I-70 in 2035.

CDOT is proposing a long-term, sustainable solution that would add -- as the Phase 1 project -- one additional lane in each direction. This new capacity would be provided as a managed (or Express Lane) so that travelers can have an additional choice and be guaranteed a congestion-free trip years into the future.

This strategy has proven successful in corridors across the metro area; providing much-needed congestion relief while also providing a way to encourage carpooling and transit.

Such lanes also give us future capacity to implement broader technology solutions such as connected and self-driving vehicles.

I-70 East is a high-growth corridor in a high-growth state.

40-50% population growth is expected statewide over next 20 years.

58% increase in employment along the corridor over the next 20 years.

I-70 is the state's backbone, and it's the only east/west interstate. It connects DIA to downtown and the eastern plains to the western slope.

1,200 businesses located along I-70 today are employing an estimated 22,000 people.

While eliminating the aging 50-year-old viaduct is an important aspect of the project, it simply does not make sense to expend the resources we would need to replace the viaduct and ignore the congestion we see out there today; let alone future projected growth.

CDOT used the latest modeling data provided by the Denver Regional Council of Governments for DRCOG's 2035 model. CDOT reviewed an even newer model released recently by DRCOG and found that the two models had less than a 5% difference in overall traffic volumes. This minor difference would not change the proposed solutions to this corridor.

Status and Next Steps:

Thirteen years of study is coming to a close this year with the issuance of a Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision, which completes the study process.

Four developer teams have been selected to respond to a Request for Proposal, which will be out in final form in fall 2016.

The Phase 1 project is estimated to cost \$1.2 billion and reflects a 100-year investment in this critical corridor.

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