

WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

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SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Community Report: I-25 and Mulberry Interchange Design

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is for the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to engage with City Council regarding the upcoming project at I-25/Mulberry and hear their concerns/comments/ideas for the outcomes of the project.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. Is the I-25/Mulberry interchange a priority for the City of Fort Collins?
 - a. If yes, CDOT requests the City of Fort Collins to maintain the I-25/Mulberry interchange as a priority project for the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO)
 - b. If no, please explain why.
2. After hearing the historical background and the proposed goals of the project, what else would the City of Fort Collins like to see addressed or evaluated as part of this project?
3. The Cooper Slough Floodplain is a large technical challenge and partial piece of this project. That said, the floodplain extends way beyond the interchange project limits and should be a project of its own. Is addressing the floodplain and flooding issue a stormwater priority for the City of Fort Collins?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

CDOT Project Schedule:

- **2000-2011:** SH14/I-25 redesigned as part of the I-25 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to accommodate the express lane and to address safety and aging infrastructure.
- **2019:** SH14/I-25 interchange prioritized by NFRMPO and CDOT, identified on CDOT's 10-yr Plan of Projects
- **2023:** Preliminary design funds allocated to advance/refine interchange concept and to seek grant funding (No construction funding)

- **2024:** CDOT hired Benesch Consulting to support design effort
- **2024-2025:** Design optimizations within existing EIS footprint, ongoing outreach to stakeholders, Fort Collins 1041 initiation
- **May 2025:** Identify preferred optimization/layout of proposed
- **2025-2026:** CDOT to begin pursuing grants for additional design funds and construction funding
- **When construction funds are secured:** Begin construction, earliest design completion, right-of-way acquisition and NEPA would be Fall 2026

CDOT has begun to partner with the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County to enhance safety (i.e., vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian) at and near the interchange of I-25/Mulberry. CDOT is also looking to correct aging infrastructure and provide multimodal opportunities.

This project has preliminary design funds budgeted but will be pursuing grants and other funding opportunities to secure funding for final design and construction.

CDOT recognizes the scope of this project extends far beyond the limits of the interchange and sees this work as a catalyst for looking beyond the I-25/Mulberry node and an opportunity to solve long standing issues regarding flooding, access and multimodal connectivity. CDOT is seeking and requesting strong partnerships with the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County to improve and address these long-standing areas of concern. Specifically, if the two agencies wished to improve the Cooper Sough Floodplain by removing insurable structures from the Floodplain, while also creating a bike/ped Box Elder crossing at I-25, now is the time to bring this to CDOT's attention and incorporate certain aspects into design.

It is important to note, CDOT is focusing on the scope along Mulberry and at I-25, which does not include Floodplain work. We recognize the larger issues in the area outside of the CDOT right-of-way (i.e., Cooper Slough Floodplain) and wish to be a partner, so projects can be combined and overall tax dollars expended in the area reduced via mobilization and design costs. Additionally, constructing the area in a single project will reduce the fatigue of construction to the residents and roadway users.

NEXT STEPS

CDOT will continue to move forward with the project design and coordinate with the City and other local agencies and stakeholders (i.e., NFRMPO, City of Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce, Larimer County, etc. as necessary. Feedback from Council will be considered in the scope of this design.

ATTACHMENTS

1. presentation