

# DRAFT

## Subtopic H2: Public Involvement Effort

Forty public and agency comments were received for the H2: Public Involvement Effort subtopic. From those 40 comments, 21 common concern statements were created. Themes associated with the H2: Public Involvement Effort subtopic include:

- FHWA and CDOT should considering holding additional public hearings.
- SWEEP, ALIVE, the traffic model peer review committee, and MCAC should have been involved in the Draft PEIS process.
- The public involvement program was inadequate and did not actively seek public input on issues such as impacts of alternatives and avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating the adverse impacts.
- The public involvement process was not in compliance with NEPA and FHWA regulations regarding involvement of local governments in the decision-making process.
- The PEIS refers to input from the MCAC but does not document the issues raised by the group
- CDOT has not taken into account the views of the I-70 mountain communities.
- Because many steps of the EIS process were missed, it is time to bring back local governments, affected communities, and the public to discuss elements of the supplement.
- CDOT should make the Final PEIS more public friendly.
- The public was not given a meaningful way to comment when there were 10 alternatives displayed as possible preferred alternatives.

| CCS No.                                       | Public Involvement Common Concern Statements  |
|---|---|
| <b>Subtopic H2: Public Involvement Effort</b> |   |
| <b>Additional Public Hearings</b>             |   |
| H2-a  | FHWA and CDOT should consider holding additional public hearings. This would provide an opportunity for the public to provide more complete and more fully developed input.   |
| <b>Interaction with the Public</b>            |   |
| H2-b  | <p>CDOT has not conducted an adequate public involvement program and has not actively sought public input on such important measures as disclosing likely impacts of alternatives, and avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating the adverse impacts.</p> <p>CDOT miscommunicated several advertisements regarding the public hearings, including the wrong time and the wrong locations.</p> <p>No public hearings have been held in Boulder, Longmont, Loveland, or Denver; and Denver is going to be greatly affected. Therefore, the comment and review period should be extended, and additional locations for hearings should be added.</p> <p>CDOT did not provide Evergreen residents access to the Draft PEIS in an easily accessible location, such as the public library or a more central location.</p> <p>Additionally, there is nothing in the newspapers to open discussion on the I-70 PEIS.</p> |
| <b>Local Government Involvement</b>           |   |
| H2-c  | <p><b>Idaho Springs</b></p> <p>The Draft PEIS public involvement process has not complied within FHWA NEPA compliance regulations and policies regarding the involvement of local governments in the decision-making process. The city of Idaho Springs has been systematically and consistently excluded from significant and/or meaningful participation in the decision-making process.</p>  |

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| H2-d   | Georgetown and Silver Plume<br>Georgetown and Silver Plume were not involved in planning, and are not happy with the designs. The town of Silver Plume acknowledges transportation planning as a crucial tool for managing growth and development in the I-70 Regional Planning Organizations, such as DRCOG, but the town strongly believes that local jurisdiction input should also be included in the planning.   |
| <b>Preferred Group of Alternatives</b>       |   |
| H2-e   | Displaying 10 alternatives as possible preferred alternatives does not allow the public a meaningful way to comment on whatever the preferred alternative is. Ten alternatives are far too many to deal with at a programmatic level. It is appropriate for FHWA to require CDOT to identify its proposal and publish it in a supplemental EIS. That would be the only way in which the public has a meaningful opportunity to comment.   |
| <b>Oral Comment</b>                          |   |
| H2-f   | The oral comment time should not be limited to 3 minutes per person; more time should be allotted to those who are more expert but do not work for CDOT. The limitation on time to provide oral comment is an attempt to stifle public input, not encourage public input.<br>There should also be a period of time to ask questions.  |
| <b>Mine Waste MOU</b>                        |   |
| H2-g   | The public, and particularly the interested parties, should be involved in writing the MOU to CDPHE on mine waste, rather than having the MOU written strictly among FHWA, CDOT, and CDPHE without any input.   |
| <b>Mountain Corridor Advisory Committee</b>  |   |
| H2-h   | The PEIS refers to input from the MCAC but does not document the issues raised by the group, the response to the issues, and the role that the advice of the group played in the selection of the alternatives or preparation of the documents.<br>The MCAC was not handled as an interactive process that would include and resolve local issues. Numerous members felt that most of their input was not taken seriously and not acted on. There were periods of more than a year when the MCAC/TAC did not meet. CDOT will be misrepresenting the MCAC if any further PEIS documents indicate that it was successful in meeting the intent of NEPA; this effort was not continuous, cooperative, or comprehensive. It also constitutes a failure in communications. |
| H2-i   | The MCAC did not participate in the review of cost, travel demand, and environmental data. The MCAC was not involved in the discussion and revision of the purpose and need statement.  |
| <b>Peer Review Committee Recommendations</b> |   |
| H2-j   | What were the recommendations of the traffic model peer review committee and how were they addressed?   |
| <b>Termination of SWEEP</b>                  |   |
| H2-k   | The SWEEP became a meaningless exercise that was abruptly terminated by CDOT before it was allowed to complete its mission.   |
| <b>Advisory Committees</b>                   |   |
| H2-l   | CDOT failed during the planning phases of this project by ignoring the advice of their advisory committees, especially SWEEP and ALIVE, and by being unwilling to negotiate in good faith on areas of disagreement.   |

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| <b>CCS No.</b>   | <b>Public Involvement<br/>Common Concern Statements</b>  |
| <b>ALIVE Committee Participation</b>                         |  |
| H2-m   | The text on page F-45 in Appendix F of the Draft PEIS stated that CDOT and FHWA will be closing off discussions of ideas that cannot or will not be considered in the decision-making process with the ALIVE group. Will the criteria that CDOT and FHWA have/use be available to the public before such meetings? Will the meeting notes be available to the public in a timely fashion?  |
| <b>Supplemental PEIS</b>                                     |  |
| H2-n   | Provide details of a supplement to the PEIS, including date of announcement and extent of public involvement.<br><br>Because many steps of the EIS process were missed, it is time to bring back local governments, affected communities, and the public to discuss elements of the supplement.<br><br>The Final PEIS should not be issued until the public has had a chance to review the reactions and further re-studies of such concerns.  |
| <b>Focus of Public Outreach</b>                              |  |
| H2-o   | Public outreach should focus on the millions who use the highway every year, and thus are inconvenienced by daily congestion, not the few people who choose to live close to the highway.  |
| <b>More Public-Friendly Final PEIS</b>                       |  |
| H2-p   | Make the Final PEIS more public friendly. The tiny font and reams of paper made the Draft PEIS extremely difficult to get through. The meaning behind NEPA is to make it easy for the public to understand and participate. As an example, CDOT provided difficult to read documents and no fax numbers.   |
| <b>I-70 Coalition</b>  |  |
| H2-q   | The I-70 Coalition is not a complete and proper representation of governmental jurisdictions in the PEIS study area. It did not involve members of environmental or other nongovernmental organizations or any diversity of special interest groups. Because it is a limited special interest, its comments and reports to CDOT must be treated in such a context. The efforts of the I-70 Coalition are supplemental at best and should be treated as such. The Coalition process and its findings must be viewed as an interesting exercise in "political facility engineering" and as disqualified from contributing to the NEPA process. The I-70 Coalition MOU is relevant to public participation. |
| <b>Front Range Involvement</b>                               |  |
| H2-r   | Both general public and governmental units in the Front Range have remained largely uninvolved. CDOT has not been proactive and has not made much use of the media in generating interest in the PEIS. This condition must change if the intent and requirements of NEPA are to be complied with.  |
| <b>Lack of Public Participation Concerning PEIS Analyses</b> |  |
| H2-s   | Certain analyses that are questioned in the Draft PEIS would have been more effective with proper public participation.  |
| <b>Communications with Sierra Club</b>                       |  |
| H2-t   | The Sierra Club sent an email to CDOT during the public comment period, requesting a general meeting to elicit questions and answers from environmentalists and others in the Front Range and requesting the distribution of new post-Draft information. The Sierra Club representative was asked to state what material was being requested and received an email in response stating that the request was being considered. As of May 17, 2005, no further communication has been provided. This contravenes the principles of acceptable public participation.  |

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| Disregard for Community Concerns |   |
| H2- u                            | CDOT has not taken into account the views of the I-70 mountain communities. It appears that CDOT has considered only widening alternatives, while the alternatives preferred by the I-70 communities have not received adequate consideration and some solutions, like Intelligent Transportation Systems, have received no consideration at all. |