



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

DATE: March 19, 2008

SUBJECT: Study Session Agenda for March 24, 2008

PREPARED BY: J Brent McFall, City Manager

Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council meetings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these meetings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.

Looking ahead to next Monday night's Study Session, the following schedule has been prepared:

A light dinner will be served in the Council Family Room 6:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Report from Mayor (5 minutes)
2. Reports from City Councillors (10 minutes)

PRESENTATIONS

1. Policy on Left Turn Arrows at Signalized Intersections
2. Review of US 36 FEIS Issues - Attachment
3. City of Westminster's "Buy Westminster" Policy

6:30 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None at this time

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS – Does not require action by City Council

None at this time

Additional items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the Study Session meeting schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager



Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting
March 24, 2008



SUBJECT: Left Turn Arrows at Signalized Intersections

PREPARED BY: Greg Olson, Transportation Systems Coordinator

Recommended City Council Action:

Receive the Staff presentation pertaining to “protected only” and “protected/permissive” left turn signals and provide feedback.

Summary Statement:

- “Protected only” left turn (POLT) signals include a green arrow and a red arrow on the signal head. Legal left turn movements can be made only while the green arrow is illuminated. POLT signals reduce broadside accidents but also reduce the efficiency of the movement of traffic through these intersections.
- “Protected/permissive” left turn (PPLT) signals include a green arrow but no red arrow on the signal head. Legal left turn movements can be made while the green arrow is illuminated and while the green “ball” is illuminated after yielding to oncoming traffic. PPLT signals reduce vehicle delays but accidents tend to increase at these intersections.
- City Staff’s selection of the type of left turn signal to be utilized at any particular intersection requires a balancing of safety concerns and efficiency of movement. Staff will usually install PPLT signals initially and only convert to POLT signals if the accident history indicates that such a change is necessary.
- The materials and labor costs of converting signals from one type to the other are negligible.
- Appropriate City Staff will be in attendance at the March 24 City Council Study Session to review the criteria used for determining whether POLT or PPLT signals are appropriate at various intersections. City Council feedback on these matters is requested.

Expenditure Required: \$0

Source of Funds: N/A

Policy Issue:

Should City Staff revise the policy that is currently used in making determinations on the installation of “protected only” and “protected/permmissive” left turn signals?

Alternatives:

- Direct Staff to continue in the manner currently employed.
- Direct Staff to revise the criteria currently used to make these determinations.

Background Information:

The City currently operates and maintains 103 traffic signals that may feature either protected only (POLT) or protected/permmissive (PPLT) left-turn controls. There are 39 PPLT signals, 21 POLT signals and 7 with combination of both. POLT signals include a red arrow that requires vehicles to stop during the opposing green signal while PPLT signals allow turning movements on a green signal following green and yellow arrows. The difficulties involved in selecting PPLT versus POLT are mainly due to balancing tradeoffs between safety and efficiency. Protected control is often the safest control but generally results in increased delays because of the additional time allocated for the left turn period. PPLT control combines the characteristics of permmissive and protected controls and normally reduces vehicle delays, which is the main reason the general public prefers the more efficient PPLT control. However, the permmissive component of this signal phasing makes it less safe when conflicts are possible. The permmissive turn period requires drivers to accurately determine the adequacy of gaps in opposing traffic, and the driver must decide when the approaching vehicles are stopping during the yellow and red clearances.

National studies have consistently shown that protected only control typically results in a decrease in left turn accidents by 86% as compared to PPLT. That trend is consistent with the City’s experience when converting from PPLT to protected-only control. Accident data pertaining to those intersections in which the left turn signals have been converted from PPLT to POLT during the past seven years are tabulated below:

Intersection	Red Arrow Install date	Left turn direction	Left Turn Accidents			
			1 Year Before Red Arrow Installed		1 Year After Red Arrow Installed	
			Total	Injury	Total	Injury
Sheridan & 104th	11/16/2001	north	7	3	0	0
104 th & Westminster	01/31/2003	west	5	2	0	0
104 th & Westminster	05/05/2004	north	5	2	1	0
104 th & Westminster	05/05/2004	south	7	4	0	0
Sheridan & US36 South	08/24/2004	south	13	3	2	0
Totals			37	14	3	0
Reduction in Total Accidents			92%			
Reduction in Injury Accidents			100%			

The City's Engineering Division Staff has followed a set of national guidelines compiled by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) commonly used in determining the type of left turn signal that should be installed under various conditions. These warrants are as follows:

Protected/permissive control is warranted for any one of the following conditions:

- 1) Three to four left turn accidents in a 12 month period or six to seven in a 24 month period.
- 2) 80 or more vehicles per hour completing the left turn movement.
- 3) Double left turn lanes facing a minor roadway with opposing traffic volumes less than 150 vehicles per hour.
- 4) Continue to use PPLT control while operations are producing satisfactory results.
- 5) Combination of other contributing factors based upon an engineering judgment.

Protected only control is warranted for any one of the following conditions:

- 1) Five or more left turn accidents in a 12 month period or eight or more in a 24 month period.
- 2) Double left turn lanes that are operating on major arterials.
- 3) 300 or more vehicles per hour completing the left turn movement.
- 4) Sight distance to opposing traffic is less than 250 feet when the opposing traffic is travelling at 35 MPH or less, or less than 400 feet when the opposing traffic is travelling at 40 MPH or more.
- 5) Combination of other contributing factors based upon an engineering judgment.

If the decision between installing PPLT or POLT phasing is not obvious, Staff will initially operate the left turn phase as PPLT on a trial basis. If unsatisfactory operations result, control is converted to protected only phasing.

In recent years, the Federal Highway Administration has approved the use of a variable left turn (VLT) signal that switches between the POLT and PPLT control during different times of the day and/or week. The VLT typically switches from protected only to PPLT when traffic volumes are very low and accidents are unlikely to occur. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has approximately 20 VLT signals in the Denver metro area at locations that warranted protected only control during heavy traffic periods. One potential problem associated with the use of VLT signals is the possibility that drivers will become "conditioned" to the PPLT control if they usually travel through an intersection during the off-peak period and, thus, may not realize that POLT control has been enacted during the peak period. For this reason, CDOT does not convert existing POLT signals to VLT; only PPLT signals can be converted to VLT control.

Staff Report – Left Turn Arrows at Signalized Intersections

March 24, 2008

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The City does not currently operate any VLT signals and, in accordance with the procedure followed by CDOT, City Staff does not recommend converting any existing protected only signals to VLT operation. The next location that warrants conversion from PPLT to protected only control will provide Staff an opportunity to evaluate the possibility of a variable left turn at that time.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting
March 24, 2008



SUBJECT: Review of Key US 36 Environmental Impact Statement Issues

PREPARED BY: Matt Lutkus, Deputy City Manager

Recommended City Council Action:

Provide direction to Mayor and City Staff regarding issues that will be addressed by the Preferred Alternative Committee (PAC) as part of the preparation of the US 36 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Summary Statement:

- The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the reconstruction of US 36 was completed in July 2007. The three alternatives that were assessed in the DEIS were a no-build alternative, Package 2 (P2) that focused on increased road capacity for mass transit and high occupancy vehicles, and Package 4 (P4) that provided for a combination of enhancements that addressed both mass transit and additional general purpose highway capacity. Public feedback on the voluminous documents that made up the DEIS was accepted until late September.
- In August 2007, City Council passed a resolution addressing several areas of concern related to the DEIS. In addition, City staff prepared a multi-page detailed document that addressed a variety of technical issues that appeared in the report.
- The next steps in the process are the development of a preferred alternative and the completion of the FEIS. The current timetable calls for the identification of a preferred alternative by early summer of 2008 and the completion of the FEIS in 2009.
- The group that has been charged with recommending a preferred alternative is the Preferred Alternative Committee (PAC). It is comprised of representatives from the cities and counties located along the corridor and representatives from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Regional Transportation District (RTD), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and 36 Commuting Solutions. Mayor McNally is the City's representative on this committee with staff support provided by Deputy City Manager Matt Lutkus and City Engineer Dave Downing.
- There are a number of key issues that have been identified thus far in the process. These are summarized in the next section of this Staff Report. City Council is being asked to provide direction that will determine the City's position on each of these major project elements in the early stage of the process.
- Attached to this report is a brochure prepared by 36 Commuting Solutions' staff and staff from the Mayors' / Commissioners' Coalition (MCC) in preparation for the MCC's recent

lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. The document provides a summary of the key components of this project as well as the progress that has been made during the past year.

Expenditure Required: The cost of the various construction alternatives range from approximately \$250 million to \$2.3 billion

Source of Funds: Federal, State and Local Funds

Policy Issue:

What policy direction does City Council wish to provide on the key elements of the US 36 Environmental Impact Statement and, specifically, on the selection of a preferred alternative?

Alternatives:

Council could decide not to provide policy direction on the US 36 EIS at this time. This alternative is not recommended given the impact that the US 36 project has on Westminster citizens and businesses and the fact that key decisions regarding the future of this project will be made during the next few months.

Background Information:

The major steps in the approval process for any major Federally-funded project such as the reconstruction of US 36 consist of a Major Investment Study (MIS), the DEIS, the FEIS and the Record of Decision (ROD). The MIS process for US 36 was led by RTD and CDOT with a significant amount of involvement of cities and counties along the corridor. During this process, four multi-model packages were identified. Package 4 the alternative that included 15 miles of new bus/HOV lanes in the median of US 36, 6 park-n-rides, carpool access to HOV lanes and frequent bus service was selected as the preferred alternative in the MIS. The package also included commuter rail, a number of minor roadway improvements and a regional bike trail.

While the MIS process was essentially the means for State and local agencies to determine the locally preferred alternative, the EIS process is a Federal agency review process that allows a major transportation project to qualify for Federal funding. The EIS is the process used to ensure that a range of alternatives are considered and that environmental impacts are assessed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The development of the DEIS took approximately four years and was completed in July 2007. At that point, public input was solicited through both written comments and testimony provided at a series of hearings that took place along the corridor. In August 2006, the regional rail component of the US 36 corridor project was carved out of the DEIS. The process being followed for Northwest Rail is now in the Environmental Evaluation stage which is a much less technical and detailed exercise than an EIS.

City of Westminster elected officials and staff have been involved in the development and review of project alternatives for more than ten years. Currently, Mayor McNally and two members of City staff are actively involved in the US 36 project. The City has been a member and active participant in two organizations closely involved in this process, 36 Commuting Solutions and the MCC. 36 Commuting Solutions is comprised of businesses and public entities located along the corridor and has as its focus improving mobility throughout the corridor through promotion of alternative means of transportation, public education and involvement in the decision making processes. The MCC which is currently celebrating its 10th anniversary has been comprised of the mayors, commissioners and staff from the Cities of Westminster, Broomfield, Superior, Louisville and Boulder and Boulder County. This organization has been very successful at building consensus among its members and garnering support for corridor improvements. The MCC is often cited as a model of intergovernmental cooperation by decision-makers at the Federal and State levels. For the last several

years, the Coalition has made annual trips to Washington, D.C. to encourage support for projects along the corridor.

The three alternatives in the DEIS included P4, briefly described above, P2 which places a heavy emphasis on mass transit and high-occupancy vehicles (HOV) and a “no build” alternative. P2 includes the construction of two managed lanes in each direction from I-25 to Foothills Parkway in Boulder and no additional general purpose lanes. Access to the managed lanes would be restricted through the use of concrete barriers along most of the roadway. This alternative includes the construction of “drop ramps,” one of which would be located on Westminster Boulevard. The cost for P2, as described in the DEIS, would be \$2.3 billion.

As noted above, P4 provided for expansion of the highway to address both additional mass transit and general purpose lane capacity. More specifically, under this alternative, one separated managed lane and one additional general purpose lane in each direction would extend from I-25 to Foothills Parkway in Boulder. The cost for this alternative in the DEIS was estimated at approximately \$2 billion. Both P2 and P4 alternatives include median BRT stations, interchange improvements and a bikeway.

During the public feedback process, the City expressed several major concerns with the DEIS. These included the limited ability for residents and businesses to access the HOV and toll lanes under P2; the location of the large drop ramp interchange along Westminster Boulevard and its impact on the developments in the area and adjacent streets; the absence of an extension of 88th Avenue to connect the segments of 88th Avenue on either side of US 36; and the need for sensitivity to the impacts of highway expansion on those citizens and businesses whose properties would be affected by the purchase of additional right-of-way.

The attachment entitled “US 36 Transportation Solution” provides a summary of the funding sources that have either been used for or been committed toward improvements along US 36. While this funding and the resulting projects are in themselves significant, no funds have yet been identified that would finance the expansion of the highway for additional lanes.

In late 2006, the MCC learned of a grant program available through the US Department of Transportation that focused on congestion management. This program known as “The Urban Partnership Agreement” (UPA) encouraged entities from throughout the country to submit proposals for transportation projects that addressed transit alternatives, incorporated managed lanes that included tolling under a demand management pricing and made use of technologically advanced traffic management information systems. The concept of Demand Management Pricing has gained considerable favor within the current Presidential Administration and among environmental groups alike. Under this concept, the managed lane would always be available to rapid transit, high occupancy vehicles (HOV) and single occupant vehicles who pay the toll. Through a sophisticated circuitry system, the amount of the toll is determined by the amount of traffic in the managed lane, i.e., if speeds start to decrease because of too many vehicles in the lane, the toll increases which prompts some of the drivers to avoid the managed lane. The toll is adjusted so that the traffic in this lane always moves at a constant relatively high speed. By moving the traffic in this lane through quickly, vehicle traffic on the entire roadway benefits.

The grant application submitted by the MCC requested \$235 million for improvements related to the construction of one managed lane in each direction that would continue the current HOV / bus lanes that currently terminate in Westminster to Foothills Parkway in Boulder. The application also provided for a painted buffer versus a barricade to separate the managed lane from the general purpose lanes and for the reconstruction of four bridges along the highway to accommodate the

additional lane in each direction. Although the US 36 project was not initially selected as a grant recipient, there is the possibility for further consideration of the MCC's UPA grant application if one or more of the five grant recipients are not able to meet the grant criteria within a specific timeframe. Even though the MCC has not yet been successful in obtaining these grant funds, the process of putting the grant proposal together did bring about a consensus within the Coalition for a single buffer-separated managed lane that included a tolling component. Another grant application similar to the UPA application was recently submitted by CDOT on behalf of the MCC. There is no word yet on the status of this application.

During its recent lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. to promote funding for US 36, MCC elected officials and staff focused their efforts on a request for a project to be included in the transportation authorization bill that would cost in the range of \$250 million to \$300 million. While the specifics of such a project have yet to be defined, this alternative would consist of an extension of the buffer-separated managed lane to Foothills Parkway in Boulder, improvements to the bridges as necessary to accommodate the additional lanes of traffic, some improvements to interchanges, modifications to the roadway to incorporate the elements of the FasTracks BRT stations and the addition of a bikeway that would run the length of the highway. One of the discussions that has been taking place with regard to the PAC deliberations is whether this reduced scope for the project represents the first major phase for a long-term project of the size of P2 or P4 or if this project with its significantly reduced scope should be the completed project as identified in the FEIS.

As noted earlier, the MCC communities, CDOT, RTD, FTA, FHWA, USACE, 36 Commuting Solutions, the City and County of Denver, Adams County and Jefferson County are involved in a process to identify a preferred alternative. This process is being facilitated by consultants for CDOT.

The PAC is structured so that each agency has one voting member and one alternate. In addition, there are a number of other support staff that attend each of the meetings. The group has met twice as a full committee and, other than deciding on the process that would be used for discussion, review, and decision making, no other decisions have thus far been made by the group. To facilitate and expedite the process, four work groups have been identified to conduct more detailed research and discussions and provide the PAC with recommendations. Two of the work groups - addressing bikeway and west-end issues - have already met. The work groups that will address BRT and auxiliary lanes are scheduled to meet during the week of March 17th. At this point, no recommendations have come out of any of the work groups.

In preparation for the PAC meetings in January, the consultant working on this project provided estimates of the costs for the various elements in this project. These elements and the estimated costs are as follows:

- One general purpose lane - \$6 to \$8 million / mile
- One managed lane - \$8 to \$10 million / mile
- Median BRT station - \$13 to \$20 million each
- Bus Slip ramp - \$2 to \$3 million each
- Interchange - \$35 to \$165 million each
- Bikeway - \$6 to \$7 million / mile

Although updated traffic modeling data prepared by DRCOG staff has yet to be reviewed and there are a number of technical issues that have yet to be addressed, the major discussion points and potential points of contention have already been identified. It is, therefore, very timely prior to the PAC moving into a decision making phase for City Council to provide preliminary direction on these major areas. Staff has identified these areas and provided narrative that addresses the different perspectives on how the PAC should proceed. These key decision points are as follows:

- **Ultimate Vision for the Highway**

There has been some discussion among PAC participants on whether the preferred alternative should continue to be the size and scope of P2 and P4. An option would be to reduce the scope to the project that was previously considered by many as a first phase. As noted earlier in this report, the cities and county represented by the MCC as well as CDOT, RTD and the Federal agencies involved were able to reach a consensus on a package that was included in the UPA grant application. This proposed project called for the extension of one managed lane in each direction from Westminster to Boulder. According to CDOT, the project could be accommodated using existing highway right-of-way. It should be noted that two of the four bridges that would need to be replaced in this project have already been funded through resources made available through CDOT.

Interchange improvements that were not included in the UPA grant application could be included in the reduced scope project. Such a project has a much greater potential for funding than Packages 2 and 4 and would have less of an impact on neighborhoods adjacent to the highway. One argument for reducing the scope is that the Northwest Rail Corridor / US 36 improvements will include BRT, HOV and commuter rail as viable alternatives for many commuters.

However, with these transit alternatives, the proposed single managed lane expansion may not provide adequate road capacity over the long term given the amount of congestion currently experienced along US 36. Also, additional transit alternatives will not benefit those individuals who must travel to locations that are not located adjacent to the transit corridor.

City Staff recommends that Council support the limited scope project described above as an early phase and a larger scope project comparable to the P4 alternative as an ultimate vision for the corridor.

- **Additional General Purpose Lanes**

There is a belief among some of the participants in the process that additional general purpose lanes should not be part of the selected alternative, or if they are, they should not extend the full length of the corridor. Boulder and Boulder County representatives have expressed concerns about the addition of a general purpose lane that would encourage increased traffic onto their City streets. Also, Adams County has expressed concern over the impact that the acquisition of additional right-of-way needed for general purpose lanes would have on the residents and businesses located adjacent to the east end of the corridor. The opposing argument is that without the addition of at least one general purpose lane, it is clear that over the next decades the amount of congestion experienced by those not using the managed lanes will increase significantly. This will mean a much more congested highway for commuters including those from Westminster who commute to locations in both directions.

Staff recommends that the ultimate vision for US 36 include an additional general purpose lane in each direction for the length of the highway.

- **Accessibility to Managed Lane(s)**

A high priority previously expressed by Westminster City Council is the need for accessibility to the managed lanes. Increased accessibility through buffer separated lanes allows for maximum use of the managed lanes. Concerns expressed by those who favor more limited access are safety issues resulting from the weaving necessary to get into buffered separated lanes and the reduced efficiencies with the buffered lane option. Buffered lanes also increase the challenges involved in the operation of a tolling component in the managed lanes.

Staff recommends continued support for buffered separation of managed lanes.

- **Bikeway**

Both P2 and P4 included a bikeway that would span most of the length of the corridor. Connections with existing trails are by and large not included in the project but are anticipated as the trail systems develop. The addition of the bikeway is an important aspect of the US 36 project for those wanting to encourage a safe and environmentally less impactful means of transport as compared with the motorized alternatives. Including a bikeway into the project is also important to some of the Washington officials who are involved in transportation project funding. Combined with the urban trail connections, such a trail system could provide a convenient means of travel for commuters between different points along the corridor. The major drawbacks to incorporating a bikeway in the corridor are the expense (estimated \$6 to \$7 million per mile) and the observation that this would be used by a relatively small percentage of the commuting public.

As described in the DEIS, the section of the trail in Westminster is proposed generally along the southern side of the corridor until it gets to south Westminster. The route in the DEIS uses Bradburn Boulevard to connect with the Little Dry Creek Trail. As an alternative, Westminster staff have proposed an alignment along Tennyson Street that begins approximately at 84th Avenue and then connects to Wolff Run Park Trail and ultimately to the Little Dry Creek Trail. Other options would be to construct the bikeway along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad tracks from 88th Avenue to Little Dry Creek (this assumes that the use of this right-of-way would be approved by the railroad) and the extension of the bikeway along US 36 to Broadway which could require additional right of way. Another option that would be implemented in conjunction with any of the other alternatives would be to have the bikeway on the north side of US 36 starting at 88th Avenue.

Staff recommends support for having the bikeway constructed in phases along the corridor as funding allows.

- **Median Stations**

Both P2 and P4 provided for six median BRT stations as approved in FasTracks. The increased speed of the system and convenience to transit users are two major advantages to median stations. Although it is anticipated that these will be funded largely through the FasTracks program, the cost for right-of-way and construction present a major disadvantage for the stations.

Staff recommends support for median stations as long as the financing of the stations does not reduce the funding available for other key elements of the project.

- **Auxiliary Lanes**

Auxiliary lanes are lanes that provide for acceleration and deceleration as well as provide a relatively short stretch of roadway to be used by slower moving vehicles. An example of this type of road improvement is just west of the Wadsworth / 287 interchange on both the eastbound and westbound portions of US 36. Especially if there are no additional through lanes built, the addition of auxiliary lanes becomes a very important issue to the cities in the Boulder County portion of the highway.

Staff recommends support for the construction of auxiliary lanes as necessary to improve the free flow of traffic along the highway.

- **Options for the West End of the Corridor**

The PAC will likely be called upon to decide between two options that relate to the connection of the BRT with the Table Mesa Park-n-Ride. Assuming the managed lanes are in the center of the roadway, Option A would require buses to move across traffic lanes to exit onto Table Mesa to drop passengers off at the Park-n-Ride. Option B involves the construction of a “wish-bone” flyover that would connect the westbound managed lane directly to the Park-n-Ride resulting in a time savings for the BRT. There is not a direct impact on Westminster from an operational standpoint for either option. The additional cost for Option B is \$30 million.

Other issues will undoubtedly arise as the FEIS process proceeds. City staff will continue to periodically touch base with Council to obtain your feedback and direction.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachment

U.S. 36 Transportation Solution

U.S. 36 MAYORS AND COMMISSIONERS COALITION
Boulder County
City of Boulder
City & County of Broomfield
City of Louisville
Town of Superior
City of Westminster

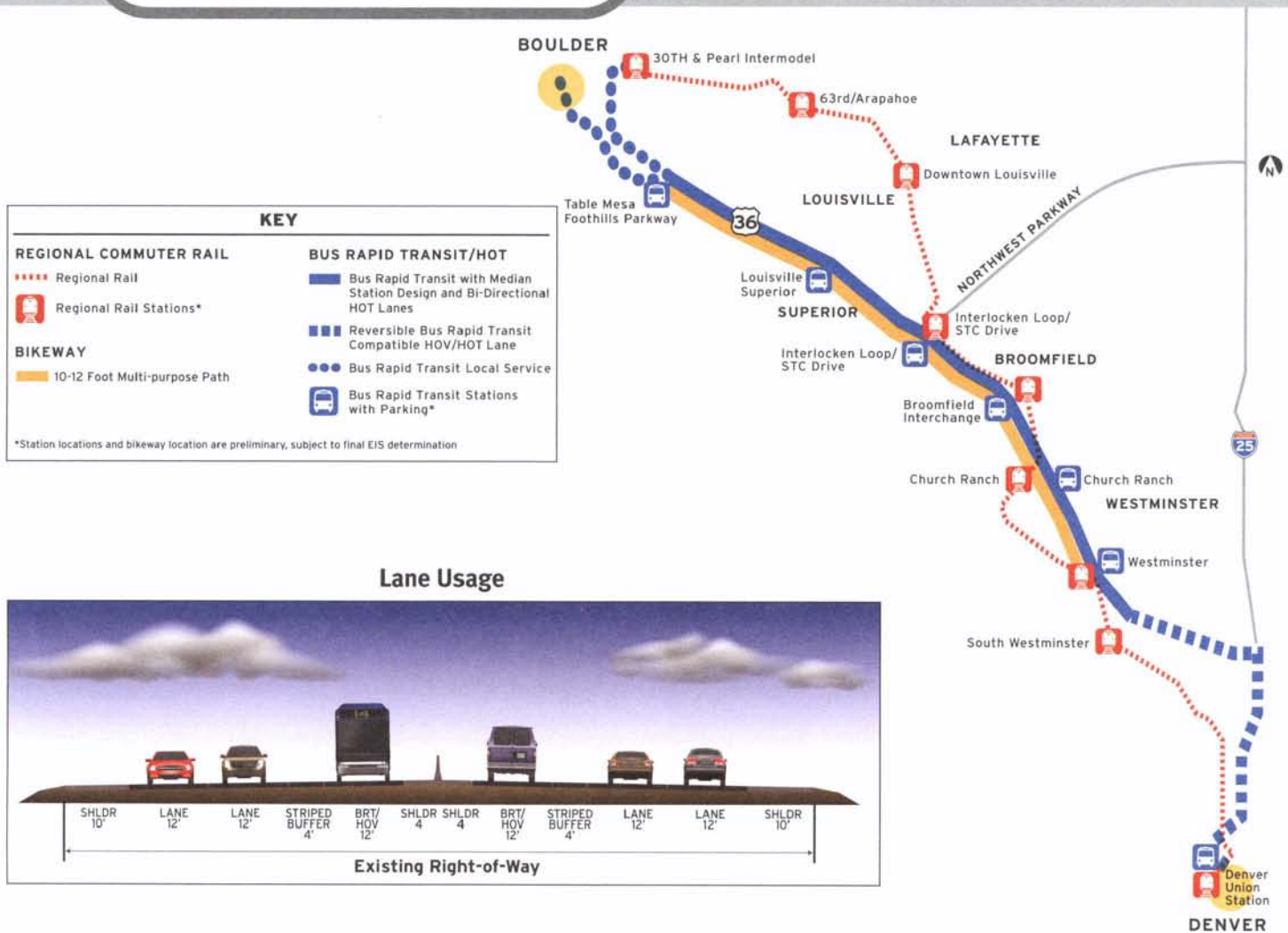
From Boulder to Denver A High-Tech, Multi-Modal Corridor



"U.S. 36 is an important corridor for linking transportation and economic development, particularly given its strengths in aerospace, bio-science, renewable energy and other industries."

– Colorado Governor Bill Ritter

U.S. 36 Transportation Solution



The U.S. 36 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), completed Fall 2007, included two build alternatives. Both alternatives included a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane, bikeway and transportation technology. One alternative also added the congestion pricing element.

Public comments on the Draft EIS demonstrated a strong consensus for a hybrid of these two alternatives that will shape the Preferred Alternative identified mid-2008. This Preferred Alternative will be included in the U.S. 36 Final EIS to be completed in 2009.

Local government, private and citizen stakeholders concur that early implementation of managed pricing is a critical first step in implementing the long term vision for this corridor. A scalable, congestion pricing strategy allows for significant and immediate commuter travel time reductions.

The key components of the initial improvements include:

- A new managed lane in each direction along U.S. 36, creating a BRT lane and options for both carpools and single occupant drivers in how they travel
- A travel time savings of up to 20 minutes for transit commuters
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology including toll-tag readers and variable message sign (VMS) provide interoperable functionality with Colorado's existing toll facilities.

Project Benefits:

- Phased delivery with expedited implementation of HOV to HOT lane conversion resulting in near term congestion reduction
- Multi-modal – setting the stage for the next generation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system
- Interoperable, expands a successful existing managed lane system
- Incorporates advanced technological solutions
- Includes a bikeway between Boulder and Westminister
- Provides travel time saving of up to 20 minutes
- Unique regional partnership with strong political, public, business and community support.

These initial improvements could be implemented for \$235 million and interim phases that bring benefits to the public can be implemented depending on available funding. The U.S. 36 Final EIS will define the Bus Rapid Transit median stations and phasing for the entire project.

Timeline:

U.S. 36 Final EIS Preferred Alternative – June 2008
Record of Decision – 2009



Church Ranch (Westminster)
Pedestrian/vehicular underpass.

Rush hour congestion on U.S. 36.

McCaslin Interchange Improvements to
existing bridge and interchange ramps.

Progress Update

Milestones:

- Application pending for a U.S. Department of Transportation Congestion Reduction Demonstration Initiative grant
- Finalist for a U.S. Department of Transportation Urban Partnership Agreement
- Completion of U.S. 36 Draft Environmental Impact Statement – Fall 2007
- State funding provides \$5 million to replace Cherryvale bridge and \$11 million in state and federal funds to replace the 80th Avenue bridge (necessary for the UPA/CRDI project implementation)
- \$40 million in local and federal funds for the 120th Avenue Connection, providing the first phase bridge over U.S. 36 and park-n-Ride relocation
- Phase 1 BRT Improvements completed or underway with \$75,200,000 in local, RTD, state and federal funding:
 - Table Mesa (BRT) slip ramps and pedestrian bridge – Complete 2010
 - Development of Table Mesa interchange options – Scope of Work completed jointly with CDOT 2008
 - McCaslin interchange and BRT improvements – Completed
 - Broomfield Event Center BRT pedestrian bridge and bus slip ramps – Under contract, complete 2010
 - Church Ranch BRT Improvements – Completed
- \$14.8 million authorized through SAFETEA-LU
- RTD FasTracks commitment to fund \$791.4 million for commuter rail, BRT Phase 1, bike path, HOV lanes, BRT stations and park-n-Ride expansion.

Re-authorization of the Federal Transportation Bill

The U.S. 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition will be requesting federal funding in the surface transportation re-authorization bill to construct multi-modal improvements to the U.S. 36 corridor. The U.S. 36 project includes integrated improvements for highways, Bus Rapid Transit, bicycle/pedestrian and ITS improvements.

The U.S. 36 transportation improvement project will address current congestion and be designed to stay ahead of projected traffic increases along the corridor. The U.S. 36 project is an ideal candidate for a regionally significant project as it serves multiple communities and businesses such as high tech, bio-science, higher education, federal labs and others. Federal

investment will move people more efficiently and benefit air quality by removing cars from the road.

The Preferred Alternative of the U.S. 36 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is expected to be determined in 2008 which will lead to construction in the first or second year of the multi-year surface transportation bill. Local matching dollars are anticipated from RTD and CDOT.

U.S. 36 is an example of a well coordinated and planned infrastructure project with strong support from both state and local governments.

“This is the finest example of community cooperation I've seen anywhere in America”

- Congressman James Oberstar (MN), on a bus tour of the U.S. 36 corridor in April 2003. Colorado Congressman Mark Udall also participated in the tour.

One Corridor. Two Studies.



U.S. 36 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

U.S. 36 is the northwestern corridor connecting Denver and the communities of Westminster, Broomfield, Superior, Louisville and Boulder. The study includes Bus Rapid Transit with median stations, interchange reconstruction, adding HOV/HOT lanes and a bikeway. The Preferred Alternative will be identified in 2008.

Lead Agencies:

FHWA, *David Nichol*, Division Administration
FTA, *Terri Rosapep*, Regional Administrator
CDOT, *Russell George*, Executive Director
RTD, *Cal Marsella*, General Manager



Northwest Rail Environmental Assessment

RTD FasTracks commuter rail will serve residents traveling regionally between the cities of Longmont to Boulder, then continuing to Denver Union Station. The Draft Environmental Evaluation (EE) will be completed mid-2008.

Lead Agency:

RTD, *Cal Marsella*, General Manager

Serving an employment corridor with industry sectors in:

- High Tech • Federal Government
- Higher Education • Manufacturing • Bio-science

Corridor Characteristics:

Population will increase 22% to 615,400
Employment will increase 40% to 483,000

U.S. 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition

Mayor Shaun McGrath

City of Boulder
PO Box 791
Boulder, CO 80306
McGrathS@bouldercolorado.gov
(303) 319-2581

Mayor Nancy McNally

City of Westminster
4800 West 92nd Avenue
Westminster, CO 80031
nmcnally@stifel.com
(303) 291-5303

Mayor Andrew Muckle

Town of Superior
124 East Coal Creek Drive
Superior, CO 80027
andrewm@townofsuperior.com
(303) 499-3675

Mayor Pat Quinn

City & County of Broomfield
One DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020
pquinn@broomfieldcitycouncil.org
(303) 298-7262

Commissioner Will Toor

Boulder County
1325 Pearl Street
Boulder, CO 80306
wtoor@co.boulder.co.us
(303) 441-4503

Mayor Chuck Sisk

City of Louisville
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027
charlessisk@aol.com
(303) 335-4533

Audrey DeBarros

Executive Director
36 Commuting Solutions
350 Interlocken Boulevard
Suite 250
Broomfield, CO 80021
Audrey@36commutingsolutions.org
(303) 439-8517



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WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting
March 24, 2008



SUBJECT: City of Westminster's "Buy Westminster" Policy

PREPARED BY: Matt Lutkus, Deputy City Manager

Recommended City Council Action:

Review the City's "Buy Westminster" administrative policy and related sections of the City Charter and City Municipal Code and provide City staff with direction on possible changes.

Summary Statement:

At the January 14th pre-City Council meeting briefing, City Councillors requested a review of the City policy regarding the preference given to Westminster businesses in the purchase of City goods and services.

The purchase of goods and services from Westminster businesses is currently addressed in a City administrative memorandum. The Memorandum, which is attached for Council's review, states that Westminster businesses should be utilized for purchases under \$1,000 unless it is not cost effective to do so. This practice is followed for the City's smaller purchases such as the purchase of food for various meetings, hand tools, emergency fuel, office supplies and a variety of other purchases. Such a practice not only benefits Westminster businesses, it is also practical, convenient and cost effective from a business standpoint.

In accordance with City Charter and the Municipal Code, larger purchases must be made through a competitive bid process unless it is determined that it is not the public's interest to do so.

Expenditure Required: Not Known

Source of Funds: N/A

Policy Issue:

Should the City revise its policies with regard to preference given to Westminster businesses in the purchase of goods and services?

Alternatives:

Council could direct staff to change the City's administrative purchasing practices and could consider changes to the City's Charter and Code to allow for a preference to be given to Westminster businesses in City purchases. Staff does not believe that changes in this area would be consistent with sound business practices or that it would be beneficial to Westminster citizens overall.

Background Information:

Chapter XIII, Section 3, of the City Charter sets forth basic guidelines regarding contracts, agreements, and purchase orders. The Charter requires that sealed bids shall be obtained except when Council determines that the public interest is best served by a joint purchase or contract or when at the recommendation of the City Manager, Council determines that the public interest is best served by a negotiated contract with a single bidder. The Chapter further reads that "whenever comparative prices have been obtained by public bidding, purchases shall be awarded to the lowest competent bidder meeting specifications unless City Council, after reviewing the bids received, determines that the public interest would be better served by accepting a higher bid."

The Westminster Municipal Code requires formal bid procedures when the amount of the purchase exceeds \$30,000. The exception for purchases above \$50,000 occurs when Council determines that the public's interest is better served by accepting a higher bid. The City Manager must make this determination for purchases between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Section 15-1-5 E. of the Code states that: "In determining whether the public interest would be better served by accepting a bid other than the lowest bid, the following factors shall be considered:

1. The bidder's skill, ability, and capacity to perform the personal services or to furnish the materials, equipment or supplies required;
2. Whether the bidder can perform the services or furnish the materials, equipment or supplies promptly, or within the time period specified, without delay or interference;
3. The bidder's character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience and efficiency;
4. The quality of the bidder's performance of previous purchase agreements;
5. The bidder's previous and current compliance with statutes, ordinances and rules relating to the purchase;
6. The sufficiency of the bidder's financial resources necessary for the performance of the purchase agreement;
7. The bidder's ability to provide future maintenance or service;
8. The number and nature of any conditions attached to the bid."

For purchases under \$30,000, the Code requires comparative price quotations unless the City Manager determines that the public interest is better served by a negotiated contract or a joint purchase with another government. The Manager also has the option of using a formal bid process for these purchases.

The City's "Buy Westminster" policy, described in an administrative memorandum, operates within the parameters of the City Code and Charter. The Memorandum states that items that cost less than

\$1,000 will be purchased from Westminster vendors unless it is not cost effective to do so. It also states that every effort should be made to locate a Westminster vendor to sell and deliver commodities that meet City specifications.

The major advantage to adopting a policy that would give preference to Westminster businesses is that it would promote the vitality of businesses that:

- are located within the City,
- remit sales tax, and in many cases,
- contribute to the overall economic health of the community.

The major disadvantages of implementing a more extensive "Buy Westminster" policy are as follows:

1. The Westminster City Government continues to operate in a very financially constrained environment where it is very important that budget dollars be spent in the most efficient and effective manner possible.
2. If Westminster businesses were given an advantage in the bid process, it would potentially create a strong disincentive for firms outside the City including some that may be equally or better qualified than Westminster businesses from bidding on City purchases and contracts.
3. There could be a wide difference of perspective as to what actually constitutes a Westminster business. While all businesses pay property taxes and, in the case of retail establishments, remit sales tax to the City, some are truly home-grown businesses with their owners also living in the community while others represent the local franchise or a branch of nationwide organizations. Council would need to decide whether there would be any differentiation in the preference given to these various types of businesses.

The City organization currently has an on-going practice of supporting local businesses not only through the regular smaller purchases made in accordance with the Administration Memorandum but in other ways as well. Local businesses receive recognition and publicity through the City's annual Business Recognition Event. In addition, local businesses are allowed to advertise their services to City employees through flyers placed in employee break rooms and various promotions posted on the City's internal website. Businesses are also regularly recognized in the **City Edition** citizen newsletter and residents are encouraged to support these businesses.

However, it is City Staff's view that to provide any specific businesses with preference when it comes to City purchases would be inconsistent with the intent and spirit of the City Charter and Westminster Municipal Code and would be contrary to sound business purchasing practices. Maintaining the current policies with regard to City purchases is consistent with the City Council's strategic plan goal of maintaining a financially sustainable City government.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachment

City of Westminster City Council Study Session
March 24, 2008

Mayor Nancy McNally called the Study Session to order at 6:40 PM. All Council was in attendance.

City Staff in attendance included: City Manager Brent McFall; Assistant City Manager Steve Smithers; City Attorney Marty McCullough; Deputy City Manager Matt Lutkus; City Engineer Dave Downing; Senior Engineer Mike Normandin; Transportation Systems Coordinator Greg Olson; Public Information Specialist Carol Jones; and Management Intern II Phil Jones.

Left Turn Arrows at Signalized Intersection Policy:

Council discussed controlled left turn signals throughout the city that may create traffic issues. The discussion included electronic controller equipment, and the ability to use variable light timings (VLT) for left turn lights. Also discussed was policy regarding controlled left turns and permissive left turns at various intersections.

As a whole, council was supportive of existing policy used on left turn signals, and is open to the use and experimentation of VLT on certain intersections as appropriate. Council will leave the decisions up to the traffic engineers.

Review of Key US 36 EIS Issues

Deputy City Manager Matt Lutkus and City Engineer Dave Downing presented a staff report regarding the completion of a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Matt Lutkus outlined the handful of issues that needed Council guidance so that the report could move forward. Council voiced their desire to move forward with the suggestions for Package 4, with buffered, not barriered managed lanes for greater accessibility. The bikeway will be supported in phases for a Boulder to Interlocken section. Auxiliary lanes will be important if there are no new through-lanes, and will be supported in order to benefit Louisville and Superior.

Options for the west end of the Corridor in Boulder were discussed and it was decided that any decision relating to this issue would be postponed until the Council had a better understanding of what Boulder desires and how those ideas will impact other cities along the US 36 Corridor.

Council was appreciative of the presentation and effort discussion and directed staff to move forward with the work on the FEIS.

City of Westminster's "Buy Westminster" Policy

Deputy City Manager Matt Lutkus was on hand to discuss the city's policy of contracting and working with local businesses. Matt covered the current policy as outlined in Chapter XIII, Section 3 of the City Charter. Council discussed the pros and cons of giving preferential treatment to local bidders such as a 5% cost margin, the ability to issue contracts to local companies, and the ability of local businesses to supply the City needed goods and services.

It was mentioned that most city staff members who are involved in contracting already look favorably on local businesses that are qualified to serve the city and bid projects competitively. It was also noted that many major contractors use local business as subcontractors, contributing the local economy. Another topic for discussion was the difficulty in defining a local business, as all companies conducting business in Westminster must have a Westminster business license.

Staff agreed to continue to look at ways to maximize local bidders awareness of City bids. City Council was appreciative of the discussion and will deliberate the topic as needed in the future.

Mayor McNally adjourned the Study Session at 8:30 PM.

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