



## Meeting Minutes

Project: I-70G Edwards Interchange Upgrade (Phase 2)

Subject: PLT Meeting #1

Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Location: Eagle County Building, 500 Broadway Eagle County, CO 81631

Attendees: See attendance list attached

### **1.0 Introductions**

Kurt kicked off the meeting, with introductions and briefly gave a project overview and summarized the agenda in the attached PowerPoint.

### **2. Project Background**

Kurt briefly discussed I-70G Phase 1 and the resulting project successes. He then briefly covered the Phase 2 scope, including the termini – (Miller Ranch Road to US 6) and known project development objectives; accommodating both the railroad and river crossing; providing multi-modal solutions (cars, bikes, pedestrians, and buses).

He talked about the partnerships between CDOT, Eagle County and Edwards Metro Districts that has contributed to past project successes and creates a foundation for Phase 2. Members of the PLT re-iterated that a primary objective for this project and the Town of Edwards is to balance the needs of pedestrians and vehicles.

### **3. CSS Process**

Kurt handed the meeting over to Wendy to discuss the I-70 CSS process that will be used on the project which allows for a collaborative decision making process. Wendy described the process originated from a commitment made in the I-70 Mountain Corridor 2011 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and that these commitments will be carried forward on this Edwards Phase 2 project.

It is a 6-step process and highlights of the process include a robust stakeholder coordination program with the public and other stakeholders at key decision points.

The stakeholders including the Project Leadership Team (PLT) will be asked to identify values and issues that should be considered during project development. This is Step 1 (Define Desired Outcomes) of the 6 step process and the PLT will be asked to participate in this step later in the meeting. Wendy quickly summarized the other 6 steps that we will undertake throughout the entire process and referred the group to the I-70 CSS website for more information. <https://www.codot.gov/projects/contextsensitivesolutions>

Wendy noted that by the next meeting in August we will have completed Step 1 and will enter into Step 2 - Endorse the Process and Step 3 - Establish the Criteria. She added the critical issues and values that we identify as a group will help shape the criterion which supports the transparent process we aim to achieve. In Step 4, we will develop Alternatives and in Step 5 we will Evaluate, Select and Refine Alternative by considering avoidance, minimization and mitigation of impacts.

The final step is Step 6 – Finalize Documentation, this step allows for clear documentation of how project decisions were made. Lastly, Step 6 includes documentation of “Lessons Learned” at end of process so that CDOT can improve upon the process if needed for future project development activities.

Ken Marchetti said the CSS process sounds similar to the community process used for the Phase 1 project which had broad community endorsement. He added that he believes engaging the PLT by using the CSS process for Phase 2 will work well. Eva Wilson (Eagle County) added that working through the Edwards Community Authority has been successful for engaging the community in the Project and they also have monthly meetings. The ECA meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month) are held after the PLT to disseminate information if beneficial.

#### **4. Role of PLT and Others**

Wendy described how the PLT will lead the process, champion CSS and enable decision making as the project progresses. The PLT does not make final decisions; rather CDOT and Eagle County will make the decisions with input from the PLT. For more detailed technical issues, the PLT may choose to engage a Technical Team comprised of subject matter experts. Currently we have place holders for two technical team meetings.

Wendy distributed a standard PLT checklist and highlighted roles and responsibilities of the PLT. Most importantly, members need to be committed to attend meetings and bring information back to their constituents for feedback. Conference call opportunities will be provided for all future PLT meetings in the event that you cannot physically attend. We also ask for timely review of draft materials submitted to you we can be prepared to discuss and maximize efficiencies at the PLT meetings. PLT Meetings will be advertised and the public will always be invited to attend.

Wendy and Kurt reviewed the PLT Roster and asked the group if we had the right representatives in the room for the PLT. There were no comments. We will ask the PLT to help identify technical team members, if we convene a technical team, similarly with Issue Task Forces. These are typically convened when and if there is an issue which needs resolution quickly and that can not be resolved by the PLT alone.

Wendy asked Catherine Ventling CDOT Environmental Team Leader from Region 3 to describe how the CSS process integrates with NEPA requirements. She said she will ensure the compliance with environmental laws and regulations are followed for Federal

Funding or other federal actions. She stated that the CSS process mirrors the NEPA process, essentially the terms are different but the intent is the same.

Wendy reviewed the upcoming opportunities for public outreach. There are two Public open houses (August 27<sup>th</sup> and Jan 4<sup>th</sup>) planned and a newsletter update slated for next March. Meetings will be held at the Miller Ranch Recreation Center. There will also be project updates provided on the county website. At the first open house, we will solicit input on core values, critical issues and known environmental issues. The second open house will be used to depict short-listed alternatives and the screening process. The March newsletter will describe the recommended alternative.

One-on-one property meetings and small group meetings will be held as needed.

### **5. Step 1: Define Desired Outcomes**

Wendy asked the group to participate in a discussion to define desired outcomes. Part of this exercise is to devise a Context Statement, identify Core Values – and Critical Issues. These are then incorporated into the project criteria for review. She referred them to the example flowchart included in the PowerPoint. Core Values and Critical Issues are similar to the project goals and objectives used in typical planning processes.

A draft Context Statement was provided based on information collected to date. Ken and Eva shared a Vision statement developed by the Edwards Community for the master plan that was similar. The group directed Wendy to combine these statements and provide one statement to the PLT group through email before next meeting. **Action Item: Project Team will provide a revised Context Statement and distribute to the PLT 1 week prior the next PLT meeting.**

The group discussed the Core Value examples and the Critical Issue examples listed in the PowerPoint. These were generated from review of existing studies and the project scope included in the Request for Proposals. Wendy suggested we identify critical issues first and then “roll them up” a level to see if we can categorize them by mutually agreed upon Core Values.

The PLT worked together to identify the following Critical Issues:

- Connectivity and balancing cars, bike, pedestrian, and bus across the railroad and Eagle River and at the intersection of US 6
- Eagle River preservation of water quality, wildlife, recreation, wetlands, riparian habitat (Safe Crossing)
- Safety – Bike, Pedestrian and vehicle interaction – controlling speeds – traffic calming
- Enhancing Town Character (small town feel) – complementing Phase 1 but not duplicating – through aesthetics and landscaping
- Minimizing impacts to property owners
- Addressing adjacent access points
- Preserving the Natural Environment (ecosystems)

- Constructability – financial feasibility, minimal impacts during construction to the public and businesses

## **6. Next Steps**

Wendy and Kurt agreed to try to summarize these issues into “Critical Issue” statements and categorize the issues into “Core Values” for review by the PLT prior to the next meeting. We will also use this information to start crafting the evaluation criteria. Wendy and Kurt will provide a list of Critical Issues listed above and any others for PLT consideration 1 week prior to next PLT Meeting.

The group discussed distribution of materials and decided draft products would be e-mailed to the PLT for review and finalized deliverables would be posted to a project website hosted through the county.

**Action Item: The Project Team is finalizing a Draft Work Plan for the CSS Process and will distribute to the PLT 1 week prior the next PLT meeting.**

Next PLT meeting is August 12<sup>th</sup> and Public Open House is August 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **7. Public Comments**

Wendy asked the public participants if they had any questions or comments for the PLT.

A couple from the residential area of Arrowhead commented that the existing US6 signalized intersection is terrible for motorists and pedestrians and something needs to be done to fix it.

Fritz Schmidt made a statement regarding the courtesy of drivers towards pedestrians crossing in roundabouts. He feels roundabouts do not work and the primary reason he came to this meeting was to voice that he does not want to see a roundabout as a future condition at US6.

Brendan Feery (FHWA) let the group know that FHWA has resource specialists from the 50 states on staff that study safety and can be called upon for expertise innovative designs and safety if the need is there. The PLT can consult with these resources during this process.

The meeting adjourned with = Eva noting that the next PLT meeting will be in EOC room located across the hall.

