

US 6/Wadsworth



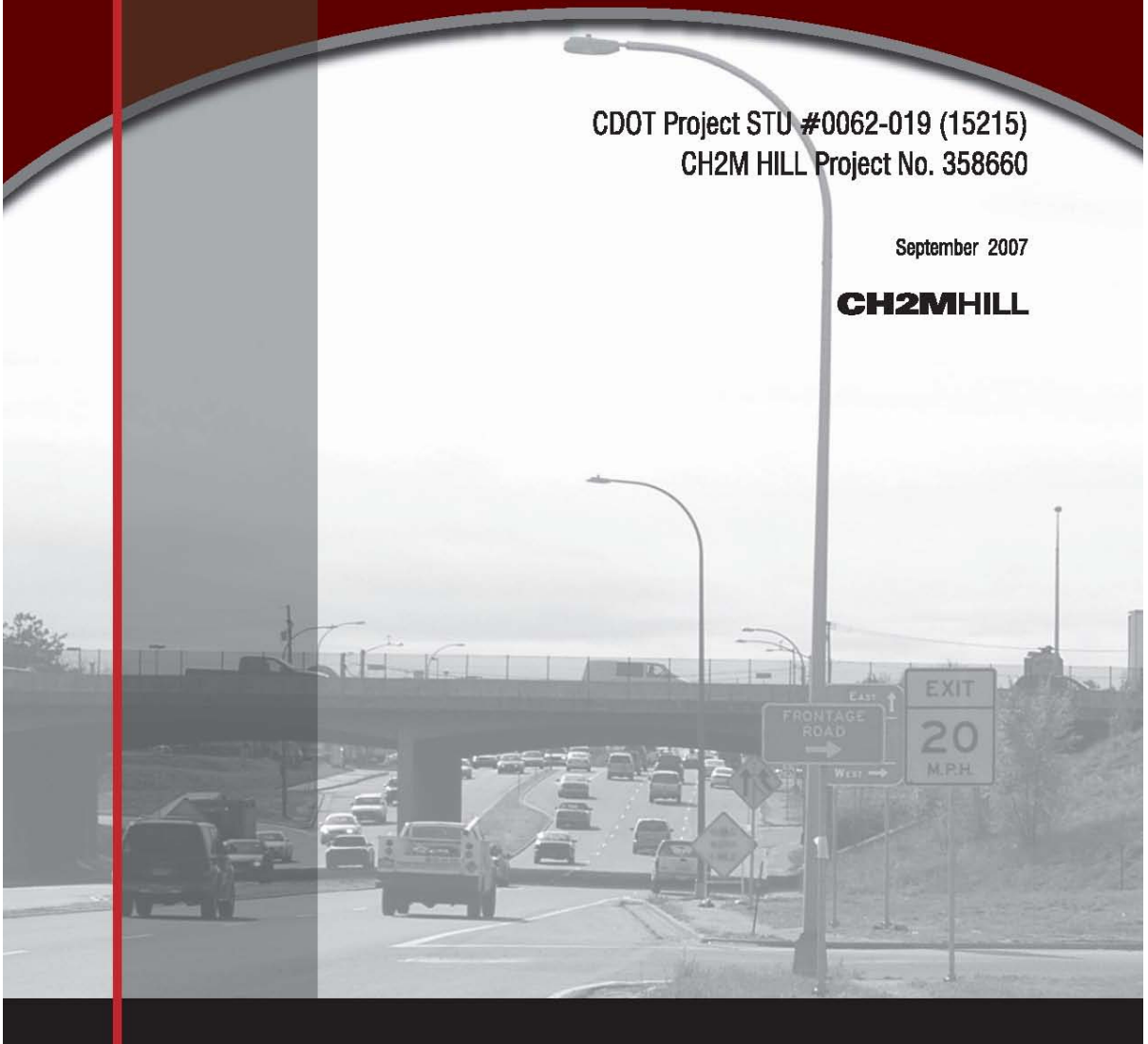
Environmental
Assessment

Scoping Summary Report

CDOT Project STU #0062-019 (15215)
CH2M HILL Project No. 358660

September 2007

CH2MHILL





Scoping Summary Report

Contents

Section	Page
Acronyms and Abbreviations	iv
1.0 Introduction.....	1-1
1.1 Background	1-1
1.2 Purpose and Need	1-2
1.3 Public Involvement	1-2
2.0 Notification of Scoping	2-1
2.1 Agency Scoping Notification and Outreach.....	2-1
2.2 Public Scoping Notification and Outreach	2-3
2.2.1 Newsletters	2-3
2.2.2 Press Releases	2-3
2.2.3 Newspaper Advertisements.....	2-3
2.2.4 Flyers.....	2-3
2.2.5 Small Group Meetings.....	2-4
2.2.6 Other Notification Media	2-4
3.0 Scoping Meetings	3-1
3.1 Locations and Attendance.....	3-1
3.1.1 Agency Scoping Meeting	3-1
3.1.2 Public Scoping Meeting.....	3-2
3.2 Meeting Format and Content.....	3-2
3.2.1 Agency Scoping Meetings.....	3-2
3.2.2 Public Scoping Meeting.....	3-2
3.3 Display Boards and Handouts	3-3
3.3.1 Agency Scoping Meeting	3-3
3.3.2 Public Scoping Meeting.....	3-3
4.0 Small Group Meetings	4-1
5.0 Scoping Comments	5-1
5.1 Summary.....	5-1
5.2 Agency Scoping Comments.....	5-1
5.2.1 Summary of Comments at Scoping Meeting	5-1
5.2.2 Written Comments.....	5-2
5.3 Public Scoping Comments	5-3
5.3.1 Summary of Comments at Scoping Meeting	5-3
5.3.2 Written, Web site, and Other Comments.....	5-5
5.3.3 Small Group Meeting Comments	5-7



Scoping Summary Report

Appendixes

- A Notices and Advertisements
- B Agency Mailing List and Sample Letter
- C Agency Meeting Rosters
- D Public Meeting Roster
- E Agency Scoping Meeting Presentation and Display Boards
- F Agency Meeting Handouts
- G CDOT Scoping Checklist
- H Public Scoping Meeting Presentation and Display Boards
- I Public Meeting Handouts
- J Small Group Meeting Presentations
- K Meeting Minutes
- L Written Comments

Exhibits

- 1 Agencies Invited to Scoping Meetings
- 2 Locations for Flyers Advertising Public Scoping Meeting
- 3 Meetings and Community Events through August 31, 2007
- 4 Contacts with Neighborhood and Business Organizations



Scoping Summary Report

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
LOS	level of service
MIS	Major Investment Study
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
RTD	Regional Transportation District
TMU	Transit Mixed-Use
VMS	Variable Message Signs



Scoping Summary Report

This page intentionally left blank.



Scoping Summary Report

1.0 Introduction

This Scoping Meeting Summary Report summarizes the notification methods and issues raised at the agency and public scoping meetings conducted in support of the US 6/Wadsworth Boulevard Environmental Assessment (EA). The purpose of the meetings was to elicit comments that would help establish the scope of the Environmental Assessment. The agency scoping meeting was held on August 16, 2007, and the public scoping meeting was held on August 21, 2007.

1.1 Background

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are conducting an EA to study transportation improvements at the interchange of US 6 (also designated as 6th Avenue) and Wadsworth Boulevard (also designated as Colorado State Highway 121), including improvements along Wadsworth Boulevard from approximately 4th Avenue to 14th Avenue in Lakewood, Colorado.

Transportation improvements in the study area have been identified as a high priority for CDOT, the City of Lakewood, area residents, businesses, and commuters. Roadway improvements in the region's West Corridor have been identified in Lakewood's *Comprehensive Plan*, the Denver Regional Council of Governments' (DRCOG) *Regional Transportation Plan*, and the 1997 *West Corridor Major Investment Study* prepared by the Regional Transportation District (RTD). CDOT and the City of Lakewood also have conducted several safety assessments for the project area.

The need for improvements to the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange as well as Wadsworth Boulevard between 4th Avenue and 14th Avenue has been identified by local, regional, and statewide transportation planners. The City of Lakewood has identified this project as a high priority for the City. The project also is included as a priority project in DRCOG's *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan* and the long-range *Statewide Transportation Plan*.

The US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange is the gateway to Lakewood's downtown (Belmar) and city center (Lakewood Commons) areas. US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard serve both local and regional travel needs that include daily commuter traffic in and through the City of Lakewood. RTD local, regional, and express bus services use these streets, and businesses and residents depend on these roads for access. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic occurs on Wadsworth Boulevard (although bicycle and pedestrian



Scoping Summary Report

facilities are limited), and a future RTD light rail line and station will be constructed at 13th Avenue.

CDOT's goal is to complete an EA to determine if a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate or if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The EA will evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives for improvements, including the No Action alternative. The EA and supporting documentation will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and with regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Parts 1500-1508) and FHWA (23 CFR 771) for implementing the Act.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard project is to improve safety and efficiency at the interchange and along Wadsworth Boulevard between 4th Avenue and 14th Avenue; to accommodate the transportation needs of area residents, commuters, commercial and through-traffic, and existing businesses; and to provide multi-modal travel options and connections at the interchange and along Wadsworth Boulevard.

The primary needs of the project are to improve safety and mobility at the interchange and along Wadsworth Boulevard. Some of the transportation issues in the study area include traffic congestion, neighborhood and business access issues, discontinuous local residential traffic circulation, poor interchange operations, high accident rates, undersized drainage facilities, and inadequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

A draft purpose and need handout was distributed at public and agency scoping meetings. A copy of that handout is included in Appendixes F and I.

1.3 Public Involvement

A Stakeholder Involvement Plan was developed to guide the public involvement activities for the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard EA. The plan provides information on the committees that participate in decision making, agency coordination, public outreach tools, and public input strategies.

Scoping is the first step in the NEPA public involvement process. The NEPA regulations define scoping as *"an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying significant issues related to a proposed action"* (40 CFR 1501.7). Scoping helps to identify alternatives to the proposed action, important environmental issues to be addressed in the EA, and environmental issues that do not require detailed analysis in the EA. Scoping involves the public, agencies, and other interested parties, and often includes



Scoping Summary Report

public and agency meetings. Scoping also helps to identify public or agency concerns or issues.

Public involvement activities conducted during the scoping period included agency and public scoping meetings, meetings with City of Lakewood and RTD staff, small group meetings, community event attendance, and contact with area neighborhood and business organizations. Business interviews will be conducted at a later date to gather more detailed input from businesses operating in the corridor. The agency and public scoping meetings are described in detail in Section 3.0 of this report. Small group meetings are described in Section 4.0, and scoping comments are summarized in Section 5.0.

Public and agency involvement continues throughout the development of the EA, and input is sought at key milestones.

The milestones were presented at the agency and public scoping meetings and at small group meetings. Please refer to copies of the oral presentations in Appendixes E and H.



Scoping Summary Report

This page intentionally left blank.

2.0 Notification of Scoping

Multiple methods of communication were used to notify the public and agencies of the scoping meetings. For the agency scoping meeting, agencies with permitting review responsibilities, CDOT Environmental Programs Branch staff, and other interested parties were invited to the meeting held August 16, 2007. Section 2.1 below describes the agency scoping meeting notification and outreach process in greater detail.

For the public scoping meeting, notification outreach efforts included newsletters, a press release, advertisements in local newspapers, flyers posted in schools, churches, and other public locations, notification during small group meetings, and notifications in other media. Section 2.2 below describes the public scoping meeting notification and outreach process in greater detail.

2.1 Agency Scoping Notification and Outreach

Agencies with permitting review responsibilities and other agencies with potential interest or expertise were invited to the agency scoping meeting held on August 16, 2007. Appropriate CDOT Environmental Programs Branch and engineering staff were also invited to the scoping meeting. The agency scoping meeting was divided into three sessions in order to group topics of interest and focus discussion. Exhibit 1 below lists the agencies and other interested parties that were invited to and attended each session of the agency scoping meeting.

Agencies were notified by letter, shown in Appendix B. Both hard copies and electronic copies of the letter were sent to all agencies on July 25, 2007. Follow-up contacts were made in person, and follow-up letters and informational materials were delivered at the same time for review prior to the scoping meeting. Many of the agencies that did not attend the scoping meetings provided comments before or after the meeting.



Scoping Summary Report

EXHIBIT 1

Agencies Invited to Scoping Meetings

Topics of Interest	Invited Agency	Attendance
Social and Community Resources	Colorado Department of Local Affairs	No
• Bicycles/Pedestrians	Colorado State Parks	No
• Cumulative Impacts	Denver Regional Council of Governments	Yes
• Environmental Justice	Department of Housing and Urban Development	No
• Land Use	Federal Transit Administration	No
• Public Involvement	Jefferson County Administration	No
• Right-of-Way	Jefferson Economic Council	No
• Socioeconomics	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Yes
• Visual/Aesthetic Considerations	Regional Transportation District	Yes
	City of Lakewood	Yes
Human and Built Environment	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Air Pollution Control Division	No
• Air Quality	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division	No
• Archaeology	Department of Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance	No
• Hazardous Materials	Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment	Yes
• Historic Resources	Jefferson County Highways and Transportation Department	Yes
• Noise	Regional Air Quality Council	No
• Paleontology	State Historic Preservation Office	No
• Safety	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	No
Natural Environment	Colorado Division of Wildlife	Yes
• Floodplains	Federal Emergency Management Agency	No
• Hydraulics	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	No
• Noxious Weeds	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	No
• Stormwater	Urban Flood and Drainage Control District	No
• Threatened and Endangered Species	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Yes
• Vegetation		
• Water Quality		
• Wetlands		
• Wildlife/Fisheries		

Source: CH2M HILL, 2007.



Scoping Summary Report

2.2 Public Scoping Notification and Outreach

Outreach efforts for the August 21, 2007, public scoping meeting included newsletters, a press release, advertisements in local newspapers, flyers posted in schools, churches, and other public locations, notification during small group meetings, and notifications in other media.

2.2.1 Newsletters

The first project newsletter was mailed on July 25, 2007 to the project mailing list. The newsletter consisted of a cover letter from the CDOT project manager, Seyed Kalantar, and a project fact sheet. The cover letter explained the current status of the study and invited members of the public to the meeting, while the fact sheet explained what the study will accomplish and provided project team contact information. The mailing list consisted of 500 property owners adjacent to Wadsworth Boulevard and the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange, as well as several other members of the public who asked to be added to the mailing list at small group meetings. See Appendix A for a copy of the newsletter.

RTD's West Corridor August newsletter also included notification of the public meeting.

2.2.2 Press Releases

A press release (see Appendix A) was distributed by CDOT to the CDOT Region 6 media distribution list, which includes over 90 media outlets in the Denver metropolitan area.

2.2.3 Newspaper Advertisements

Advertisements ran in the *Lakewood Sentinel* weekly newspaper on August 9 and August 16, 2007, and in the Sunday edition of the *Denver Post* on August 19, 2007. See Appendix A for a copy of the advertisement.

2.2.4 Flyers

A public notice flyer was developed and distributed to the locations listed in Exhibit 2 to advertise the public scoping meeting. See Appendix A for a copy of the flyer.



Scoping Summary Report

EXHIBIT 2

Locations for Flyers Advertising Public Scoping Meeting

Category	Location
Businesses	Businesses on Wadsworth between 4th Avenue and 14th Avenue
Schools	Alameda High School Bethlehem Lutheran School Creighton Middle School Lakewood United Methodist Parents Day Out Program Molholm Elementary School New America Day School St. Bernadette School & Church Stein Elementary School
Churches	First Presbyterian Church of Lakewood Lakewood United Methodist Church St. Bernadette Catholic Church
Lakewood Community Locations	Belmar Library Clements Community Center Denver Indian Center Heritage Center Farmers Market and Visitors Center Market at Belmar Super Wal-Mart Wal-Mart Whole Foods Customer Service
Information Kiosks	Molholm School Newland Park

Source: CH2M HILL, 2007

2.2.5 Small Group Meetings

The project team met with three neighborhood groups prior to the public scoping meeting: the Eiber Neighborhood Association, Two Creeks Neighborhood Organization, and the West Colfax Community Association. The public meeting date and location were advertised at each of these meetings. Additional details on the small group meetings are presented in Section 4.0.

2.2.6 Other Notification Media

Three other notification media were used to advertise the public scoping meeting. Notice of the meeting ran on the City of Lakewood Public Access Television Channel 8. The City of Lakewood Web site advertised the meeting on its home page and transportation planning page, and the meeting was also advertised on the project Web site at www.US6Wadsworth.com.

3.0 Scoping Meetings

This section summarizes the venues for the agency and public scoping meetings, and presents the meeting format and materials used for exhibits and handouts to agencies and the public.

3.1 Locations and Attendance

3.1.1 Agency Scoping Meeting

The agency scoping meeting was held in three sessions at the CDOT Headquarters, Shumate Building, Denver, Colorado, on Thursday, August 16, 2007. Randy Furst, P.E., CDOT, opened each session with a welcome, and provided an overview of the project team and meeting agenda. Tim Eversoll, P.E., Project Manager, CH2M HILL, presented a “fly-through” tour of the project area and provided an overview of transportation needs and issues. Mandy Whorton, Environmental Planner, CH2M HILL, presented information about agency review, schedule, project purpose, transportation needs, and environmental resources. At the end of each presentation, agency representatives asked questions and provided verbal comments.

As noted in Exhibit 1, representatives from the following agencies attended one of the three sessions of the agency scoping meeting:

- City of Lakewood
- Colorado Department of Transportation, Environmental Programs Branch
- Colorado Department of Transportation, Intelligent Transportation System Branch
- Colorado Department of Transportation, Region 6
- Colorado Division of Wildlife
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Jefferson County
- Regional Transportation District
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Appendix C includes a copy of the meeting roster listing attendees for each agency scoping meeting session. The comments provided by agency representatives are summarized in Section 5.2 of this report.

Scoping Summary Report

3.1.2 Public Scoping Meeting

The public scoping meeting was held at the Clements Community Center in Lakewood, Colorado, on Tuesday, August 21, 2007, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by members of the public, City of Lakewood, CDOT representatives, local business owners, and members of the Lakewood City Council. Approximately 70 people, not including CDOT, consultant, or Lakewood staff, attended the meeting. The majority of people arrived before 6:00 p.m. Appendix D includes a copy of the meeting roster, listing the attendees at the public scoping meeting. Public comments are summarized in Section 5.3 of this report.

3.2 Meeting Format and Content

3.2.1 Agency Scoping Meetings

The agency scoping meeting was held in three sessions on August 21, 2007, from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Each session was conducted in a presentation format, and the same 45-minute presentation was repeated at all three sessions, giving each agency the same opportunity to hear the presentation contents. Appendix E includes a copy of the agency scoping meeting presentation. Display boards and scoping packets were available at each session to provide an overview of the project, existing conditions of the project area, and environmental resources to be studied. Comments were obtained during a question-and-answer period following each presentation. Each session lasted approximately 90 minutes.

3.2.2 Public Scoping Meeting

The public scoping meeting was conducted in a mixed open house and presentation format. Display boards positioned at tables/stations served as a self-guided tour to introduce the public to the project mission, NEPA process, and resource issues. CDOT and consultant staff were available at each information table and talked with participants as they continued through each display station. An informational presentation was given from 5:00 to 5:30 p.m. and repeated again from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Appendix H includes a copy of the public scoping meeting presentation.

Information packets were handed out to meeting attendees at the sign-in table. Comments were taken by staff during the open house portions of the meeting and at the comments table, and a comments box was provided to collect written comments. Meeting minutes are provided in Appendix K. A Spanish translator was available, but no Spanish-only speakers were present at the meeting. A limited supervised childrens' area was available, and one family took advantage of this service.

3.3 Display Boards and Handouts

Display boards were used at the scoping meetings to visually illustrate project concepts and resources in the study area. Handouts provided more detailed information on the study to meeting attendees.

3.3.1 Agency Scoping Meeting

Display boards used at the agency scoping meeting provided illustrations of resources in the study area and transportation issues on US 6, at the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange, and on Wadsworth Boulevard. Display boards illustrated the following topics (see Appendix E for illustrations):

- Transportation issues
- Existing noise contours (June 2007)
- Potential area of effects
- Hazardous materials sites
- 100-year floodplains
- Land use

Handouts (see Appendix F) included copies of the draft purpose and need information sheet, agency comment forms, and project fact sheets. The *Existing Conditions Summary*, which was distributed the week prior to the agency scoping meeting, provided more detailed information on the project background, draft purpose and need, environmental resources present in the study area, and proposed methodologies for assessing environmental impacts for the environmental resources in the study area.

3.3.2 Public Scoping Meeting

Display boards used at the public scoping meeting provided information on the study process and purpose, transportation issues, traffic and noise analysis, and environmental resources. Display boards illustrated the following topics (see Appendix H for illustrations):

- Project purpose
- Key decision milestones
- Transportation issues
- Vicinity map
- Level of service (LOS) explanation board
- Existing traffic conditions
- Neighborhood traffic speeds and counts
- CDOT noise analysis procedures
- Sound pressure levels
- Environmental resources
- Community resources



Scoping Summary Report

An information packet was distributed to all meeting attendees to provide more detailed information on the study (see Appendix I). The information packet was designed to supplement the information stations and provide information on the following topics:

- Project fact sheet
- EA process
- EA schedule
- Draft purpose and need
- Noise
- Environmental resources
- Frequently asked questions
- Comment form

4.0 Small Group Meetings

In addition to the large agency and public scoping meetings, a number of smaller meetings and conversations were held during the scoping period to help identify and clarify the scope of the US 6/Wadsworth Boulevard EA. The following exhibits summarize the meetings and community events, and contacts with neighborhood and business organizations that occurred during the scoping period. Exhibit 3 below summarizes the meetings held during the scoping period (June to August), while Exhibit 4 summarizes contacts with individuals during the scoping period.

EXHIBIT 3

Meetings and Community Events through August 31, 2007

Date and Time	Meeting	Location	Purpose
June 5, 2007	Design Standards Review Meeting with City of Lakewood	CDOT Region 6, Golden Residency	Review design standards with City of Lakewood, CDOT, and CH2M HILL.
June 6, 2007	NEPA Training for City of Lakewood	City of Lakewood	Provide training on NEPA process for City of Lakewood public works, planning, and maintenance staffs.
June 14, 2007	Meeting with City of Lakewood Planning Staff	City of Lakewood, Community Planning and Development Department	Gather information on existing plans and policies relating to corridor; plans for LRT station; information about LRT station planning public process; and corridor contacts.
June 15, 2007	Agency Chartering Meeting	CH2M HILL, 9191 S. Jamaica St., Englewood	Set expectations for the partnering process among CDOT, RTD, FHWA, and City of Lakewood.
June 18, 2007	Meeting with JeffCo Open School Principal Wendy Wheaton	Jefferson County Open School	Introduce project and characterize existing conditions related to area schools.
July 19, 2007 7:00 p.m.	Eiber Neighborhood Association	Lakewood United Methodist Church, 1390 Brentwood St., Lakewood	Introduce project, gather early input, set project expectations, and characterize existing conditions (30-minute presentation and Q&A).
July 21, 2007 8:30 a.m.	Two Creeks Neighborhood Organization	Mountair Christian Church, 1390 Benton St., Lakewood	Introduce project, gather early input, set project expectations, and characterize existing conditions (15-minute presentation and Q&A).
Wednesday August 15, 2007 7:30 a.m.	West Colfax Community Association	Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, Rotunda, 1600 Pierce St., Lakewood	Introduce project, gather early input, set project expectations, and characterize existing conditions (15-minute presentation and Q&A; approximately 40 attendees).



Scoping Summary Report

EXHIBIT 3

Meetings and Community Events through August 31, 2007

Date and Time	Meeting	Location	Purpose
Thursday August 16, 2007 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Agency Scoping Meeting	CDOT Shumate Building, Mt. Evans A & B Conference Rooms	Discuss NEPA process; project issues/concerns; project schedule and process; purpose and need; and possible project impacts and mitigation.
Tuesday August 21, 2007 3:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Public Scoping Meeting	Clements Center, 1580 Yarrow St., Lakewood	Introduce project; describe NEPA process; present project schedule and process; present purpose and need; and gather input.
Saturday August 25, 2007 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Lakewood on Parade Festival – Booth Staffing	Belmar Park	Advertise project to the public, hand out project information, and answer questions.
Tuesday August 28, 2007 7:00 p.m.	O’Kane Park Neighborhood Association	Washington Heights Arts Center, 6375 W. 1st Ave., Lakewood	Introduce project, gather early input, set project expectations, and characterize existing conditions (45-minute presentation and Q&A; approximately 60 attendees).

Source: CH2M HILL, 2007.

EXHIBIT 4

Contacts with Neighborhood and Business Organizations

Organization	Contact	Result
Eiber Neighborhood Association	Paul Ditson, Chair	Invitation to present at board meetings; request to send him project updates.
Two Creeks Neighborhood Organization	Maddie Nichols, Co-Chair	Invitation to present at board meetings; request to send her project updates.
Green Acres Homeowners Association	Mike Turner, Chair	Work through Two Creeks Neighborhood Organization to reach this group.
O’Kane Park Neighborhood Organization	Gail Mark, Chair	Invitation to present at general membership meetings; request to send her project updates.
West Alameda Heights Homeowners Association	David Wolf, Chair	Declined our attendance at board meeting; request to send him project updates.
Mid Lakewood Civic Association	Robert Baker, Chair David Saindon, Board Member	Initially declined our attendance at group meetings; later invitation to present at special meeting; request to send him project updates.
Morse Park Neighborhood Organization	Madie Martinek, Chair	Invitation to present at board and general membership meetings; request to send her project updates.
Holbrooke Park Neighborhood Organization	Ramey Johnson, Chair	Unable to reach this contact by end of scoping period.
Edgewood Neighborhood Organization	Pam Benigno, Chair	Unable to reach this contact by end of scoping period.
Country Club Condos	Thomas Scholle, Chair	Unable to reach this contact by end of scoping period.
Rural Acres Organization	Kathy Knobel, Chair	Request to send her project updates.



Scoping Summary Report

EXHIBIT 4

Contacts with Neighborhood and Business Organizations

Organization	Contact	Result
Southern Gables Homeowners Association	Kathleen Stapleton, Chair	Invitation to present at general membership meetings; request to send her project updates.
West Colfax Community Association	Doug Stiverson, President	Invitation to present at general membership meetings; request to send him project updates.
Alameda Gateway Community Association	George Valuck, Executive Director	Invitation to present at general membership meetings; request to send him project updates.

Source: CH2M HILL, 2007.

Section 5.3.3 of this report presents a summary of comments received at these meetings. Appendix J contains copies of the presentations given at each meeting, and Appendix K contains meeting minutes for each meeting.



Scoping Summary Report

This page intentionally left blank.

5.0 Scoping Comments

5.1 Summary

Agencies and members of the public provided numerous comments during the scoping period at the agency and public scoping meetings, small group meetings, and via the project Web site and comment forms. The sections below summarize the comments received at the scoping and small group meetings. Individual comments from the agency and public scoping meetings, and small group meetings are detailed in the meeting minutes in Appendix K, and individual written comments are compiled in Appendix L.

5.2 Agency Scoping Comments

Most of the scoping comments received from agencies resulted from verbal discussions at the agency scoping meeting. These comments are summarized in Section 5.2.1 below, and listed in greater detail in the agency scoping meeting minutes in Appendix K. Written comments, including emails, received before and after the scoping meeting are summarized below in Section 5.2.2 and included in their entirety in Appendix L. A summary of agency contacts is provided in Appendix B.

5.2.1 Summary of Comments at Scoping Meeting

The three sessions of the agency scoping meeting were divided by topic area: Social and Community Resources, Human and Built Environment, and Natural Environment. Comments received at each of the sessions generally fell into these topic areas. A summary of the comments is provided here, and detailed comments are included in the meeting notes in Appendix K.

Social and Community Resources

- The ball fields at 10th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard are an important community park resource.
- Need more information to characterize the minority and low-income populations that may be present in the corridor. CDOT and the City of Lakewood offered assistance in interpreting data.
- Consider energy issues in the EA, particularly energy efficiency in construction.



Scoping Summary Report

- The City of Lakewood needs to consider impacts of non-compliant zoning on right-of-way acquisition. If non-compliance is not allowed, right-of-way could be a substantial project cost and impact, and could elevate the EA to an EIS-level analysis.

Human and Built Environment

- Potential impacts to paleontology should be considered.
- Need to conduct more in-depth research on specific parcels to determine whether additional hazardous materials sites are present in the project area.
- A Valentine diner is present on the Three Margaritas property and should be evaluated for historical significance.

Natural Environment

- Wetlands in the project area will likely be classified as jurisdictional.
- Current Nationwide permit regulations may not provide coverage for project impacts, and an individual 404 permit may be required.
- Need to coordinate with the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District regarding flood improvements upstream of the project area.
- Wetlands could be affected by drainage improvements.

5.2.2 Written Comments

Five written comment forms, twelve emails, and one letter were received from agencies during or after the agency scoping meeting. Copies of this correspondence are included in Appendix L.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided guidance regarding timing for construction and bridge work, and tree and shrub removal.

The Environmental Protection Agency provided guidelines for addressing potential impacts to McIntyre Gulch.

The Colorado Historical Society recommended that CDOT begin the Section 106 process as early in the planning process as possible; identify consulting parties during the scoping stage to gather early comments; and initiate consultation with the Colorado Historical Society regarding an appropriate Area of Potential Effects for the project.

DRCOG noted that its plans include a fixed guideway transit system in the Wadsworth Corridor post-FasTracks, and that this should be considered during alternatives screening.



Scoping Summary Report

Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment provided comments reinforcing the scope of the study, specifically noting that water quality and air quality were important. The purpose and need was also determined to be adequate.

The City of Lakewood planning department noted that the planned (undeveloped) future Two Creeks Park should be considered a 4(f) property. The park fronts Wadsworth at Dry Gulch near 12th Avenue.

CDOT staff provided the rest of the written comments. CDOT comments addressed cumulative impact assessment, water quality, wildlife, traffic, and utilities.

5.3 Public Scoping Comments

Scoping comments received from the public consisted of meeting notes from small group meetings; conversations with project staff during the open house portion of the public scoping meeting; written comments submitted during the meeting or mailed afterward; telephone conversations with project staff; emails; or comments submitted on the project Web site. Comments received verbally by project staff during the public scoping meeting are summarized in Section 5.3.1 below and listed in greater detail in the public scoping meeting minutes in Appendix K. Written, Web site, and other comments are summarized in Section 5.3.2 below and included in their entirety in Appendix L. Comments received through small group meetings are summarized in Section 5.3.3, and meeting minutes are included in Appendix K.

5.3.1 Summary of Comments at Scoping Meeting

The topics receiving the most comments at the public scoping meeting were noise, safety, and access and traffic issues. Other topics of interest included right-of-way acquisition, drainage and utilities, and maintenance.

Noise

- Noise mitigation should be provided along 6th Avenue west of Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Special features such as sound absorptive barriers and quieter paving should be considered to assist with noise mitigation.
- The existing noise walls have increased noise levels deeper in the neighborhoods near 6th Avenue.

Safety

- The 65-mph speed limit on 6th Avenue is too high and presents a major safety concern. The principal worry is the speed differential between 6th Avenue and the entrance and exit ramps, where members of the public have witnessed numerous accidents.



Scoping Summary Report

- The Carr Street slip ramp to eastbound 6th Avenue is a dangerous entrance ramp.
- Drivers do not honor the yield signs at the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists need dedicated facilities for the length of the study area.

Access and Traffic Issues

- Drivers are forced to drive circuitous routes to travel in their desired direction on Wadsworth Boulevard because of the difficulties turning left onto Wadsworth Boulevard, and the frontage road configurations on Wadsworth Boulevard (especially the northeast frontage road, which is one way and merges with the northbound exit ramp from US 6). Vehicles also cut through the parking lots of local businesses to avoid waiting behind vehicles that are trying to turn left onto Wadsworth Boulevard, or to make U-turns on Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Keep access closed between Wadsworth Boulevard and 8th Avenue (on both sides of Wadsworth Boulevard).
- Cut-through traffic in neighborhoods is a concern.

Right-of-Way and Property Acquisition

- Individual property owners asked how the redesigned interchange might affect their property. Project staff stated that they currently do not know what the design solutions might ultimately look like, and could not answer that question at this stage in the process.

Drainage and Utilities

- Flooding at Lakewood Gulch is a problem.
- There are existing ditch systems in the neighborhood that are not shown on the 100-year floodplain and drainages map. The School Lateral Ditch along 12th Avenue should be added to the list of drainages and ditches.
- The project team should coordinate with RTD to determine what utility changes will result from the West Corridor Project.

Maintenance

- The existing noise walls east of Wadsworth Boulevard should be properly maintained; there are cracks and holes in the walls.
- There is currently insufficient snow storage on Wadsworth Boulevard. Future designs for snow storage should not block pedestrian and bike paths.
- If medians are landscaped, provide xeriscape.

Miscellaneous

- The City of Lakewood has purchased land on 12th Avenue, east of Wadsworth Boulevard, for the future Two Creeks Park.
- When will the project be built, and how will it overlap with the construction of RTD's West Corridor? Project staff responded that this study is on a streamlined process and, if a construction project is identified, it could occur quickly. Construction timing and phasing will be coordinated with RTD's West Corridor construction to reduce negative impacts to drivers.

5.3.2 Written, Web site, and Other Comments

Approximately 36 comments were received during the scoping period. The written comment forms and Web site were the most common methods for transmitting comments. Additional comments were also received at small group meetings, and these comments are summarized in meeting notes included in Appendix K.

A comment database was established to record all individual public comments (that is, written comment forms, Web site entries, emails, letters, and telephone comments) received on the project. Appendix L contains a database report detailing all public comments received during the scoping period. The comment database will continue to be updated to record public comment throughout the EA process.

The primary topics of interest were noise, pedestrian and bicycle access, and access and traffic issues. Other topics of interest included coordination with RTD's West Corridor and other FasTracks programs, construction staging, appropriate planning (design year and study area definition), and the public involvement process.

Noise

- A study was conducted 2 years ago by Hankard Environmental for the 6th Avenue Summit group.
- Build noise walls between Wadsworth Boulevard and Kipling Street.
- Build noise walls that absorb rather than reflect noise.
- Consider graffiti prevention in noise wall design.
- Provide more T-barriers on ramps to alleviate tire noise. [T-barriers are noise walls with horizontal ledges at the top, forming a "T" shape, which may provide greater noise reduction than standard noise walls.]
- Noise from helicopters hovering over accidents on 6th Avenue during morning and evening rush hour increases the noise level at homes along 6th Avenue. This area is also in the flight path for hospital and military helicopters, which add to the noise levels.

Scoping Summary Report

Bicycle and Pedestrian Access

- Provide bicycle and pedestrian access along Wadsworth Boulevard; create strong connections north-south across US 6 and east-west across Wadsworth Boulevard, particularly at existing bike routes.
- Provide ADA access on pedestrian facilities.
- Consider the possibility of a future bike path along Lakewood Gulch when designing the crossing of the gulch at Wadsworth.

Access and Traffic Issues

- Concern about increased neighborhood traffic resulting from light rail and increased traffic volumes on Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Provide easier access from Wadsworth Boulevard to the frontage road on the south side of 6th Avenue (drivers currently access the frontage road from 5th Avenue rather than from Wadsworth Boulevard).
- Provide a longer signal at 10th Avenue. This is a primary entrance point from neighborhoods to Wadsworth Boulevard, and a primary U-turn location for drivers entering Wadsworth Boulevard from the east between 6th and 10th Avenues who want to go south on Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Restrict access on Wadsworth Boulevard to improve traffic flow.
- The current cloverleaf interchange is fine the way it is, and cloverleaf interchanges work better than diamond interchanges.
- A diamond interchange would be best so that the length of entrance and exit ramps can be increased.
- Synchronize the traffic signals on Wadsworth Boulevard; drivers currently cannot drive north or south without stopping at traffic signals multiple times.

Coordination with FasTracks

- Consider land use changes and traffic impacts that will result from light rail and Transit Mixed Use (TMU) zoning around the station at 13th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Coordinate construction of this project with construction of the West Corridor so that traffic impacts in neighborhoods are manageable.

Planning Techniques

- Extend planning horizon to 50 years rather than 2030.
- Plan for future light rail on Wadsworth Boulevard as part of DRCOG plan.



Scoping Summary Report

- Extend the study area south to Lakewood City Commons because the primary traffic patterns will be between the City Commons and the light rail line.

Public Involvement Process

- It is necessary to involve residents and businesses in developing solutions for the interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Directly notify all property owners in the study area of the project and the fact that their property may be affected.

Right-of-Way and Property Acquisition

- Individual property owners have asked how the redesigned US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange and Wadsworth Boulevard might affect their property. Project staff stated that they do not know at this point what the design solutions might look like, and could not answer that question at this stage in the process.

Miscellaneous

- The West Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) found that the entire length of Wadsworth Boulevard through the Denver metropolitan area employs more people than downtown Denver. Keep economic vitality in mind and design a road by which employees and customers can readily reach their destinations.
- Use xeriscape in median and roadway landscaping.
- Use “freeway entrance” signs, similar to those used in California, to better signal the highway entrance to drivers.

5.3.3 Small Group Meeting Comments

Comments received during small group meetings are summarized here. In general, meeting participants were supportive of project improvements and the public outreach process employed by the team. A detailed description of comments from each meeting are provided in the meeting minutes in Appendix K. No comment forms were submitted at or after the small group meetings.

The topics raised at the small group meetings included:

- Need for more signage along 6th Avenue near the US 6 and Wadsworth Boulevard interchange.
- How context-sensitive solutions and aesthetics will be incorporated into design.
- Need to consider special needs of the corridor’s numerous elderly and high school drivers.



Scoping Summary Report

- Need thorough analysis of current and future neighborhood traffic.
- How much right-of-way will be required for the project improvements?
- Need to coordinate traffic signal timing on Wadsworth Boulevard.
- Construction detours could affect Alameda Avenue and Colfax Avenue.
- Other areas will also require improvement, including US 6 from Wadsworth Boulevard to I-25 and US 6 interchanges with Kipling Street and Simms Street/Union Boulevard.
- How much will this cost, and who is paying for it?
- Need to consider construction staging coordination with other planned projects.
- Traffic from RTD LRT station and new zoning needs to be accounted for in the EA.