



# Appendix A - Letters of Support



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





# COLORADO SPRINGS AIRPORT

Administration Office  
7770 Milton E. Proby Parkway, Suite 50  
Colorado Springs, CO 80916-4928  
TEL 719.550.1900 • FAX 719.550.1901  
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El Paso County  
Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

Attention: Howard Schwartz, P.E., Engineer III

April 4, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

City of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport participated in the South Powers Extension (SPE) Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. Draft PEL recommendations was completed at the end of 2023. As an integral participating agency in the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study recommendations. We have attended agency-specific meetings and have provided feedback on the study.

We are writing to endorse the following:

1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, area stakeholders, and local agencies. The PEL was developed with the participation of our organization and information was made available to all interested parties.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined as posted to the study website: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>
3. The recommended alternatives as noted on the study website were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the SPE corridor: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>
4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff in order to implement improvements to benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

Gregory S. Phillips, A.A.E.

Director of Aviation

City of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport



El Paso County  
Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

Attention: Howard Schwartz, P.E., Engineer III

March 1, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

The Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC has closely monitored the South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. Final recommendations for the study, will be completed by Winter 2023. As a stakeholder affected by the study we are sending this letter of support for the study's recommendations. With our organizational mission dedicated to the economic growth and prosperity of the Pikes Peak region, we are writing to endorse the following:

- The study has been conducted through collaborative effort by El Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies. The PEL survey formulation and information was made available to all interested parties.
- The purpose and need for the extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
- The recommended alternatives were selected, because they best meet the purpose, need, and goals of the SPE corridor.
- A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
- Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
- Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor's vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff to implement improvements that benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnna Reeder Kleymeyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Johnna Reeder Kleymeyer  
President and CEO  
Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC

El Paso County  
Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922



Attention: Howard Schwartz, P.E., Engineer III

May 2, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

CONO participated in the South Powers Extension (SPE) Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate-25. Final PEL recommendations have been completed. As an integral participating agency in the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study recommendations. We have regularly attended SPE stakeholder specific meetings; and provided consistent feedback throughout progression of the study. We are writing to endorse the following:

1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, area stakeholders, and local agencies. The PEL was developed with the participation of CONO and information was made available to all interested parties.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined as posted to the study website: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>
3. The recommended alternatives as noted on the study website were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the SPE corridor: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>
4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
6. Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff in order to implement improvements to benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

CONO

Sara Vaas  
Executive Director

Board of County Commissioners

O: 719-520-7276  
F: 719-520-6397  
Centennial Hall  
200 S. Cascade Ave.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
www.ElPasoCo.com

**Board of County Commissioners**  
Holly Williams, District 1  
Carrie Geitner, District 2  
Stan VanderWerf, District 3  
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4  
Cami Bremer, District 5

Attn: S Powers Extension PEL Study Team  
c/o Howard Schwartz, P.E.  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs CO, 80922

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Study Team

El Paso County participated in the South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. Final PEL recommendations will be complete by Winter 2024. As an integral participating agency in the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study recommendations. The County regularly attended Executive Oversight Team, Technical Team, public outreach, and agency specific meetings; and provided consistent feedback throughout progression of the study. We are writing to endorse the following:

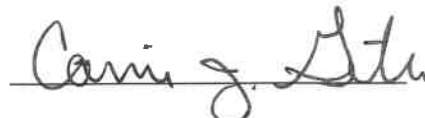
1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies. The PEL was developed with the participation of our agency and information was made available to all interested parties.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
3. The recommended alternatives were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the SPE corridor.
4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
6. Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff in order to implement improvements to benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,



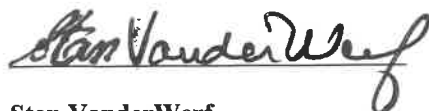
Cami Bremer - Chair



Carrie Geitner - Vice Chair



Holly Williams



Stan VanderWerf



Longinos Gonzalez



El Paso County  
Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

Attention: Howard Schwartz, P.E., Engineer III

March 1, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

The Military Affairs Council of the Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC has closely monitored the South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. Final recommendations for the study, will be completed by Winter 2023. As a stakeholder affected by the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study's recommendations. With our organizational mission dedicated to the support of our Department of Defense missions and installations in the Pikes Peak Region, we are writing to endorse the following:

- The study has been conducted through collaborative effort by El Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies. The PEL survey formulation and information was made available to all interested parties.
- The purpose and need for the extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
- The recommended alternatives were selected, because they best meet the purpose, need, and goals of the SPE corridor.
- A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
- Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
- Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor's vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff to implement improvements that benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Mortensen". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a large "K" and "M".

Kevin "Morty" Mortensen  
Chairman,  
Military Affairs Council



El Paso County  
Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

Attention: Howard Schwartz, P.E., Engineer III

May 21, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

Mountain Metropolitan Transit has participated in the South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. As an integral participating agency in the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study recommendations. We have regularly attended meetings and provided consistent feedback throughout the progression of the study. We are writing to endorse the following:

1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies. The PEL was developed with the participation of our agency and information was made available to all interested parties.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
3. The recommended alternatives were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the corridor.
4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
6. Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff in order to implement improvements to benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

Lan Rao, Transit Division Manager

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Andrew Gunning  
Executive Director



Pikes Peak Area  
Council of Governments  
Communities Working Together

**RESOLUTION BY**  
**THE PIKES PEAK AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**SUPPORT FOR THE SOUTH POWERS EXTENSION (CO 21)**  
**PLANNING AND ENVIROMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**APRIL 10, 2024**

Attn: S Powers Extension PEL Study Team  
c/o Howard Schwartz, P.E.  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs CO, 80922

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Study Team

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) has participated in the South Powers Extension (SPE) Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for the proposed extension of the existing South Powers Boulevard (with the southern terminus currently at Mesa Ridge Parkway) to extend around the east side of the City of Fountain and connect with Interstate 25. As a participating agency in the study, we are sending this letter of support for the study recommendations. We have regularly attended study meetings and provided feedback throughout the study when appropriate. We are writing to endorse the following:

1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies. The PEL was developed with the participation of our agency and information was made available to all interested parties.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
3. The recommended alternatives were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the SPE corridor.

4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
6. The project was included in the PPACG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document in 2021. Additionally, the project is consistent with the PPACG 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff in order to implement improvements to benefit the region and South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,



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Mayor Sharon Thompson,  
Chair



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ATTEST

Kellie Case  
Secretary

PIKES PEAK INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

16650 Midway Ranch Road  
PO Box 430  
Fountain, CO 80817-0430

Tel: 719.382.7223  
Fax: 719.382.9180

November, 14, 2023

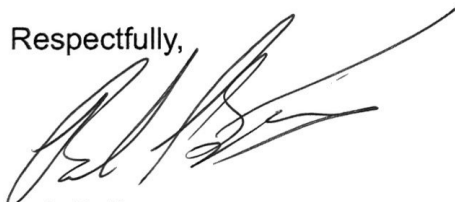
To whom it may concern,

In response to the public outreach by the South Powers Extension study team, I would like to offer our support of the study and the proposed alignment options.

As a property owner in South Fountain, we can see the advantages that the South Powers Interchange will bring to the City of Fountain. This project will bring jobs and increased tax revenue to the City even before it's completion. It is my opinion that once the final alignment is announced the economic growth will begin.

The Project Team has been very through and approachable during this process and I look forward to seeing how this turns out.

Respectfully,



Bob Boileau

President, Pikes Peak International Raceway





15 SOUTH 7TH STREET  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80905  
P: (719) 471-7080  
F: (719) 471-1226  
www.PPRTA.com

Attn: S. Powers Extension PEL Study Team  
c/o Howard Schwartz, P.E.  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs CO, 80922

April 10, 2024

Subject: Support for the South Powers Extension (CO 21) PEL Study Recommendations

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Study Team

The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) has its PPRTA-3 voter-approved Capital projects list for the period of 2025-2034. One of the Regional Collaborative capital projects, which will be managed by El Paso County, is "Powers Boulevard Extension – Mesa Ridge Parkway to I-25 (Design and Right-of-Way Acquisition Only)." This is the same project for which the PEL Study has been conducted. The recommendations from the study will be used to implement the PPRTA's funding of the design of this project in 2025 and beyond. Consequently, we are writing to endorse the following:

1. The study has been a collaborative effort between EL Paso County, FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, and local agencies.
2. The purpose and need for extension of South Powers Boulevard are clearly defined.
3. The recommended alternatives were selected because they best meet the purpose and need and goals of the SPE corridor.
4. A well-planned transportation system is foundational to the resilience, mobility, and safety of the region.
5. Corridor improvements will be phased, and future projects will incorporate the identified supplemental elements such as multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and technology.
6. Identifying funding and continuing to partner with all agencies involved in developing the PEL will be critical in realizing the corridor vision.

We look forward to continuing communication and collaboration with you and your staff to implement improvements to benefit South Powers Boulevard users.

Sincerely,

Holly Williams, Board Chair  
Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority



# **Appendix B - FHWA Coordination Points**



# **South Powers Extension**

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





**Project:** South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study/Access Control Plan  
**To:** Troy Halouska, Planning and Environmental Linkages Program Manager and Sr. NEPA Specialist  
**From:** Howard Schwartz, El Paso County Project Manager  
**Date:** April 21, 2022  
**Subject:** PEL Study for South Powers Extension - FHWA Coordination Point #1

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This memo has been prepared to obtain concurrence on FHWA Coordination Point #1 for the South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) in El Paso County. In August 2020, El Paso County, CDOT, and FHWA met, discussed, and determined that a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study is the correct study approach for the South Powers Boulevard Extension in El Paso County. Participants of the meeting concluded that a PEL is an appropriate method of study due to the amount of previous planning in this corridor and the need for a redundant route to I-25. As such, the PEL will fulfill a need to understand future growth and demand in this region.

The regional partners are working together to continue planning for the South Powers Boulevard corridor to help preserve the corridor, plan for limited access for the freeway standard, plan for multimodal use and crossings of the corridor, and provide predictability to development by studying alternatives. This PEL will continue the intensive planning efforts of the region.

In 1964, the Powers Boulevard Extension was identified as a by-pass alternative for the I-25 corridor along the eastern edge of the City of Fountain. Cooperative planning for Powers Boulevard was formalized in the 1980's through an Intergovernmental Agreement among El Paso County and the cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain. Multiple land use planning documents have incorporated the expansion of Powers Boulevard, including:

- The 2000 South Powers Feasibility Study in cooperation with PPACG, El Paso County, CDOT and the City of Fountain
- The 2010 Link Powers Corridor Environmental Assessment from Woodmen to SH 16 by CDOT
- The El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP) from 2016.
- The City of Fountain Transportation Master Plan from 2022.
- The El Paso County Master Plan from 2021

The PEL provides a preliminary step to a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review of specific transportation improvements that will be developed during the PEL process. The PEL documentation includes a FHWA PEL Questionnaire which may be used during NEPA environmental permitting and approval.



El Paso County determined that the scope of work for the PEL Study should include the development of Purpose and Need which will provide a foundation for future NEPA work. The report will summarize research and define the existing and future transportation systems as well as a qualitative environmental evaluation. The Study will also include a range of feasible alternatives. The PEL Study will document relevant decisions and processes that can be utilized during the scoping process for subsequent NEPA documents.

Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Howard Schwartz at (719) 339-5615 or [howardschwartz@elpasoco.com](mailto:howardschwartz@elpasoco.com).

**From:** [Gibson, Stephanie \(FHWA\)](#)  
**To:** [troy.halouska](#); [Henriquez, Armando \(FHWA\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Robert Frei - CDOT](#); [Kelly C. Maiorana](#); [Shay N. Reilly](#)  
**Subject:** RE: SPE PEL: FHWA Coordination Point #1 Concurrence Memo  
**Date:** Thursday, June 2, 2022 12:55:25 PM

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Hi Troy,

FHWA is pleased to concur that coordination point #1 has been completed for the South Powers Boulevard Extension PEL.

I apologize for the delay in our reply. Armando was on top of things right away, but unfortunately I had several additional work items all hit in May.

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Gibson* (she/her/hers)

Federal Highway Administration – Colorado Division

720-963-3013

[Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov)

---

**From:** Halouska - CDOT, Troy <troy.halouska@state.co.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 6, 2022 8:59 AM  
**To:** Henriquez, Armando (FHWA) <armando.henriquez@dot.gov>; Gibson, Stephanie (FHWA) <Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov>  
**Cc:** Robert Frei - CDOT <robert.frei@state.co.us>; Kelly C. Maiorana <kmaiorana@mullereng.com>; Shay N. Reilly <sreilly@mullereng.com>  
**Subject:** Fwd: SPE PEL: FHWA Coordination Point #1 Concurrence Memo

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Armando and Stephanie,

For the South Powers Boulevard Extension in PEL Study, we would like to have formal concurrence for FHWA Coordination Point #1. Below is an email and attached is a memo describing our meeting and decision to conduct the PEL. Please take a look at the summary. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. Otherwise, if you feel the summary is accurate, please simply respond to this email stating that the coordination point has been completed.

Thank you,

**Troy Halouska**  
**Senior NEPA Specialist and PEL Program Manager**



Work 303.757.9978 | Mobile 720.371.5519  
2829 W. Howard Pl., Denver, CO 80204  
[troy.halouska@state.co.us](mailto:troy.halouska@state.co.us) | [www.codot.gov](http://www.codot.gov)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Shay N. Reilly** <[sreilly@mullereng.com](mailto:sreilly@mullereng.com)>  
Date: Thu, Apr 21, 2022 at 4:47 PM  
Subject: SPE PEL: FHWA Coordination Point #1 Concurrence Memo  
To: troy.halouska <[troy.halouska@state.co.us](mailto:troy.halouska@state.co.us)>  
Cc: [Robert.frei@state.co.us](mailto:Robert.frei@state.co.us) <[robert.frei@state.co.us](mailto:robert.frei@state.co.us)>, Kelly C. Maiorana <[kmaiorana@mullereng.com](mailto:kmaiorana@mullereng.com)>

Hi Troy –

Attached is the concurrence memo for FHWA Coordination Point #1 for the South Powers Boulevard Extension in El Paso County. This agreement happened prior to our involvement with the project, so please let us know if there are any details you or Rob would like added to the memo. It is our understanding that in August 2020, El Paso County, CDOT, and FHWA determined that a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study was the correct study approach. Participants of the meeting concluded that a PEL is an appropriate method of study due to the amount of previous planning in this corridor and the need for a redundant route to I-25.

Thank you for your help coordinating this with FHWA –

**Shay Reilly**

**MULLER** Engineering Company

303.988.4939 • 614.580.6438 (cell)

## FW: South Powers Extension PEL Coordination Point #2: Purpose and Need

Kelly C. Maiorana <kmaiorana@mullereng.com>

Wed 7/10/2024 5:01 PM

To: Mackenzie A. Foss <mfoss@mullereng.com>

### Kelly Maiorana

Associate

Senior Project Manager • Planning & Program Management

(p) [303.301.1332](tel:303.301.1332) • (c) [303.483.3502](tel:303.483.3502)

[kmaiorana@mullereng.com](mailto:kmaiorana@mullereng.com)

[Muller Engineering Company](#)

---

**From:** Gibson, Stephanie (FHWA) <Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 29, 2022 8:21 PM

**To:** troy.halouska <troy.halouska@state.co.us>; Henriquez, Armando (FHWA) <armando.henriquez@dot.gov>

**Cc:** robert.frei <robert.frei@state.co.us>; Howard Schwartz <HowardSchwartz@elpasoco.com>; Kelly C. Maiorana <kmaiorana@mullereng.com>

**Subject:** RE: South Powers Extension PEL Coordination Point #2: Purpose and Need

Hello Troy,

Overall, I can give concurrence to the P&N as long as Armando is ok with it as well. Unfortunately, he and I have not been able to connect to discuss the P&N, so please coordinate with him on his thoughts.

I do have some suggestions for the team to consider.

First page, Purpose statement – “that recognizes previous local and regional planning efforts intended” – This would be better in either the intro paragraph of the memo or in an intro paragraph under Corridor history, saying that this study will be building on previous studies. Having it as part of the purpose is a bit awkward, but not a deal killer. I also recommend moving “to enhance regional mobility and integrate future multimodal opportunities” to after the first sentence as a stand-alone sentence. Mobility and multimodal are separate from the phasing and next steps so having them in the same sentence is confusing. So basically the same stuff, just moved around a bit.

Figure 1 – It says 2021 PEL – should it say 2022 (or even 2023 since that is when the PEL is likely to be finalized)?

Figure 2 – the City of Fountain label is confusing – I thought Fort Carson was the city of Fountain at first. Adding an arrow to it might help (I assume you didn’t want it over the city of Fountain area because of the street labels there). This figure might benefit from being blown up and focusing just on the south area.

Figure 4 – recommend changing the label from “South Powers Extension Environmental Study Area” to remove “Environmental” – it is the study area for other things as well like traffic. (would also want to make that change in the text – focus on “study area” rather than “environmental study area” since we are in planning, not the NEPA/environmental phase.

Page 18, Goals – this might be another place to put “recognizes previous local and regional planning efforts” rather than in the purpose statement

*Stephanie Gibson* (she/her/hers)

Federal Highway Administration – Colorado Division

720-963-3013

[Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov)

---

**From:** Halouska - CDOT, Troy <[troy.halouska@state.co.us](mailto:troy.halouska@state.co.us)>

**Sent:** Monday, November 7, 2022 5:19 PM

**To:** Gibson, Stephanie (FHWA) <[Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov)>; Henriquez, Armando (FHWA) <[armando.henriquez@dot.gov](mailto:armando.henriquez@dot.gov)>

**Cc:** Robert Frei - CDOT <[robert.frei@state.co.us](mailto:robert.frei@state.co.us)>; Howard Schwartz <[HowardSchwartz@elpasoco.com](mailto:HowardSchwartz@elpasoco.com)>; Kelly C. Maiorana <[kmaiorana@mullereng.com](mailto:kmaiorana@mullereng.com)>

**Subject:** South Powers Extension PEL Coordination Point #2: Purpose and Need

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Armando and Stephanie,

Please see the attached P&N Memo. The memo has been reviewed by Rob Frei and me and your previous comments have been addressed. This is being submitted as the FHWA Coordination Point #2 as a part of the Planning and Environmental Linkages process.


El Paso County and CDOT are requesting your support and acknowledgment that this P&N statement satisfies the PEL coordination point. Should you have any additional questions or comments, or if you need any additional time to review, please let me know by **November 21st**.

Otherwise, if you feel the memo and P&N statement is adequate, please simply respond to this email stating that the coordination point has been completed.

Thanks much,

**Troy Halouska**

**Senior NEPA Specialist and PEL Program Manager**

  
Work 303.757.9978 | Mobile 720.371.5519  
2829 W. Howard Pl., Denver, CO 80204  
[troy.halouska@state.co.us](mailto:troy.halouska@state.co.us) | [www.codot.gov](http://www.codot.gov)

**RE: South Powers Extension PEL & ACP: FHWA Coordination Point #3**

Keenan, William (FHWA) <william.keenan@dot.gov>

Fri 10/27/2023 10:00 AM

To: troy.halouska <troy.halouska@state.co.us>; Gibson, Stephanie (FHWA) <stephanie.gibson@dot.gov>; Henriquez, Armando (FHWA) <armando.henriquez@dot.gov>

Cc: robert.frei <robert.frei@state.co.us>; Kelly C. Maiorana <kmaiorana@mullereng.com>; Shay N. Reilly <sreilly@mullereng.com>

Good morning Troy,

FHWA is pleased to concur that coordination point #3 has been completed for the South Powers Blvd Extension PEL.

Thank you,  
Will

**William Keenan** (*he/him/his*)

*Air Quality, Climate, Research, Innovation, P.E.L Specialist*

Federal Highway Administration - Colorado Division

12300 West Dakota Avenue, Suite 180

Lakewood, CO 80228

e: [william.keenan@dot.gov](mailto:william.keenan@dot.gov)

p: 720-963-3019

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**From:** Halouska - CDOT, Troy <troy.halouska@state.co.us>

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023 6:39 PM

**To:** Gibson, Stephanie (FHWA) <Stephanie.Gibson@dot.gov>; Henriquez, Armando (FHWA) <armando.henriquez@dot.gov>

**Cc:** Robert Frei - CDOT <robert.frei@state.co.us>; Kelly C. Maiorana <kmaiorana@mullereng.com>; Shay N. Reilly <sreilly@mullereng.com>; Keenan, William (FHWA) <william.keenan@dot.gov>

**Subject:** South Powers Extension PEL & ACP: FHWA Coordination Point #3

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Armando and Stephanie,

Please see the attached Alternatives Evaluation Memo for the South Powers Blvd Extension PEL. The memo has been reviewed by Rob Frei and me and your previous comments have been addressed. Also attached is a comments matrix showing your comments addressed. This is being submitted as the FHWA Coordination Point #3 as a part of the PEL process.

El Paso County and CDOT are requesting your support and acknowledgment that this alternatives documentation satisfies this PEL coordination point with FHWA. Should you have any additional questions or comments, please let me know. Otherwise, if you feel the memo and alternatives evaluation is adequate, please simply respond to this email stating that the coordination point has been completed.

Thanks much,

**Troy Halouska**  
**Senior NEPA Specialist and PEL Program Manager**



Work 303.757.9978 | Mobile 720.371.5519  
2829 W. Howard Pl., Denver, CO 80204  
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**Project:** South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL)  
**To:** Armando Henriquez, FHWA; Stephanie Gibson, FHWA  
**From:** Howard Schwartz, El Paso County; Troy Halouska, CDOT HQ  
**Date:** July 11, 2024  
**Subject:** South Powers Extension (SPE) FHWA Coordination 4: PEL Document

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El Paso County, in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation, has completed the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study for the South Powers Boulevard Extension. The project spans from the current Powers Boulevard in the north to the El Paso County Line in the south, and from I-25 in the west to approximately 6 miles eastward. The Study identified a recommended alignment with a phased implementation plan intended to reduce congestion and improve mobility for multimodal travelers. Agency and stakeholder involvement that encouraged meaningful participation was necessary to minimize impacts to communities and resources along the proposed corridor.

The project would like to seek support from FHWA on the final PEL document. This review will seek concurrence on:

- Adequacy of the document for incorporation into future NEPA processes.
- Specification for changes or additional information needed for the final document.
- Recommendations for future projects and/or NEPA processes that may arise from the PEL Study.

As acknowledgement and completion of FHWA Coordination Point 4, it is anticipated that FHWA will accept the project and provide a final project acceptance letter to document FHWA's involvement with the Study.

Should you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to reach out through email, [HowardSchwartz@elpasoco.com](mailto:HowardSchwartz@elpasoco.com) or by phone, 719-339-5615.

Sincerely,

Howard Schwartz  
Project Manager  
El Paso County Department of Public Works



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

**Colorado Division**

12300 W. Dakota Ave., Suite #180  
Lakewood, Colorado 80228  
720-963-3000

June 11, 2025

In Reply Refer To:  
VIA EMAIL ONLY

Howard Schwartz, P.E.  
El Paso County Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Dr.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

**Subject: Acceptance of South Powers Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study**

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

This letter is to acknowledge the completion of the South Powers Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study undertaken by El Paso County and the Colorado Department of Transportation. We appreciate and commend the efforts of everyone involved in conducting this study in a manner consistent with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) PEL guidance which outlines a process similar to that required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The benefits of this streamlining effort will undoubtedly be realized in terms of time and cost savings on future NEPA studies conducted within the South Powers Boulevard PEL Study limits.

The completed PEL Questionnaire provides a summary of work completed in the PEL Study and the information that will be needed once projects enter into the NEPA process. The strengths of the corridor study include focused coordination with resource agencies, meaningful public involvement through the process, and a detailed look at access management in the corridor. Cumulative effects were not addressed in the corridor study and will be required in subsequent NEPA studies. As individual projects are initiated and funding becomes available, it will be necessary for FHWA to meet with El Paso County and CDOT on a project-by-project basis to determine the scope of the NEPA study including the level of study required, purpose and need, logical termini, and the extent to which the corridor study can be used to supplement or replace certain milestone in the NEPA process.

These documents are in accordance with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> FHWA Coordination Points as part of the PEL process. We look forward to future coordination associated with the South Powers Boulevard PEL Study.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Ajin Hu at [ajin.hu@dot.gov](mailto:ajin.hu@dot.gov) or (720) 963-3071.

Sincerely,

JOHN MARTIN  
CATER

Digitally signed by JOHN  
MARTIN CATER  
Date: 2025.06.11 13:03:48 -06'00'

John M. Cater, P.E.  
Division Administrator

CC: John Hall, CDOT Region 2 North Program Engineer  
Rob Frei, CDOT Region 2 Environmental Manager  
Troy Halouska, CDOT HQ NEPA Specialist and PEL Program Manager  
Lindsay Edgar, FHWA Environmental Protection Specialist  
Ajin Hu, FHWA Colorado Division Region 2 Area Engineer



# COLORADO

## Department of Transportation

Colorado Department of Transportation  
2829 W. Howard Pl.  
Denver, CO 80204

Howard Schwartz, P.E.  
El Paso County Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Dr.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

6/12/2025

**Subject: Support for the South Powers Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Process**

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

This letter is in response to your request for the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) acknowledgement of the South Powers Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study undertaken by El Paso County. CDOT Executive Management and Region 2 Management formally approved this PEL on 6/2/2025. We have appreciated the opportunity to participate in this process and commend the efforts of everyone involved in conducting this study in a manner consistent with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and CDOT PEL guidance. The benefits of this streamlining effort will undoubtedly be realized in terms of time and cost savings on future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies within the South Powers Boulevard PEL limits.

The completed PEL Questionnaire provides a summary of work completed in the PEL Study and the information that will be needed once projects enter the NEPA process. As individual projects are initiated and funding becomes available, it will be necessary for CDOT to meet with El Paso County on a project-by-project basis to determine the scope of the NEPA study and the extent to which the PEL can be used to supplement the NEPA effort. Further coordination with FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) may also be required.

The PEL study documents are in accordance with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> FHWA Coordination Points as part of the PEL process. We look forward to future coordination associated with the South Powers Boulevard PEL Study. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at 720-371-5519 or [troy.halouska@state.co.us](mailto:troy.halouska@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

Troy Halouska  
CDOT Planning and Environmental Linkages Program Manager

cc: Robert Frei, Region 2 Planning and Environmental Manager  
Shane Ferguson, Region 2 Transportation Director  
Lindsay Edgar, FHWA CO Division Environmental and PEL Program Manager  
Ajin Hu, Region 2 FHWA Area Engineer





# Appendix C - PEL Questionnaire



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*



## **PEL Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is intended to act as a summary of the Planning process and ease the transition from the planning study to a NEPA analysis. Often, there is no overlap in personnel between the planning and NEPA phases of a project, and much (or all) of the history of decisions, etc., is not passed along. Different planning processes take projects through analysis at different levels of detail. Without knowing how far, or in how much detail a planning study went, NEPA project teams often re-do work that has already been done.

Planning teams need to be cautious during the alternative screen process; alternative screening should focus on purpose and need/corridor vision, fatal flaw analysis and possibly mode selection. This may help minimize problems during discussions with resource agencies. Alternatives that have fatal flaws or do not meet the purpose and need/corridor vision cannot be considered viable alternatives, even if they reduce impacts to a particular resource. This questionnaire is consistent with 23 CFR 450 (Planning regulations) and other FHWA policy on Planning and Environmental Linkage process.

### **Instructions:**

These questions should be used as a guide throughout the planning process. The questionnaire should be filled out as the study progresses. It is a beneficial tool to keep leadership and program managers up to date on a study's progress. When a PEL study (i.e. corridor study) is started, this questionnaire will be given to the project team. Some of the basic questions to consider are: "What did you do?", "What didn't you do?" and "Why?". When the team submits the study to FHWA for review, the completed questionnaire will be included with the submittal. FHWA will use this questionnaire to assist in determining if an effective PEL process has been applied before NEPA processes are authorized to begin. The questionnaire should be included in the planning document as an executive summary, chapter, or appendix.

### **1. Background:**

**What is the name of the PEL document and other identifying project information (e.g., subaccount or STIP numbers)?**

South Powers Extension (SPE) PEL Study

**Who is the lead agency for the study? (FHWA, FTA, CDOT, Local Agency)**

FHWA

**Provide a brief chronology of the planning activities (PEL study) including the year(s) the studies were conducted. (Include project start date and end date).**

In the mid-1960s, local, county, regional and state organizations recognized the need for an eastern loop connecting I-25 at both ends to provide connectivity, an alternative route for closures, military access, and to prepare for the tremendous growth seen over the decades. In 1963, the City of Colorado Springs adopted the full Powers Boulevard alignment as part of its major thoroughfare plan.

Cooperative planning for Powers Boulevard was formalized in the early 1980s through an Intergovernmental Agreement that created the Major Thoroughfare Task Force (MTTF).

Due to this early and cooperative planning, the central corridor between Woodmen Road and Platte Avenue/U.S. 24 was completed in 1987. Extensions to the south (Fountain Boulevard in 1995, Fontaine Boulevard in the 1990s, and Mesa Ridge Parkway in 2002) and to the north (CO 83 from 2000 to 2005) followed as these areas developed.

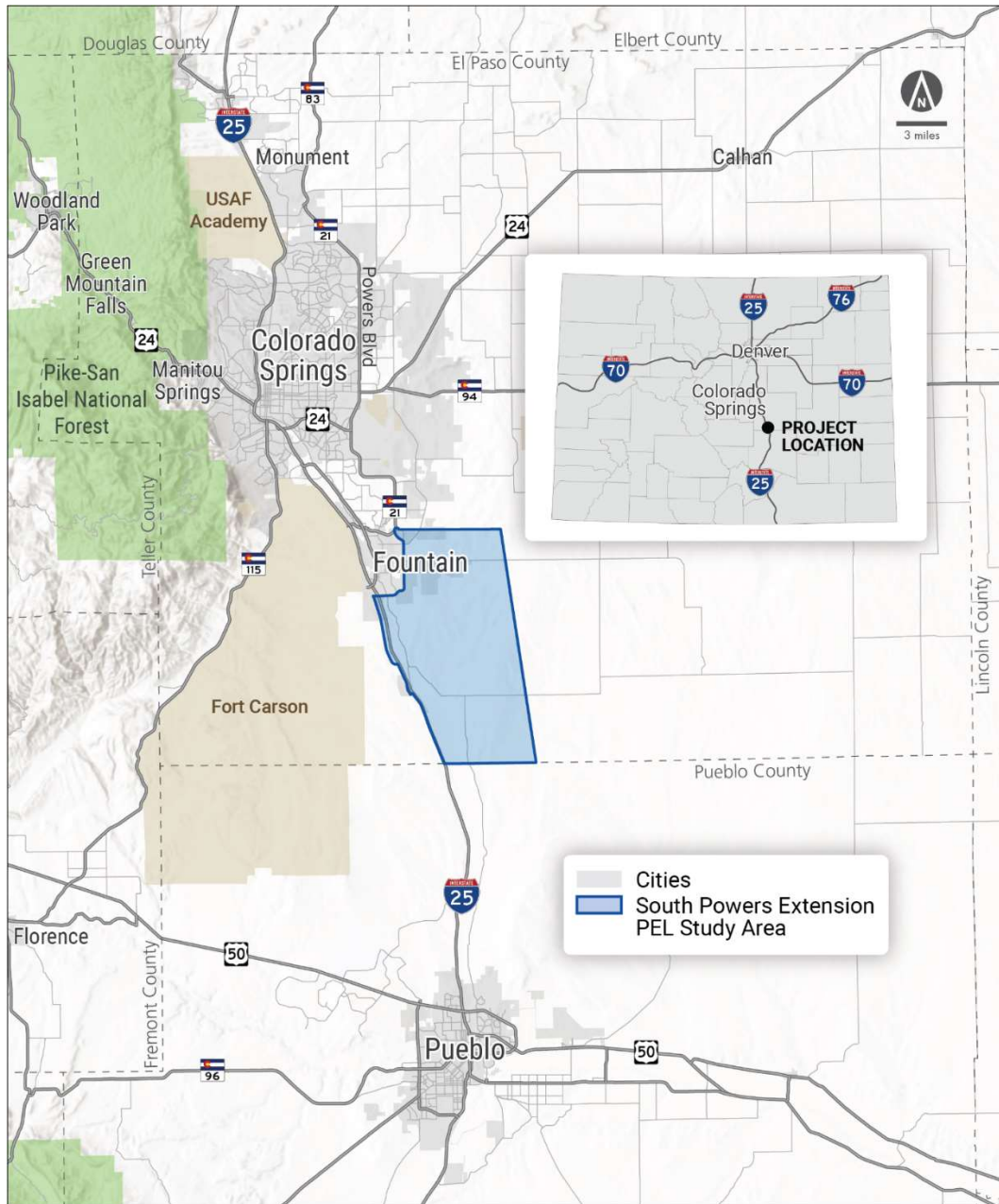
In 2000, a Feasibility Study determined the preferred corridor plan and alignment for the extension of Powers Boulevard south from Fontaine Boulevard to a connection with I-25.

In October of 2004, CDOT, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs finalized Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) whereby then state highways were removed from the State Highway System and Powers Boulevard became State Highway 21 (CO 21/Powers Boulevard). CDOT completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Powers Boulevard in 2010 to provide a framework for future corridor planning and investments between Woodmen Road and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway. After an EA Reevaluation for Powers Boulevard between Voyager Parkway and I-25, the ultimate connection to the north was advanced as a local metropolitan district initiative.

**Provide a description of the existing transportation corridor, including project limits, length of study corridor, modes, number of lanes, shoulder, access control and surrounding environment (urban vs. rural, residential vs. commercial, etc.)**

The Study Area begins at the intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and Powers Boulevard and extends south to the El Paso/Pueblo County Line. The Study Area boundaries were determined based on a combination of previous planning documents, the feasibility of having an alternate route parallel to I-25, military base properties, and county boundary lines. To the north, the Study Area is constrained by existing development. To the east, it is bound by I-25 and Fort Carson but extends west to allow for a potential alignment that could avoid existing developments, utilities, and solar farms (**Figure 1**).

**Figure 1. Regional Context Map**



A brief description of the proposed roadway attributes and multimodal features are described below:

- Project Limits – The project limits start at the intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and South Powers Boulevard and extend south, ultimately connecting to I-25.
- Length of Study Corridor – The Study Corridor is defined as the Study Area and extends from Mesa Ridge Parkway south to the El Paso County line, which is approximately 14 miles north to south. The east/west Study Area limits extend from I-25 to the east approximately 8 miles.

- Modes – This multimodal project intends to include vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The Study Team acknowledges the need for future expansion for additional opportunities such as transit, equestrian, freight, or rail.
- Speed – Speed limits for the new corridor would follow CDOT standards.
- Number of Lanes – Four lanes are proposed for the more confined portions of the corridor, while an ultimate 6 lanes are proposed for the less confined portions.
- Intersections/Interchanges – Five intersections are proposed, at Mesa Ridge Parkway, Squirrel Creek Road, I-25, and two others planned at currently unnamed roadways. These would ultimately become grade separated interchanges.
- Shoulders – The roadway alignment is proposed with 12' shoulders along the median and 20' shoulders on the outside.
- Access Control – The corridor is proposed as a limited access-controlled corridor.
- Surrounding Environment – The existing Study Area includes a mix of uses, but primarily suburban, large lot residential, and agricultural properties.

The recommended corridor would create an alternate north-south route to I-25 around the Cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs.

**Who was the sponsor of the PEL study? (CDOT, Local Agency [name the local agency], Other)**

Local Agency - El Paso County

**Who was included on the study team (Name and title of agency representatives, PMT, TWG, consultants, etc.)?**

The SPE PEL was led by Howard Schwartz, Project Manager and El Paso County Department of Public Works, and Victoria Chavez, El Paso County Transportation Planning Manager, with support from the following consultant firms: Wilson & Company Engineers and Architects, Muller Engineering Company, Bachman PR, and Pinyon Environmental.

Agency and public outreach were structured to obtain input from and provide information to the Project Management Team (PMT), Technical Team (TT), Executive Oversight Team, (EOT), stakeholders, and the public.

The PMT, composed of representatives from El Paso County, Wilson & Company, Inc., Muller Engineering Company, and Bachman PR who met biweekly throughout the Study.

The TT included representatives from agencies along the corridor, including the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities, El Paso County, El Paso County Community Services, the City of Fountain, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Mountain Metropolitan Transit, and the Project Management Team. The TT met monthly to discuss topics such as public involvement, traffic, environmental, engineering, and planning, to develop strategies and make decisions on technical questions and communication strategies.

The EOT was composed of elected officials and staff from the following entities participating in the Study: FHWA, CDOT, PPACG, El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, and the City of Fountain.

**List the recent, current or near future planning studies or projects in the vicinity? What is the relationship of this project to those studies/projects?**

Within the Study Area, several local plans and corridor, regional, and local-level studies and/or projects have previously been completed that informed the SPE PEL Study process, including the following:

- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, *South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study*, 2000.
- Colorado Department of Transportation, *The Link Powers Corridor: Environmental Assessment for Powers Boulevard (CO 21)*, April 2010.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, *South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study*, July 2000.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, *Colorado Springs Regional Joint Land Use Study*, December 2018.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, *Moving Forward 2045: Pikes Peak Area Regional Transportation Plan*, January 8, 2020.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, *2045 Regional Transportation Plan – Transit: Mountain Metropolitan Transit*, January 8, 2020.
- City of Fountain, *City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan 2005*, August 9, 2005, amended 2017.
- City of Fountain, *City of Fountain Annexation Plan*, November 13, 2007, amended December 2009.
- City of Fountain, *City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan*, May 26, 2015.
- City of Fountain, *Transportation Master Plan 2022*, February 22, 2022.
- El Paso County, *El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan Update (MTCP)*, December 6, 2016.
- El Paso County, *Your El Paso Master Plan*, May 26, 2021.
- El Paso County, Department of Public Works, *El Paso County Road Safety Plan*, 2022.
- El Paso County Planning Department, *El Paso County Zoning Map Book*, accessed November 2022.
- City of Colorado Springs, *ConnectCOS: Transportation Plan for a Mobile Community*, March 2023.
- City of Colorado Springs, *PlanCOS: Leading the Way to Our Future: Comprehensive Plan*, January 2019.
- City of Colorado Springs, *Parks, Recreation, Trails, Open Space & Cultural Services*, City of Colorado Springs Park System Master Plan, September 14, 2014.

**2. Methodology used:**

**Did the Study follow the FHWA PEL Process? If the Study was conducted by another US DOT Agency, provide a crosswalk table to demonstrate how the FHWA Process was utilized.**

The Study followed the FHWA PEL Process. Per the FHWA PEL Process, throughout the Study, four Coordination Points were completed and approved by FHWA to move forward.

### **How did the Study meet each of the PEL Coordination Points identified in 23 USC 168?**

Each of the Coordination Points were met and approved by FHWA throughout the Study. These included:

- Coordination Point 1: Reason for the Study (Completed 6/2/22)
- Coordination Point 2: Purpose and Need (Completed 1/4/23)
- Coordination Point 3: Alternatives Development and Evaluation (Completed 10/12/23)
- Coordination Point 4: PEL Document (draft) (2025)

### **What NEPA terminology/language was used and how did you define them? (Provide examples or list)**

The following terms in the PEL Study are the same in meaning to those used in NEPA and the CDOT NEPA Manual:

- Purpose and Need
- Alternative
- Alternative Analysis
- No Action Alternative
- Alternatives Eliminated
- Study Area

The term Recommended Alternative(s) was used to refer to the recommendations from the alternatives evaluation conducted in the PEL Study to identify an alternative(s) that should be carried forward. Based on the alternatives evaluation, the Recommended Alternative(s) were determined to meet the Purpose and Need while minimizing impacts to the environment and community.

### **How do you see these terms being used in NEPA documents?**

These terms will continue to be used in the same manner and in accordance with the CDOT NEPA Manual (2023). Planning and alignment concepts developed for the SPE PEL Study established a foundation for NEPA as well as future design and construction decisions.

### **What were the key steps and coordination points in the PEL decision-making process? Who were the decision-makers and who else participated in those key steps? For example, for the corridor vision, the decision was made by CDOT and the local agency, with buy-in from FHWA, USACE, and USFWS.**

- The PMT met bi-weekly over the course of the project. CDOT, El Paso County, and FHWA served as the decision-makers throughout the PEL, while the consultant team acted as technical support and professional expertise to aid in decision-making.

- The Technical Team (comprised of CDOT, consultant staff, and local agency representatives) met monthly to advocate for their communities and concur that decisions aligned with their local agency values and plans.
- Determining the Reason for the PEL Study (Completed 6/2/22) by El Paso County and CDOT and approved by FHWA.
- Purpose & Need (Completed 1/4/23) by El Paso County and the PMT, with review and contributions from local agencies, CDOT and PPACG, and approved by FHWA.
- The PMT, with concurrence from the TT, decided to hold the first public input meeting both virtually and in-person. The virtual meeting was held on the project website between 5/25/22– 6/15/22. The in-person meeting was held at the Fountain City Hall (116 South Main Street, Fountain, Colorado 80817) on 5/25/22 from 5:30 - 7 p.m.
- Alternatives to be Evaluated During the PEL Study (Completed 10/12/23) by El Paso County and the PMT, with review and contributions from CDOT, and approved by FHWA.
- The PMT, with concurrence from the TT, decided to host the second Public Input Meeting virtually on the project website between 1/25/24 - 2/19/24.
- The final PEL document was developed by the PMT, with review from resource agencies, CDOT, PPACG, the Cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs, and the public.

#### **How should the PEL information below be presented in NEPA?**

The PEL Study and supporting documentation was prepared to be consistent with NEPA requirements and allows for future NEPA processes to readily extract pertinent information from the reports. The Alternatives Development and Analysis process included developing screening and evaluation criteria based on the Purpose and Need and documenting the reason for alternatives elimination to limit the need for consideration during future NEPA processes. Concepts were screened to understand and incorporate future needs and not preclude potential design considerations for the Corridor.

### 3. Agency coordination:

**Provide a synopsis of coordination with federal, tribal, state and local environmental, regulatory and resource agencies. Describe their level of participation and how you coordinated with them.**

Agency contacts below received a letter via email on June 16, 2022, detailing the scope of the project. At the completion of the Existing Conditions Report (**Appendix D**), they were sent a copy for review and comment. Each of the agencies were also sent a final version of this PEL Study document. Any further comments from the agencies would be addressed during NEPA. The Existing Conditions Report was reviewed by each of these agencies. Only the representatives from the FHWA, EPA and CDOT had comments on the report. In response, meetings with each agency were completed to review and resolve comments. At the Federal level, the PMT coordinated with:

- EPA NEPA Transportation Sector
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Resources Conservation Service

At the State level, the PMT coordinated with the:

- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE)
  - CDPHE Air Quality Division
  - CDPHE EPS Oil and Gas Liaison
  - CDPHE Hazardous Materials
  - CDPHE Solid Waste
  - CDPHE Water Quality Control Division
  - CDPHE Water Quality Control Division (Permits Section)
- Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
- State Historic Preservation Officer

**What transportation agencies (e.g., for adjacent jurisdictions) did you coordinate with or were involved in the PEL study? This includes all federal agencies if the study is being led by a local agency or transit-oriented study seeking to utilize the FHWA PEL Process.**

The PMT met with the TT and EOT throughout the course of the PEL Study. The Technical Team included representatives from the Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain, Mountain Metro Transit, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, FHWA, and CDOT (both Region 2 and Headquarters).

**What steps will need to be taken with each agency during NEPA scoping?**

Next steps will depend on the type of NEPA documentation prepared for the proposed improvement project(s). El Paso County will coordinate with the identified transportation and resource agencies during the NEPA scoping process. Any scoping meetings may either be one-on-one or group setting with the relevant agency. During these meetings, El Paso County will present and reference the PEL Study findings and process, then identify agency concerns regarding the project. The PEL Study will be used as a guide and reference on preferred projects in the area to reduce the NEPA scoping process and review period.

#### **4. Public coordination:**

**Provide a synopsis and table of your coordination efforts with the public and stakeholders.**

The SPE PEL Study held two open houses during the PEL process to engage and inform the public as well as gather their input and opinions. The first meeting had an in-person and virtual option, and the second was held virtually only. Each virtual meeting was open to the public for several weeks. A statement was added to all public-facing documents that Spanish translated materials, and a Spanish or ASL translator were available upon request.

- In-person Open House
  - May 25, 2022. Approximately 50 citizens attended the in-person Public Open House for the South Powers Extension (SPE) Study and Access Control Plan (ACP). The event went from 5:30 to 7 PM. The event was held at the City of Fountain City Hall building (116 S Main St, Fountain CO, 80817). This location was the closest to the study area, and helped to engage City of Fountain residents, who would be some of the primary users of the facility. The meeting included 10 stations, with the following topics: PEL Study Process, History of the Corridor, Access Control Plan, Existing Traffic Conditions, Existing Safety Concerns in the Area, Land Use, Environmental Resources in the Study Area, and Next Steps. There was also a station for providing comments to the project team, both verbally and written (comment forms were made available). In order of prevalence, the key themes of public comment received included: Environment and aesthetics, Safety, Transportation Improvements, Bike/ Pedestrian/ Multi-

modal considerations, Land Use, and Planning. Approximately 7 comment forms were completed at the event.

- Virtual Open House # 1
  - May 25 to June 15, 2022. There was both a virtual and in-person attendance option for the first event to gauge public preference (for virtual or in-person meetings) and to have the largest outreach and opportunity for folks to get involved with the Study. The virtual option allowed folks to interact with the materials on their own schedule and time. There were approximately 531 website views over the three weeks the virtual public meeting was live. By the end of the virtual public meeting, 277 individuals signed up on the project contact list. Approximately 3 survey forms were completed online.
  
- Virtual Open House # 2
  - January 25 to February 19, 2024. The second Public Open House for the South Powers PEL Study (the Study) was entirely virtual to enable wider public participation and a longer duration of time for the public to review the PEL materials and provide comments. The approach for promoting this event involved outreach to residents and property owners located along the recommended corridor alignments; including additional outreach efforts to disadvantaged communities, project stakeholders, and the public. The goals of this second virtual public open house public engagement included: Inform the public about the status of the PEL Study, the Vision for the corridor and the Reason for the project; inform the public about the resulting recommendations from the Study; collect comments and/or questions; collect public input for the final PEL report.

The virtual public open house remained open for public comment on the project website from January 25 through February 19, 2024, for the public to review the virtual display boards and to post comments either geographically on the Interactive Comment Map or in the online open house Comment Form. Project-relevant content was produced, managed, and maintained on the project website through the duration of the PEL Study. To engage individuals and corridor users, the project team connected with local community groups, HOAs, and other local organizations. Quarterly newsletters were distributed to the Technical Team so that they could share information on the status of the project with their respective agencies.

The quarterly e-blasts were also sent to stakeholders and local residents who signed up to stay informed about the project. Throughout the PEL process, an email distribution list was developed, and email blasts were sent to over 570 email addresses.

An initial letter certified April 21, 2022, requested that property owners contact the PMT and arrange a one-on-one meeting so that the PMT could provide an overview of the study and the Corridor Alternatives Development and Recommended Alignment process and to answer any questions the property owners may have had. A second letter mailed September 21, 2023, requested that property owners contact the PMT for a second round of one-on-one meetings to discuss the Recommended Alignment in relation to their properties.

- May 11 and 12, 2022: Initial meetings with 21 separate property owners to discuss the Study in relation to their properties as well as the PEL Study goals, process, and schedule.

- February 8, 2023: Meeting with property owners along Furlong Circle, Fountain to obtain their input on the narrowed list of corridor alignments.
- October 11, 12, and 18, 2023: Meetings to review the Recommended Alignment and obtain property owner feedback.
- October 18, 2023: Meeting with Cherry Creek Farm Neighborhood Group, Fountain, to review the Recommended Alignment and obtain their feedback.
- October 18, 2023: Meeting with individual property owner to review the Recommended Alignment and obtain property owner feedback.
- November 2, 2023: Meeting with individual property owner to review the Recommended Alignment and obtain property owner feedback.

## **5. Corridor Vision/Purpose and Need:**

### **What was the scope of the PEL study and the reason for doing it?**

El Paso County, CDOT, and FHWA met, discussed, and determined that a PEL Study was the appropriate approach as it would best fulfill a need to understand future growth and demand in the region.

The PEL Study was developed to continue planning efforts to help preserve the corridor, plan for limited access for the freeway standard, plan for multimodal use and crossings of the corridor, and provide predictability to development by studying alternatives.

The Study's scope of work:

- Included the development of Purpose and Need to be used as a foundation for future NEPA processes.
- Documented research.
- Defined the existing and future transportation systems.
- Provided a qualitative environmental evaluation.
- Included a range of feasible alternatives.
- Documented relevant decisions and processes that can be utilized during the scoping process for subsequent NEPA documents.

### **What is the vision for the corridor?**

The Vision for the South Powers Boulevard Extension is to develop a resilient facility that improves safety, connectivity, and travel time reliability. The proposed corridor is intended to provide connectivity for all modes of transportation with an emphasis on implementing innovative infrastructure practices.

## **What were the goals and objectives?**

Goals were developed collaboratively with the PMT and TT, while using valuable input from stakeholder meetings. Alternatives are evaluated by how they meet the needs of the PEL Study and Goals are used to help differentiate priorities during the Alternatives Evaluation process. Goals also help define local and regional priorities which can be considered when making future design recommendations.

The Goals of this PEL Study are to:

- Accommodate Local and Regional Plans and Economic Growth
- Define a Corridor Preservation Footprint
- Consider Impacts to the Natural and Built Environment
- Incorporate Resiliency
- Support Technology and Green Infrastructure

## **What is the PEL Purpose and Need statement?**

The Purpose and Need was informed by existing transportation conditions identified throughout the Study Area and local roadway network. The PMT also considered previous planning studies, local agency coordination, and public input received to draft the Purpose and Need statements. After the statements were drafted, the PMT gathered feedback from the TT, EOT, and the public. The complete Purpose and Need memo submitted to FHWA for Coordination Point 2, was approved and is included in **Appendix B – FHWA**

**Coordination Points.** SPE connection is needed to:

- **Advance Local and Regional Mobility:** The SPE is needed to complete the regional transportation network in the Fountain area to adequately serve future travel demands associated with continued growth. Improvements would enhance north-south mobility in the region by providing a connection to I-25, increasing access to future east-west routes, and adding an alternate route to other destinations.
- **Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities:** Stakeholder input and prior planning efforts identified the need to increase connectivity and accessibility to multimodal opportunities. Through improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, enhanced trail network connectivity, and potential public transit connections, the SPE would support an integrated transportation network.

**What steps will need to be taken during the NEPA process to make this a project-level purpose and need statement?**

The Purpose and Need statement addresses the entire project corridor. Depending on the specific proposed project, the Purpose and Need may need to be revised to address the needs at the specific location. Updated traffic data may be needed depending on when the NEPA study is initiated. Individual project elements that advance out of the Carried Forward alternative should address at least one Need identified in the PEL report. Additional environmental data will also need to be collected to update existing conditions at specific project locations.

**6. Range of alternatives considered, screening criteria, and screening process:**

**What types of alternatives were looked at? (Provide a one or two sentence summary and reference document.)**

The alternatives focused on addressing the issues identified in the evaluation of existing conditions and were developed based on input received from agency stakeholders, traffic data, and public open houses. Concepts were developed for numerous different road alignments and were categorized by the project Needs that were identified. The alternatives development process is discussed in detail in Chapter 4 – Alternatives Development, Evaluation, & Recommendation in the PEL report and the full Alternatives Analysis and matrix can be found in **Appendix G** of the PEL report.

**How did you select the screening criteria and screening process?**

The screening criteria were developed based on the Study's Purpose and Need and Goals. The process assisted in narrowing down a wide range of alternatives from previous studies, and from public and Technical Team alignment recommendations and alternatives, ultimately identifying alternatives to be Recommended or Carried Forward. Screening criteria were developed in close coordination with local agency partners

**For alternative(s) that were screened out, briefly summarize the reasons for eliminating or not recommending the alternative(s). (During the initial screenings, this generally will focus on fatal flaws)**

The alternatives evaluation was completed in three phases or levels of evaluation.

Level 1: Alternatives were evaluated for their ability to meet Purpose and Need. As all alternatives were found to meet Purpose and Need, none were eliminated in this level of analysis.

Level 2: Each alignment was assessed for the extent to which it would meet Purpose and Need, and how well it would address project goals. During this analysis, two alignments (G1 and H1) were eliminated, as they were found to have a fatal flaw, or be considered unreasonable. The two alignments that were eliminated were found to not meet most project

goals, and do not address the Purpose and Need completely or as well as the other alternatives.

Level 3: During the third level of analysis, the recommended alignment from Level 2 was used to evaluate possible corridor widths to allow for various corridor elements. During this level of analysis, the only alternatives that were eliminated were removed from consideration due to their unreasonable amount of property needs, and their potential impacts to adjacent property owners without just cause. Due to them being unreasonable, they were considered to have fatal flaws.

### **How did the team develop Alternatives? Was each alternative screened consistently?**

Alternatives were produced through a multi-level iterative process through a focused evaluation effort. The process began with a large number of alternatives that were originally derived from previous planning studies and resulted in a recommended alternative. Agency coordination and public involvement played a major role in the alternative evaluation process. The alignments that met the Study's Purpose and Need and matched corridor context were further developed into alternatives. Evaluation criteria and performance measures were developed before the alternatives development and evaluation process. The PMT reviewed the proposed Evaluation Criteria with the Project Management and Technical Teams, and utilized their revisions to confirm the final Evaluation Criteria. The Alternatives Development and Evaluation Memo submitted to and approved by FHWA is in Appendix B.

### **Which alternatives were recommended? Which should be brought forward into NEPA and why?**

The Study ultimately recommended two alignments as part of a two phased recommendation for further analysis and to move into NEPA: alignments E3 and H3. These alignments were recommended because they were found to best meet the project's Purpose and Need and Goals, with the least number of anticipated burdens on the existing area. Two corridor widths were recommended, as portions of the recommended alignment were more feasible to have more space for corridor elements, while portions through more developed regions of the alignment would require a more consolidated corridor width.

### **Did the public, stakeholders, and agencies have an opportunity to comment during this process? Summarize the amount of public interest in the PEL Study.**

Yes. Throughout the Study, the public had ongoing and accessible opportunities to participate and provide input to inform the Study. Input was solicited during public meetings with comment forms. An email address and project website were created so members were easily able to provide input and ask questions throughout the Study process. Numerous one-on-one meetings were held to ensure agencies and stakeholders understood the alternatives being evaluated and had the proper chance to respond and provide input.

The comments that were collected were shared with the TT and EOT. The public meeting summaries are included in Chapter 7 – Public Involvement of the PEL report.

### **Were there unresolved issues with the public, stakeholders and/or agencies?**

Concerns and comments submitted to the PMT throughout the Study were addressed directly to the individual or agency. The PMT made phone calls, responded to emails, and offered one-on-one meetings to answer questions or concerns.

There were comments and concerns from residents that own property or live adjacent to or in reasonable proximity from the recommended alignments. Most notably, this was found along the southern extent of the E3 alignment (near the recommended E3 connection point to I-25). Property owners in this area had concerns about property value and nuisance impacts because of the roadway, if developed in the recommended alignment. A petition was created by residents in this neighborhood in opposition to the recommended alignment. In response to public comments, and especially one-on-one meeting discussions with these property owners, the PMT refined the recommended alignment post-recommendation from Alternatives Analysis. These refinements were used to adjust the alignment to reduce impacts to these properties, where feasible.

## **7. Planning assumptions and analytical methods:**

### **What is the forecast year used in the PEL study?**

The forecast year used in the PEL Study is 2045.

### **What method was used for forecasting traffic volumes?**

The traffic forecasting reviewed traffic volumes under the 2015 existing conditions, the 2045 No Action alternative, and 2045 action alternatives using the PPACG travel demand model.

### **Are the planning assumptions and the corridor vision/purpose and need statement consistent with the long-range transportation plan?**

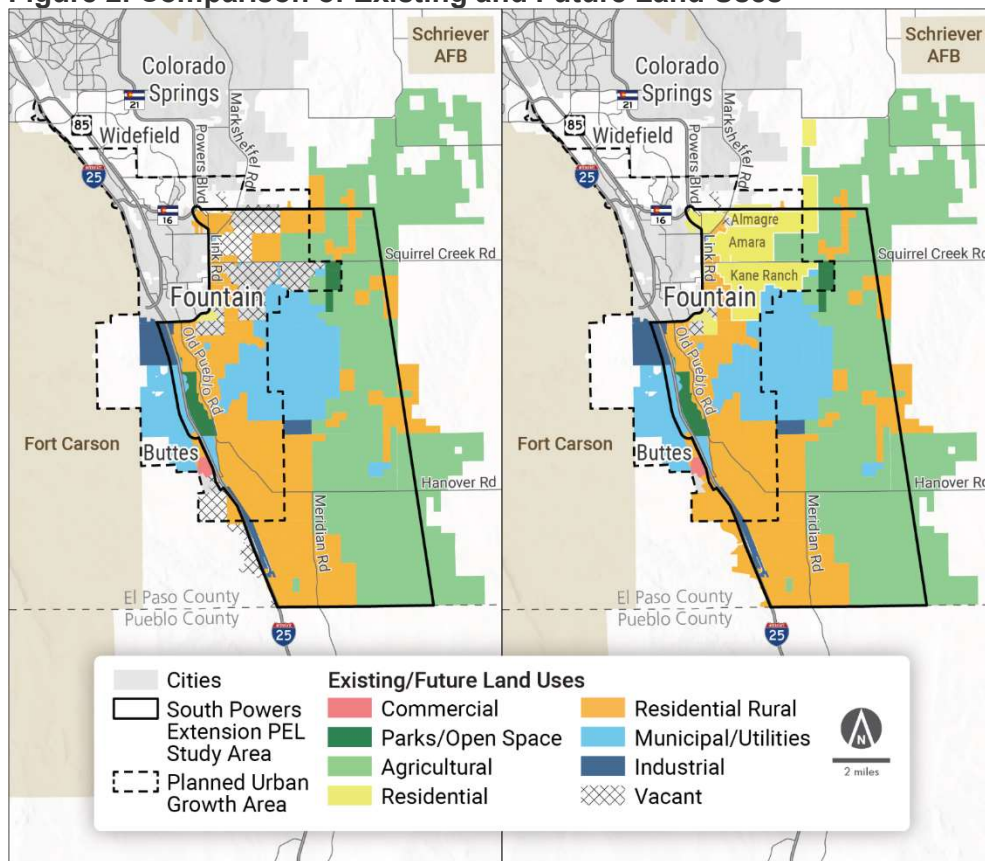
The Vision and Purpose and Need statement are consistent with each other and the long-range transportation plans within the project corridor. The assumptions remain valid.

### **What were the future year policy and/or data assumptions used in the transportation planning process related to land use, economic development, transportation costs and network expansion?**

The Current Land Use Patterns Map was developed using County Assessor records and aerial maps. The Future Land Use Map was developed by aggregating future land use data from Local Agencies' and the County's comprehensive plans. Development plans are approved or underway for the Almagre, Amara, Mesa Ridge, Southern Colorado Dual Service Rail Park, and Kane Ranch properties. Land use categories were aggregated to

provide land use designations along the entire project corridor. This analysis assumes that cities and towns will annex adjacent County lands as reflected by their plans. Population/household density and employment growth projections were also taken into consideration. In 2022, El Paso County was the most populous county in the state of Colorado with a population estimate of 745,345 and an annual growth rate of 1.13%. Colorado has 2,119,312 household units statewide with 12.2% of household units being located within El Paso County. The current infrastructure for this region is limited in supporting the population/household density of El Paso County as north-south travel is heavily reliant on I-25 and east-west requires out-of- direction travel. El Paso County's employment grew at a faster pace than any other county in Colorado between 2010 and 2020. Employment density is moderate, with the highest density employment centers being in the northern portion of the Study Area. Also, Fort Carson is currently the State's largest employer and is located just west of the Study Area.

**Figure 2. Comparison of Existing and Future Land Uses**



**8. What pieces of the PEL can transfer directly to the NEPA phase of a project?**

The Purpose and Need developed and used during this Study can be directly used to a NEPA phase of a project to maintain consistency across all project stages. Stakeholder engagement and public input gathered during this Study can be directly used to fulfill NEPA public involvement requirements. The Existing Conditions Report can be used during any potential alternatives development and evaluation analysis for future projects.

Additionally, **Table 1** and **Table 2** outlining early identification of potential resource impacts and considerations can be used to streamline future NEPA impact assessments.

**9. Resources (wetlands, cultural, etc.) reviewed. For each resource or group of resources reviewed, provide the following:**

**In the PEL study, at what level of detail were the resources reviewed and what was the method of review?**

Resources identified within the PEL Study Area were assessed through a desktop review of available data within the context of the regulatory framework. This was prepared as part of the PEL Study to identify resources early in the planning process. Further information on the environmental resource details and mapping can be found in the Existing Conditions Report.

**Is this resource present in the area and what is the existing environmental condition for this resource?**

**Table 1. Existing Environmental Resources**

Floodplains and Floodways	Four different floodplain or floodway areas were identified within the corridor limits.
Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS)	Wetlands and other WOTUS within the corridor limits are a mix of stream channels, ponds, reservoirs, and wetlands.
Water Quality	Three surface water 303 (D) Listed areas were identified within the project limits. Several State and Local Agencies are identified throughout the corridor to comply with stormwater discharge.
Threatened & Endangered Species, Species of Special Concern, Migratory Birds, and Eagles	Habitat that can support T&E species, special concern species, migratory birds, and eagles are found within the corridor. The Potential for the occurrence of these species must be considered. Federally listed species that have the potential to occur within the study area are the Piping Plover, Pallid Sturgeon, Whooping Crane, and Western Prairie Fringed Orchid. The presence of mule deer has been identified within the project corridor.
Hazardous Materials	There are 5 gravel pits, 25 oil and gas wells, 3 surficial mines, and 2 leaking underground storage tanks known within the study area.
Historic Resources	A review of El Paso County Assessor records, historic aerial imagery, and historic maps for the study area found 124 parcels containing buildings and/or structures older than 45 years of age. There are 14 previously identified historic resources that are considered eligible and 22 archaeological resources that are considered eligible.
Paleontological Resources	5 areas along the corridor were identified as highly sensitive for paleontological resources. Projects in this area require additional investigations.

Traffic Noise	Results of the mapping exercise show that existing and potential future residential areas generally occur in the northwestern portion of the study area. Existing residential areas primarily straddle Old Pueblo Road and Link Road.
Parks, Trails, Open Spaces, Wildlife Refuges	The corridor contains several existing and future recreational trailheads and crossings. Sections of 10 major regional trails intersect the corridor. The corridor hosts 4 public open-space properties.
Environmental Justice	Minority and Low-Income populations were identified throughout the project corridor. The Existing Conditions Report contains further information on location and statistics.
Utilities	The Existing Conditions review identified major utility infrastructure that is critical for service distribution within the study area that could be costly or complicated to relocate. This includes electric lines and stations, water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, gas transmission lines, petroleum lines, and telecommunication lines.
Prime and Unique Farmland	There are areas within the study area that identify as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and farmland of local importance. There is approximately 16,013 square miles of prime farmland located within the study area.
Air Quality	The study area is located within El Paso County, which is in attainment for all NAAQS pollutants. The project will consist of roadways within the PPACG MPO and non-MPO areas.

**What are the issues that need to be considered during NEPA, including potential resource impacts and potential mitigation requirements (if known)?**

**Table 2. Potential Resource Impacts**

Floodplains and Floodways	CDOT evaluates potential alternative footprints for transportation projects to ensure they do not encroach or alter floodplains and cause future flooding or other adverse impacts. The floodplain evaluation would be completed during the conceptual design of any proposed project.
Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS)	Impacts to WOTUS would require a Section 404 permit. A Section 404 permit also requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). To determine whether waters (including wetlands) impacted by project activities are WOTUS and require Section 404 permitting, an Approved Jurisdictional Determination request should be submitted to the USACE, as only the USACE has the authority to determine jurisdictional status. Section 404 permitting is not required for

	<p>features determined by the USACE to be non-jurisdictional. The completion of an Approved Jurisdictional Determination request can take up to a year.</p> <p>A site visit should be conducted to field verify and formally delineate non-wetland waters and wetlands per USACE protocols. Design should avoid and minimize impacts to non-wetland waters and wetlands wherever feasible. The project plans should include best management practices (BMPs) to minimize indirect impacts on non-wetland waters and wetlands.</p>
<p>Water Quality</p>	<p>The project will need to consider potential locations for treatment and work with local agencies to determine water quality requirements. Space constraints are a prominent challenge for water quality, so allocating space for treatment early in the planning process will better incorporate water quality needs within future projects. It is advantageous to consider that future development will direct water quality treatment to regional water quality control. Given the impervious surface changes (with over one acre of conceptual roadway and current Permanent Water Quality triggers), improvements draining to a 303(d) listed stream with a CDOT pollutant of concern require implementing a permanent water quality treatment. However, currently, the pollutant of concern for the 303(d) listed impaired waters within the study area is not a CDOT roadway pollutant of concern. Should the 303(d) listed pollutant of concern change, the control measures, or potential regional control measure, must treat the entire water quality capture volume of the area within the MS4 boundary or draining to a 303(d) listed stream. MS4 boundaries and 303(d) listings should be confirmed and coordinated with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). The need for permanent water quality should be considered based on the latest triggers and 303(d) pollutants of concern.</p>
<p>Threatened &amp; Endangered Species, Species of Special Concern, Migratory Birds, and Eagles</p>	<p>Potential impacts to federally listed species would require Section 7 consultation (assuming federal nexus) or Section 10 consultation (assuming no federal nexus) with the USFWS. Potential habitat was noted for numerous SC species and the monarch butterfly, a FC species. There are currently no statutory requirements for SC or FC species, although CPW may require additional mitigation at their discretion. Regardless, impacts on these species and their habitat should be avoided and/or minimized as feasible.</p> <p>Assuming a NEPA study is required, potential impacts to federally listed species would require Section 7 consultation with the USFWS. Consultation with the USFWS can last 60–90 days, depending on the determined project-related impacts on federally listed species.</p> <p>Migratory bird (including raptor) nesting habitat occurs in and within 0.5-miles of the study area. Additionally, CPW-mapped bald eagle winter forage and range, as well as a bald eagle roost site,</p>

	<p>occurs within the study area. Depending on construction timing, a biologist should conduct pre-construction surveys of the study area to determine if any active nests and/or eagle roost sites are present. If nests and/or roosts are noted, the nests and/or roosts would need to be evaluated for the potential for take resulting from project-related activities. CPW should be contacted to help determine the appropriate mitigation, which may include using a biological monitor to confirm nesting and/or roosting birds are not disturbed, removing nests before egg-laying begins, or ceasing construction until all nestlings have fledged.</p>
<p>Traffic Noise</p>	<p>After an alignment is selected, a site visit will be required to identify sensitive receptor locations. If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required for the project, a Type I noise analysis is anticipated due to the construction of the new roadway, nearby existing and potential sensitive noise receptors, and CDOT noise analysis requirements. The Type I analysis will require noise modeling and traffic noise field measurements. The analysis may require a feasibility and reasonableness assessment of noise barriers, including additional modeling. Required information to complete the Type I analysis includes traffic volumes and speeds, project design specifications, and additional parcel data.</p>
<p>Parks, Trails, Open Spaces, Wildlife Refuges</p>	<p>Avoidance and minimization of impacts on park properties should occur at the start of the planning process and be carried through design and construction. Depending on the funding source(s) secured for future roadway improvement projects, additional coordination and documentation may be needed for impacted recreational resources. Projects should evaluate Section 6(f) properties that the proposed improvements may impact. Any public lands and facilities purchased or enhanced using Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act grants through the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI), National Park Service (NPS), and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) should be considered. No 6(f) properties were identified within or adjacent to the study area. During the planning process, federally funded transportation projects must consider Section 4(f) properties. Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 U.S.C. 303, declares that “it is the policy of the United States Government that special efforts should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” Recreational areas within the study area were identified for consideration as Section 4(f) properties for evaluation during NEPA processes. Future projects should avoid and minimize harm to Section 4(f) properties.</p>
<p>Environmental Justice</p>	<p>During the NEPA phase of this project, a robust stakeholder engagement process should be implemented to identify and address the transportation needs of all users. Non-traditional outreach efforts that provide access to information and opportunities for meaningful engagement should be implemented.</p>

Visual Resources	<p>The typical compliance process for historic resources consists of establishing an Area of Potential Effect (APE) or Area of Potential Action (APA), identifying and evaluating NRHP and State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) eligibility for resources within or intersecting the APE/APA, documentation of project effects, and a historic Section 4(f) notification. Eligibility and effects are resolved through consultation with the SHPO.</p> <p>If USACE oversight is required, Section 106 applies to the project regardless of CDOT involvement.</p> <p>If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required, historic Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act applies to the project. Affected properties require coordination with FHWA, CDOT, and the Official with Jurisdiction (OWJ). If there is an identified use of a historic or archaeological resource for transportation purposes, additional planning, and documentation of measures to minimize or mitigate impacts are required. An individual Section 4(f) approval process can take one year or more, whereas exceptions or a de minimis determination for minor impacts takes significantly less time.</p>
Prime and Unique Farmland	<p>A visual inspection of the area is needed. For areas not used as farmland, the FPPA does not apply. Alternatives are unlikely to significantly impact prime farmlands. Nonetheless, right-of-way acquisition should minimize impacts on prime farmlands and complete the application for conversion from prime farmland to developable land as necessary. If federal funding is associated with any projects stemming from this PEL study, each project will need to determine potential impacts on farmland and document appropriate mitigation in the NEPA document.</p>
Air Quality	<p>Mobile source air toxics requirement considerations may need to be reviewed, identified, and coordinated with CDOT. Consultation with CDOT may be necessary to determine if emissions modeling, construction air monitoring, and other reporting and plan requirements would be required for the project. At this time, project-level guidance has not been released outlining steps to conduct greenhouse gas analyses during the project-level (i.e., NEPA) evaluation.</p>

**How will the data provided need to be supplemented during NEPA?**

Additional analysis will be required during NEPA to examine the new potential resource impacts and new potential mitigation requirements. Consultations with appropriate agencies and continued public involvement will also be required. Field surveys will be required to determine the next steps.

**10. List resources that were not reviewed in the PEL study and why? Indicate whether or not they will need to be reviewed in NEPA and explain why.**

The following resources would need additional analysis during NEPA depending on the NEPA class of action, the context of the Proposed Action, and project location:

- Air Quality/GHG
- Geologic Resources and Soil
- Cultural Resources
- Water Quality
- Vegetation and Noxious Weeds
- Fish and Wildlife
- Wetlands
- Threatened/Endangered Species
- Social Resources
- Recreational Resources
- Economic Resources
- Energy
- Noise
- Land Use
- Visual Resources

**11. Were cumulative impacts considered in the PEL study? If yes, provide the information or reference where it can be found.**

Cumulative impacts were not considered in the PEL study. They may be considered during future NEPA processes, if required.

**12. Describe any mitigation strategies discussed at the planning level that should be analyzed during NEPA.**

Mitigation strategies were developed at a planning level in this PEL Study. Known environmental resources are described for the entire Study Area in the SPE Existing Conditions Report. The PEL clearly states that future improvements being implemented should consider the built environment through a context-sensitive approach to land use and character along the corridor.

**13. What needs to be done during NEPA to make information from the PEL study available to the agencies and the public? Are there PEL study products which can be used or provided to agencies or the public during the NEPA scoping process?**

The PEL Study, along with the preliminary environmental scoping, will serve as a basis of the NEPA document and will be included as an appendix, if applicable. The documents developed through the PEL process are available on the project website for future use.

**14. Are there any other issues a future project team should be aware of?**

**Examples: Utility problems, access or ROW issues, encroachments into ROW, problematic landowners and/or groups, contact information for stakeholders, special or unique resources in the area, etc.**

Topics to consider for future projects as potential issues include:

- Coordination with the Hanna Ranch property owner concerns.
- Obtaining the CDOT Executive Director approval of PEL Study Recommendations
- Identifying funding for future projects and updating project costs with material costs increasing

**15. Provide a table of identified projects and/or a proposed phasing plan for corridor build out.**

**Table 3. Summary Table of Potential Projects**

Project ID and recommended phasing order	Location	Improvement Type	Cost Estimate - Low	Cost Estimate - High
1	Mesa Ridge Interchange	Interchange	\$ 60,000,000	\$ 75,000,000
2	MP 125.6 I-25 Connection	Interchange	\$ 70,000,000	\$ 87,500,000
3	Mesa Ridge to Squirrel Creek Road	6-lane separated freeway with 80 feet for potential corridor elements (380-foot section)	\$ 134,950,000	\$ 168,687,500
4	I-25 MP 125.6 to Planned Road	6-lane separated freeway with 30 feet for potential corridor elements (330-foot section)	\$ 264,600,000	\$ 330,750,000
5	Planned Roadway Network Interchanges	Interchange	\$ 40,000,000	\$ 50,000,000

6	Squirrel Creek Road Interchange	Interchange	\$ 40,000,000	\$ 50,000,000
7	Squirrel Creek Road to Planned Roadway Network	6-lane separated freeway with 80 feet for potential corridor elements (380-foot section)	\$ 62,200,000	\$ 77,750,000
8	MP 121.6 I-25 Connection	Interchange	\$ 120,000,000	\$ 150,000,000
9	Planned Roadway Network to I-25 MP 121.6	6-lane separated freeway with 80 feet for potential corridor elements (380-foot section)	\$ 296,680,000	\$ 370,850,000

**16. Provide a list of what funding sources have been identified to fund projects from this PEL?**

Currently, El Paso County and the City of Colorado Springs have budgeted \$25 million through the PPRTA for design, environmental clearances and available right-of-preservation from 2025 to 2035. As for future alignments for the South Powers Extension (SPE) corridor continues to be defined through the planning, environmental and design processes, opportunities for federal, state, local, and developer funding for the entire project or specific cost elements through competitive grant opportunities offered by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), FHWA, and CDOT have been identified. A brief overview of competitive grant programs used to support the planning, engineering, and/or construction of the proposed South Powers Extension transportation improvements are provided below:

- USDOT RAISE Grant Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Roadway, Transit, Active Transportation, and Freight
- USDOT INFRA Grant Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Freight, Highway, Multimodal, Active Transportation
- Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund (MMOF)
  - » Relevance to SPE: GHG Emissions, Multimodal, Safety, DI Communities
- FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
  - » Relevance to SPE: Active Transportation – capital costs
- FHWA Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
  - » Relevance to SPE: Greenhouse gas emissions, Roadway, Active Transportation – capital costs
- Highway Safety Improvement Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Roadway, Freight and Active Transportation
- FASTER Safety
  - » Relevance to SPE: Roadway (must be defined as addressing a safety issue)
- Multimodal Options Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Transit
- Transit Grant Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Transit
- National Highway Freight Program
  - » Relevance to SPE: Freight
- Strategic Projects
  - » Relevance to SPE: Roadway, Transit, Freight, and Active Transportation



# Appendix D - Existing Conditions Report



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





# South Powers Extension

## PEL Study

### Existing Conditions Report

December 3, 2024





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## List of Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Term/Phrase/Name</b>
ACS	American Community Survey
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
APA	Area of Potential Action
APE	Area of Potential Effect
AQ-PLAG	Air Quality Project Level Analysis Guidance
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
BGEPA	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
BMP	Best Management Practice
BNSF	Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad
CCR	Code of Colorado Regulations
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CDRMS	Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CLOMR	Conditional Letter of Map Revisions
CO	Colorado State Highway
CDPHE	Colorado Department of Health and Environment
CDRMS	Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety
CDWR	Colorado Division of Water Resources
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHAMP	Colorado Hazard Mapping Program
CLOMR	Conditional Letter of Map Revision
CNHP	Colorado Natural Heritage Program
COMaP	Colorado Ownership, Management and Protection
CPW	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
CRS	Colorado Revised Statutes
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
CWCB	Colorado Water Conservation Board
DIC	Disproportionately Impacted Community
EA	Environmental Assessment
EJ	Environmental Justice
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERIS	Environmental Risk Information Services
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAT	Fatalities
FC	Federal Candidate (ESA)
FE	Federal Endangered (ESA)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration



FFPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
FT	Federal Threatened (ESA)
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
INJ	Injuries
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation (USFWS)
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
LOS	Level of Service
LOSS	Level of Service of Safety
LST	Leaking Storage Tank
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MMP	Materials Management Plan
MP	Milepost
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MTCP	Major Transportation Corridors Plan
MTTF	Major Thoroughfare Task Force
NAAG	Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHD	National Hydrography Dataset
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
OAHP	Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
OPS	(Division of) Oil and Public Safety
OTIS	Online Transportation Information System
OWJ	Official with Jurisdiction
PDO	Property Damage Only
PEL	Planning and Environmental Linkages
POAQC	Projects of Air Quality Concern
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
PPSC	Pikes Peak State College
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	Recognized Environmental Condition



SAM	Species Activity Mapping
SB	Senate Bill
SC	Special Concern (state species)
SE	State-Listed Endangered
SFB	U.S. Space Force Base
SFS	U.S. Space Force Station
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SPF	Safety Performance Functions
SRHP	State Register of Historic Places
ST	State-Listed Threatened
STRAHNET	Strategic Highway Access Network
SUT	Single Unit Truck
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TDM	Travel Demand Model
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TCP	Traditional Cultural Place
UP	Union Pacific Railroad
U.S.	United States
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USDOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VCP	Voluntary Cleanup Program
VPD	Vehicles per day
WOTUS	Waters of the United States



## Project Description

Since 1963, Powers Boulevard was planned as a bypass for I-25 along the eastern edge of the city of Colorado Springs, Colorado with northern and southern termini to connect to I-25. As one of Colorado's 28 strategic corridors and a vital element of the National Highway System, Powers Boulevard is a critical corridor supporting local, regional, and national mobility. As a critical component of the Region's Congestion Management Plan, Powers Boulevard provides access to five military installations, shall be the primary north-south thoroughfare for the rapidly developing eastern edge of the city, and offers direct access to the City of Colorado Springs Airport.

This Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study focuses on Powers South from Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) to I-25. There is currently a lot of interest and activity in this rapidly developing area of the city of Fountain and El Paso County. Most of the project area is currently within the jurisdiction of El Paso County, however, it is likely that a significant portion of the presently developing sites within the project area may be incorporated into the cities of Fountain or Colorado Springs as development progresses. While it is anticipated that South Powers Boulevard shall begin as a locally owned road, it is expected that the Colorado Department of Transportation (COOT) shall eventually maintain it as a state highway. Close coordination shall be required with the cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs, El Paso County, and COOT regarding these issues throughout the project.

The purpose of the study is to recommend an alignment that recognizes previous local and regional planning efforts to extend South Powers Boulevard (CO 21) from CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway to a connection with Interstate 25 (I-25), south of the Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain. The study will define the phasing and next steps for implementing South Powers Extension to the south to enhance regional mobility and integrate future multimodal opportunities.

Figure 1. Project Location Map

## History of the Corridor

In the mid-1960s, local, county, regional, and state planners recognized the need for an eastern loop connecting to I-25 at both ends, to provide connectivity, an alternative route for closures, military access, and to prepare for the tremendous growth seen over the decades. In 1963, the City of Colorado Springs adopted the full Powers Boulevard alignment as part of its major thoroughfare plan. As one of the State of Colorado's



28 strategic corridors and a key element of the National Highway System, Powers Boulevard is a critical corridor supporting local, regional, and national mobility. It is an essential component of the Region's Congestion Management Plan, provides access to five military installations, will be the predominate north/south thoroughfare for the rapidly developing eastern edge of the city, and provides direct access to the City of Colorado Springs Airport.

Cooperative planning for Powers Boulevard was formalized in the early 1980s through an Intergovernmental Agreement that created the Major Thoroughfare Task Force (MTTF). The MTTF, which included representatives from COOT, PPACG, El Paso County and the cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain, acted as a recommending body to the three jurisdictions regarding the implementation of plans for the location, design, access, engineering, construction, and other related matters pertaining to the Powers Boulevard corridor and other major transportation corridors. Early planning for Powers Boulevard included identifying a corridor alignment, establishing a conceptual typical section for the roadway, and adopting an access control plan. Due to this early and cooperative planning, the central corridor between Woodmen Road and Platte Avenue/U.S. 24 was completed in 1987. Extensions to the south (Fountain Boulevard in 1995, Fontaine Boulevard in the 1990s, and Mesa Ridge Parkway in 2002) and the north (CO 83 from 2000 to 2005) followed as these areas developed.

In 2000, a Feasibility Study determined the preferred corridor plan and alignment for the extension of Powers Boulevard south from Fontaine Boulevard to a connection with I-25. The corridor plan defined the appropriate phasing and next steps to complete Powers Boulevard to the south. The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) led the study in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation (COOT), El Paso County, and the City of Fountain. South of Colorado Springs, the City of Fountain and the surrounding areas that drain to Fountain Creek and are locally known as the Fountain Valley.

In October of 2004, COOT, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs finalized Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) whereby then state highways were removed from the State Highway System and Powers Boulevard became State Highway 21 (CO 21). COOT completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Powers Boulevard in 2010 to provide a framework for future corridor planning and investments between Woodmen Road and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway. After an EA Reevaluation for Powers Boulevard between Voyager Parkway and I-25, the ultimate connection to the north was advanced as a local metropolitan district initiative. The planned Powers Boulevard northern segment and I-25/CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange will be added to the state highway system.



The map shown in **Figure 2** shows the South Powers Boulevard related projects completed between 1968 and 2020. COOT, Colorado Springs, and El Paso County continue to make progress implementing the regional vision and in accordance with the agreement among these parties.

### Figure 2. Powers Corridor Development

Regional plans that include or reference the southern extension of Powers Boulevard to a direct connection to I-25 include:

- 1970: Pikes Peak Regional Land Use Plan, adopted by PPACG, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs.
- 1971: General alignment is shown in the Colorado Springs' Regional Major Thoroughfare Plan update.
- 1987: The complete Powers Boulevard alignment, including the south extension was first depicted on El Paso County's Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP) and remained on the current (2016) MTCP.
- 1993: Federal, State, and local planning processes include the recommendation of Powers Boulevard as part of the National Highway Systems designation. The National Highway System Map includes Powers Boulevard.
- 1993: Powers Boulevard, including the southern alignment, was also identified as part of the Federal Strategic Highway Access Network (STRAHNET) that provides critical access to and among military installations. The Pikes Peak Region is home to five military commands/installations.
- 1998: The Colorado General Assembly identified Powers Boulevard as one of 28 State Strategic Corridors that have high priority to receive State transportation funds.
- 2000: The PPACG completed the South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study to identify a recommended alignment for the southernmost segment of the Powers Boulevard/ CO 21 corridor with ultimate direct connection to I-25. According to the results of this study, Powers Boulevard is planned to be a four- to six-lane facility, approximately 36 miles in length. It is planned as an access-controlled facility, with interchanges no closer than one mile apart. Ultimately it is intended to be a grade-separated freeway.
- 2007: The South Powers Extension was included in Fountain's Traffic Master Plan (TMP) and remains in the current Transportation Master Plan 2022.
- 2016: El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan (Corridor Preservation Plan)
- 2022: Colorado Springs ConnectCOS was amended to add the South Powers Extension alignment outside the current boundaries of the City of Colorado Springs.

Regional partners (El Paso County/Fountain/Colorado Springs/CDOT/FHWA/PPACG) are working together to continue planning for the South Powers Boulevard corridor to help preserve right-of-way, plan for limited access for the freeway standard, plan for multimodal use and crossings of the corridor, and provide predictability to development by studying an alignment.

### Importance of the Corridor

The long history of support and planning efforts for Powers Boulevard is due to its local, regional, statewide and national importance. According to the South Powers Feasibility Study completed in 2000, "Planning for Powers Boulevard Corridor began in 1963 when the City of Colorado Springs adopted it on their major thoroughfare plan... Recognizing the regional importance of this corridor, in 1983 the cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs and El Paso County entered into an agreement to work together in the planning, design, funding and construction of the overall corridor." In 1993 Powers Boulevard received National Highway System designation at the request of PPACG and COOT, due to its local, regional and national significance.



"The national significance of Powers Boulevard is first due to its important role with our national defense" (South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study, July 2000). Powers Boulevard provides key access to five major military installations; Fort Carson, Peterson Space Force Base, United States Space Force, Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station, and Schriever Space Force Base. Additionally, Colorado Springs Municipal Airport and Peterson Space Force Base jointly use a single airfield, lending even greater importance to the landside access highways that include CO 21/Powers Boulevard and U.S. 24; as well as Milton Proby Parkway (via Powers Boulevard) and Marksheffel Road (via U.S. 24/CO 94/CO 16). "Secondly, the completion of Powers Boulevard will provide an eastern by-pass alternative for I-25, helping to alleviate a portion of the congestion on that interstate... Third, Powers Boulevard provides direct access to the Colorado Springs Airport" (2000 Feasibility Study).

Powers Boulevard is locally and regionally significant, since if completed, it would provide major mobility benefits for the regional system. Its local and regional significance is noted by the corridor's long-standing inclusion in the PPACG Regional Congestion Management Plan. Powers Boulevard will be a major north/south throughfare for the rapidly growing development along the eastern edges of the Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain. The Pikes Peak Regional Council of Governments also notes the Powers Boulevard Extension (SH 21) numerous times as a critical component to the transportation system needs.

The Colorado Department of Transportation identified the South Powers Extension in their 'Statewide Transportation Plan, Appendix E: Corridor Profiles' report.

## Supporting Planning Efforts

The Pikes Peak region has a long history of cooperative and collaborative planning for the region's future growth and supporting transportation facilities. Together, El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, and the City of Fountain, supported by COOT and PPACG, have established a shared vision for orderly development, environmental stewardship, and implementation of a connected, multimodal regional transportation system. The elements of this vision can be found across both the shared and individual master planning documents of the region.

## Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Since 1984, COOT has been actively engaged with PPACG and local agencies to advance right-of-way preservation and planning for Powers Boulevard through participation on the MTTF. Although the scope of the MTTF was broad, it did focus on the development of a north-south beltway facility that could replace and function better than SH 83/Academy Boulevard. In 2007, Powers Boulevard was added to the State Highway System as Colorado Highway 21 (CO 21). To satisfy system connectivity requirement for the State Highway System, CO 21 was designated for the existing alignment between CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and CO 83. At that time, CO 16 was viewed as an interim south connection to I-25 based on the PPACG-led South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study (2000). In 2010, COOT prepared The Link Powers Corridor: Environmental Assessment for Powers Boulevard (CO 21) to provide the necessary foundation to upgrade the functional classification CO 21 from an expressway to a freeway. Although the project limits for the EA were Woodmen Road on the north and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway on the south, the study acknowledged planning for direct connections to I-25 north and south of the Colorado Springs Metropolitan Area. COOT completed Platte Avenue (2002) and Woodmen Road (2007-2008) interchange upgrades and Powers Boulevard extensions to Fountain Boulevard (1995), Fontaine Boulevard (mid- to late-1990s), CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway (2002) and CO 83 (2000-2005). The following documents were reviewed:

- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study, 2000.



- Colorado Department of Transportation, The Link Powers Corridor: Environmental Assessment for Powers Boulevard (CO 21), April 2010.

### **Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)**

As the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area, PPACG has been engaged with COOT and local agencies in advancing right-of-way preservation and planning for a connected regional, multimodal transportation system since 1974. In 1984, COOT, PPACG, the City of Colorado Springs, and El Paso County formed the MTTF with the mission to advance regional bypass routes (alternatives to I-25) and to improve connectivity among the region's military installations. In 1994, PPACG prepared a discretionary funding request for Powers Boulevard. Although no funding was granted, the application was compelling enough to secure designation of Powers Boulevard as part of the National Highway System and a military STRAHNET facility. This was significant because, at the time, Powers Boulevard was an off-system arterial/expressway facility. PPACG's ongoing planning since that time continued to recognize the importance of Powers Boulevard as a part of the vision for a connected, multimodal transportation system to serve the region's mobility and economic and strategic defense needs and priorities. The following documents were reviewed:

- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study, July 2000.
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs Regional Joint Land Use Study, December 2018
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Moving Forward 2045: Pikes Peak Area Regional Transportation Plan, January 8, 2020.
- Peak Area Council of Governments, 2045 Regional Transportation Plan - Transit: Mountain Metropolitan Transit, January 8, 2020

### **City of Fountain**

The City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan (Comprehensive Development Plan, Amended 2017) and City of Fountain Annexation Plan (Annexation Plan, Amended 2019) identify the portion of the region located to the north of Ray Nixon Road Interchange to be developed in residential and commercial lands uses. These developments are considered a Priority 1 target for annexation into the City of Fountain. Several annexations into the City of Fountain and associated Overall Development Plan approvals have already occurred. Prominent among these are the Mesa Ridge, Kane Ranch, and Almagre developments. Powers Boulevard right-of-way dedications have been obtained by the City of Fountain as part of the annexation review and approval processes for these developments. The Future Land Use Plan Map, identified as the most critical element within the Comprehensive Plan document, includes the extension of Powers Boulevard to the interim connection to south I-25 at milepost (MP) 123 and ultimate connection to south 1- 25 at MP 119, confirming Fountain's recognition that the South Powers Extension is a critical element of the mobility framework needed to serve the city and the region. Like the predecessor Traffic Master Plan (2002), the City of Fountain Transportation Master Plan 2022 identifies the South Powers Extension Boulevard as a future freeway corridor with east-west connectivity to the I-25 corridor. The following documents were reviewed:

- City of Fountain, City of Fountain Comprehensive Development Plan 2005, August 9, 2005, \_amended 2017.
- City of Fountain, City of Fountain Annexation Plan, November 13, 2007, amended December 2009.
- City of Fountain, City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan, May 26, 2015.
- City of Fountain, Transportation Master Plan 2022, February 22, 2022.



## El Paso County

El Paso County has always been an active member of the MTF. El Paso County's Your El Paso Master Plan classifies the desired character of land located within the study corridor as "Suburban Development". It describes character and development densities for the Suburban Development land use type grouping as "predominantly residential in the form of subdivisions with smaller lots and curvilinear streets, with some County areas being difficult to distinguish from suburban development within city limits" (p.8).

Powers Boulevard, including a now-complete extension to a connection to north I-25 and an extension to a connection to south I-25, has long been an integral part of El Paso County's Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP). The current MTCP (2016) identifies the full CO 21/Powers Boulevard corridor, including the extension of CO 21/Powers Boulevard south from CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway to an I-25 south connection. Mentions of the corridor are also included in the County's 1987 MTCP.

- El Paso County, El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan Update (MTCP), December 6, 2016.
- El Paso County, Your El Paso Master Plan, May 26, 2021.
- El Paso County, Department of Public Works, El Paso County Road Safety Plan, 2022.
- El Paso County Planning Department, El Paso County Zoning Map Book, accessed November 2022.

## City of Colorado Springs

The City of Colorado Springs is a founding member of the MTF and has been an active partner in advancing right-of-way preservation and planning for Powers Boulevard since the early 1970s. The METEX Metropolitan District was formed to build the segment of Powers Boulevard between Platte Avenue and Woodman Road. The City of Colorado Springs made construction of Powers Boulevard a priority by requiring construction of the METEX segment as a condition for annexation of the Stetson Hills and Springs Ranch developments into the city of Colorado Springs. Prior to the completion of the METEX segment in 1987, Powers Boulevard had existed only as a two-lane, unpaved roadway between Platte Avenue and Drennan Road. In 1997, the City of Colorado Springs completed an EA for a northern extension of Powers Boulevard to I-25 near the U.S. Air Force Academy. Then, in 2000, the City of Colorado Springs partnered with PPACG, COOT, and other local agencies on the *South Powers Feasibility Study* to identify a recommended alignment for the extension of Powers Boulevard from its then-existing terminus at Fontaine Boulevard to a connection to I-25 south of the Colorado Springs Metropolitan Area. The City of Colorado Springs also had a prominent role in advancing extensions of Powers Boulevard to Fountain Boulevard (1995) and from Fountain Boulevard to Fontaine Boulevard (mid- to late-1990s), providing connections to both Peterson Space Force Base and Colorado Springs Municipal Airport.

Although all of the previously selected corridor alignments for the South Powers Extension have been outside of the municipal boundaries of Colorado Springs, the extension of Powers Boulevard south to I-25 was added to the City of Colorado Springs draft Intermodal Transportation Plan, *ConnectCOS*.

- City of Colorado Springs, *ConnectCOS: Transportation Plan for a Mobile Community*, March 2023.
- City of Colorado Springs, *PlanCOS: Leading the Way to Our Future: Comprehensive Plan*, January 2019.
- City of Colorado Springs, Parks, Recreation, Trails, Open Space & Cultural Services, *City of Colorado Springs Park System Master Plan*, September 14, 2014.

## Existing Land Use

### Development

The South Powers Extension study is being conducted within the City of Fountain and unincorporated El Paso County. Rural development, including large estates, former and working cattle and horse ranches, and associated grazing land, is the predominant existing land use within the area reviewed. Local land use plans



identify most of the corridor as areas of near-term change. To ensure that change happens in a way that supports the region's shared vision for the future, El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, and the City of Fountain came together in the mid-1980s to identify a Planned Urban Growth Area as a component of land use planning for the entire Powers Boulevard corridor. Within the planning corridor, the south extension study was envisioned as the future home of suburban mixed-use development, regardless of the jurisdiction in which development would occur.

Figure 3. Current Land Use

Figure 4. Utilities within the Study Area

## Utility Corridors

### NuStar Energy Petroleum Pipeline

NuStar Energy operates a petroleum pipe that originates at the McKee Refinery to the Colorado Springs Terminal just east of the Colorado Springs Airport. This pipeline continues north to the Denver metro area. This is a 10-inch pipeline facility with a capacity of 32.5 million barrels a day. The terminal stores gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, and ethanol and is served by both truck and pipeline delivery.

### Plains Energy

Plains operates several facilities, including crude oil pipelines, natural gas pipelines, and natural gas liquid pipelines, in Colorado. Their facilities in the South Powers Extension area include liquid petroleum products that originate in Oklahoma and connect to the terminal in Fountain, Colorado, southeast of I-25 and U.S. 85. The terminal is served by truck, rail, and pipelines.

### Colorado Springs Utilities

Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has several facilities in the study area that provide services for the City of Colorado Springs. These include the Southern Delivery Pipeline that provides water from the Pueblo Reservoir to the water treatment plant at Marksheffel Road and SH 94. This facility's 60-inch and 54-inch raw waterlines pass through the project area. As part of the Southern Delivery System, there is a planned storage reservoir along Williams Creek that will need to be considered.

CSU has several electrical transmission distribution and generation facilities in the region as well. CSU transmission line facilities originate from the Ray Nixon Power Plant on the west side of I-25. The transmission lines are 230 kV and extend east from Ray Nixon and to the north along the east side of Colorado Springs. There are multiple substations that distribute power to the region that will need to be considered as part of this study.

### Public Service of Colorado

Public Service of Colorado has four transmission lines in the study area that originate/terminate at the substation west of I-25 and south of the Ray Nixon Power Plant. There are one 230 kV (kilovolts) line and two 345 kV lines in the study area.

### Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association has two lines in the study area that are 230 kV. The lines also originate/terminate at the sub-station west of I-25.



## **Black Hills Energy & Western Area Power Administration**

Black Hills Energy and Western Area Power Administration each have a single transmission line in the study area. Black Hills Energy has a 115 kV line, and Western Area Power Administration has a 230 kV line.

## **Magellan Midstream Partners**

Magellan Midstream Partners operates a high-pressure natural gas line that runs north-south through the study area. Magellan currently operates two 20-inch high-pressure gas lines for Colorado Interstate Gas

## **Solar Farms**

As part of the move toward renewable energy, several solar facilities have been constructed and are planned within the project study area, including two existing facilities and one that is under construction.

### **Clear Spring Ranch Solar Array**

The Clear Spring Ranch Solar Array lies south of the Ray Nixon Power Plant that is scheduled to close by 2030.

### **Palmer Solar Array**

The Palmer Solar Array was constructed along the west side of the Calhan Reservoir in 2020.

### **Pike Solar Array**

The Pike Solar Array initial phase has been constructed approximately 1.2 miles southeast of the Calhan Reservoir. In phase 11, the facilities are planned to expand about two miles to the north and then east around the planned Williams Creek Reservoir.

## **Reservoirs and Irrigation Facilities**

Multiple irrigation ditches and two reservoirs (one existing and one planned) run the study corridor, as shown in **Figure 4**, and summarized below.

### **Reservoirs**

**Calhan Reservoir:** The Calhan Reservoir is currently owned and operated by the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. The reservoir has a current footprint of approximately 56 acres. The reservoir is planned to be expanded to cover an area of about 250 acres. The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District also plans to construct a pipeline from the Calhan Reservoir north to Link Road and then continue to the north to provide water to users in northern El Paso County.

**Williams Creek Reservoir:** The Williams Creek Reservoir is a planned reservoir to store water as part of the Southern Delivery System for Colorado Springs Utilities. The reservoir is not currently constructed but is planned as part of future phases of the Southern Delivery System. The reservoir will cover about 1,000 acres to the south of the Fountain Landfill and will be surrounded by the Pike Solar Array.

### **Irrigation Facilities**



There are five known irrigation ditches in the study area that provide water for agricultural needs in the study area.

**Fountain Ditch:** The Fountain Ditch is about 1 mile long and runs around the Lorson Ranch area east of Marksheffel Road and Fontaine Boulevard. It then feeds into the Fountain Mutual Irrigation Ditch.

**Fountain Mutual Irrigation Ditch:** The Fountain Mutual Irrigation Ditch, a ditch in the study area, starts pulling water from Fountain Creek near I-25 and the U.S. 24 Bypass on the north. The ditch is about 28 miles long and generally parallels Mesa Ridge Parkway to the east in the project area, then turns south and bisects the old Norris Ranch, and continues south into the Kane Ranch, ultimately terminating near Shumway Road and Ermel Road on the east and Rea Road and Circle C Road on the west.

**Chilcott Canal Number 27:** The Chilcott Canal is about 6 miles long. It begins near Candlelight Lane and Jimmy Camp Road; continues southward, crossing Link Road south of Bar B Road and passing through the old JV Ranches; and ultimately terminates just south of the Calhan Reservoir.

**Cotton Slough Ditch:** The Cotton Slough Ditch is approximately 1 mile long and runs through the Frost Ranches and west of Hanover Road.

**Jackson and Burke Ditch:** The Jackson and Burke Ditch is about 3.5 miles long and runs through the Frost Ranches along the west side of Fountain Creek.

## Military Bases

The continued and long history of advocacy and planning efforts for Powers Boulevard is due to the valuable access and operational support it provides to national facilities. Powers Boulevard plays an important role with national defense. It provides key access to five military installations, Fort Carson, Peterson SFB (Space Force Base), United States Space Force, Cheyenne Mountain SFS (Space Force Station), and Schriever SFB. Additionally, Colorado Springs Municipal Airport, and Peterson Space Force Base jointly use a single airfield, lending even greater importance to the landside access highways that include CO 21/Powers Boulevard and U.S. 24, as well as Milton Proby Parkway (via Powers Boulevard) and Marksheffel Road (via U.S. 24/CO 94/CO 16).

Within the Colorado Springs Regional Joint Land Use Study developed by PPACG, the development of South Powers Extension is mentioned as a needed transportation improvement for connectivity to both Fort Carson and Peterson SFB. The plan also notes the need for redundancy in their rapid deployment routes and access to the Colorado Springs Airport. The South Powers Extension corridor would provide a redundant route to this airport for local military installations.

Notably, CO 16 also provides the only direct connection to Fort Carson from Security-Widefield, Fountain, and unincorporated El Paso County, areas where many soldiers reside; it also includes the only grade-separated crossing of the dual-track Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) rail lines within the study area.

Fort Carson currently employs 25,099 military personnel, 1,472 reserve component military personnel, 6,396 civilian (PostExchange Service, Department of the Army, Defense Commissary Agency, Department of Defense) employees, and 976 contractor employees, for a total employment of 33,943. The base population also includes 38,018 dependents associated with the military employment component. Over 57% of the base population lives "off-post"; many reside in Security-Widefield, Fountain, and unincorporated El Paso County



and use Gate 20 (CO 16) to access Fort Carson. Fort Carson also has the third-largest attached military veterans (68,901) and retiree (29,457) populations in the nation.

Figure 5. Military Base Locations

### Conservation Easements

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program and the Geospatial Centroid at Colorado State University host the Colorado Ownership, Management and Protection (COMaP) service, providing a statewide land ownership, management, and protection area map. This spatial dataset provides agencies and organizations with information on ownership and protected areas for management of natural resources. Parties interested in the COMaP dataset can view, register, and download data from <https://comap.cnhp.colostate.edu/>.

COMaP dataset version 20211005, downloaded August 3, 2022, was analyzed for percent of land ownership and protection within the study area. This analysis yielded the following results, as shown in **Table 1**: 36% state, 2% local, 5% private conservation, and 57% private property. The locations of each type of conservation easement in reference to the environmental study area are shown in **Figure 6**.

Table 1. Conservation Easements by Ownership

Land Ownership and Protection	Area (Acres)	Percent of Land in Study Area
State	21,477	36%
Local	930	2%
Private Conservation	3,072	5%
No Easements (Private Property)	33,927	57%

Figure 6. Regional Conservation Easements

### Community Characteristics

Development patterns have a profound influence on travel demand. The locations and densities of household population, business establishments (places of work), schools, and to a lesser extent, visitor attractions, are the spatial determinants of peak traffic flows, routes taken, and modes of travel chosen.

### Population/Household Unit Density

The 2020 U.S. Census population count for El Paso County was 730,395, an increase of 100,000 since the 2010 Census. El Paso County is the most populous county in the state of Colorado, surpassing Denver County, in the 2020 Census. The population estimate for El Paso County for 2022 is 745,345, yielding a current annual growth rate of 1.13%. Population densities are shown in **Figure 7**.

The regional roadway network, the primary conduit for travel and freight movement within and through the region is limited. North-south travel through the region currently relies almost exclusively on I-25, the region's



only freeway, whereas east-west travel typically requires significant out-of-direction travel due to poor connectivity and lack of direct connections to I-25.

Additional opportunities for connectivity to I-25 and major City The City of Fountain provides fixed route service within the city limits with no connection to Colorado Spring Mountain Metro Transit service; making transit options ineffective in reducing congestion along I-25 and other major corridors between the City of Fountain and Colorado Springs.

Figure 7. Population/Household Unit Density

### Employment Establishment Density

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics El Paso County 2020 counts for business establishments and employment located within El Paso County are 23,600 and 294,200, respectively. This is up from 16,882 business establishments and 234,200 employees in 2010. Significantly, the number of business establishments as well as employment grew at a faster pace in El Paso County than in other areas in the state with El Paso County's share of business establishments climbing from 7.6% of total business establishments in 2010 to 10.1% in 2020.

As shown in **Figure 8**, employment density within the study area is moderate, with high-density employment centers located to the north of the study area. Additionally, Fort Carson, the state's single largest employer, is located immediately to the west of the study area. Fort Carson employs a total of 33,000 military and civilian personnel with 57% (approximately 19,000) of based personnel residing off-post. As a result, both I-25 and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway currently serve high levels of journey-to-work travel.

Figure 8. Employment Density

### Educational Facilities

There are 12 colleges and universities, some with multiple campuses, that serve the Pikes Peak Region, including the study area. Pikes Peak State College has one of two of its campuses located north of Fort Carson, as well as smaller learning centers at Fort Carson and Peterson Space Force Base. All the remaining campuses are located within central and northern Colorado Springs or in Pueblo. Because most of these colleges and universities serve day students, significant commuting between home and campus occurs along I-25.

Figure 9. Educational Facilities Locations

Table 2. Local Colleges and Universities

College Name	Type
United States Air Force Academy	4-Year, Public
Colorado College	4-Year, Private
University of Colorado- Colorado Springs	4-Year, Public
Colorado Technical University Colorado Springs	4-Year, Private
Colorado State University Pueblo	4-Year, Public
Intellitec College - Pueblo	Career Training
University of Phoenix	4-Year, Private
National American University	4-Year, Private



Regis University	4-Year, Private
Pikes Peak State College	2-Year, Public
Pueblo Community College	2-Year, Public
Colorado Technical University	4-Year, Private

### Access to Medical Services

The closest full-service public hospitals to the study area are located 17.6 miles north (Penrose Main Hospital, 2222 N. Nevada Ave., Colorado Springs, 80907) and 15.6 miles east (UC-Health Memorial Hospital Central, 1400 E. Boulder St., Colorado Springs, 80909). There are three other full-service hospitals that are nearly twice the distance from the study area: St. Francis Hospital (6001 E. Woodmen Rd., Colorado Springs, 80923) is 28 miles away; UC-Health Memorial Hospital North (4050 Briargate Parkway, Colorado Springs, 80920) is 27.9 miles away; and St. Mary Corwin Hospital (1008 Minnequa Ave., Pueblo, 81004) is 34 miles away. The locations of all hospitals can be seen in **Figure 10**.

Currently, limited connectivity, a lack of redundancy in the network, and recurring and increasing congestion create adverse impacts on emergency response times. Development of South Powers Extension would provide both additional connectivity to the nearest hospitals for residents south of the City of Fountain and a highway corridor redundant to I-25. A redundant route is essential in cases of I-25 road closures and congestion due to frequent crashes along I-25.

Figure 10. Access to Medical Services

### Transportation Context

Planning and transportation contexts were evaluated from a broader perspective to understand the potential regional influences on the South Powers Extension alignment from surrounding roadways. Encompassing key regional and distributor routes (like CO 16 to the north and I-25 to the west) generates traffic data based on forecasted land use, demographics, and travel patterns unique to the region. An expansive focus allows the impact of regional trips to/from locations such as Colorado Springs and Pueblo to be included in the analysis.

### Roadway Network

The roadway network that serves the Fountain Valley and provides connectivity to the broader regional roadway network comprises I-25, U.S. 85/Santa Fe Avenue, CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway, CO 21/Powers Boulevard, and Marksheffel Road. As shown in **Figure 11**, only CO 16, the interim terminus of CO 21/Powers Boulevard, provides a connection to I-25. Notably, CO 16 also provides the only direct connection to Fort Carson from Security-Widefield, Fountain, and unincorporated El Paso County, areas where many military personnel reside, and the roadway includes the only grade-separated crossing of the dual-track BNSF and UP rail lines within the study area.

Existing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes throughout the study are moderate. The exception is CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway to the east of I-25. The existing ADT volume at this location is approaching capacity, and CO 16 will experience increasing congestion without future alternative direct access to I-25.

Figure 11. Regional Roadway Network



## Existing Traffic Operations

### Methodology

Existing traffic operations were assessed for the freeway mainline, freeway ramps, and unsignalized and signalized intersection operations using the Transportation Research Board's *Highway Capacity Manual Sixth Edition* (HCM6, Transportation Research Board, 2016) procedures and methodologies. Study area intersection and freeway operations were evaluated using HCM6-based Level of Service (LOS) calculations as analyzed in the Synchro and FREEVAL software.

The HCM6 uses an LOS grading system to describe the operational status of the freeway network elements and local roadway network intersections. LOS is a description of an intersection's operation, ranging from a LOS A (indicating free flow traffic conditions with little or no delay) to a LOS F (representing oversaturated conditions where traffic flows exceed design capacity, resulting in long queues and delays).

### Signalized Intersections

For signalized intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average delay per vehicle for the overall intersection.

**Table 3** summarizes the relationship between delay and LOS for signalized intersections.

Table 3. LOS Criteria for Signalized Intersections

Levels of Service	Interpretation	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
A	Progression is extremely favorable, and most vehicles arrive during the green phase. Most vehicles do not stop at all. Short cycle lengths may contribute to low delay.	
B	Good progression, short cycle lengths, or both. More vehicles stop than with LOS A.	>10- 20
C	Fair progression, longer cycle lengths, or both. The number of vehicles stopping is significant, though many still pass through without stopping.	>20 - 35
D	Longer delays result from some combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high v/c ratios. Many vehicles stop.	>35- 55
E	High delay values generally indicate poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high v/c ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.	>55-80
F	This level often occurs with over saturation when arrival flow rates exceed the capacity of the	>80



Levels of Service	Interpretation	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
	intersection. Poor progression and long cycle lengths may be major contributing factors to such delays.	

Source: Transportation Research Board. 2010,19-2.

### Unsignalized Intersections

For unsignalized (all-way stop-controlled [AWSC] and side-street stop-controlled) intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average control delay per vehicle (measured in seconds) for each stop-controlled movement. The method incorporates delay associated with deceleration, acceleration, stopping, and moving up in the queue. For AWSC intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average delay per vehicle for the overall intersection. For side street stop-controlled intersections, LOS is reported for the approach with the highest average delay/vehicle.

**Table 4** summarizes the relationship between delay and LOS for unsignalized intersections. Insufficient gaps of suitable size to allow minor street traffic demand to cross safely through a major traffic stream.

Table 4. LOS Criteria for Two-Way Stop Controlled Intersections

Levels of Service	Interpretation	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
A	Little or no delay	123
B	Short traffic delays	>10-15
C	Average traffic delays	>15-25
D	Long traffic delays	>25-35
E	Very long traffic delays	>35-50
F	When demand volume exceeds the capacity of the lane, extreme delays will be encountered with queuing that may cause severe congestion affecting other traffic movements in the intersection. This condition usually warrants improving the intersection.	>50

Transportation Research Board. 2010, 18-6

### Freeway Operations

For basic freeway segments, the HCM6 defines LOS based on density of traffic flow. Density describes a motorist's proximity to other vehicles and is related to a motorist's freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream. Unlike speed, density is sensitive to flow rates throughout the range of flows. **Table 5** summarizes the relationship between density and LOS for freeway segments.



Table 5. LOS Criteria for Freeway Segments

Levels of Service	Description	Density (pc/mile/lane)
A	LOS A describes free-flow operations. Free-Flow Speed (FFS) prevails and maneuvering in unimpeded.	123
B	LOS B represents reasonably free-flow operations. Free-flow Speed (FFS) prevails with maneuvering only slightly restricted.	>11-18
C	LOS C provides for flow with speeds near the FFS with freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream noticeably restricted.	>18-26
D	LOS D is the level at which speeds decline with increasing flows and ability to maneuver within the traffic stream seriously limited.	>26-35
E	LOS E describes operation at or near capacity. Even minor disruptions will produce breakdown and substantial queuing.	>35-45
F	LOS F describes unstable flow. Such conditions exist within queues forming behind bottlenecks.	>45

Source: Transportation Research Board. 2016, 12-19.

### Freeway Operations (I-25)

As the sole freeway facility in the study area and the primary north-south route within El Paso County, I-25 operations are of critical importance. At present, the recurring congestion condition is associated with Fort Carson shift arrival/departure traffic and work commute travel to/from Colorado Springs and Denver. Higher density traffic is more prevalent north of the Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange and is present to a lesser degree between the U.S. 85 and Mesa Ridge Parkway interchanges. Recurring congestion does not typically result in significant delays; significant delays are more often due to severe weather, construction, or traffic collisions.



Traffic along I-25 through the study corridor was evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), 6th edition (2016) methodologies for freeway facilities. Data collected in March 2022 provided traffic volumes during the AM and PM peak periods at each of the interchanges; mainline I-25 volumes were derived from the COOT-maintained continuous count station located just north of the Rancho Colorado interchange, north of the Pueblo-El Paso County line. **Table 6** shows the results of the facilities network analysis at each of the on-ramp and off-ramp connections to I-25 and between the interchanges.

Table 6. Mainline I-25 HCM Analysis Levels of Service

Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
North to South Academy Blvd.	Freeway	C/C	Freeway	D/C
Mesa Ridge Interchange	SB to WB Off-Ramp	B/C	On-Ramp	C/B
	SB to EB Off-Ramp	B/B		
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	C/B
U.S. 85 Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	A/A	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Ray Nixon Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Hannah Ranch Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
PPIR Interchange	Off-Ramp	A/A	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Rancho Colorado Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	A/A



Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
South to El Paso County Line	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B

Notes: Most locations are expected to operate near free-flow conditions, as indicated by a Level of Service (LOS) A or B conditions during both the AM and PM peak periods. Near the Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange there are higher density conditions where traffic volumes result in LOS C or D conditions. While this does not necessarily indicate congestion, slower conditions may exist, and even minor incidents or disruptions have the potential to result in severe traffic disruptions.

### Local Roadway Network Operations

The I-25 ramp termini and other select intersections along key corridors within the study area, including Mesa Ridge Parkway, Powers Boulevard, U.S. 85, Link Road, and Old Pueblo Road, were evaluated using the HCM (Transportation Research Board and National Academies of Sciences 2016, 2000) methodologies for signalized and unsignalized intersections, as well as Synchro/SimTraffic simulations for intersection configurations not supported by the HCM. Data collected in March 2022 provided traffic volumes during the AM and PM peak periods. **Table 7** shows the results of the local roadway intersection analysis.

Table 7. Local Roadway Network Traffic Operations Summary

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Dealy (sec/veh)	
			AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
1	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 SB Ramps	A / 0.9	A / 9.0
2	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 NB Ramps	C / 28.9	C / 24.9
3	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Bandley	C / 21.9	B / 12.4
4	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Syracuse St	C / 34.9	C / 23.9
5	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy &	D / 38.9	D / 44.8



Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Dealy (sec/veh)	
			AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
		Fountain Mesa Rd		
6	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Sneffels St	A / 9.5	A / 9.4
7	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Powers Blvd	C / 32.5	C / 26.7
8	TWSC	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Marksheffel Rd	C / 23.6 (EB LT)	F / 90.7 (EB LT)
9	Signal	Powers Blvd & Fontaine Blvd	C / 22.7	C / 22.8
10	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy WB Ramps	A / 8.3	A / 8.6
11	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy EB Ramps	A / 8.6	B / 10.8
12	Signal	U.S. 85 & Duckwood Rd	C / 24.7	C / 24.4
13	Signal	U.S. 85 & Ohio Ave	C / 28.2	C / 24.5
14	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 NB Ramps	A / 3.7	A / 2.6
15	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 SB Ramps	B / 15.6	C / 21.5
16	Signal	Link Rd & C&S Rd	C / 21.5	B / 17.9



Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Dealy (sec/veh)	
			AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
17	Signal	Link Rd & Squirrel Creek Rd	B / 14.6	B / 12.6
18	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Link Rd	C / 15.1 (WB LT)	C / 16.3 (WB LT)
19	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Birdsall Rd (1)	A / 4.6 (SB)	B / 10.2 (SB LT)
20	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Hanover Rd (1)	A / 1.4 (NB)	A / 2.4 (NB RT)
21	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 SB Ramps (2)	A / 8.5 (SB)	A / 8.7 (SB)
22	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 NB Ramps (2)	A / 9.0 (NB)	A / 9.3 (NB)
23	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 SB Ramps (2)	A / 8.6 (SB)	A / 8.6 (SB)
24	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 NB Ramps (2)	A / 8.4 (NB)	A / 8.4 (NB)
25	TWSC	Midway Ranch Rd & I-25 SB Ramps (1)	A / 5.5 (SB, NB LT)	A / 8.5 (NB RT)
26	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & I-25 NB Ramps	B / 10.7 (NB)	B / 10.1 (NB)
27	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 SB Ramps (1)(2)	A / 6.4 (EB)	B / 12.5 (SB RT)



Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Dealy (sec/veh)	
			AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
28	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 NB Ramps (1)(2)	A / 7.7 (WB)	A / 8.9 (NB)

Notes: (1) Level of service at this intersection is based on microsimulation (average of five SimTraffic runs), as its traffic control and/or configuration is not supported by HCM analysis. (2) Level of service does not consider the one-lane underpass at this interchange; vehicle delay is under-reported.

Nearly all the studied intersections are reported to operate at LOS C or better, except the signalized Mesa Ridge Parkway/Fountain Mesa Road intersection (LOS D) and the unsignalized Mesa Ridge Parkway/Marksheffel Road intersection (LOS F but planned to be signalized in the near-term future). Although the HCM analysis indicates acceptable traffic operations along Mesa Ridge Parkway at I-25, the analysis does not consider the effect of traffic backing up from Fort Carson Gate 20 through the interchange, which can result in much higher vehicle delay at certain times of day than what is shown here.

### Corridor Growth, Development, and Travel Demand

Growth and development in the Fountain Valley area have been planned based on the final connection of South Powers Boulevard. The local and regional documents anticipated the need for the South Powers Extension to improve coordination between land use and transportation. The South Powers Extension would accommodate pedestrian and bike safety, increase mobility, enhance public transportation service, and improve road network connectivity. Planned growth along the corridor and the travel demand modeling highlight the need for local and regional mobility advancement.

Regional socioeconomic forecasts were developed using the adopted PPACG Regional Congestion Management Plan as the starting point. However, this model understates the growth potential because it is limited to a county-level control total.

Adjustments to the future land use allow the model to include the build-out of approved developments that have been or are expected to be annexed into local jurisdictions and approved/granted entitlements to develop within the 2045 planning horizon. Areas along the eastern edges of existing municipal boundaries were updated to include approved development densities and estimated build-out densities for developments reasonably expected to be approved.

The build-out land use data for 15 PPACG traffic analysis zones (TAZs) located along the current eastern and southern municipal boundaries (**Figure 12**) include a significant increase in the number of households and projected employment compared with the PPACG fiscally constrained model data. The TAZs identified in **Figure 12** were selected since they have the greatest changes in either household or employment projections within the corridor. TAZ 343 incorporates planned growth in employment around Schriever Space Force Base, which is a major employment center destination. Some areas, such as south of TAZ 341 and east of TAZ 683, are already addressed in the PPACG Buildout scenarios and did not change in the buildout scenario. The area south of TAZ 326 consists mostly of private property



and is not anticipated to be developed in the near future. Within the highlighted TAZs, employment is projected to increase by another 7,500 over the PPACG forecasts, with more than 11,000 additional households, as summarized in Table 8.

This build-out scenario affords a clearer understanding of future transportation system needs due to the rapid population growth and increased development pressures that will drive increased travel demand affecting the region. This methodology is detailed in the South Powers Extension PEL Traffic Methodology and Assumptions Memo (El Paso County 2022).

Table 8. Highest Growth Traffic Analysis Zones

Scenario/Characteristic	Households	Employment
2020 Base Year	2,906	2,031
PPACG 2045 Forecast	14,710	1,840
PPACG 25-Year Change	+11,804	-191
PPACG 25-Year Percent Increase	+406%	-9%
Buildout Forecast	25,651	9,392
Buildout Change from 2020	+22,745	+7,361
Buildout Percent Increase from 2020	+783%	+362%
Difference: Buildout vs. PPACG Forecast	+10,941	+7,552

Source: PPACG 2045 Regional Model

Figure 12. Highest TAZ Employment and Household Projections

### Local Roadway Network Operations

Highway transportation facilitates the production and movement of people and commodities, supports trade in goods and services, and provides critical emergency response routes. Recurring congestion on I-25 and the local network is primarily associated with Fort Carson shift arrival/departure traffic and work commute travel from Fountain to Colorado Springs. Higher density traffic is more prevalent north of the CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange and, to a lesser degree, between the U.S. 85/Santa Fe Avenue and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway interchanges.

The employment and household growth indicators identify the need to develop additional north-south routes as well as fully connected east-west routes. Without improvements beyond those included in the PPACG 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, 2045 traffic volumes on many area roadways are expected to quadruple by 2045.

- Link Road daily traffic will increase from 7,660 ADT to 30,000 ADT.
- C & S Road will increase from 6,000 ADT to 23,000 ADT.
- Squirrel Creek Road will increase from 4,000 ADT to 17,000 ADT.
- The western segment of CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway will increase from the existing ADT volume



of 36,000 vehicles per day (vpd) to 70,000 vpd.

The preliminary travel demand model (TOM) results (South Powers Extension PEL Traffic Memo, 2022) showed spreading and increased levels of congestion within the study area, particularly along CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and C & S Road, where LOS F conditions are expected, indicating serious congestion and delay. The limited east-west connectivity and the lack of direct north-south connections adjacent to the planned developments reinforce the conclusion that the transportation network will need to be expanded significantly to adequately serve future travel demand associated with continued growth.

The analysis confirmed the need to both develop additional north-south routes as alternatives to I-25 and fully connected east-west routes. More diverse east-west route options will divert traffic from CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and C & S Road and Ohio Avenue. Additional north-south routes will relieve Link Road, U.S. 85/Santa Fe Avenue, which will continue to be overburdened as connectors to I-25 via CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and CO 21/Powers Boulevard without the South Powers Extension improvements.

### **Socioeconomic Projections**

The PPACG adopted regional socioeconomic forecasts were used as one future land use development scenario. Because that scenario is constrained to a county-level control total that is believed to understate regional growth potential, a second scenario was evaluated. The second future land-use scenario includes the build-out of approved developments that have been or are expected to be annexed into local jurisdictions and approved/granted entitlements to develop within the 2045 planning horizon. In the second scenario, areas along eastern edges of existing municipal boundaries were updated to include approved development densities and estimated build-out densities for developments going through the approval process and reasonably expected to be approved. This scenario was developed to afford a clear understanding of future transportation system needs due to the rapid population growth and increased development pressures that will drive increased travel demand affecting the study area.

### **Traffic Safety**

Crashes along the primary study corridors were reviewed over the five years from 2015 through 2019 to evaluate the existing safety conditions within the existing transportation network. Data was sourced from the COOT statewide crash database and the El Paso County Road Safety Plan study data and included crashes along the I-25, Santa Fe Avenue (U.S. 85), Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16), and Powers Boulevard (CO 21) corridors as well as several intersections along local routes within the City of Fountain and El Paso County.

Where applicable, the assessment of the magnitude of safety problems was refined using Safety Performance Functions (SPF). The SPF reflects the relationship between traffic exposure measured in ADT and crash counts measured in crashes per year. The SPF model estimates the normal or expected crash frequency and severity for a range of ADT among similar facilities using data collected throughout the state of Colorado.

Crashes along mainline I-25 were reviewed separately from interchange-related crashes. The analysis along the other corridors and non-state highway facilities focused on intersection crashes where future changes in traffic patterns are likely to have the greatest impact on safety.

### **Mainline I-25**

There were 820 crashes along mainline I-25 between MP 116 and MP 134, starting just north of the El Paso



County line to the north of the Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) interchange, broken out annually in Table 9. The crash frequency has increased by about 33% over the five-year study period, with a peak frequency in 2018. There were 13 fatal crashes resulting in 14 fatalities during this timeframe. Injury and fatal crashes combined account for nearly 40% of the overall crashes along the corridor.



Table 9. Mainline I-25 Crashes by Year

Year	Number of Crashes				Persons	
	Property Damage Only (PDO)	Injuries (INJ)	Fatalities (FAT)	Total	Injured	Killed
2015	74	50	3	127	72	4
2016	88	51	0	139	80	0
2017	97	57	3	157	85	3
2018	138	76	5	219	112	5
2019	101	75	2	178	112	2
Total	498	309	13	820	461	14
Average/Year	99.6	61.8	2.6	164.0	92.2	2.8

Figure 13. I-25 Crash Severity, Frequency, and Fatal Locations

**Figure 13** summarizes lengths of Mainline I-25 that experience high-severity crashes, high-frequency and high-severity crashes, and fatal crash locations. The SPF analysis indicated several locations with higher-than-expected crash frequencies for both total and severe crashes.

Most of the fatal collisions (7 of 13) occurred between the U.S. 85 and CO 16 interchanges, and the most significant pattern of crashes indicated by the SPF analysis is located just north of the CO 16 interchange.

### Corridor Crashes

The CO 16 and U.S. 85 corridors are the primary routes connecting the City of Fountain and its environs to I-25. Table 10 provides the overall number of crashes for each corridor, along with the frequency of crashes attributed to intersection locations. The table also shows the relative proportion of intersection crashes to the overall crashes for each. Intersections account for around 65% of the total crashes and an even higher proportion (75% ) of severe crashes.

Table 10. Corridor Crash Summary

Corridor Summary	Total Crashes				Intersection Crashes				Proportion	
	PDO	INJ	FAT	ALL	PDO	INJ	FAT	INT	Severe	Total
Mesa Ridge Pkwy (CO 16)	406	173	4	583	244	133	3	380	77%	65%
Santa Fe Ave (U.S. 85)	222	128	2	352	146	93	0	239	72%	68%
Powers Blvd	27	14	0	41	14	11	0	25	79%	61%
Other Intersections (Non-SH)	0	0	0	0	28	10	0	38	0	0



The SPF analysis for each location highlights locations with higher-than-expected crash frequencies compared with similar facilities. The analysis helps to identify hot spots where future changes in traffic patterns are likely to have the most impact.

**Figure 14** displays the intersection crash data for key intersections for the five years between 2015 and 2019, along with the Level of Service of Safety (LOSS) designation. LOSS is a commonly used safety performance rating system from I to IV (1 to 4), with IV indicating the highest potential for crash reduction. Intersections with LOSS IV conditions for total crashes, severe crashes, or both are considered hot spots highly susceptible to changes in traffic patterns.

Figure 14. Intersection Crash Hot Spots

## Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities & Operations and Transit

### Existing Facilities

Pedestrian/bicycle and transit facilities within the project area are widely dispersed. Multimodal facilities increase the connectivity of the El Paso County area. This section describes the existing, adjacent, and proposed pedestrian/bicycle and transit facilities. The high-level review of pedestrian/bicycle and transit access was completed by reviewing local transportation master plans and GIS maps.

The existing bike, pedestrian and transit facilities are detailed in **Table 11**.

Table 11. Existing Bike/Pedestrian and Transit Facilities

Multimodal Segment	Use	Existing or Adjacent Existing	Distance within Project Area (miles)
Greyhound Lines, Along I-25, to Colorado Springs and Pueblo	Bus	Existing	5.75
Los Paisanos Autobuses, Along I-25, Connects Greeley, Longmont, Denver, Fountain, Pueblo, Walsenburg, and Trinidad	Bus	Existing	5.75
CDOT Bustang Outrider Line, Along I-25	Bus	Existing	5.75



Fountain Creek Regional Trail	Bike & Pedestrian	Existing	3.3
Fountain Municipal Transit	Bus	Adjacent Existing	N/A

**Bike & Pedestrian**

Fountain Creek Regional Trail, located within the Clear Spring Ranch Park boundaries, is the one existing bike/pedestrian trail in the project area, as shown in **Figure 15**. The trail connects the north and south parts of the park.

Figure 15. Existing Parks and Recreational Resources

**Transit**

The transit access in the project area runs along I-25, and Fountain Municipal Transit has routes adjacent to the project area. The transit services along I-25 are COOT Bustang Outrider, Greyhound Buses, and Los Paisanos Autobuses.

**Fixed Route Bus Service**

Fountain Municipal Transit (FMT) currently operates fixed-route bus service within Fountain and to Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) and the El Paso County Service Center. FMT Bus Service was created in April 2012; it is funded entirely by Moving Fountain Forward funds. Over its first five years of services, FMT served 111,379 riders, and FMT buses have traveled a total of 566,001 miles. FMT operates fixed-route service and on-demand, diverted route service. Hourly service is provided on a single loop route using two vehicles with staggered start times. Service operates on weekdays between approximately 5:00AM and 7:00PM. Saturday services are provided between approximately 9 AM and 5 PM. Hourly AM and PM transit service schedules and a corresponding route map, as of March 1, 2021, are shown in **Table 12** and **Figure 16**

Figure 16. Existing Transit Routes

## Specialized Transit Service

Fountain Valley Seniors center operates demand responsive, door to door transit service to seniors in the Fountain Valley area and eastern El Paso County. The service is available for a variety of trip purposes, including medical/dental appointments, shopping, employment, education, and recreation. Community Intersections delivers a portion of the One Ride trips under contract to Fountain Valley Seniors.

## Intercity Bus

The COOT Bustang Outrider Line operates between Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and Lamar along I-25 in the project area. Each day, there is one northbound bus service and one southbound bus service. There is no COOT Bustang Outrider bus stop infrastructure in the project area. The closest Bustang bus stop is at the Fountain Park-n-Ride (425 Royalty Place Fountain, CO). This bus route can connect to the Bustang South Line, providing service to and from Denver.

The Greyhound bus service provides transit options to Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and locations throughout the United States. Within the project area, the Greyhound bus route runs along I-25. There are no Greyhound bus stops in the project area. The nearest bus stops for this service are in Colorado Springs and Pueblo. There are two northbound buses and two southbound buses that operate daily.

Los Paisanos Autobuses is a Mexican bus service company that operates in both the United States and Mexico. The service connects Greeley, Longmont, Denver, Fountain, Pueblo, Walsenburg, and Trinidad. The route in the project area runs along I-25, but there are no bus stops for this service within the project area. The bus service connects to Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Idaho, Dallas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

## Multimodal Freight

The PPACG 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (*2045 Moving Forward*) set the goal "to improve economic vitality and freight movement in the region by enhancing the transportation system" (2020) as a top transportation planning priority and recognized that "the most important operational improvement that can be made for truck freight movement is maintaining or improving the capacity for operations along the key truck routes within the Pikes Peak region". The *2045 Moving Forward* regional plan also notes that opportunities for capacity improvement includes "addressing gaps in the existing roadway network".

## Truck Freight

In the Pikes Peak region, the majority of freight, whether based on weight (99.5%) or based on value (91.7%), is moved by truck. Current projections estimate that trucks will remain a dominate transportation mode for freight throughout Colorado over the next two decades. Trucking is expected to experience a significant increase (71% growth) in tonnage transported by 2045, and an even larger increase (78% growth) in the value of freight moved by truck through the region. The truck mode is also anticipated to remain dominant, while decreasing in mode share to 99.3% and 90.3% based on weight and value, respectively.



### **Truck Freight along Adjacent Corridors**

I-25 is part of the Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Public Law. No. 114-94). I-25 is the principal freight carrier in the Pikes Peak region and has the highest truck carrying profile. On average, within the Pikes Peak region, the north segment of I-25 carries an ADT of 106,000 vehicles, 4.3% of which is truck traffic. Of those trucks, 67% are Single Unit Trucks (SUTs). The central segments of I-25 carry an ADT volume of 114,000 vehicles, 3.8% of which is truck traffic. Of those trucks traveling the central segments of I-25, 65% are SUTs. The southern segment of I-25 carries an ADT volume of 44,000 vehicles, 7.2% of which is truck traffic; 66% of the trucks on the southern segments are SUTs.

Marksheffel Road north of Barnes Road has 16,800 ADT, of which 3% is truck traffic and 49% of those trucks are single-unit trucks. South of Space Village Avenue it has 17,000 ADT, of which 5.4% is truck traffic and 44% of those trucks are single unit trucks.

Woodmen Road, east of I-25, has 55,700 ADT, of which 1% is truck traffic and 63% of those trucks are single-unit trucks. East of Powers Boulevard, Woodmen Road has 29,400 ADT, of which 1% is truck traffic and 70% of those trucks are single-unit trucks.

### **Truck Freight along Adjacent Corridors**

According to PPACG, the highest VMT route in the region was I-25, followed by U.S. 24 and SH-21/ Powers Boulevard (2020, chapter 12, 325). Currently, the northernmost segment of Powers Boulevard has a volume of 63,000 ADT, of which 1% is truck traffic, and 77% of those trucks are SUTs. The central segment has approximately 62,000 ADT, of which 1.3% is truck traffic, and 77% of those trucks are SUTs. The southern segment of the corridor is more rural and has a lower volume of 20,000 ADT, of which 2% is truck traffic, and approximately 87% of the trucks are SUTs. The lower freight traffic along the southern portion of the corridor is likely due to its lack of connectivity to I-25, and its currently rural condition. This freight demand is likely to increase in concert with the expected increase in development and employment centers within and adjacent to the study area. With high freight traffic along adjacent corridors, the South Powers Extension corridor is poised to provide additional truck freight connectivity and capacity to the freight network.

### **Air Freight**

Air freight currently makes up 7.3% of the total freight based on value transported in the Pikes Peak region and less than .01% based on weight. Current projections estimate that the air freight mode share will increase slightly over the next two decades, increasing to a 7.6% mode share by 2045. The Colorado Springs Municipal Airport serves the region's air freight. The airport is located immediately to the east of existing Powers Boulevard north of the study area and adjacent to the Pikes Peak Innovation Park. Pikes Peak Innovation Park includes several aerospace industry facilities and an Amazon distribution complex.



## Rail Freight

Although rail accounts for a very small percentage (less than 0.5%) of freight movement in the region, both UP and BNSF have a major presence in the City of Fountain. UP is designated as a Class 1 railroad, indicating it has an annual gross operating revenue of \$50 million or more. Additionally, Fountain is the only secondary location along the Front Range with dual-railway serviceability. Fountain's dual rail service is derived from the Ray Nixon Power Plant switch loop infrastructure owned by Colorado Springs Utilities (City of Fountain). The mainline corridors of each of these railroads bisect the City of Fountain.

## Environmental Overview

Environmental resources adjacent to the corridor were reviewed and generally analyzed with methodology consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (23 CFR Part 771 and 40 CFR 1500, et seq.), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and CDOT guidelines. The environmental resources studied were selected based on the characteristics of the study area and input from stakeholders, El Paso County, CDOT, and FHWA. The study area (Figure 17) is defined as the intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and the existing South Powers Boulevard at the project's northern end, and connection to I-25 at the southern end. The northernmost first mile of the study area which utilizes a 0.15-mile buffer around a previously identified proposed alignment, is now constrained due to new development in the area. The location of the proposed roadway through existing residential development in the northern portion of the study area is more clearly defined than the potential alignment options to the south. South of Marksheffel Road, the study area expands significantly to the east. This portion of the study area is bounded by development to the west and the Excel Transmission line to the east. The southernmost limit and connection to I-25 will be evaluated as part of the Alternatives Analysis and is anticipated to be between the two existing interchange locations at I-25: Pikes Peak International Raceway and the unnamed interchange located at milepost 115.8. This study area was created to be inclusive of all previous alignments of SPE considered.

### Figure 17. Study Area

The purpose of the environmental scan is to identify resources early in the planning process and identify potential red flag resource areas for use in evaluating alternatives. The sections below detail the resources reviewed, applicable regulations and methodology, affected environment, and next steps for each resource category.

More information and context can be found in the Environmental Mapbook (**Attachment 1**).

## Floodplains and Floodways

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies flood hazard areas as geographic zones with a defined level of risk of flooding located along a waterway. The Assigned zone type reflects the



potential for flooding based on topography characteristics concerning the associated drainage. Flood zones along the project corridor were assessed to identify flooding risks to the corridor.

**Regulatory Framework**

- FHWA Floodplain Regulations, 1979
- Executive Order 11988, 1977
- Executive Order 13690, 2015
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), 1968
- Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Rules & Regulations for Floodplains in Colorado, 2020
- Colorado Hazard Mapping Program (CHAMP), 2020

**Methodology**

The FEMA Flood Map Service Center was reviewed to identify flood zones along the corridor. Flood zones were mapped along the length of the project corridor to assess the potential for impact on floodplains resulting from future project design. Floodplains within the study area are listed in Table 13 and depicted in the Environmental Mapbook (**Attachment 1**).

**Affected Environment**

Table 13. Floodplains and Floodways within the Study Area

Map ID	Location	Drainage	Floodplain Zones
A	Northern portion of Study Area; east of Mesa Ridge Pkwy	Jimmy Camp Creek	X, A, AE, AE Floodway
B	Small subset of zone (approximately 396,580 sq. ft) along northeastern portion of study area	Williams Creek	A
C	Calhan Reservoir; within Study Area; northern limits of Birdsall Rd; approximately 2,566,208 sq. ft.	Chilcotte Canal Number 27	A
D	Convergence of Little Fountain Creek and Fountain Creek; Within southwestern limits of the study area; to the east of I-25	Fountain Creek	X (reduced risk due to levee), A, AE, AE Floodway

Source: FEMA 2020



Zone A: Areas inundated by a 1-percent (100-year) annual chance of flooding, for which no base flood elevations (BFEs) have been determined.

Zone AE: Areas inundated by a 1-percent (100-year) annual chance of flooding, for which BFEs have been determined.

Zone AO: Areas inundated by a 1-percent (100-year) annual chance of flooding (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain), for which depths have been determined; flood depths range from one to three feet.

Floodway: Areas identified as the stream channel and overbank areas necessary to convey floodwaters effectively

### **Next Steps**

CDOT evaluates potential alternative footprints for transportation projects to ensure they do not encroach or alter floodplains and cause future flooding or other adverse impacts. The floodplain evaluation would be completed during the conceptual design of any proposed project.

### **Design and Project Implications**

#### **Scope:**

Design solutions should minimize impacts on floodplains and be developed cooperatively with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), FEMA, and the affected communities.

If there is a federal nexus for any future projects, then they must comply with Executive Order (EO) 13690. On May 20, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order (EO) 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk, reinstating EO 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input (January 30, 2015). EO 13690 amends the original floodplain management standard established in 1977 by EO 11988, and was revoked by EO 13807 in August 2017, though is now reinstated. This action reestablished the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) for projects receiving federal funds. The FFRMS aids to increase resilience of infrastructure for flooding events caused by climate disasters.

FFRMS describes three (3) available approaches for determining the vertical flood elevation and corresponding horizontal floodplain for federally funded projects. These approaches must be used for determining the FFRMS floodplain for federal actions. These approaches are designed to recognize and incorporate future conditions rather than rely solely on existing data and information. One of these approaches must be used for determining the FFRMS floodplain for federal actions. The approaches currently described in the FFRMS are the following:

1. Climate-informed Science Approach – use best available, actionable hydrologic and hydraulic data and methods that integrate current and future changes in flooding based on climate science and other factors or changes affecting flood risk to determine the vertical flood elevation and corresponding horizontal floodplain in a manner appropriate to policies, practices, criticality, and consequences.



2. Freeboard Value Approach – use the Base Flood Elevation (or 1-percent-annual-chance flood determined using the best available data) and an additional height to calculate the freeboard values. The additional height (2' non-critical or 3' critical) will depend on whether or not the action is a critical action (i.e., any activity for which even a slight chance of flooding would be too great).
3. The 0.2-percent-annual-chance Flood Approach – use the 0.2-percent-annual-chance flood elevation (also known as the 500-year flood elevation).

### Construction/Design:

Project scheduling and budget should include time for floodplain development permitting and Conditional Letter of Map Revisions (CLOMR; 9-12 months).

### Water Resources

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act regulates Waters of the United States (WOTUS), including wetlands and non-wetland waters. Impacts to WOTUS require permitting through the USACE. This permit program is administered jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Executive Order 11990 provides additional protection to wetlands. This Executive Order seeks to “minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands.” CDOT has wetland-specific requirements beyond what is required by the USACE to comply with Executive Order 11990.

### Regulatory Framework

- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- Executive Order 11990

### Methodology

Potential WOTUS were identified within the environmental study area using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) database and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) (USFWS, 2021; USGS, 2022).

### Affected Environment

The study area is within the Fountain Creek and Chico Creek watersheds. Water ultimately flows southeast into the Arkansas River. Numerous streams, ditches, lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands are mapped by the USFWS NWI and/or USGS NHD within the study area (see Appendix 1). Some of these features may be jurisdictional WOTUS; however, only the USACE has the authority to determine jurisdictional status.

Named NWI and NHD streams and ditches include Chilcotte Canal Number 27, Cotton Slough Ditch, Fountain Creek, Fountain Ditch, Jackson and Burke Ditch, Jimmy Camp Creek, Little Fountain Creek, Sand Creek, and Williams Creek (Table 14). Other waterways within the study area include unnamed tributaries to the above-named streams and ditches, human-made ponds and reservoirs (the largest of which is the approximately 50-acre Calhan Reservoir), and isolated features.



Table 14. Named Waterways within the Study Area

Named Waterway	Wetland/Riverine Type	USGS Stream	Description
<b>Chilcotte Canal Number 27</b>	PAB PEM, R	Canal/ditch, Artificial path	Chilcotte Canal Number 27 occurs in the west-central portion of the study area. The channel of Chilcotte Canal Number 27 appears to contain water and is generally well-defined and unvegetated. Water from Chilcotte Canal Number 27 is conveyed through several stock ponds and ends in uplands.
<b>Cotton Slough Ditch</b>	PEM, R	Canal/ditch	Cotton Slough Ditch occurs in the southwest portion of the study area and appears mostly vegetated and potentially dry based on current and historical aerial imagery. The ditch runs parallel to Fountain Creek and eventually flows southeast into Williams Creek.
<b>Fountain Creek</b>	PEM, PSS, R	Perennial stream, intermittent stream, artificial path	Fountain Creek occurs on the western portion of the study area. The creek has a wide, wet, open, meandering channel with numerous gravel bars and wetlands along its banks. Chilcotte Canal Number 27, Cotton Slough Ditch, Fountain Ditch, Jackson and Burke Ditch, Jimmy Camp Creek, Little Fountain Creek, Sand Creek, Williams Creek, and numerous unnamed intermittent/ephemeral tributaries ultimately flow into Fountain



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Named Waterway	Wetland/Riverine Type1	USGS Stream	Description
			Creek. Fountain Creek discharges into the Arkansas River south of the environmental study area.
<b>Fountain Ditch</b>	PAB, PEM	Canal/ditch artificial path	Fountain Ditch occurs in the northwest portion of the study area. The ditch generally appears to have an open, unvegetated channel with water present based on current and historical aerial imagery. Water from the ditch is conveyed southwest and flows into several stock ponds before it ultimately ends in uplands.
<b>Jackson and Burke Ditch</b>	PEM, R	Canal/ditch, artificial path	Jackson and Burke Ditch occurs in the southwest corner of the study area. Water is conveyed from Fountain Creek into the ditch and flows south, ultimately discharging back into Fountain Creek. Within the environmental study area, the ditch appears to be mostly vegetated.
<b>Jimmy Camp Creek</b>	PEM, PSS R	Intermittent stream	Jimmy Camp Creek flows northeast to southwest in the northwest corner of the study area. The creek often appears to be dry based on current and historical imagery. Jimmy Camp Creek discharges into Fountain Creek outside of the environmental study area.



Named Waterway	Wetland/Riverine Type <sup>1</sup>	USGS Stream	Description
Little Fountain Creek	R	Perennial stream, artificial path	Little Fountain Creek is a perennial tributary to Fountain Creek that occurs in the west-central portion of the study area. Based on current and historical aerial imagery, the creek appears to contain water and be primarily unvegetated.
Sand Creek	R	Artificial path	Sand Creek is an NHD-mapped artificial path that connects to the Jackson and Burke Ditch in the southwest corner of the study area. The creek appears to have a defined but dry channel in current and historical aerial imagery
Williams Creek	PEM, PSS, R	Intermittent stream, artificial path	Williams Creek flows north to south within the central portion of the study area. The creek appears predominantly dry and vegetated in current and historical imagery. Williams Creek ultimately discharges into Fountain Creek in the southern portion of the study area.

<sup>1</sup>Wetland type as designated by the USFWS NWI: PAB = freshwater pond; PEM = freshwater emergent wetland; PSS = freshwater forested/shrub wetland; R = riverine <sup>2</sup>Stream type was generally based on the USGS NHD.

### Next Steps

As the project progresses into the design phase, a site visit should be conducted to field verify and formally delineate non-wetland waters and wetlands per USACE protocols. Design should avoid and minimize impacts to non-wetland waters and wetlands wherever feasible. The project plans should include best management practices (BMPs) to minimize indirect impacts on non-wetland waters and wetlands.



Impacts to WOTUS would require a Section 404 permit. A Section 404 permit also requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). To determine whether waters (including wetlands) impacts by project activities are WOTUS and require Section 404 Permitting, an Approved Jurisdictional Determination request should be submitted to the USACE, as only the USACE has the authority to determine jurisdictional status. Section 404 permitting is not required by features determined by the USACE to be non-jurisdictional. The completion of an Approved Jurisdictional Determination request can take up to a year.

Alternatively, a project can assume impacted waters (including wetlands) are jurisdictional and apply for a Section 404 permit. Impacts less than 0.5 acres would likely be covered under a Nationwide Permit; A type of permit issued by the USACE to authorize activities that have minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects. The USACE has 45 days to respond to a Nationwide Permit application. Impacts over 0.5 acres may require an Individual Permit, which is lengthier and a more expensive process. Depending on the type of activity resulting in the impacts, as well as the quantity of impacts, mitigation for wetland or streambed loss may also be required.

If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required for the project, wetland mitigation and additional reporting, including a Wetland Finding, may be required for impacts to wetlands, regardless of their jurisdictional status.

### **Federally and State-Sensitive Species**

The ESA, administered by the USFWS, protects federally listed endangered (FE) and threatened (FT) plant and animal species intending to ensure their long-term survival. The USFWS also identifies candidate species for federal listing (FC) that may be protected under the ESA in the future.

The Colorado Non-Game, Endangered, and Threatened Species Conservation Act, administered by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), protects state-listed threatened (ST) and state-listed endangered (SE) species. CPW also identifies state special concern species (SC) of high conservation priority.

### **Regulatory Framework**

- Endangered Species Act
- Colorado State Non-game, Endangered, and Threatened Species Conservation Act

### **Methodology**

Federally and state-listed species and state special concern species with the potential to occur in, or be impacted by, the project were identified based on a review of the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system, CPW Species Activity Mapping data, CPW Threatened and Endangered List, and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) Tracking List (USFWS 2022; CPW 2022a, 2022b; CNHP 2021). The potential for those species to occur in the study area was assessed based on aerial and ground-based photography and species distribution maps (Google Earth Pro 2022; CPW 2022a).



### Affected Environment

The IPaC database search identified federally listed and candidate species with the potential to occur in, or be impacted by, projects in El Paso County (USFWS 2022). Four of those species occur downstream of the study area long the Platte or Missouri Rivers and could be impacted by the projects that result in water depletions (see **Table 15**).

Table 15. Species with Potential to be Impacted by Projects that Result in Water Depletions

Common Name	Species	Federal Status
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Federal Threatened
Pallid Sturgeon	<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	Federal Endangered
Whooping Crane	<i>Grus americana</i>	Federal Endangered
Western Prairie Fringed Orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Federal Threatened

A desktop assessment for species distribution and habitat was conducted for the remaining species noted in the IPaC list to determine the potential for the species to occur within the study area. There is no suitable habitat in the study area for the Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*; FT) or the Pawnee montane skipper (*Hesperia leonardus montana*; FT), and the study area is located outside of the known occupied range for greenback cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii stomias*; FT) and the eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. Jamaicensis*; FT). The closest known Ute ladies'-tresses orchid (*Spiranthes Diluvialis*; FT) population is about 75 miles northwest of the study area. The gray wolf (*Canis lupus*; FE) only needs to be considered in habitat evaluations if project activities include a predator management plan. This activity does not include a predator management program. Further, there are no established wolf packs within or near the study area. While suitable habitat was noted within the study area for the Preble's meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius prebeli*; FT), the potential for the species to occur this far south in its range is unlikely. The closest positive trapping record and designated critical habitat are approximately 18 miles to the north of Fountain, just south of where East Woodmen Road crosses Interstate 25.



In addition, there is a block clearance zone established for the Colorado Springs metro area; given the amount of development within Colorado Springs, it is unlikely that mice would travel as far south as to the suitable riparian habitats noted in the study area.

The monarch butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*; FC) and the western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*) have potential to occur in the study area. The western bumble bee, while not currently federally listed, is under review for federal listing. Suitable habitat for the monarch butterfly and western bumble bee occurs within the study area, and there is potential for these species to be impacted by project activities. There are state-listed and state special concern (SC) species with the potential to be impacted by projects that occur within or near the study area. Of those, suitable habitat was noted for the American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*; SC), Arkansas darter (*Etheostoma cragini*; ST), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*; SC), black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*; SC), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; ST), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*; SC), mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*; SC), northern leopard frog (*Lithobates pipiens*; SC), and swift fox (*Vulpes velox*; SC). The Arkansas darter is known to occur in both Jimmy Camp Creek and Fountain Creek.

### Next Steps

A biologist should conduct a site visit to confirm the results of the desktop assessment. Potential impacts to federally listed species would require Section 7 consultation (assuming federal nexus) or Section 10 consultation (assuming no federal nexus) with the USFWS. Potential habitat was noted for numerous SC species and the monarch butterfly, a FC species. There are currently no statutory requirements for SC or FC species, although CPW may require additional mitigation at their discretion. Regardless, impacts on these species and their habitat should be avoided and/or minimized as feasible.

Potential habitat was also noted for two ST species: the Arkansas darter and burrowing owl. If the site visit confirms the presence of suitable habitat for state-sensitive species, project specials and general notes should be included in the project contract documents to avoid and/or minimize impacts once the project advances.

Assuming a NEPA study is required, potential impacts to federally listed species would require Section 7 consultation with the USFWS. Consultation with USFWS can last 60-90 days, depending on the determined project-related impacts on federally listed species.

IF CDOT oversight is involved, the project must comply with CDOT's Impacted Black-tailed Prairie Dog Policy.

### Migratory Birds, Raptors

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) protects birds and their active nests (except for rock doves [*Columba livia*], European starlings [*Sturnus vulgaris*], and some other non-native birds). In Colorado, most nesting and rearing activities occur between April and August; however, raptors may nest as early as February. These dates are guidelines, and nesting birds covered under the MBTA are protected year-round. Bald eagles and golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) are provided additional protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), which is administered by USFWS.



## Regulatory Framework

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

## Methodology

Aerial and ground-based photography were used to assess nesting habitats for migratory birds within the study area and nesting and roosting habitat for raptors within 0.5-miles of the study area (Google Earth Pro 2022). Additionally, CPW Species Activity Mapping data were reviewed to assess the potential for raptors to occur within 0.5-miles of the study area (CPW 2022a).

## Affected Environment

The upland and riparian habitats in the study area likely provide high-quality foraging and nesting habitat for several species of migratory birds. Structures such as bridges and culverts located within the study area provide suitable nesting habitats for species such as cliff swallows (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) and barn swallows (*Hirundo rustica*). Large trees within and adjacent to the study area provide suitable nesting habitats for raptors (i.e., birds of prey) and other non-raptor species.

CPW-mapped bald eagle winter forage and range occurs along Fountain Creek, Jimmy Camp Creek, and an area just southeast of Jimmy Camp Creek (CPW 2022a). Additionally, a CPW-mapped Bald Eagle roost site occurs along Fountain Creek.

## Next Steps

Migratory bird (including raptor) nesting habitat occurs in and within 0.5-miles of the study area. Additionally, CPW-mapped bald eagle winter forage and range, as well as a bald eagle roost site, occurs within the study area. Depending on construction timing, a biologist should conduct pre-construction surveys of the study area to determine if any active nests and/or eagle roost sites are present. If nests and/or roosts are noted, the nests and/or roosts would need to be evaluated for the potential for take resulting from project-related activities. CPW should be contacted to help determine the appropriate mitigation, which may include using a biological monitor to confirm nesting and/or roosting birds are not disturbed, removing nests before egg-laying begins, or ceasing construction until all nestlings have fledged.

## State and National Forests

State and national forests are protected lands managed for conservation, timber harvesting, livestock grazing, watershed protection, wildlife, and recreation. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manages national forests and must comply with environmental laws and regulations in NEPA.

There are no state forests in Colorado. However, in Colorado, CPW manages 43 state parks, 307 state wildlife areas, and 93 natural areas.

## Methodology

The USFS Land Status and Encumbrance Viewer website

<https://usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a6a32f0501754fdc8932b1c0090a1d8>



3) and CPW website (<https://cpw.state.co.us/>) were assessed to identify state and national forests within the study area (accessed 2022).

### **Affected Environment**

Based on a review of the USFS Land Status and Encumbrance Viewer and CPW website, there are no designated state or national forests within the study area.

### **Next Steps**

Not applicable – State and National Forests are not presented in the study area.

### **Recreational Resources and Open Space**

Recreation resources include but are not limited to trails, campsites, rivers, lakes, open space, wildlife refuges and sanctuaries, and other developed facilities such as parks and ballfields. These resources support an enormous variety of recreational activities.

### **Regulatory Framework**

- Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, 1966
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act, 1965

### **Methodology**

Recreational resources were assessed within and adjacent to the study area. Resources were determined by reviewing relevant planning documents and online mapping services, including:

- The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan (2015)
- The City of Fountain’s Online Parks, Trails & Open Space Mapper, <https://fountainco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=660ccad256794ea5b1e1f76b3140e791> (accessed May 2022)
- The City of Colorado Springs Park System Master Plan (completed September 23, 2014)
- CDOT’s Online Transportation Information System (OTIS) C-Plan and online Map Viewer, <https://dtdapps.coloradodot.info/MapViewExt/> (accessed May 2022)
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (Completed November 2015)
- El Paso County Parks Master Plan (updated December 2022), [https://assets-communityservices.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Parks\\_Planning/FINAL-El-Paso-County-Parks-Master-Plan-11-10-22-Final-for-publication.pdf](https://assets-communityservices.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Parks_Planning/FINAL-El-Paso-County-Parks-Master-Plan-11-10-22-Final-for-publication.pdf)

### **Affected Environment**

#### **Existing Resources**

Recreational resources within and adjacent to the study area and known characteristics of each resource have been documented in **Table 16** to help with future evaluation as projects are funded and constructed.



Table 16. Existing Parks, Open Spaces, and Recreational Trails

Resource Name	Comments	Approximate Area (Acres) or Length (Miles) within Study Area	Ownership	Use
Clear Spring Ranch Open Space	Adjacent to I-25, within study area	930.50 acres	El Paso County Parks	Public: multiuse trails, public facilities, pavilion
Kane Ranch Open Space	South of Squirrel Creek Rd, within Study Area	492.13 acres	El Paso County Parks	Public: multiuse trails, public facilities, pavilion
Cross Creek Metro Parks	Outside of study area	0 acres	Public	Public: playground equipment, athletic fields, public facilities
Heritage Open Space	Outside of study area	0 acres	Public	Public: multiuse trail
Frontier Sportsman's Club Hanover Range	Outside of study area	0 acres	Private	Private
MM Equestrian Center	Within study are	61.40 acres	Private	Private
Kirk Hanna Park	Outside of study area	0 acres	Public	Public: Playground equipment, sports courts



Resource Name	Comments	Approximate Area (Acres) or Length (Miles) within Study Area	Ownership	Use
Fountain Creek Regional Trail	Within study area	3.30 miles	Public	Public: Recreational trail
Former Apple Tree Golf Course	Outside of study area	0 acres	Public	Public: multiuse trail
Pikes Peak International Raceway	Outside and to the west of Study Area	0 acres	Private	Private Raceway

### Proposed Facilities

#### Parks & Open Space

Five parks are proposed within the study area: 1) Noris/Apple Tree Community Commons, 2) Jimmy Camp Creek Community Park, 3) Kane Ranch Community Park, 4) an unnamed neighborhood park, and 5) another unnamed community park (**Table 17**). All five proposed parks have approximate locations identified by the City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan (2015) (see **Attachment 1**: Environmental Mapbook). It is possible that their locations, as approximated in the master plane, would be within the study area.



Table 17. Proposed Parks and Open Spaces

Proposed Name	Planning Document Reference	Comments
Norris/Apple Tree Community Commons (old Golf Course)	Adjacent to I-25, within study area	Proposed park within study area
Jimmy Camp Creek Community Park	The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan	Proposed park within study area
Kane Ranch Community Park	The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan	Proposed park within study area
Unnamed Proposed Neighborhood Park	The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan	Proposed park within study area
Unnamed Proposed Neighborhood Park	The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan	Proposed park within study area

### Recreational Trails

According to the City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan, there are ten proposed bike and pedestrian trails within the study area.

Table 18. Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails



Proposed Name	Location	Distance within Study Area (miles)
<b>Heritage Trail System</b>	Will run between the existing Heritage Open Space to the proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Community Park (as an east to west trail connection)	2.8
<b>Extensions of Fountain Creek Regional Trail</b>	Extending to the south of existing Fountain Creek Regional Trail to near the County Line.	7.8
<b>Kane Ranch Regional Trail</b>	Extending to the north and south of Kane Ranch Open Space	10 (+3.8 miles of internal OS trails) OR 8.5 miles for the alternate route
<b>Fountain Creek West Regional Trail</b>	Extending from Fountain Creek Regional Park to Heritage Open Space	0.6
<b>Squirrel Creek Road</b>	Parallels Squirrel Creek Road	6.0
<b>South Powers</b>	Location to be determined by the preferred alignment of South Powers Extension	9.1
<b>Great Plains Regional Trail</b>	Connects to the proposed Kane Ranch Regional Trail at the north, and runs south through the study area, and then east of the study area	9.5



Proposed Name	Location	Distance within Study Area (miles)
Hanover Road Route	Parallels Hanover Road	8.4
Squirrel Creek Road Bicycle Route	Parallels existing Squirrel Creek Road	6.0
South Marksheffel Road Route	Parallels existing South Marksheffel Road 1.6	1.6

For more information on the existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian trails within or adjacent to the study area, refer to the “Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities & Operations and Transit” section of this report.

**Next Steps**

**Design and Construction Recommendations**

Avoidance and minimization of impacts on park properties should occur at the start of the planning process and be carried through design and construction. Depending on the funding source(s) secured for future roadway improvement projects, additional coordination and documentation may be needed for impacted recreational resources.

Projects should evaluate Section 6(f) properties that the proposed improvements may impact. Any public lands and facilities purchased or enhanced using Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act grants through the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI), National Park Service (NPS), and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) should be considered. No 6(f) properties were identified within or adjacent to the study area.

During the planning process, federally funded transportation project must consider Section 4(f) properties. Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 U.S.C 303, declares that “it is the policy of the United States Government that special efforts should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” Recreational areas within the study area were identified for consideration as Section 4(f) properties for evaluation during the NEPA processes. Future projects should avoid and minimize harm to Section 4(f) properties.

The development status of Jimmy Camp Creek Community Park and Kane Ranch Regional Trail may afford an opportunity to coordinate with the City of Fountain to designate a transportation easement



corridor for a future South Powers Boulevard Extension alignment. If a transportation easement is identified, future Section 4(f) coordination and mitigation would be minimal if no avoided altogether.

## Design and Project Implications

### Scope

Affected properties would require coordination with FHWA, CDOT, and officials with jurisdiction. If there is an identified “use” for transportation purposes, recreation properties must be evaluated separately. Planning for these evaluations assists in the ability to meet both project approval and construction timelines.

### Construction/Design

If avoiding impacts to Section 4(f) and 6(f) properties is not reasonably feasible, planning and documentation of measures to minimize or mitigate impacts are required. An individual Section 4(f) approval process can take one year or more. In contrast, exceptions or a de minimis determination (for minor use) can take four to six months. A public involvement opportunity is also required if a de minimis impact determination is made. It is recommended to avoid 6(f) impacts, when possible, because one-to-one acreage replacement of equal or greater resource value is required. Negotiations and mitigation plan approval for Section 6(f) resources can take 16 months or more and require NPS approval.

## Water Quality

South Powers Extension is proposed as a new location roadway that may trigger permanent water quality requirements. Transportation projects can impact drainage and water quality during construction and maintenance/operation phases. Depending on the extent of land disturbance, location of the proposed project, and pollutants of concern in the area, specific stormwater permits would be required.

### Regulatory Framework

- Clean Water Act Section 303(d): Impaired Waters and Total Maximum Daily Loads, 1972
- CDOT Permanent Water Quality Program
- CDOT Water Quality Construction Site Program
- Local Agency Guidance – Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program documents

### Methodology

Water resources (surface waters and MS4 boundaries) were assessed within the study area. These water resources are depicted in the Environmental Mapbook (**Attachment 1**). The following resources were reviewed:

- CDOT Online Transportation Information System (OTIS) (CDOT 2020)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Hydrographic Dataset (USGS 2020)
- Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) Clean Water GIS Maps (CDPHE 2020)

## Affected Environment



The environmental study area falls outside any MS4 permitted areas. As the region continues to develop, additional review of specific MS4 areas and requirements may be needed.

### MS4 Permits

MS4 Permits govern stormwater discharges from CDOT facilities and discharges in municipalities and county urbanized areas with a population of at least 50,000 (CDOT, 2020). If certain thresholds are exceeded, the terms and conditions of MS4 permits must be met (CDOT, 2015). The following state and local agencies are MS4 permit holders:

- CDOT, along the I-25 corridor
- El Paso County
- City of Fountain

### 303(D) Listed

The 303(d) Listed Impaired Waters within the study area include the following:

- Fountain Creek and all tributaries
- Jimmy Camp Creek and all tributaries and wetlands
- Little Fountain Creek and all tributaries and wetlands

### Groundwater

The South Powers Extension study area is situated in the Dakota Aquifer, which covers a large area of southwestern Colorado. It is an area of Cretaceous Seaway sediments where local beds of sandstone and limestone or fractures can yield water.

The more local area of the Arkansas Alluvial Aquifer is composed of a heterogeneous mix of interbedded sands, gravels, silts, and clays. Water levels in this area of the Aquifer are at a depth of 5 to 58 feet. Generally, with these depths, a reasonable use for the aquifer groundwater is for domestic purposes or agriculture.

The Alluvium of Fountain Creek, which is a subdivision of the Arkansas Alluvial Principal Aquifer, runs north-south along the east side of I-25 and as such represents tributary groundwater that is hydrologically connected to the surface stream. Other portions of the study area represent non-tributary groundwater in units of Pierre Shale, Eolian deposits, and some small areas of older gravels and alluviums.

### Next Steps

The project will need to consider potential locations for treatment and work with local agencies to determine water quality requirements. Space constraints are a prominent challenge for water quality, so allocating space for treatment early in the planning process will better incorporate water quality needs within future projects. It is advantageous to consider that future development will direct water quality treatment to regional water quality control.

Given the impervious surface changes (with over one acre of conceptual roadway and current Permanent Water Quality triggers), improvements draining to a 303(d) listed stream with a CDOT



pollutant of concern require implementing a permanent water quality treatment. However, at this time, the pollutant of concern for the 303(d) listed impaired waters within the study area is not a CDOT roadway pollutant of concern. Should the 303(d) listed pollutant of concern change, the control measures, or potential regional control measure, must treat the entire water quality capture volume of the area within the MS4 boundary or draining to a 303(d) listed stream. MS4 boundaries and 303(d) listings should be confirmed and coordinated with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). The need for permanent water quality should be considered based on the latest triggers and 303(d) pollutants of concern.

## **Design and Project Implications**

### Scope

Construction and long-term maintenance of permanent water quality control measures will need to be determined before the final design is completed. More information on various CDPHE dewatering and activity permits can be found on CDPHE's website (<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/ceos-dewatering-general-permit-program>). Potential permit requirements include:

- CDOT MS4 Permit and General Phase II MS4 permit CDPHE Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction
- Activity Permit
- CDPHE Dewatering Discharge Permit
- Local Agency Stormwater Grading Permits, as required

### Schedule and Budget

Early coordination between El Paso County and local agencies should occur to identify stormwater permitting requirements for the project. Required permanent water quality control measures can increase right-of-way impacts and additional design, operation, and maintenance efforts, affecting cost and schedule.

## **Historical and Archaeological Resources**

Federal legislation requires that federal government agencies assess the impacts of their decisions and actions (undertakings) on historic properties before approving such actions. Historic properties are any prehistoric or historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects that are eligible for or already listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Also included are any artifacts, records, and remains (surface or subsurface) related to and located within historic properties and any properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to tribes. Historic properties are evaluated for NRHP eligibility based on criteria identified by the NPS. They must retain sufficient integrity to convey historical significance. Historic resource evaluations typically use 50 years of age to identify potentially eligible historic resources. Infrastructure projects often use 45 years as the year-built threshold to accommodate extended review while minimizing the need to reevaluate project impacts to individual resources. In some instances, resources determined to have exceptional importance that are less than 45 years old may be considered eligible for the NRHP.

## **Regulatory Framework**



- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800)
- The Colorado Register of Historic Places Act (CRS 24-80.1-101 to 108)
- Section 4(f) of the 1966 Department of Transportation Act (23 CFR Part 774)
- Historical, Prehistorical, and Archaeological Resources Act (CRS 24- 80-401 ff, aka State Antiquities Act)

## Methodology

The study area was assessed for historic and potentially historic resources based on a desktop assessment. No site visits were conducted. Previously surveyed architectural resource were identified through a file search of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP), History Colorado, Colorado Cultural Resources Online Resource (Known as COMPASS) database (History Colorado 2022. Accessed October 21, 2022) Potentially historic, un-surveyed resources were identified through a records search of the El Paso County Assessor Data (El Paso County, 2022. Accessed October 21, 2022. <https://admin.elpasoco.com/free-gis-data/>). These data were supplemented with aerial images available on Google Earth, and with current and historic topographic maps (Google Earth Pro, 2022; USGS, various years).

## Affected Environment

There are 74 surveys and 193 previously identified historic and archaeological resources within the study area. Of those, 14 previously identified historic resources are considered eligible, and 22 archaeological resources are considered eligible. The previously identified historic resources are shown in **Table 19**. The ‘5’ in the Site ID signifies the State of Colorado , and the EP signifies El Paso County.

Table 19. Historic Resources within the Study Area

Site ID	Site Name
5EP.1003.8	Denver and Santa Fe – Segment
5EP.6681	South Ridge Site
5EP.3936.2	Talcott And Cotton Ditch
5EP.6911.1	Unnamed Ditch – Segment
5EP.6685	West Ridge Site
5EP.592	Wilson Cemetery - Butte Cemetery
5EP.3299	NA
5EP.4718	NA
5EP.4719	NA
5EP.4826	NA
5EP.4830	NA



Site ID	Site Name
5EP.4832	NA
5EP.4833	NA
5EP.4835	NA
5EP.4836	NA
5EP.4838	NA
5EP.4840	NA
5EP.4844	NA
5EP.4846	NA
5EP.4847	NA
5EP.4848	NA
5EP.4849	NA
5EP.4851	NA
5EP.5127	NA
5EP.607	NA
5EP.6327	NA
5EP.7329	NA
5PE.1209	NA

**1 Mapping data were not available for these resources.**

A review of El Paso County Assessor records, historical aerial imagery, and historic topographic maps for the study area found 124 parcels containing buildings/structures older than 1977, or 45 years of age (EL Paso County 2022; Google Earth Pro 2022; USGS various years).

Parcels containing potentially historic resources are generally clustered near I-25 at the western side end of the study area. However, parcels containing potentially historic resources are scattered throughout the study area. Next steps may discover historic resources not identified by this screening.

**Next Steps**

The eligibility of resources that will be 50 years or older at the time of impact would be determined through consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Avoidance and minimization of impacts to listed and eligible historic properties and archaeological resources should occur at the start of the planning process and be carried through all design phases and construction. Once the project footprint is provided by the design team, the potential to impact listed or eligible properties should be evaluated through consultation with the SHPO; should listed or eligible properties be impacted, compliance with local, state, and federal regulations may be required. Potentially applicable



regulations include, but are not limited to, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106, the Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f), and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA).

The typical compliance process for historic resources consists of establishing an Area of Potential Effect (APE) or Area of Potential Action (APA), identifying and evaluating NRHP and State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) eligibility for resources within or intersecting the APE/APA, documentation of project effects, and a historic Section 4(f) notification. Eligibility and effects are resolved through consultation with the SHPO.

If USACE oversight is required, Section 106 applies to the project regardless of CDOT involvement. The compliance process is as described above; however, it is advisable to provide a draft APE for the USACE to review and confirm or modify early in the project design process. If the USACE is the lead agency, the APE would only apply around the USACE's jurisdictional areas (i.e., WOTUS). An archaeological survey may be required to comply with Section 106. An archaeological survey may include documenting prehistoric resources or traditional cultural places (TCPs). The archaeological assessment may also include recording new and previously identified archaeological resources on the appropriate OAHPC Cultural Resource Survey form(s).

If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required, historic Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act applies to the project. Affected properties require coordination with FHWA, CDOT, and the Official with Jurisdiction (OWJ). If there is an identified use of a historic or archaeological resource for transportation purposes, additional planning and documentation of measures to minimize or mitigate impacts are required. An individual Section 4(f) approval process can take one year or more, whereas exceptions or a de minimis determination for minor impacts takes significantly less time.

### **Paleontological Resources**

Paleontological resources include fossils (the remains and traces of once-living organisms, preserved in the rock record) and the rocks surrounding those fossils that provide context. Because fossil organisms are, for the most part, extinct, no further fossils of those organisms will ever be formed; therefore, fossils are considered a non-renewable resource, protected under various state and federal laws and regulations.

### **Regulatory Framework**

- Historical, Prehistorical, and Archaeological Resources Act: C.R.S. 24-80-401 et al.;
- Antiquities Act of 1906: Title 16, Sections 431-433;
- Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956: Title 23, Section 305;
- NEPA: Title 42, Section 4321 et al.;
- FLPMA : Title 43, Section 1732 [Pertinent regulations : 43 CFR 2920, 43 CFR 7; informal guidelines for identifying significant fossil localities printed in Appendix B of Kuntz D.W., H. J. Armstrong, and F. J. Athearn, 1989, "Faults, Fossils, and Canyons: Significant Geological Features on Public Lands in Colorado", Colorado State Office, Bureau of Land Management Cultural Resources Series 25, 63 p.];
- Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009 (PRPA).



## Methodology

The geology of the project area was reviewed, using the following geological maps:

- Scott, G.R., Taylor, R.B., Epis R.C., and Wobus, R.A., 1976, Geological map of Pueblo 1 degree x 2 degrees quadrangle, south-central Colorado: U.S. Geological Survey, MF-775, scale 1:187,500.
- White, J.L., Lindsey, K.O., Morgan, M.L., and Mahan, S.A., 2017, Geological Map of the Fountain Quadrangle, El Paso County, Colorado: Colorado Geological Survey, 17-05, scale 1:24,000

Based on the map review, the following unites are known to underlie the project area:

Table 20. Underlying Geological Units

Unit	Full Unit Name	Age	PFYC	MAP
af/da	Artificial fill and disturbed areas	Upper Holocene	1	Fountain Quad
Qa	Undivided alluvium	Upper Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qp	Piney Creek Alluvium	Upper Holocene	2	Pueblo 1x2
Qa2	Alluvium two	Middle Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qf	Young alluvian-fan deposits	Middle Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qav	Valley-Fill Alluvium	Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qes	Eolian Sand	Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qa3	Alluvium three	Lower Holocene	2	Fountain Quad
Qlo	Eolian Loess	Holocene- Pleistocene	3	Fountain Quad



Unit	Full Unit Name	Age	PFC	MAP
Qs	Slocum Alluvium	Pleistocene	3	Pueblo 1x2
Kp	Pierre Shale, undivided	Upper Cretaceous	4	Pueblo 1x2
Kpc	Pierre Shale, cone-in- cone zone	Upper Cretaceous	4	Fountain Quad
Kptb	Pierre Shale, Tepee Zone	Upper Cretaceous	4	Fountain Quad

PFC (potential Fossil Yield Classification) is a system that classifies geological units from 1 (non-sensitive for paleontological resources) to 5 (highly sensitive for paleontological resources), based on the likelihood of finding scientifically important fossils in each unit. Excavation within each unit classification will require different degrees of mitigation, usually in the form of monitoring by a qualified and permitted paleontologist. Typically, units that are classified as PFC 3 (moderate or unknown sensitivity) will require spot-monitoring, units classified as PFC 5 will require continuous monitoring, and units classified as PFC 4 may require some combination of the two depending on the proximity of fossil localities within those units. Units classified as PFC 1 or 2 do not typically require monitoring for paleontological resources.

Spot-monitoring consists of occasional check-ins by a qualified and permitted paleontologist to examine areas of current excavation as well as any debris removed from previously excavated areas. Continuous monitoring requires a qualified and permitted paleontologist to be on site during all excavation into the rock unit being monitored.

### Next Steps

In the event that scientifically important fossils are discovered, they will be removed from the work site to a repository museum for further study. This may impact the project schedule, but does not typically cause major setbacks. In addition to fossil excavation, other kinds of mitigation may be considered, including educational materials produced about particularly important fossil sites that may be discovered.

No previously recorded paleontological localities were found within the boundaries of this project’s study area upon a search of available records. However, numerous localities are located in El Paso County, particularly within the moderately-to-moderately high sensitivity Cretaceous Pierre Shale, and some combination of spot-check and continuous monitoring is likely to be required during construction.



## Environmental Justice & Equity/ Title 6

FHWA and CDOT must identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on low-income and minority populations to ensure compliance with Executive Order 12898. The following section provides an overview of environmental justice (EJ) considerations, Title VI analysis, and Senate Bill 260 analysis for the South Powers Boulevard Extension Existing Conditions.

### Regulatory Framework

- Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice for Low Income & Minority Populations, 1994
- Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
- FHWA Order 6640.23A on Environmental Justice, 1994
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, 2000
- FHWA Guidance on Environmental Justice and NEPA, 2011
- U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order 5610.2(a) on Environmental Justice, 2012
- FHWA Environmental Justice Reference Guide, 2015
- CDOT National Environmental Policy Act Manual, Version 5, 2017
- Environmental justice screening tools (EJScreen & EnviroScreen)
- CO SB21-260 Sustainability of the Transportation System, 2021

### Community Study Area

The project team has identified a proposed community study area, as shown in **Figure 18**. The community study area is a three-mile buffer from the project study area to encompass surrounding communities. The community study area is broader than the project study area to ensure minority and low-income populations are identified during the transportation planning process. Transportation improvements have a greater potential to impact vulnerable communities from a farther distance than many of the other resources identified and evaluated within this Existing Conditions document.

### Figure 18. Community Study Area

### Use of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

The project team used the U.S. Census: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019 for the EJ, Title VI Compliance, and Senate Bill 260 analyses. The ACS dataset was selected due to reliability and incorporation in EJ screening tools supported by CDOT, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and CDPHE.



At this time, 2020 data that has been released has a larger margin of error than the selected dataset. The ACS dataset selected is utilized in CDPHE's Disproportionately Impacted Communities Data Viewer and Climate Equity Data Viewer tools, as well as the EPA's EJ mapping and screening tool called EJScreen. All three of these tools are recommended by CDOT for EJ analyses. They will be used for portions of this EJ review.

Census Block Group data were used when available and beneficial to the related analysis. Where this level of analysis was not beneficial or available, Census Tract data was used.

## Environmental Justice

### Methodology

An EJ analysis evaluates the impacts of programs, policies, and activities on low-income and minority populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens.

For this EJ analysis, Minority Populations were analyzed by using the total population within the community study area, then excluding the white, non-Hispanic/Latino population, resulting in the total Minority Population. This analysis was then used to determine which census block groups within the study area have Minority Populations that exceed the County's proportion of Minority Populations. There are a total of Block Groups within or partially within the Community Study Area. Data for the Analysis was gathered from the ACS 2015-2019 5-year estimates.

The Low-income Population analysis includes review of the percent of low-income households of each census block group within the community study area to determine if percentages exceeded the County's average low-income population. A combination of data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Census Data was used for data collection and analysis. The ACS 5-year estimate, 2015-2019 data, was used as the base data set. The EPA EJScreen mapping and the CDPHE Colorado EnviroScreen tools were reviewed for supplemental data. Both of these tools utilize the 2015-2019 ACE 5-year estimates, so all data was comparable.

### Affected Environment: Minority Populations

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "minority populations" are defined as the population of people who are not single-race white and not of Hispanic or Latino origin. The current ethnic character of the community study area was assessed and documented to identify areas of significant minority populations. For this EJ analysis, areas are considered to have significant minority populations if the percentage of minority populations is larger than the percentage of minorities within the entire county.

Pueblo County has a minority population of approximately 48.47 percent, and El Paso County has a minority population of approximately 31.67 percent (**Table 21**). The percentage of minorities per Census Block Group within the community study area is shown in **Table 22**. All census block groups estimated to have a proportionately larger minority populations than the County are highlighted for reference. As seen in **Table 22**, 23 of the 33 block groups within the community study area have a significant minority population.



Table 21. Minority Population by County

Location	Minority Population	Total Population	Minority Population (%)
El Paso County	228,140	720,403	31.67%
Pueblo County	78,473	161,900	48.47%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Table 22. Minority Populations by Block Group within the Community Study Area

Census Tract	Block Group	Minority Population	Total Population	Minority Population (%)
29.18	1	676	2,489	27.16%
36.00	2	82	463	17.71%
40.08	1	1,423	3,027	47.01%
43.00	1	1,813	3,264	55.55%
	2	686	2,353	29.15%
	3	243	1,110	21.89%
44.02	1	148	327	45.26%
44.03	1	548	1,220	44.92%
45.01	3	830	2,006	41.38%
45.02	2	1,789	4,661	38.38%
45.03	1	3,003	7,058	42.55%
	2	605	1,744	34.69%
	3	496	954	51.99%
	4	2,840	6,064	46.83%
45.06	1	374	1,091	34.28%
	2	31	462	6.71%
	3	197	1,008	19.54%
	4	964	2,143	44.98%



Census Tract	Block Group	Minority Population	Total Population	Minority Population (%)
45.07	1	379	1,442	26.28%
	2	228	547	41.68%
	3	737	1,552	47.49%
45.08	1	1,333	1,707	78.09%
	2	1,452	2,800	51.86%
	3	402	1,689	23.80%
	4	748	1,264	59.18%
45.10	1	2,396	5,012	47.81%
	2	2,993	6,045	49.51%
45.11	1	758	2,217	34.19%
	2	293	803	36.49%
	3	2,161	4,516	47.85%
46.02	1	741	2,431	30.48%
	2	338	1,371	24.65%
46.03	2	2,257	5,323	42.40%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Blue shaded cells represent block groups with a higher percentage of minority populations than the County’s average. The light blue census tracts and block group cells represent Pueblo Conty block groups within the Community Study Area.

**Affected Environment: Low Income Population**

Under Executive Order 12898, a “low-income population” is defined as any readily identifiable group of low-income persons (where household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines) who live in geographic proximity and will be affected by the proposed program, policy, or activity.

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) defined that low-income populations are present when either:

- The low-income population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent; or
- The population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the low-income population percentage in the general population or other appropriate geographical units.



According to the 2015–2019 ACS data, Colorado has a low-income population of approximately 23 percent, El Paso County has a low-income population of approximately 25 percent, and Pueblo County has a low-income population of approximately 40 percent. Of the 27 Census Block Groups within the community study area, 14 exceed the state and county low-income averages (**Table 23**). Although only three block groups exceed a 50 percent low-income population, many low-income population percentages are meaningfully greater than the county and state percentages.

In **Table 23**, all block groups with a significantly higher proportion of low-income individuals within their population than in the entire state or county (21 total) have been bolded for emphasis. All block groups with a low-income population at or above 50 percent of the entire population (4 total) have been highlighted in blue for additional emphasis.

**Table 23.** Low-Income Populations within the Community Study Area

Census Tract	Block Group	Low Income Population	Total Population	Low Income Population (%)
29.18	1	702	2,489	28%
36.00	2	192	463	42%
40.08	1	507	2,676	19%
43.00	1	945	945	29%
	2	716	2,337	31%
44.03	1	525	892	59%
45.01	3	1,290	2,000	65%
45.02	2	854	4,652	18%
45.03	1	1,583	7,058	22%
	2	156	1,744	9%
	3	253	954	27%
	4	1,437	6,064	24%
45.06	1	570	1,413	40%
	2	150	538	28%
	3	614	1,552	40%
	4	1,251	1,707	73%



Census Tract	Block Group	Low Income Population	Total Population	Low Income Population (%)
45.07	1	1,068	2,787	38%
	2	847	1,689	50%
	3	247	1,091	23%
45.08	1	442	4,998	9%
	2	1,344	6,013	22%
	3	676	2,203	31%
	4	161	462	35%
45.10	1	839	4,516	19%
	2	331	1,008	33%
45.11	1	785	5,323	15%
	2	931	2,131	44%
	3	337	1,264	27%
46.02	2	256	803	32%
46.03	1	756	2,431	31%
	2	583	1,362	43%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Block groups with a significantly higher proportion of low-income individuals within their population than in the entire state or county have been bolded for emphasis. All block groups with a low-income population at or above 50 percent of the entire population have been highlighted in blue for additional emphasis.

The light blue census tracts and block group cells represent Pueblo County block groups within the Community Study Area.



## Title VI Compliance

### Methodology

Title VI prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance (e.g., states, universities, local governments) from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin in their programs or activities.

For the Title VI compliance approach, the current ethnic character of the community study area was assessed and documented to identify areas of significant minority populations. For a Title VI analysis, areas are considered to have significant minority populations if the percentage of minority populations is larger than the average percentage for the entire county. Pursuant to Executive Order 12898, minority classifications include:

- Black
- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian American
- American Indian and Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Populations for Hispanic or Latino classifications include all racial groups, as long as they also identify as Hispanic or Latino. The minority classifications identified exclude persons who are of more than one race.

### Affected Environment: Minority Group Populations

As seen in **Tables 24 and 25, 28** of the 32 census block groups have at least one minority group whose proportion of the population substantially exceeds that of their respective county. Twenty of the 32 block groups identified have more than one minority group whose proportion of the population substantially exceeds that of their respective county.

As explained in the methodology portion of this assessment, this table also does not include members of the population of multiple racial minority groups, so these proportions are realistically higher than what is shown in the table.



Table 24. County Minority Group Populations

County	Minority Group	Minority Group Population	% Minority Group Population
El Paso	Black Alone	41,086	5.7%
Pueblo		2,592	1.6%
El Paso	Hispanic or Latino (in combination with any race(s))	127,746	17.7%
Pueblo		71,483	44.2%
El Paso	Asian American Alone	19,785	2.7%
Pueblo		1,007	0.6%
El Paso	American Indian and Alaskan Native Alone	3,538	0.5%
Pueblo		1,280	0.8%
El Paso	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Alone	2,127	0.3%
Pueblo		118	0.1%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019



Table 25. Populations of Minority Groups within the Community Study Area by Block Group

Census Tract	Block Group	Minority Group Population				
		Black	Hispanic or Latin	Asian American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Blue shaded cells represent block groups with a higher percentage of low income residents than the County's average. The light blue census tracts and block group cells represent Pueblo County block groups within the Community Study Area. \*Minority Group Populations are shown as a percentage of the entire census block-group population.

### Populations of Limited English Proficiency

Additionally, the Project Team reviewed the population of the community study area to determine English speaking proficiency. ACS 2015– 2019 5-year estimates were used to determine the proportion of each census tract of the community study area that has Limited English Proficiency, speaks English as a second language (speaks another language at home), or speaks only English. The results of these estimates were compared against the county and state averages for English Proficiency to determine if the community study area has Census Block Groups that are of a comparatively higher Limited English Proficiency.

In Colorado, 5.4 percent of the total population (over the age of 5) has limited English proficiency, and 16.7 percent of the population speaks another language at home (**Table 26**). At the county level, 3.6 percent of the population has limited English proficiency, with 11.5 percent speaking another language at home (**Table 27**). As seen in **Table 28**, five Census Block Groups were identified to have a higher limited English proficiency population than the those in the corresponding counties. Notably, 11.8 percent of the population within Census Tract 45.06, Block Group 4, has Limited English Proficiency, with 29.1 percent of the Block Group speaking another language at home.



Table 26. English Proficiency of State

English Proficiency of State		
Limited English Proficiency	Another Language than English Spoken at Home	Speaks only English
5.4%	16.7%	83.8%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Table 27. English Proficiency by County

English Proficiency of State			
County	Limited English Proficiency	Another Language than English Spoken at Home	Speaks only English
El Paso	3.6%	11.5%	84.6%
Pueblo	1.3%	19.4%	80.6%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Table 28. English Proficiency in Community Study Area

Census Tract	Block Group	English Proficiency of State		
		Limited English Proficiency	Another Language than English Spoken at Home	Speaks only English
29.18	1	0%	5.6%	94.4%
36.00	2	4.0%	14.8%	85.2%
40.08	1	4.4%	17.5%	82.5%
43.00	1	0%	24.3%	75.7%
	2	0%	16.5%	83.5%
	3	0%	14.7%	85.3%
44.03	1	0%	17.1%	82.9%
45.01	3	0%	19.1%	80.9%
45.02	2	0%	18.5%	81.5%
45.03	1	0%	17.1%	82.9%
	2	0%	33.8%	66.2%
	3	0%	44.2%	55.8%
	4	2.4%	29.2%	70.8%



Census Tract	Block Group	English Proficiency of State		
		Limited English Proficiency	Another Language than English Spoken at Home	Speaks only English
45.06	1	0%	11.9%	88.1%
	2	0%	24.6%	75.4%
	3	3.1%	32.5%	67.5%
	4	11.8%	29.1%	70.9%
45.07	1	0%	19.1%	80.9%
	2	0%	18.8%	81.2%
	3	0%	41.6%	58.4%
45.08	1	0%	19.4%	80.6%
	2	0%	17.3%	82.7%
	3	6.2%	12.4%	87.6%
	4	0%	15.9%	84.1%
45.10	1	0%	12.3%	87.7%
	2	2.8%	11.3%	88.7%
45.11	1	3.2%	16.5%	83.5%
	2	1.6%	23.3%	75.1%
	3	0%	14.3%	85.7%
46.02	2	0%	10.5%	91.5%
46.03	1	4.1%	20.8%	79.2%
	2	0%	22.2%	77.8%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Blue shaded cells represent block groups with a higher percentage of english proficiency categories than the County's average. The light blue census tracts and block group cells represent Pueblo County block groups within the Community Study Area. \*English Proficiency Populations are shown as a percentage of the entire census block-group population



This review was completed to determine the level of Spanish-translated material and outreach efforts needed for the public involvement portion of the project. In populations with a large proportion of residents who do not speak English, it is essential to coordinate translated materials to have an accurate representation of the entire population that would be affected by the future South Powers Extension.

### **2021 Colorado Senate Bill 260 (SB 260): Disproportionately Impacted Communities (DIC)**

According to the 2021 Colorado Senate Bill 260, Section 28 creates the environmental justice and equity branch in CDOT's engineering, design, and construction division and requires the branch to "identify and address technological, language, and information barriers that may prevent disproportionately impacted communities from participating fully in transportation decisions that affect health, quality of life, and access for disadvantaged and minority businesses in project delivery."

### **Methodology**

For initial data collection and analysis, the ACS 2015–2019 5-year estimate data was used as the base data set. As supplemental datasets, the EPA EJScreen: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Colorado EnviroScreen were used. Both of the supplemental datasets utilize ACS 2015–2019 5-year estimate data for their analyses. Data collected was used to determine which census block groups within the community study area qualify as a Disproportionately Impacted Community (DIC), per State guidelines.

DIC can be defined as a community within a census block group where the proportion of households that are low income, that identify as a minority, or that are housing cost-burdened is greater than 40 percent; or any other community as identified or approved by a state agency, if the community has a history of environmental racism perpetuated through redlining, anti-Indigenous, anti-Immigrant, anti-Hispanic, or anti-Black laws; or is a community where multiple factors may act cumulatively to affect health and the environment and contribute to persistent disparities (Colorado House Bill 21-1266). In this context, "housing cost-burdened" is defined as a household that spends more than 40 percent of its income on housing.

### **Affected Environment**

Of the 32 Census Block Groups identified within the community study area, 26 qualified as DICs (Table 29), and 7 qualified as a DIC in more than one category. The predominant qualifier as a DIC within the community study area was the proportion of People of Color within the population (18 block groups being made up of more than 40 percent of People of Color). Three Block Groups (Census Tract 44.03, Block Group 1; Census Tract 45.01, Block Group 3; and Census Tract 45.08 Block Group 1) met the threshold for all three qualifications of a DIC.

Table 29. Disproportionately Impacted Communities within the Community Study Area



Existing Conditions Report

Census Tract	Block Group	Measures for Determining DICs			
		% Low Income	% People of Color	% Housing Cost Burdened	Total Population
29.18	1	28.20%	27.16%	0%	2,489
36.00	2	41.47%	17.71%	12.00%	463
40.08	1	18.95%	47.01%	28.95%	3,027
43.00	1	29.29%	55.55%	38.26%	3,264
	2	30.64%	29.15%	55.96%	2,337
	3	31.89%	21.89%	100%	1,110
44.02	1	0%	45.26%	0%	327
44.03	1	58.86%	44.92%	71.22%	1,220
45.01	3	64.50%	41.38%	69.97%	2,006
45.02	2	18.36%	38.38%	33.57%	4,661
45.03	1	22.43%	42.55%	36.59%	7,058
	3	26.52%	51.99%	34.78%	954
	4	23.70%	46.83%	30.87%	6,064
45.06	1	43.69%	44.98%	36.35%	1,091
	2	26.66%	59.18%	17.86%	1,264
	3	31.88	36.49%	28.57%	803
	4	42.80%	24.65%	42.36%	1,371
45.07	1	40.34%	26.28%	34.45%	1,442
	2	27.88%	41.68%	24.62%	547
	3	39.56%	47.49%	20.40%	1,552
45.08	1	73.29%	78.09%	40.85%	1,707
	2	38.32%	51.86%	27.69%	2,800
	3	50.15%	23.80%	44.77%	1,689
	4	22.64%	34.28%	31.78%	1,091
45.10	1	8.84%	47.81%	37.11%	5,012
	2	22.35%	49.51%	28.87%	6,045



Census Tract	Block Group	Measures for Determining DICs			
		% Low Income	% People of Color	% Housing Cost Burdened	Total Population
45.11	1	30.69%	34.19%	42.76%	2,217
	2	34.85%	6.71%	0%	462
	3	18.58%	47.85%	43.09%	4,516
46.02	2	32.84%	32.84%	23.08%	1,008
46.03	1	31.10%	30.48%	42.55%	2,431
	2	14.75%	42.40%	27.17%	5,323

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

Blue shaded cells represent block groups with over 40% of the measure for determining a DIC. If a Block Group contains one highlighted cell, then it is considered to be a DIC community. The light blue census tracts and block group cells represent Pueblo County block groups within the Community Study Area.

### Hazardous Waste Sites and Mines

Multiple federal, state, and local environmental regulations provide for the use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials and cleanup of soil and groundwater that have been impacted by improper usage, storage, and disposal.

### Regulatory Framework

- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 United States Code [USC] Part 103, Sec. 9601 et seq.)
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA; 40 CFR Parts 260-299)
- Underground Storage Tank Remediation, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment – Division of Oil and Public Safety (OPS; 7CCR 1101-14)
- Radiation Control, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) – Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division (6 CCR 1007-1)

### Methodology

Aerial and ground-based photography were used to assess land uses in the study area that could result in conflicts with hazardous materials during construction (Google Earth Pro 2022). CDOT obtained a regulatory agency database report from Environmental Risk Information Services (ERIS) for the study area. The database report was reviewed for regulated facilities. Additionally, the EPA, CDPHE, Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (CDRMS), and OPS websites were reviewed for potential impacts and cleanups in the area (EPA 2022, CDPHE 2022, CDRMS 2022). No site visits were conducted.



## Affected Environment

Pole and pad-mounted transformers are likely present throughout the study area. The following facilities were identified in the database report with the potential to impact the study area:

- Williams Creek Substation, 8799 Birdsall Road (ERIS ID #2): An anonymous caller reported hydraulic oil dumping at this property in the study area.
- 932 Bromefield Drive (ERIS ID #30): An unknown amount of hydraulic fluid was released into a residential area due to boom lift equipment failure.
- Thompson Regional Water Reclamation Facility (9001 Birdsall Road, 14611 Birdsall Road, and 14621 Lower Fountain Heights; ERIS ID #s 2–5) is located in the study area.
- Kane Ranch is located at 11855 Squirrel Creek Road (ERIS ID #s 45 and 46) and is a Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) facility.
- Pikes Peak International Raceway, located at 16650 Midway Ranch Road (ERIS IDs #18 and 20), is an RCRA-regulated facility adjacent to the study area.
- Fountain Landfill (also called the Broadacre Landfill) is a CDPHE solid waste facility located at 10000 Squirrel Creek Road (ERIS IDs #6, 13, 17, 20, 43), in the north-central portion of the study area.
- Terranext (ERIS ID #7) is a CDPHE solid waste facility that does not have a listed address but is mapped at the same location as the Fountain Landfill.
- Clear Spring Ranch (sludge and ash disposal area) is a CDPHE solid waste facility located at 14055 Ray Nixon Road (ERIS ID #17) on the central-western portion of the study area.
- The Colorado Springs Utilities Ray Nixon Power Plant is a CDPHE solid waste facility located at 14020 Ray Nixon Road (ERIS ID #29) in the western-central portion of the study area. This facility is also a VCP participant, recycling facility, and air permit facility.
- Intrawest LLC is a CDPHE solid waste facility located at 19775 Industry Avenue (ERIS ID #48) on the southwestern portion of the study area

The following gravel pits were reported across the study area:

- ID 10142475, ERIS ID #11
- ID 10239480, ERIS ID #7
- ID 10017792, ERIS ID #9
- ID 10142466, ERIS ID #24
- Clear Spring Ranch Pit 2, ERIS ID #35

Twenty-five oil and gas wells are located in the study area or immediate project vicinity.

Three surficial mines were reported in the study area:

- Hanna Ranch Gravel Mine: The associated permit is considered inactive, and gravel was the previously mined resource.
- Sundance Sand and Gravel Resource: The associated permit is considered active, and sand is the mined resource.
- GCC Rio Grance Inc. (also called Salt Canyon Mine): The associated permit is considered inactive, and gypsum was the previously mined resource.



The following leaking storage tanks (LSTs) were reported in the study area:

- Solids Handling and Disposal is a leaking storage tank (LST) facility located at 14020 Midway Ranch Road (ERIS ID #18).
- CDOW Colorado Springs Wildlife is a LST located off of I-25 at Exit 123 (ERIS ID #20).

### **Next Steps**

If future improvements impact facilities of potential concern, coordination with the Williams Creek Substation, Thompson Regional Water Reclamation District, Fountain Landfill, CDPHE, and/or the OPS may be necessary.

The potential for the hazardous materials identified in this environmental scan to impact future project activities is dependent on construction types, magnitude, and construction depth. For instance, resurfacing activities near a gas station where the depth of disturbance during construction would be less than a few feet are unlikely to result in exposure to regulated materials. However, deep construction, such as installing caissons near a gas station, could expose regulated materials.

If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required for the project, CDOT Form 881 and potentially a Phase 1 Initial Site Assessment (ISA) will be required. A current database of known Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) will need to be obtained within 180 days of CDOT's approval of NEPA documentation. If facilities of concern are identified adjacent to the elements and depths of construction that may impact these facilities, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and a Materials Management Plan (MMP) should be completed. Regardless of CDOT involvement, it is prudent to conduct a Phase 1 ESA if any right-of-way will be acquired.

### **Community of Public Wells**

The Colorado Division of Water Resources (CDWR) regulates the proper abandonment of community or public wells impacted by projects such as the proposed South Powers Extension project.

### **Methodology**

The CDWR provides publicly accessible hydrology data through the CDWR Map Viewer, including information on community and public wells. The CDWR Map Viewer was assessed to identify and map the community and public wells within the study area (CDWR 2022).

### **Affected Environment**

A total of 371 constructed wells were noted in the study area. These wells include 11 commercial wells, 197 domestic wells, 4 industrial wells, 66 irrigation wells, 35 monitoring/sampling wells, 14 municipal wells, 32 stock wells, and 12 undesignated wells.



## Next Steps

Community and public wells should be identified during design. Designs should minimize impacts to the community or public wells wherever feasible. If future improvements impact these wells, potential coordination with well owners, property owners, and/or abandonment of these wells per CDWR regulations may be required.

## Prime and Unique Farmland

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) defines prime and unique farmland as land designated for agricultural uses.

### Prime farmland must have at least one of the following:

- Dependable water supply, natural or irrigated
- Favorable temperature and growing season
- Acceptable acidity or alkalinity, salt content, and few or no rocks
- Permeable to air and water
- Do not frequently flood, are not continuously saturated, or are not excessively eroded

### NRCS farmland classifications include:

- Prime Farmland: has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, and other crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor
- Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance: used to produce food, feed, fiber, forage, or other crops
- Farmland of Unique Importance: currently used to make high-valued food and fiber such as citrus or tree nuts
- Not Prime Farmland: farmland that is none of the above

## Regulatory Framework

- Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), 1994, 7 CFR 658

## Methodology

The goal of the FPPA is to minimize the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. NRCS maps were reviewed to determine if farmland is present in the study area. Data were obtained from the NRCS USDA Soils Farmland Class dataset and clipped to the project study area. Please see the Environmental Mapbook (**Attachment 1**) for more information.



### Affected Environment

A review of the NRCS USDA Soils data indicated there are soils to support prime farmland within the study area. The review concluded that no areas within the study area are considered farmland of statewide importance or farmland of local importance.

Approximately 16,013 square miles (or 27 percent of the total study area identified for the PEL study) of prime farmland is located within the study area (**Table 30**).

Table 30. Farmland Designations and Percent Cover in the Study Area

Farmland Designation	Percent Cover in Environmental Study Area (%)	Total Acres
Prime Farmland	27%	16,013
Farmland of Statewide Importance	0	0
Farmland of Local Importance	0	0
Not Prime Farmland	73%	43,402

Source: USDA NRCS, “Web Soil Survey,” last modified July 31, 2019  
<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>, accessed December 1, 2022.

### Next Steps

A visual inspection of the area is needed. For areas not used as farmland, the FPPA does not apply.

### Design and Project Implications

#### Scope:

Alternatives are unlikely to significantly impact prime farmlands. Nonetheless, right-of-way acquisition should minimize impacts on prime farmlands and complete the application for conversion from prime farmland to developable land as necessary.

If federal funding is associated with any projects stemming from this PEL study, each project will need to determine potential impacts on farmland and document appropriate mitigation in the NEPA document.

### Wildlife Movement

Per the directives of Colorado Executive Order D2019011, CDOT “shall enable safe wildlife passage and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and incorporate consideration of big game migration into all levels of its planning process, to the greatest extent possible” (p.3). As part of the Executive Order, CDOT and CPW entered into a Memorandum of Agreement to outline expectations for collaboration on certain



transportation projects that may affect wildlife (e.g., identify priority areas for wildlife crossings along Colorado roadways).

## Regulatory Framework

- Colorado Executive Order D2019011

## Methodology

To analyze the landscape for potential wildlife use within the study area, potential habitat and wildlife movement patterns using publicly available data, including CPW Species Activity Mapping (SAM) Data, Google Earth Aerial Imagery, and Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Data, were assessed (CPW 2022; Google Earth Pro 2022).

## Affected Environment

Based on the CPW SAM data, large mammals are expected to occur within or near the study area, including but not limited to white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*), mountain lion (*Puma concolor*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), and elk (*Cervus canadensis*). Additionally, several stream features within the study area (e.g., Fountain Creek and its tributaries), are likely productive movement corridors that provide food, water, and shelter/sanctuary for various species.

Wildlife fencing already occurs along the I-25 corridor, creating a barrier to wildlife movement. The construction of a new road on undeveloped land will create additional obstacles to movement. Once the road is constructed, seasonal ranges such as winter concentration and production areas could shift for certain species. The potential for shifts in seasonal ranges and wildlife movement challenges would decrease with implementing a wildlife system, including wildlife crossings, wildlife fencing, wildlife escape ramps, or wildlife guards.

## Next Steps

Once the project progresses to the design phase, a biologist should conduct site visits to identify potential locations for wildlife crossings. During the surveys, existing topographical features (e.g., stream features and hillslopes) should be assessed, as these features, if located near a habitat that provides food, water, shelter/sanctuary, can often be suitable locations for potential wildlife overpasses or underpasses. With minor design updates, functional wildlife crossings (e.g., underpasses) can be made in conjunction with necessary roadway bridges for clearance over streams. There are no industry standards for wildlife crossing dimensions; however, crossing features must be evaluated based on targeted species. Some species, such as elk, are more reluctant to use crossing features than others. If crossings are determined necessary for the project, wildlife fencing, escape ramps, and guards should also be utilized, to the extent practical, as they will further enhance the productivity of the wildlife crossings. Biologists and engineers should collaborate closely during the design and placement of the wildlife system.



In addition to the larger crossing structures, culverts often provide passage for smaller fauna (e.g., coyote [*Canis latrans*]). Therefore, culvert design/size should also be considered prior to installation. Where feasible, it is recommended to install 36–48-inch pipe culverts to allow for small- to medium-sized fauna passage. Bears may also use these culverts for passage. If regular flows are expected to occur within these culverts, it may be necessary to install ledges in the culverts for small fauna passages (dry passage). The project should coordinate with CPW during the design phase to discuss the implementation of wildlife crossings and areas to avoid due to wildlife concentrations.

### Barrier Effect

FHWA acknowledges there may be barriers for certain populations, including EJ populations and individuals with disabilities, to fully participate in transportation projects. Overcoming these barriers is critical in developing a safe and equitable transportation system. While neither FHWA nor CDOT has regulatory requirements other than those related to EJ, it is good practice to fully engage all stakeholders in the project to meet the needs of all users.

### Affected Environment

Consideration to Potential barriers of participation have been included in **Table 31**. The 'Comments' column of this table addresses how the project plans to address these potential barriers.



Table 31. Potential Barriers to Public Participation

Considerations	Comments
<b>Equitable access to/from the South Powers Extension Multimodal</b>	This project's primary goal is to construct a facility that provides access for all users, including those in personal vehicles, commercial vehicles, transit riders, and those using nearby multiuse paths and recreational facilities.
<b>Avoid disproportionate impacts on EJ communities and people with disabilities</b>	To truly assess impacts, a clear understanding of these populations and their transportation needs is critical. This understanding should extend beyond simply mapping EJ populations or incorporating technology to enable people with disabilities to navigate the transportation system; it requires engaging these populations in the project development to determine applicable transportation needs.
<b>Meaningful opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in the NEPA process</b>	Given that the area is relatively undeveloped, it will be critical to engage future users of South Powers Boulevard. This should include consideration of populations that may not participate in traditional outreach efforts, such as public open houses, and stakeholders that may require materials be translated into languages other than English or provided in ways that enable people with visual impairments to access information.

**Next Steps**

During the NEPA phase of this project, a robust stakeholder engagement process should be implemented to identify and address the transportation needs of all users. Non-traditional outreach efforts that provide access to information and opportunities for meaningful engagement should be implemented.



## Noise

Noise impact criteria and abatement for federally funded highway projects are set forth in 23 CFR 772 - Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise. Per 23 CFR 772, states are required to adopt state-specific guidelines, which include adopting specific parameters such as a noise reduction design goal. The FHWA Highway Traffic Noise: Analysis and Abatement Guidance provides FHWA guidance, and CDOT's Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines (NAAG) provides Colorado's procedural and technical requirements for applying 23 CFR Part 772 in the analysis and abatement of highway traffic noise (FHWA 2011; CDOT 2020).

The CDOT NAAG outlines requirements for when a project must conduct quantitative analysis, including noise measurements and modeling, which are considered a Type I analysis. The triggers for Type I analysis include construction of a new highway, physical alteration of an existing highway that halves the distance between traffic noise and the closest receptor and/or changes the vertical line-of-sight between the receptor and traffic noise by five feet or more, the addition of a through-traffic lane, the addition of an auxiliary lane over 2,500 feet, the addition or relocation of an interchange lane or ramp, restriping existing pavement to add a through-traffic lane or auxiliary lane that is 2,500 feet or longer, or the addition of a new or substantial alteration of a weigh station, rest stop, ride-share lot, or toll plaza. Note that each trigger for a Type I analysis can have complexities and exemptions that should be analyzed individually for a project.

## Regulatory Framework

- Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (23 CFR 772)
- The FHWA Highway Traffic Noise: Analysis and Abatement Guidance
- CDOT's Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines (NAAG)

## Methodology

El Paso County's Your El Paso Master Plan (2021) was used to identify current or potential future residential areas within the Study Area. The El Paso County master plan identifies "placetypes," or a collection of land uses that work together to establish the character of an area or multiple parcels of land. Placetypes with primary land uses that included single-family detached, single-family attached, or multifamily were identified as current or potential future residential areas within the Study Area. For areas within the City of Fountain, current or potential future residential areas were identified based on land development data compiled by Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects. Pinyon Environmental, Inc., identified existing residential areas by assessing aerial imagery and the County and City parcel data (El Paso County 2022, City of Fountain 2022). No site visits were conducted.

## Affected Environment

A desktop assessment was conducted to identify existing and potential future residential areas within the Study Area. This mapping exercise was conducted to help inform alternatives analyses that potentially minimize noise impacts and barrier needs.



Results of the mapping exercise show that existing and potential future residential areas generally occur in the northwestern portion of the Study Area. Existing residential areas primarily straddle Old Pueblo Road and Link Road. Potential future residential developments generally occur east of the existing developments and include, but are not limited to, the Amara, Kane Ranch, and Aspen Ranch developments.

## Next Steps

After an alignment is selected, a site visit will be required to identify sensitive receptor locations. If FHWA/CDOT oversight is required for the project, a Type I noise analysis is anticipated due to the construction of the new roadway, nearby existing and potential sensitive noise receptors, and CDOT noise analysis requirements. The Type I analysis will require noise modeling and traffic noise field measurements. The analysis may require a feasibility and reasonableness assessment of noise barriers, including additional modeling. Required information to complete the Type I analysis includes traffic volumes and speeds, project design specifications, and additional parcel data.

## Air Quality

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter, particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, and lead (40 CFR part 50). NAAQS for each criterion pollutant have been determined based on the effects of each pollutant on public health and welfare and are updated as needed to reflect scientific advancements. Compliance with the NAAQS in Colorado is enforced by the CDPHE, and transportation projects must conform to these standards. Geographic areas that violate NAAQS for a criterion pollutant are considered “nonattainment” areas for that pollutant, whereas areas that are below standards are considered “attainment” areas.

Guidelines for project-level quantitative analyses for pollutants are provided in the CDOT’s Air Quality Project Level Analysis Guidance (AQPLAG) document (2019). The AQ-PLAG details requirements for quantitative analyses for projects of air quality concern (POAQC). A project is determined to be a POAQC through coordination with CDOT, in which the volume of diesel vehicles and the potential increase in diesel vehicles, among other project details, are evaluated.

Colorado Senate Bill 21-260, signed in June 2021, requires regionally significant transportation capacity projects to conduct emissions modeling for air pollutants and provide monitoring of criteria pollutants prior to construction. Per a memorandum from CDOT on August 15, 2022, CDOT projects located outside of the jurisdiction of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) may be considered a regionally significant transportation capacity project if it includes, but is not limited to:

- A new roadway segment on a regional transportation facility of at least one-centerline mile in length (or, two miles in length if in a rural area with a volume to capacity ratio of less than 0.85); or
- A new roadway segment on a regional transportation facility less than a mile that completes a missing connection to another roadway on the roadway system; or provides access to major activity centers, planned developments, or transportation terminals.



MPOs are not required to change or update their definition of a regionally significant transportation capacity project per the August 15, 2022, memorandum.

The Rules Governing Statewide Transportation Planning Process and Transportation Planning Regions (2 CCR 601-22), signed December 2021, require CDOT and MPOs to achieve set greenhouse gas reduction levels in 2025, 2030, 2040, and 2050. CDOT and MPOs are required per 2 CCR 601-22 to model their existing transportation networks and future regionally significant transportation capacity projects in their transportation planning documents.

### **Regulatory Framework**

- Clean Air Act
- Colorado Senate Bill 21-260
- 2 CCR 601-22

### **Affected Environment**

The study area is located within El Paso County, which is in attainment for all NAAQS pollutants. The project will consist of roadways within the PPACG MPO and non-MPO areas. The definition of a regionally significant transportation capacity project, which informs emissions modeling and/or monitoring of criteria pollutants before construction as well as greenhouse gas requirements, may be different for the PPACG MPO and non-MPO project areas.

### **Next Steps**

Emissions modeling for air pollutants and monitoring of criteria pollutants may be required prior to construction depending on whether the project becomes federalized and/or whether the project fits the definition of a regionally significant transportation capacity project. Based on the August 31, 2022, CDOT memorandum, the portion of the project outside of the jurisdiction of PPACG (if federalized) would likely qualify as a regionally significant transportation capacity project, and therefore be subject to modeling and/or monitoring requirements before construction and greenhouse gas requirements.

Based on project specifics and the level of the NEPA study (if required), mobile source air toxics requirement considerations may need to be reviewed, identified, and coordinated with CDOT. Consultation with CDOT may be necessary to determine if emissions modeling, construction air monitoring, and other reporting and plan requirements would be required for the project. At this time, project-level guidance has not been released outlining steps to conduct greenhouse gas analyses during the project-level (i.e., NEPA) evaluation.

### **Context Sensitivity**

#### **The FHWA defines context-sensitive solutions as:**

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.



CSS principles include employing early, continuous and meaningful involvement of the public and all stakeholders throughout the project development process (FHWA December 12, 2019).

**FHWA has identified 8 Core CSS Principals.**

CSS Core Principles (decision-making process):

- Strive towards a shared stakeholder vision to provide a basis for decisions.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of contexts.
- Foster continuing communication and collaboration to achieve consensus.
- Exercise flexibility and creativity to shape effective transportation solutions while preserving and enhancing community and natural environments.

CSD Core Principles (design approach):

- Safe for all users.
- Design process involves a shared stakeholder vision as a basis for decisions and for solving problems that may arise.
- Design outcomes meet or exceed the expectations of both designers and stakeholders, thereby adding lasting value to the community, the environment, and the transportation system.
- Demonstrate effective and efficient use of resources. (FHWA December 12, 2019, boldface added)

While there is currently no mandate or regulatory requirement to incorporate CSS into CDOT projects, it is good practice to meet the above principles during project development, planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation facilities. By incorporating these principals into all life-cycles phases, the project will be more inclusive, equitable, and more likely to garner support from stakeholders. Additionally, it will likely increase the resiliency of the facility.

**Affected Environment**

The project area will consist of roadways within the PPACG MPO and non-MPO areas. The non-MPO area has a 2025 greenhouse gas reduction target per 2 CCR 601-22; however, PPACG does not have a reduction target until 2030.



Table 32. CSS Considerations

Considerations	Comments
<b>Equitable access to/from the South Powers Extension Multimodal</b>	This project's primary goal is to construct a facility that provides access for all users, including those in personal vehicles, commercial vehicles, transit riders, and those using nearby multiuse paths and recreational facilities.
<b>Avoid disproportionate impacts on EJ communities and people with disabilities</b>	To truly assess impacts, a clear understanding of these populations and their transportation needs is critical. This understanding should extend beyond simply mapping EJ populations or incorporating technology to enable people with disabilities to navigate the transportation system; it requires engaging these populations in the project development to determine applicable transportation needs.
<b>Meaningful opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in the NEPA process</b>	Given that the area is relatively undeveloped, it will be critical to engage future users of South Powers Boulevard. This should include consideration of populations that may not participate in traditional outreach efforts, such as public open houses, and stakeholders that may require materials be translated into languages other than English or provided in ways that enable people with visual impairments to access information.

**Next Steps**

As a part of the alternatives analysis that will be completed in the NEPA phase of this project, opportunities to provide safe multimodal connectivity should be a key consideration. Opportunities to enhance connectivity for all users should be a part of the Purpose and Need Statement and the screening criteria.

A robust analysis of the natural and human-made environment should be conducted during the NEPA study and design phase. Mapping of resources should be completed to inform an impact assessment that provides a comparison of the different design options. Additionally, mitigation measures should be identified and implemented for the Proposed Action, focusing on offsetting impacts and enhancing the environmental context. Opportunities for partnerships to enhance the environment should be pursued with regulatory agencies, developers, and landowners. An initial step would be to collaborate with



stakeholders to craft a Context Statement with specific core values that capture the qualities and attributes of the study area that are important to them.

Aesthetic guidelines should be developed that harmonize the roadway with the surrounding natural and cultural context.

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Existing Conditions Report

# Attachment A. Environmental Overview Mapbook



Existing Conditions Report

# Attachment B. Environmental

## Justice Maps



# Appendix E - Traffic Analysis Memo



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





PEL Study

Traffic Analysis Memo

December 3, 2024





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## List of Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Term/Phrase/Name</b>
ACS	American Community Survey
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
BNSF	Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CO	Colorado State Highway
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
INJ	Injuries
I-25	Interstate 25
LOS	Level of Service
LOSS	Level of Service of Safety
MP	Milepost
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTCP	Major Transportation Corridors Plan
MTTF	Major Thoroughfare Task Force
OTIS	Online Transportation Information System
PDO	Property Damage Only
PEL	Planning and Environmental Linkages
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
PPSC	Pikes Peak State College
SFB	U.S. Space Force Base
SFS	U.S. Space Force Station
SPE	South Powers Boulevard Extension
SPF	Safety Performance Functions
STRAHNET	Strategic Highway Access Network
SUT	Single Unit Truck
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TDM	Travel Demand Model
UP	Union Pacific Railroad
U.S.	United States
vpd	Vehicles per day



## Purpose

This traffic report describes the supporting data, methodology and assumptions used and the results of traffic operations and safety analysis that was conducted in support of the South Powers Extension (SPE) Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL). This traffic report also evaluates emergency response accessibility, resilience, regional and study area growth, and greenhouse gas effects of the proposed South Powers Boulevard extension.

Traffic operations were evaluated for existing conditions, 2045 conditions without the South Powers Boulevard (CO 21) extension, and 2045 conditions with the South Powers Boulevard extension for alternative alignments and connections to Interstate 25 (I-25). Safety performance was evaluated for five years (2015 - 2019).

## PEL Study Area

The PEL Study Area As shown in **Figure 1**, the PEL Study Area, including the limits for potential SPE alignment alternatives and potential impacts of and constraints affecting those alignments, starts at the intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and CO 21 and extends south to El Paso/Pueblo county line. The location of the proposed extension alignment at northern end of the Study Area is constrained due to development, and the Study Area extends larger to the east and west, once heading south of South Marksheffel Road. The Study Area breadth and boundaries were determined based on a combination of previous planning documents, the feasibility of having an alternate route parallel to I-25, and the locations of military base properties and county boundary lines.

Figure 1. Study Area for South Powers Extension PEL

## Traffic Analysis Study Area

The Traffic Analysis Study area is broader than the PEL Study Area, including the existing and planned transit and roadway networks south of and including CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway. **Figure 2** shows the PPACG model network within the extents of the full PPACG travel demand model (TDM) with relevance to the development of traffic forecasts that were used for traffic and safety analysis for the South Powers Extension PEL Study.

Figure 2: South Powers Extension PEL Traffic Analysis Area Map

The intersections and freeway segments that were analyzed consisted of mainline I-25 from north of the CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway to south of the Rancho Colorado Boulevard interchange and all ramp terminal intersections associated with these areas of freeway. These ramp terminal intersections include:

- I-25 / Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) Interchange Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / U.S. 85/Santa Fe Avenue Interchange Southbound Ramp



- I-25 / U.S. 85/Santa Fe Avenue Interchange Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / Ray Nixon Road Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Ray Nixon Road Interchange Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / Exit 123 (Loren Lane) Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Exit 123 (Loren Lane) Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / Old Pueblo Road Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Old Pueblo Road Interchange Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / Midway Ranch Road Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Midway Ranch Road Interchange Northbound Ramps
- I-25 / Rancho Colorado Boulevard Interchange Southbound Ramps
- I-25 / Rancho Colorado Boulevard Interchange Northbound Ramps

Additionally, the analysis included the following non-freeway intersections:

- CO 21 / Powers Boulevard / Fontaine Boulevard
- CO 21 / Powers Boulevard / CO 16 / Mesa Ridge Parkway
- CO 16 / Mesa Ridge Parkway / Sneffels Street
- CO 16 / Mesa Ridge Parkway / Fountain Mesa Road
- CO 16 / Mesa Ridge Parkway / Syracuse Street
- CO 16 / Mesa Ridge Parkway / Bandley Drive
- Mesa Ridge Parkway / Marksheffel Road
- US 85/Santa Fe Avenue / Duckwood Road
- C&S Road/Marksheffel Road / Link Road
- Squirrel Creek Road / Link Road
- US 85/Santa Fe Avenue /Ohio Avenue
- Old Pueblo Road / Link Road
- Old Pueblo Road / Birdsall Road
- Old Pueblo Road / Hanover Road

## Software Packages

Traffic operations analysis was performed using Synchro/SimTraffic (v11) microsimulation software and the FREEVAL macroscopic freeway analysis tool. Synchro simulations were used for analysis of non-freeway intersection performance and FREEVAL was used for analysis of Interstate 25. These analysis tools were chosen for the South Powers Extension because together they provide for accurate modeling of vehicular operations for the freeway and non-freeway facilities within the study area network. Travel demand forecasts for the 2045 planning horizon were developed using the PPACG regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) as a foundation. Full (including PopGen2 runs to generate synthetic populations as required for growth scenario alternatives) and partial runs of the PPACG advanced, tour-based travel model were performed to represent adopted PPACG forecasted growth and for adopted PPACG forecasted growth plus growth associated with approved large developments located within the study area. PPACG model runs, and analysis of model inputs and outputs will be performed using a PTV VISUM and PopGen2 software platforms per PPACG model use guidance.

Safety analysis was performed using Safety Performance Functions (SPF). The SPF reflects the relationship between traffic exposure measured in ADT and crash counts measured in crashes per year.



The SPF model estimates the normal or expected crash frequency and severity for a range of ADT among similar facilities using data collected throughout the state of Colorado.

## Data Collection

### Traffic Data Collection

**Table 1** outlines the data collection plan that was used to assemble input to the analysis of current conditions and to support validation of the PPACG regional travel demand model as modified to enhance traffic assignment fidelity within the study area subarea of the regional model. **Figure 3** shows the locations of intersection and ADT traffic counts collected for the study.

Table 1. Existing Conditions Data Summary

Data Category	Data Source
ADT Traffic Volumes	Assemble available ADT coverage counts for validation of the PPACG regional TDM as modified to include enhanced network coding within the subarea including the area of influence of the SPE corridor. Collect additional ADT counts will be collected at 7 locations (see Figure 2).
Freeway Mainline Traffic Counts	Obtain mainline counts will be obtained from the CDOT OTIS database and recent studies. Use data from the CDOT continuous count station at MP 119 (north of Rancho Colorado Blvd) as a basis to calculate traffic volumes for AM & PM peak periods. Review COGNOS data for the same timeframes and dates, if available, as another data source, and to validate the collected 2022 data.
Freeway Speed Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire INRIX data for freeway speeds.</li> <li>• Available CDOT data will be pulled for freeway speeds.</li> <li>• Wilson &amp; Company will field review during the AM &amp; PM peak periods to validate the INRIX and available CDOT data.</li> </ul>



Data Category	Data Source
<b>Freeway Travel Times</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· INRIX data will be pulled for freeway travel times.</li> <li>· Available CDOT data will be pulled for freeway travel times.</li> <li>· Wilson &amp; Company will validate the INRIX and available CDOT data to field observations to estimate freeway speeds.</li> </ul>
<b>Intersection Turning Movement Counts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· IDAX is collecting peak hour intersection turning movement counts at 28 subarea intersections (see Figure 2) for the AM &amp; PM peak periods. Recent counts are available for a few of the intersections to be analyzed, and these intersections will not be re-counted. Bicycle and pedestrian counts are included in all counts.</li> </ul>
<b>Signal Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Existing signal timing is being provided by CDOT for coding in the Existing Conditions Models.</li> </ul>
<b>Origin-Destination Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· PPACG has made StreetLight data available to the project. This data will be used as a second data point to evaluate existing traffic distribution within the area of influence of the SPE corridor.</li> </ul>
<b>Crash Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Crash data for the most recent available five years will be obtained from sources including the CDOT statewide crash database and the El Paso County Road Safety Plan.</li> </ul>

### Safety Data Collection

Crash data for the most recent available five years was obtained from sources including the CDOT statewide crash database and the El Paso County Road Safety Plan. Data included crashes along the I-25, Santa Fe Avenue (U.S. 85), Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16), and Powers Boulevard (CO 21) corridors as well as several intersections along local routes within the City of Fountain and El Paso County.

### Land Use Data Collection

Development entitlements Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), and Master Plan submittals for approved and pending study area development projects were obtained from the City of Fountain, El Paso County



and the City of Colorado Springs. This data was used to develop a approved/planned growth scenario that was used to evaluate traffic impacts for a regional growth potential scenario that includes buildout of approved development within the study area.

## **Analysis Tools and Methodology**

### **Traffic Forecasts**

The PPACG travel model was used to develop traffic forecasts for the PEL subarea facilities. The current travel model version files for 2015 (model base year), 2020 (existing conditions), and 2045 (planning horizon), and associated input files were obtained from the PPACG. The network within that subarea was enhanced as needed to provide improved detail within the subarea, including the addition of local facility connection included in the City of Fountain Transportation master Plan (TMP) that were not included in the PPACG 2045 Moving Forward LRTP network.

Full model scenarios were obtained as well as model outputs produced by PPACG in-house model runs for each of these scenarios. Obtaining both the full scenarios and PPACG-produced model results for the four scenarios preserved flexibility to apply the model either fully, including synthetic population generation using PopGen2, or in a standard fashion, using PPACG's adopted land use and synthetic population, to address a variety of demand forecasting and analysis needs.

### **Model Installation and Testing**

The current TDM was obtained from PPACG and installed in accordance with PPACG policy for external user model use. Test runs were completed to confirm model function for the study area. These tests included full runs for the provided scenarios and comparison to current model assignments (for adopted 2045 RTP planning cycle) to ensure consistency of traffic assignment results. Regional model performance within the subarea will also be reviewed for the 2020 model scenario consistent with industry standard "goodness of fit" criteria.

### **Land Use Review**

Implementation of modeling for modified land use scenarios, including the 2050 "buildout" scenario at a minimum, will require full PPACG PopGen2 and VISUM TDM model runs that will utilize modified input socioeconomic data files produced through the review and update processes. This approach will be required for the 2045 "buildout" scenario. Land use assumptions will be developed from adopted development plans and associated traffic impact studies for planned developments located within the South Powers Extension subarea of the full extents of the PPACG regional travel model. The goal will be to ensure that development entitlement traffic impacts are considered in planning for the South Powers Extension.

### **Network Modifications**

The PPACG regional model network was enhanced within the South Powers Extension subarea to provide better traffic assignment fidelity or to better represent existing conditions. Edits to future year



scenario networks included the addition of privately funded and locally funded roadways that were not included in the PPACG networks for 2020 and 2045. Analysis model scenarios included alternatives with and without key planned corridors including the South Powers Extension. **Figure 4** shows the PPACG model traffic analysis zone configuration and network coding within the South Powers Extension model subarea. Land use assumptions within the subarea were also reviewed for reasonability for the official PPACG 2045 scenario. Ultimately, the PPACG 2045 adopted forecast scenario was retained to ensure consistency with the adopted forecasts. A second 2045 scenario was also developed to represent “build-out” of development entitlements located within the subarea’s area of influence. This was done to provide an understanding of potential impacts on travel demand posed by approved development within the study area.

#### Figure 4: PPACG Model Network – South Powers Extension Subarea

### Model Assignment Adjustments

Raw traffic assignment volumes produced by the model for the 2045 planning horizon scenario were adjusted using modeled percent growth and absolute growth in traffic flows between the 2020 and the 2045 model scenarios, together with observed traffic count data for 2020 as input. Adjustments to base, raw assignment volumes were made in accordance with industry standard guidance.<sup>1</sup> Adjusted assignment results for 2045 were then post-processed to generate balanced peak period intersection turning movements and/or origin-destination volumes for the planning horizon (2045) as input to traffic operations simulation and analysis.

- 1 NCHRP Report 255 – Highway Traffic Data for Urbanized Area Project Planning and Design, 1982;  
NCHRP Report 765 – Analytical Travel Forecasting Approaches for Project-Level Planning and Design, 2014.

### Other PPACG Travel Demand Model Applications

Visum software platform visualization applications, including shortest path and travel time isochronal plots, were used to support analysis of military installation access, emergency response travel times, freight route travel times and connectivity, and hospital access travel times. This analysis was completed for scenarios without the South Powers extension (No Action alternatives) and with the South Powers extension for final alignment alternatives.

### Traffic Operations Analysis

Existing traffic operations were assessed for the freeway mainline, freeway ramps, and unsignalized and signalized intersection operations using the Transportation Research Board’s *Highway Capacity Manual Sixth Edition* (HCM6, Transportation Research Board, 2016) procedures and methodologies. Study area intersection and freeway operations were evaluated using HCM6-based Level of Service (LOS) calculations as analyzed in the Synchro and FREEVAL software. LOS was used as the primary Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) for operational analysis.

The HCM6 uses the LOS grading system to describe the operational status of the freeway network elements and local roadway network intersections. LOS is a description of an intersection’s operation, ranging from a LOS A (indicating free flow traffic conditions with little or no delay) to a LOS F (representing oversaturated conditions where traffic flows exceed design capacity, resulting in long queues and delays).

### Signalized Intersection Measures of Effectiveness



For signalized intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average delay per vehicle for the overall intersection. **Table 2** summarizes the relationship between delay and LOS for signalized intersections.

Table 2. LOS Criteria for Signalized Intersections

Level of Service	Interpretation	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
A	Progression is extremely favorable, and most vehicles arrive during the green phase. Most vehicles do not stop at all. Short cycle lengths may contribute to low delay.	≤10
B	Good progression, short cycle lengths, or both. More vehicles stop than with LOS A.	>10–20
C	Fair progression, longer cycle lengths, or both. The number of vehicles stopping is significant, though many still pass through without stopping.	>20–35
D	Longer delays result from some combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high v/c ratios. Many vehicles stop.	>35–55
E	High delay values generally indicate poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high v/c ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.	>55–80
F	This level often occurs with over saturation when arrival flow rates exceed the capacity of the intersection. Poor progression and long cycle lengths may be major contributing factors to such delays.	>45

Source: Transportation Research Board. 2010, 19-2.

**Unsignalized Intersection Measures of Effectiveness**

For unsignalized (all-way stop-controlled [AWSC] and side-street stop-controlled) intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average control delay per vehicle (measured in seconds) for each stop-controlled movement. The method incorporates delay associated with deceleration, acceleration,



stopping, and moving up in the queue. For AWSC intersections, the HCM6 defines the LOS as the average delay per vehicle for the overall intersection. For side street stop-controlled intersections, LOS is reported for the approach with the highest average delay/vehicle. **Error! Reference source not found.** summarizes the relationship between delay and LOS for unsignalized intersections. Insufficient gaps of suitable size to allow minor street traffic demand to cross safely through a major traffic stream.

Table 4. LOS Criteria for Freeway Segments

Level of Service	Description	Density (pc/mile/lane)
A	LOS A describes free-flow operations. Free-Flow Speed (FFS) prevails and maneuvering in unimpeded.	≤11
B	LOS B represents reasonably free-flow operations. Free-Flow Speed (FFS) prevails with maneuvering only slightly restricted.	>11–18
C	LOS C provides for flow with speeds near the FFS with freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream noticeably restricted.	>18–26
D	LOS D is the level at which speeds decline with increasing flows and ability to maneuver within the traffic stream seriously limited.	>26–35
E	LOS E describes operation at or near capacity. Even minor disruptions will produce breakdown and substantial queuing	>35–45
F	LOS F describes unstable flow. Such conditions exist within queues forming behind bottlenecks.	>45

Source: Transportation Research Board. 2016, 12-19.

## Safety Analysis



Crashes along the primary study corridors were reviewed over the five years from 2015 through 2019 to evaluate the existing safety conditions within the existing transportation network. Data was sourced from the CDOT statewide crash database and the El Paso County Road Safety Plan study data and included crashes along the I-25, Santa Fe Avenue (U.S. 85), Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16), and Powers Boulevard (CO 21) corridors as well as several intersections along local routes within the City of Fountain and El Paso County.

Where applicable, the assessment of the magnitude of safety problems was refined using Safety Performance Functions (SPF). The SPF reflects the relationship between traffic exposure measured in ADT and crash counts measured in crashes per year. The SPF model estimates the normal or expected crash frequency and severity for a range of ADT among similar facilities using data collected throughout the state of Colorado.

Crashes along mainline I-25 were reviewed separately from interchange-related crashes. The analysis along the other corridors and non-state highway facilities focused on intersection crashes where future changes in traffic patterns are likely to have the greatest impact on safety.

## Travel Demand Modeling

### Land Use Forecasts

Adopted PPACG regional TAZ-level socioeconomic forecasts were used as one future land use development scenario. Because that scenario is constrained to a county-level control total, it is believed that the adopted forecasts may understate regional growth potential. For this reason, a second scenario was also evaluated. The second future land use scenario includes the build-out of approved developments that are expected to develop within the 2045 planning horizon but that were not included in the adopted PPACG forecasts. In the second scenario, areas along eastern edges of existing municipal boundaries were updated to include approved development densities and estimated build-out densities for approved developments (entitlements) and other large developments that are going through the approval process and are reasonably expected to be approved. This scenario was developed to afford a clear understanding of future transportation system needs due to the rapid population growth and increased development pressures that will drive increased travel demand affecting the study area.

**Table 5** shows adopted PPACG land use forecasts and build-out land use forecast for the 15 highest growth PPACG traffic analysis zones (TAZs) within the SPE traffic analysis study area. These TAZs identified in **Figure 12** were selected to be evaluated for the buildout land use scenario because they **were** forecast to have the greatest changes in either household or employment projections within the study area. TAZ 343 incorporates planned growth in employment around Schriever Space Force Base, which is a major employment center destination. Some areas, such as south of TAZ 341 and east of TAZ 683, are already reflected in the PPACG adopted forecasts and did not change in the buildout scenario. The area south of TAZ 326 consists mostly of private property and is not anticipated to be developed in the near future. Within the highlighted TAZs, employment is projected to increase by another 7,500 over the PPACG forecasts, with more than 11,000 additional households.



Figure 5. Highest Employment and Household Growth Traffic Analysis Zones

Table 5. Highest Growth Traffic Analysis

Scenario/Characteristic	Households	Employment
2020 Base Year	2,906	2,031
PPACG 2045 Forecast	14,710	1,840
PPACG 25-Year Change	+11,804	-191
PPACG 25-Year Percent Increase	+406%	-9%
Buildout Forecast	25,651	9,392
Buildout Change from 2020	+22,745	+7,361
Buildout Percent Increase from 2020	+783%	+362%
Difference: Buildout vs. PPACG Forecast	+10,941	+7,552

Source: PPACG 2045 Regional Model

### Traffic Forecasts

Traffic forecasts were prepared for the 2015 model base year network scenario and socioeconomic database as well as for the adopted PPACG 2045 Moving Forward LRTP network and adopted PPACG 2045 Moving Forward LRTP network plus the south Powers Extension. Both of the 2045 network scenarios used adopted PPACG 2045 socioeconomic database as travel model input. **Figure 6** and **Figure 7** show an increase in I-25 and CO16/Mesa Ridge Parkway traffic volumes of 70% in 2045 compared to 2015 traffic volumes. Comparison of traffic volumes for 2045 scenarios with and without the South Powers Extension shows that traffic using CO16 is reduced by 20%, and traffic using I-25 is reduced by 7% with the South Powers Extension.

### Figure 6: 2015 Traffic Volumes

### Figure 7: 2045 No Action Forecast Traffic Volumes

### Study Area Network Congestion Analysis



The potential for peak hour congestion relief due to redistribution of traffic away from the CO16 and I-25 corridors was evaluated using the PPACG model for the 2015 base year and 2045 network scenarios with and without the South Powers extension. Congestion was evaluated for four modeled volume to capacity (V/C) ratio categories: No Congestion (V/C ratio  $\leq 0.30$ ), Low/Moderate Congestion (V/C ratio  $>0.30$  and  $< 0.75$ ), High Congestion (V/C ratio  $> 0.75$  and  $< 1.0$ ), and Gridlock Congestion (V/C ratio  $> 1.00$ ). As shown in **Figure 8**, modeled 2015 peak hour congestion levels are low to moderate. The exception to this is the I-25 corridor and CO16 adjacent to Gate 20 that experience high levels of peak hour congestion.

As shown in **Figure 9**, model 2045 peak hour congestion levels without the South Powers Extension with increase with increasing traffic volumes to high congestion and gridlock congestion affecting most major routes within the traffic analysis study area.

As shown in Figure 10, the South Powers Extension would have the effect of distributing traffic away from CO16, I-25, U.S. 85, Marksheffel Road, Hoover Road, Peyton Highway and Squirrel Creek Road, and reducing congestion on all of these routes. These shifts in out-of-direction travel would also reduce GHG emissions and improve accessibility and emergency response times.

Figure 8: 2015 Peak Hour Congestion

Figure 9: 2045 Peak Hour Congestion without South Powers Extension

Figure 10: 2045 Peak Hour Congestion with South Powers Extension

### Hospital/Trauma Center Access Travel Times Analysis

The PPACG model was used to generate isochronal travel time plots to display access travel times for the regional hospital/trauma centers shown in **Figure 11**. The analysis was done for 2045 scenarios for the No Action Alternative and four alignment alternatives with the South Powers Extension. The isochronal plots were used to compare and rank the performance of alternative alignments with respect to hospital/trauma center access travel times. An example for alternative alignment E is shown in **Figure 12**.

Figure 11: Regional Hospital/Trauma Center Locations

Figure 12: Hospital/Trauma Center Isochronal Access Time Plot Example

### Emergency Response Travel Times Analysis

The PPACG model was used to generate isochronal travel time plots to display emergency response travel times from fire stations. The analysis was done for 2045 scenarios for the No Action Alternative and four 2045 South Powers Extension alignment alternatives. The isochronal travel time plots were used to compare and rank alternative South Powers Extension alignment alternatives with respect to emergency response times. The analysis was based on based on existing fire station locations. An example emergency response times isochronal travel time plot alternative alignment K is shown in **Figure 12**.

Figure 13: Emergency Response Time Center Isochronal Plot for Alignment K

### Analysis of Travel Times to/from Military Bases



The PPACG model was used to generate isochronal travel time plots to display access travel times for the regional hospital/trauma centers shown in **Figure 14**. The analysis was done for 2045 scenarios for the No Action Alternative four 2045 South Powers Extension alignment alternatives. The plots were used to compare and rank medical facility accessibility for alternative alignments. These visualizations were used to compare and rank the improvement to hospital access times provided by alternative South Powers Extension alignments. An example for alternative alignment E is shown in **Figure 15**.

Figure 14: Regional Military Base and Access Gate Locations

Figure 15: Military Installation Access Time Isochronal Plot for Alignment K

### Shortest Path Assessment of Out-of-Direction Travel Time Reduction

The PPACG model was used to generate shortest path plots to evaluate performance of alternative South Powers Extension alignments with respect to reduction in out-of-direction travel. An example is shown in **Figure 16**.

Figure 16: Shortest Path Plot – South Powers Extension Alignment E to Shriever Space Force Base

## Traffic Operations Analysis

### Existing Conditions Traffic Operations Analysis

#### Freeway (I-25) Existing Conditions Traffic Operations

As the sole freeway facility in the study area and the primary north-south route within El Paso County, I-25 operations are of critical importance. At present, the recurring congestion condition is associated with Fort Carson shift arrival/departure traffic and work commute travel to/from Colorado Springs and Denver. Higher density traffic is more prevalent north of the Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange and is present to a lesser degree between the U.S. 85 and Mesa Ridge Parkway interchanges. Recurring congestion does not typically result in significant delays; significant delays are more often due to severe weather, construction, or traffic collisions.

Traffic along I-25 through the study corridor was evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), 6th edition (2016) methodologies for freeway facilities. Data collected in March 2022 provided traffic volumes during the AM and PM peak periods at each of the interchanges; mainline I-25 volumes were derived from the CDOT-maintained continuous count station located just north of the Rancho Colorado interchange, north of the Pueblo–El Paso County line. **Table 6** shows the results of the facilities network analysis at each of the on-ramp and off-ramp connections to I-25 and between the interchanges.

Table 6. Mainline I-25 HCM Analysis Levels of Service



Traffic Analysis Memo

Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
North to South Academy Blvd.	Freeway	C/C	Freeway	D/C
Mesa Ridge Interchange	SB to WB Off-Ramp	B/C	On-Ramp	C/B
	SB to EB Off-Ramp	B/B		
	On-Ramp	B/B		
	Freeway	B/B		
U.S. 85 Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	A/A	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Ray Nixon Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Hannah Ranch Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
	Off-Ramp	A/A	On-Ramp	B/B



Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
PPIR Interchange	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	A/A
	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B
Rancho Colorado Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/B	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	A/A
South to El Paso County Line	Freeway	B/B	Freeway	B/B

Most locations are expected to operate near free-flow conditions, as indicated by a Level of Service (LOS) A or B conditions during both the AM and PM peak periods. Near the Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange there are higher density conditions where traffic volumes result in LOS C or D conditions. While this does not necessarily indicate congestion, slower conditions may exist, and even minor incidents or disruptions have the potential to result in severe traffic disruptions.

**Local Roadway Network Existing Conditions Traffic Operations**

The I-25 ramp termini and other select intersections along key corridors within the study area, including Mesa Ridge Parkway, Powers Boulevard, U.S. 85, Link Road, and Old Pueblo Road, were evaluated using the HCM (Transportation Research Board and National Academies of Sciences 2016, 2000) methodologies for signalized and unsignalized intersections, as well as Synchro/SimTraffic simulations for intersection configurations not supported by the HCM. Data collected in March 2022 provided traffic volumes during the AM and PM peak periods.

Nearly all the studied intersections are reported to operate at LOS C or better, except the signalized Mesa Ridge Parkway/Fountain Mesa Road intersection (LOS D) and the unsignalized Mesa Ridge Parkway/ Marksheffel Road intersection (LOS F but planned to be signalized in the near-term future). Although the HCM analysis indicates acceptable traffic operations along Mesa Ridge Parkway at I-25, the analysis does not consider the effect of traffic backing up from Fort Carson Gate 20 through the interchange, which can result in much higher vehicle delay at certain times of day than what is shown here.



**Table 7** shows the results of the local roadway intersection analysis.

Table 7. Local Roadway Network Existing Conditions Traffic Operations Summary

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
1	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 SB Ramps	A / 0.9	A / 0.9
2	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 NB Ramps	C / 28.9	C / 24.9
3	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Bandlely Dr	C / 21.9	B / 12.4
4	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Syracuse St	C / 34.9	C / 23.9
5	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Fountain Mesa Rd	D / 38.9	D / 44.8
6	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Sneffels St	A / 9.5	A / 9.4



Traffic Analysis Memo

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
7	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Powers Blvd	C / 32.5	C / 26.7
8	TWSC	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Marksheffel Rd	c / 23.6 (EB LT)	f / 90.7 (EB LT)
9	Signal	Powers Blvd & Fontaine Blvd	C / 22.7	C / 22.8
10	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy WB Ramps	A / 8.3	A / 8.6
11	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy EB Ramps	A / 8.6	B / 10.8
12	Signal	U.S. 85 & Duckwood Rd	C / 24.7	C / 24.4
13	Signal	U.S. 85 & Ohio Ave	C / 28.2	C / 24.5
14	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 NB Ramps	A / 3.7	A / 2.6



Traffic Analysis Memo

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
15	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 SB Ramps	B / 15.6	C / 21.5
16	Signal	Link Rd & C&S Rd	C / 21.5	B / 17.9
17	Signal	Link Rd & Squirrel Creek Rd	B / 14.6	B / 12.6
18	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Link Rd	c / 15.1 (WB LT)	c / 16.3 (WB LT)
19	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Birdsall Rd (1)	a / 4.6 (SB)	b / 10.2 (SB LT)
20	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Hanover Rd (1)	a / 1.4 (NB)	a / 2.4 (NB RT)
21	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 SB Ramps (2)	a / 8.5 (SB)	a / 8.7 (SB)



Traffic Analysis Memo

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
22	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 NB Ramps (2)	a / 9.0 (NB)	a / 9.3 (NB)
23	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 SB Ramps (2)	a / 8.6 (SB)	a / 8.6 (SB)
24	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 NB Ramps (2)	a / 8.4 (NB)	a / 8.4 (NB)
25	TWSC	Midway Ranch Rd & I-25 SB Ramps (1)	a / 5.5 (SB, NB LT)	a / 8.5 (NB RT)
26	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & I-25 NB Ramps	b / 10.7 (NB)	b / 10.1 (NB)
27	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 SB Ramps (1) (2)	a / 6.4 (EB)	b / 12.5 (SB RT)
28	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 NB Ramps (1) (2)	a / 7.7 (WB)	a / 8.9 (NB)



Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour

Notes: (1) Level of service at this intersection is based on microsimulation (average of five SimTraffic runs), as its traffic control and/or configuration is not supported by HCM analysis. (2) Level of service does not consider the one-lane underpass at this interchange; vehicle delay is under-reported.

### 2045 No Action Traffic Operations Analysis

#### Freeway (I-25) 2045 No Action Traffic Operations

I-25 is the only freeway facility in the Study Area and the primary north-south route within El Paso County. The I-25/Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) interchange also provides access to Gate 20, Fort Carson’s highest volume access, serving approximately 20,000 combined inbound and outbound trips daily. Other key connections within the Study Area roadway network include US 85/Santa Fe Avenue, CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway, CO 21/Powers Boulevard, Marksheffel Road, Link Road, Squirrel Creek Road, and Old Pueblo Road.

Daily recurring congestion is associated with Fort Carson shift arrival/departure traffic and work commute travel to/from Colorado Springs and Denver. Higher density traffic is more prevalent north of the Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange and less prevalent between the US 85 and Mesa Ridge Parkway interchanges.

High levels of congestion associated with the No Action alternative will impact incident management and increase emergency response times. The relationship between higher crash frequency and severity with higher volumes and congestion observed for existing conditions suggests that crash frequency and severity will increase for the No Action alternative.

For the No Action Alternative, **Table 8** shows that existing AM/PM peak hour delays and queue lengths will gradually become longer over time. This is represented as the seconds delayed per vehicle (SEC/VEH) which continues to increase, causing the LOS grade to decrease.

Table 8. Mainline I-25 2045 No Action HCM Analysis Levels of Service

Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
North to South	Freeway	C/D	Freeway	E/C



Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
Academy Blvd.				
Mesa Ridge Interchange	SB to WB Off-Ramp	C/D		D/C
	SB to EB Off-Ramp	C/D	On-Ramp	
	On-Ramp	B/C	Off-Ramp	C/C
	Freeway	C/D	Freeway	D/D
U.S. 85 Interchange	Off-Ramp	C/D	On-Ramp	C/C
	On-Ramp	A/A	Off-Ramp	C/B
	Freeway	C/C	Freeway	C/C
Ray Nixon Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/C	On-Ramp	C/C
	On-Ramp	B/C	Off-Ramp	C/C
	Freeway	B/C	Freeway	C/C
Hannah Ranch Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/C	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/C	Off-Ramp	C/B
	Freeway	B/C	Freeway	C/C



Location	Southbound		Northbound	
	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS	Segment Type	AM/PM LOS
PPIR Interchange	Off-Ramp	B/C	On-Ramp	C/B
	On-Ramp	B/C	Off-Ramp	B/B
	Freeway	C/C	Freeway	C/C
Rancho Colorado Interchange	Off-Ramp	C/C	On-Ramp	B/B
	On-Ramp	B/B	Off-Ramp	B/B
South to El Paso County Line	Freeway	B/C	Freeway	C/C

### Local Roadway Network 2045 No Action Traffic Operations

For the No Action Alternative, **Table 9** shows that the Mesa Ridge Parkway intersections at the NB I-25 Ramps, Bandy Road, Syracuse Street, and Fountain Mesa Road, and the U.S. 85/Ohio Avenue and U.S. 85/I-25 NB Ramps intersections drops to LOS E during the PM peak hour. For the AM peak hour LOS at these intersections ranges from LOS D to LOS F, all decreased in comparison to existing conditions.

Table 9. Local Roadway Network 2045 No Action Traffic Operations Summary

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
1	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 SB Ramps	A / 1.7	C / 23.3
2	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & I-25 NB Ramps	E / 84.2	E / 59.0



Traffic Analysis Memo

Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
3	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Bandley Dr	E / 64.2	E / 71.7
4	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Syracuse St	F / 110.7	E / 75.2
5	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Fountain Mesa Rd	D / 52.0	E / 56.8
6	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Sneffels St	B / 11.7	B / 14.1
7	Signal	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Powers Blvd	C / 29.8	D / 36.0
8	TWSC	Mesa Ridge Pkwy & Marksheffel Rd	B / 10.3	N/A
9	Signal	Powers Blvd & Fontaine Blvd	B / 10.3	B / 15.4
10	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy WB Ramps	C / 28.2	C / 28.4
11	Signal	U.S. 85 & Mesa Ridge Pkwy EB Ramps	A / 9.6	B / 11.3
12	Signal	U.S. 85 & Duckwood Rd	A / 9.6	B / 12.9
13	Signal	U.S. 85 & Ohio Ave	E / 66.2	E / 78.9
14	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 NB Ramps	E / 74.0	E / 63.0
15	Signal	U.S. 85 & I-25 SB Ramps	A / 6.8	A / 3.1
16	Signal	Link Rd & C&S Rd	B / 16.4	C / 26.1
17	Signal	Link Rd & Squirrel Creek Rd	C / 24.6	C / 20.1
18	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Link Rd	B / 15.1	B / 13.6
19	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Birdsall Rd (1)	C / 16.1 (WB LT)	C / 22.2 (WB LT)



Intersection	Control	Intersection	LOS/Delay (sec/veh)	
			Am Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
20	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & Hanover Rd <sup>(1)</sup>	A / 5.1 (SB LT)	B / 12.3 (SB LT)
21	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 SB Ramps <sup>(2)</sup>	A / 2.0 (NB)	A / 3.1 (NB RT)
22	TWSC	Ray Nixon Rd & I-25 NB Ramps <sup>(2)</sup>	A / 8.6 (SB)	A / 8.7 (SB)
23	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 SB Ramps <sup>(2)</sup>	A / 8.9 (NB)	A / 9.3 (NB)
24	TWSC	Exit 123 & I-25 NB Ramps <sup>(2)</sup>	A / 8.6 (SB)	A / 8.6 (SB)
25	TWSC	Midway Ranch Rd & I-25 SB Ramps <sup>(1)</sup>	A / 8.4 (NB)	A / 8.4 (NB)
26	TWSC	Old Pueblo Rd & I-25 NB Ramps	A / 6.9 (SB)	A / 8.4 (NB RT)
27	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 SB Ramps <sup>(1) (2)</sup>	B / 10.8 (NB)	B / 10.8 (NB)
28	TWSC	Rancho Colorado Blvd & I-25 NB Ramps <sup>(1) (2)</sup>	A / 6.6 (EB)	B / 10.4 (SB RT)

Notes: <sup>(1)</sup>Level of service at this intersection is based on microsimulation (average of five SimTraffic runs), as its traffic control and/or configuration is not supported by HCM analysis. <sup>(2)</sup>Level of service generated by Synchro does not consider the one-lane underpass at this interchange so vehicle delay may be under-reported.

## Existing Conditions Safety Analysis

### Mainline I-25

There were 820 crashes along mainline I-25 between MP 116 and MP 134, starting just north of the El Paso County line to the north of the Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) interchange, broken out annually in **Table 10**. The crash frequency has increased by about 33% over the five-year study period, with a peak frequency in 2018. There were 13 fatal crashes resulting in 14 fatalities during this timeframe. Injury and fatal crashes combined account for nearly 40% of the overall crashes along the corridor.

Table 10. Mainline I-25 Crashes by Year



Year	Number of Crashes				Persons	
	Property Damage Only (PDO)	Injuries (INJ)	Fatalities (FAT)	Total	Injured	Killed
2015	74	50	3	127	72	4
2016	88	51	0	139	80	0
2017	97	57	3	157	85	3
2018	138	76	5	219	112	5
2019	101	75	2	178	112	2
<b>Total</b>	498	309	13	820	461	14
<b>Average/Year</b>	99.6	61.8	2.6	164.0	92.2	2.8

**Figure 17** summarizes lengths of Mainline I-25 that experience high-severity crashes, high-frequency and high-severity crashes, and fatal crash locations. The SPF analysis indicated several locations with higher-than-expected crash frequencies for both total and severe crashes.

Most of the fatal collisions (7 of 13) occurred between the U.S. 85 and CO 16 interchanges, and the most significant pattern of crashes indicated by the SPF analysis is located just north of the CO 16 interchange.

### Figure 17: I-25 Crash Severity, Frequency and Fatal Locations

#### Corridor and Intersection Crashes

The CO 16 and U.S. 85 corridors are the primary routes connecting the City of Fountain and its environs to I-25. Table 10 provides the overall number of crashes for each corridor, along with the frequency of crashes attributed to intersection locations. **Table 11** shows the relative proportion of intersection crashes to the overall crashes for each. Intersections account for around 65% of the total crashes and an even higher proportion (75%) of severe crashes.

Table 11. Corridor Crash Summary

Corridor Summary	Total Crashes				Intersection Crashes				Proportion	
	PDO	INJ	FAT	ALL	PDO	INJ	FAT	INT	Severe	Total
Mesa Ridge Pkway (CO 16)	406	173	4	583	244	133	3	380	77%	65%
Santa Fe Ave (U.S. 85)	222	128	2	352	146	93	0	239	72%	68%



Traffic Analysis Memo

Powers Blvd (CO 21)	27	14	0	41	14	11	0	25	79%	61%
Other Intersections (Non-SH)	-	-	-	-	28	10	0	38	-	-

The SPF analysis for each location highlights the locations with higher-than-expected crash frequencies compared with similar facilities. The analysis helps to identify hot spots where future changes in traffic patterns are likely to have the most impact. Figure 18 displays the crash hot spot data for key intersections for the five years between 2015 and 2019, along with the Level of Service of Safety (LOSS) designation. LOSS is a commonly used safety performance rating system from I to IV (1 to 4), with IV indicating the highest potential for crash reduction. Intersections with LOSS IV conditions for total crashes, severe crashes, or both are considered hot spots highly susceptible to changes in traffic patterns.

Figure 18: CO 16 and I-25 Crash Hot Spots



# Appendix F - PEL Purpose and Need Memo



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





## PEL Study

# Purpose and Need Memo

December 3, 2024





## Figure 1. Powers Corridor Development

Regional Plans that show the Powers South Extension include the following:

- 1968: A Highway Needs Study for the El Paso County Colorado Springs Area shows an eastern loop.
- 1970: Pikes Peak Regional Land Use Plan, adopted by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs.
- 1971: General alignment is shown in the update of the Colorado Springs' Regional Major Thoroughfare Plan.
- 1987: The South Powers was depicted on the El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan.
- 1993: Federal, State, and local planning processes includes a recommendation of Powers Boulevard as part of the National Highway Systems designation. The National Highway System Map includes Powers Boulevard.
- 1999: Future Public Transportation Rapid Transit Corridors.
- 1999: South Powers Existing Conditions Report.
- 2000: The South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study identifies a preferred alignment for the southernmost segment of the Powers Boulevard/ CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway corridor with ultimate direct connection to I-25.
- 2007: City of Fountain Traffic Master Plan.
- 2016: El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan shows regional growth.
- 2020: PPACG 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.
- 2022: CDOT's Vision for Colorado's Transportation System; Updated 10-Year Strategic Project Pipeline

## Need for Transportation Improvements

This section discusses the transportation needs for the Fountain Valley area. Transportation improvements are needed to:

**Advance Local and Regional Mobility** –SPE is needed to complete the regional transportation network in the Fountain Valley area to adequately serve future travel demands associated with continued growth. Improvements would enhance north/south mobility in the region by providing a connection to I-25, increasing access to future east/west routes, and adding an alternate route to other destinations.

**Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities** — Stakeholder input and prior planning efforts identified the need to increase connectivity and accessibility to multimodal opportunities. Through improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, enhanced trail network connectivity, and potential public transit connections, SPE would support an integrated transportation network.

## ADVANCE LOCAL AND REGIONAL MOBILITY



## Roadway Network

The current roadway network in the Fountain Valley area is constrained by the lack of north/south and east/west routes. I-25 and US 85/Santa Fe Avenue provide the primary north/south options, with some support from local routes like CO 21/Powers Blvd, Marksheffel Road, Fountain Mesa, and Link Road. These north/south routes connect to even fewer east-west options. CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway, C&S Road, and Squirrel Creek Road are limited east-west options, with only CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway connecting to I-25. This limited roadway network is shown in **Figure 2**. East-west roadway connections to I-25 in the Fountain Valley are limited due to the south-flowing Fountain Creek just east of the Interstate highway.

## Connectivity to Regional Infrastructure

The lack of a consistent network means that access to regional facilities is limited. CO 21/Powers Blvd to the north provides direct access to the Colorado Springs Airport, which supports regional and commercial air traffic, military operations for Peterson Space Force Base, and is a hub for freight operations of FedEx, Old Dominion, and Amazon, which are located in the Peak Innovation Park.

CO 16/Mesa Ridge is a short east-west expressway, only 3.1 miles in length, with the western terminus at I-25 and the eastern terminus at CO 21/Powers Blvd. It is the only connection in the Fountain Valley area that connects to I-25. More importantly, it is the primary route to Fort Carson from the unincorporated Security-Widefield community, where many military personnel and their families reside.

## Figure 2. Regional Roadway Network

### Corridor Growth, Development, and Travel Demand

Growth and development in the Fountain Valley area have been planned based on the final connection of South Powers Boulevard. As discussed in the Purpose of Transportation Improvements section, local and regional documents anticipated the need for the SPE to improve coordination between land use and transportation. SPE would accommodate pedestrian and bike safety, increase mobility, enhance public transportation service, and improve road network connectivity. Planned growth along the corridor and the travel demand modeling highlight the need for local and regional mobility advancement.

Regional socioeconomic forecasts were developed using the adopted Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) Regional Congestion Management Plan as the starting point. However, this model understates the growth potential because it is limited to a county-level control total.

Adjustments to the future land use allow the model to include the build-out of approved developments that have been, or are expected to be, annexed into local jurisdictions and approved/granted entitlements to develop within the 2045 planning horizon. Areas along the eastern edges of existing municipal boundaries were updated to include approved development densities and estimated build-out densities for developments reasonably expected to be approved.



The build-out land use data for fifteen traffic analysis zones (TAZs) located along the current eastern and southern municipal boundaries include a significant increase in the number of households and projected employment compared to the PPACG fiscally constrained model data.

**Figure 3** were selected because they have the greatest changes in either household or employment projections within the corridor. TAZ 343 incorporates planned growth in employment around Schriever Space Force Base, which is a major employment center destination. Some areas, like south of TAZ 341 or east of TAZ 683, is already addressed in the PPACG Buildout scenarios and did not change in the buildout scenario. The area south of TAZ 326 consists mostly of private property and is not anticipated to be developed in the near future. Within the highlighted TAZs, employment is projected to increase by another 7,500 over the PPACG forecasts, with more than 11,000 additional households, as summarized in **Table 1**.

Figure 3. Highest TAZ Employment and Household Projections

Table 1. Highest Growth Traffic Analysis Zones

Scenario/Characteristic	Households	Employment
2020 BaseYear	2,906	2,031
PPACG 2045 Forecast	14,710	1,840
PPACG 25-Year Change	+11,804	-191
PPACG 25-Year Percent Increase	+406%	-9%
Buildout Forecast	25,651	9,392
Buildout Change from 2020	+22,745	+7,361
Buildout percent Increase from 2020	+783%	+362%
Difference: Buildout vs. PPACG Forecast	+10,941	+7,552

Source: PPACG Regional Congestion Management Plan

This build-out scenario affords a clearer understanding of future transportation system needs due to the rapid population growth and increased development pressures that will drive increased travel demand affecting the region. This methodology is detailed in the South Powers Extension PEL Traffic Methodology and Assumptions Memo, 2022.

### Local Roadway Network Operations

Highway transportation facilitates the production and movement of commodities, supports trade in goods and services, and provides critical emergency response routes. Recurring congestion on I-25 and the local network is primarily associated with Fort Carson shift arrival/departure traffic and work commute travel from Fountain to Colorado Springs. Higher density traffic is more prevalent north of



the CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway interchange and, to a lesser degree, between the US 85/Santa Fe Avenue and CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway interchanges.

The employment and household growth indicators identify the need to develop additional north-south routes as well as fully connected east-west routes. Without improvements beyond those included in the PPACG 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, 2045 traffic volumes on many area roadways are expected to quadruple by 2045. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on Link Road will increase from 7,660 ADT to 30,000 ADT; C & S Road will increase from 6,000 ADT to 23,000 ADT; and Squirrel Creek Road will increase from 4,000 ADT to 17,000 ADT. The western segment of CO 16/ Mesa Ridge Parkway will increase from the existing ADT volume of 36,000 vehicles per day (vpd) to 70,000 vpd.

The preliminary travel demand model (TDM) results (South Powers Extension PEL Traffic Memo, 2022) showed spreading and increased levels of congestion within the study area, in particular along CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and C & S Road, where Level of Service (LOS) F conditions are expected, indicating serious congestion and delay. The limited east-west connectivity and the lack of direct north-south connections adjacent to the planned developments reinforce the conclusion that the transportation network will need to be expanded significantly to adequately serve future travel demand associated with continued growth.

The analysis confirmed the need to develop additional north-south routes as alternatives to I-25 and fully connected east-west routes. More diverse east-west route options will divert traffic from CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and C & S Road and Ohio Avenue. Additional north-south routes will relieve Link Road, US 85/Santa Fe Avenue, which will continue to be overburdened as connectors to I-25 via CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway and CO 21/Powers Boulevard.

### **Incorporate Multimodal Connections**

The corridor contains several existing and future recreational trailheads and trail crossings. The El Paso County Parks Master Plan, approved by El Paso County in August 2022, focuses on needed improvements within existing parks but also identifies the need for a broader master planning process that considers public recreation needs. Stakeholder input efforts identified the need to improve bicycle mobility and support enhanced trail connectivity.

### **Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

Pedestrian/bicycle facilities were identified by reviewing local transportation master plans and GIS maps. Existing pedestrian/bicycle facilities are located near the City of Fountain but are less common east of the city. See **Table 2** for the list of existing trails.

There are two existing bike/pedestrian trails within the study area, the Fountain Creek Regional Trail and the Lariat Loop. The Fountain Creek Regional Trail is located within Clear Spring Ranch Open Space, a 930-acre linear park along Fountain Creek south of the City of Fountain. Within the open space, there are over four miles of the Colorado Front Range Trail. The Lariat Loop is a 3.5-mile-long double-track natural surface trail suitable for hiking, running, bicycling, and especially equestrian



located within the Kane Ranch Open Space. The trail connects the north and south ends of the park. Both trails are shown in **Figure 4**.

Table 2: Existing Bike/Pedestrian Facilities

Multimodal Segment	Use	Existing or Adjacent Existing	Distance within Study Area (miles)
Fountain Creek Regional Trail	Bike & Pedestrian	Existing	4.0
Lariat Loop	Bike & Pedestrian	Existing	3.5

Source: El Paso County Park Master Plan; City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan

### Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Previous planning documents have identified the need for regional trails to provide recreational enjoyment, links, and access to recreation areas of regional significance, cities, local communities, commercial areas, and commuting opportunities. The El Paso County Park Master Plan envisions over 700 miles of trails and bike routes in the long term, which includes off-street regional trails and proposed bike routes. Connectivity with other regional trails is a high priority.

The proposed bike/pedestrian and transit facilities are detailed in **Table 3**. **Figure 4** shows the proposed bike/pedestrian access facilities within the study area.

Table 3: Proposed Bike/Pedestrian Facilities

Multimodal Segment	Use	Proposed or Adjacent Proposed	Distance within Study Area (miles)
Southern Extension of Fountain Creek Regional Trail	Bike & Pedestrian	Proposed	3
Hanover Road Route	Bike	Proposed	4



Kane Ranch Regional Trail	Bike & Pedestrian	Proposed	6
South Powers Blvd Regional Trail	Bike	Proposed	10
Fountain Creek West Regional Trail	Bike & Pedestrian	Proposed	0.3
Squirrel Creek Road	Bike & Pedestrian	Proposed	3.5
S. Peyton Highway	Bike	Adjacent Proposed	15.93
S. Ellicott Highway	Bike & Pedestrian	Adjacent Proposed	1.93
Falcon Highway	Bike & Pedestrian	Adjacent Proposed	6.95
Meridian Road	Bike	Adjacent Proposed	2.98
Peyton Highway	Bike	Adjacent Proposed	7

Source: El Paso County Park Master Plan; City of Fountain Parks, Recreation Open Space and Trails Master Plan

### Proposed Trail Connections

Squirrel Creek Road is located at the north end of the study area. The Squirrel Creek Regional Trail and the Squirrel Creek Road Bicycle Route extend from the Cumberland Green Open Space east along Squirrel Creek Road. This trail connects to adjacent proposed bike/pedestrian facilities that lead to Peyton, Falcon, and Colorado Springs trails. The adjacent proposed trails are South Peyton Highway (bike access), Peyton Highway (bike access), South Ellicott Highway (pedestrian and bike access), Falcon Highway Trail (pedestrian and bike access), and Meridian Road (bike access).

Kane Ranch Regional Trail would extend from Clear Spring Ranch Open Space north to Kane Ranch Open Space. The trail would intersect the Squirrel Creek Regional Trail and the Squirrel Creek Road Bicycle Route and continue north, connecting to a bike access route with the proposed Crews Gulch Trail within the Widefield community of Colorado Springs.

The Fountain Creek Regional Trail would start at the Clear Spring Ranch Park and head south before splitting into the Fountain Creek Regional Trail and the Fountain Creek West Regional Trail. The Fountain Creek West Regional Trail would cross I-25 and connect to the Christian Open Space before looping back to the Fountain Creek Regional Trail within the Clear Spring Ranch Open Space. This connection would allow bikes and pedestrians access to the proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Trail within the City of Fountain. The Fountain Creek Regional Trail would head south into Pueblo County. The proposed extension of the Fountain Creek Regional Trail is a part of the City of Colorado Springs Bikes! Vision Network to improve connectivity and access to destinations across Colorado Springs.



(Colorado Springs Bike Master Plan, 2017)

## Proposed Bicycle Connections

In addition to the Squirrel Creek Road Bicycle Route described, two additional regional bicycle facilities are planned within the study area. Hanover Road Route would extend south from the Clear Spring Ranch Open Space and head east on Hanover Road. The South Powers Boulevard Bicycle Route would connect from the Fountain Creek Regional Trail and head north into the City of Fountain. The alignment of this bicycle route follows the proposed South Powers Boulevard Extension alignment identified in the South Powers Extension Feasibility Study. The City of Fountain Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan also recognizes the alignment of the bicycle route parallel the proposed South Powers Boulevard Extension.

### Figure 4. Existing and Proposed Park, Bicycle, Pedestrian Facilities

#### Transit Facilities

The transit access in the project is limited to the I-25 corridor and the Fountain Municipal Transit, which has routes adjacent to the study area. Mountain Metro Transit, based in Colorado Springs, has one route with hourly service that reaches the Security-Widefield area, but does not extend further southward into the City of Fountain. The transit services provided along I-25 are the CDOT Bustang Outrider, Greyhound Buses, and Los Paisanos Autobuses.

#### Existing Fixed Route Bus Service

Fountain Municipal Transit (FMT) currently operates a fixed route bus service within Fountain and to PPCC and the El Paso County Service Center. FMT Bus Service was created in April 2012 and is funded entirely by Moving Fountain Forward (MFF) funds. MFF funds are a local sales tax program that the City of Fountain has utilized for funding local projects for over ten years. Over its first five years of service, FMT served 111,379 riders, and FMT buses have traveled a total of 566,001 miles. The existing transit system is operating at capacity with no planned expansion at this time. FMT operates fixed-route service and on-demand, diverted route service, as shown in **Figure 5**. Hourly service is provided on a single loop route using two vehicles with staggered start times. Service operates on weekdays between approximately 5:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Saturday services are provided between approximately 9 AM and 5 PM. Hourly AM and PM transit service schedules and a corresponding route map as of March 1, 2021.

The Mountain Metro Transit (MMT), previously known as Colorado Springs Coach Company, has been providing a bus system for the City of Colorado Springs since 1972. The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) assists in funding to help pay for capital projects, maintenance, and transit. Bus ridership is expected to exceed 2 million rides in 2022, with an increase in service on most routes and 2 additional routes added. The MMT is improving the frequency during off-peak hours and during evenings on and off weekends to improve customer travel time in the fall of 2022.



Specialized Transit Service

Fountain Valley Seniors, Inc. operates demand-responsive, door-to-door transit service to seniors in the Fountain Valley area and eastern El Paso County. The service is available for various trip purposes, including medical/dental appointments, shopping, employment, education, and recreation. Community Intersections delivers a portion of the One Ride trips under contract to Fountain Valley Seniors.

Table 4: Transit Facilities

Multimodal Segment	Use	Existing Or Adjacent Existing	Distance within Study Area (miles)
Greyhound Lines, Along I-25, to Colorado Springs & Pueblo	Bus	Existing	5.75
Los Paisanos Autobuses, Along I-25, connects Greeley, Longmont, Denver, Fountain, Pueblo, Walsenburg, and Trinidad	Bus	Existing	5.75
CDOT Bustang Outrider Line, Along I-25	Bus	Existing	5.75
Fountain Municipal Transit	Bus	Adjacent Existing	N/A
Colorado Springs-Mountain Metro Bus Service	Bus	Existing	N/A

Source: Moving Forward 2045 PPACG Master Plan; City of Fountain Transportation Master Plan; Colorado

Springs Transportation Master Plan



### Intercity Bus

The CDOT Bustang Outrider Line travels between Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and Lamar along I-25 in the study area. Every day, there is one northbound bus service and one southbound bus service. Currently, there is no CDOT Bustang Outrider bus stop infrastructure within the study area. The closest bus stop is Fountain Park and Ride (425 Royalty Plaza, Fountain, CO). This bus route can connect to the Bustang South Line to get to and from Denver.

The Greyhound bus service provides transit options to Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and locations throughout the United States. Within the study area, the greyhound bus route runs are limited to I-25. The nearest bus stops for this service are in Colorado Springs and Pueblo. Currently, there are no Greyhound bus stops within the study area. There are two northbound and two southbound buses that operate daily.

Los Paisanos Autobuses is a Mexican bus service company. The service connects Greeley, Longmont, Denver, Fountain, Pueblo, Walsenburg, and Trinidad. The route within the study area travels along I-25, however, there are no bus stops for this service. The bus service connects Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Idaho, Dallas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

### Proposed Transit Facilities

It is anticipated that multimodal options will be necessary as local agencies plan for development and understand the demand for transit facilities. As shown in **Figure 5**, as the population grows, the SPE will be a critical link between communities and providing the opportunity to connect to other transit facilities. Within the current transit facilities, there is a gap between bus routes between Colorado Springs and the City of Fountain (Figure 5). The two transit services do not connect to each other, which creates inconsistent transit access for residents of the Fountain Valley.

The Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) is one travel mode planned from Pueblo to Fort Collins. Within the study area, the FRPR would parallel I-25 and provide a safe, efficient, and reliable transportation option for travel between major population centers and destinations. Currently, stops are only planned in Pueblo and Colorado Springs. Residents of the Fountain Valley would have to travel into Colorado Springs to access this service. Still, this planned option will create a backbone for connecting and expanding rail and transit options in the state and region.

This PEL study aims to work with local municipalities and regional transportation agencies to define their vision for transit options. The project team connected with the CDOT Region 2 - Transit & Innovative Mobility Liaison, to understand any future local or regional transit plans. The CDOT 10-Year Strategic Project Pipeline identifies two transportation improvements in the area, within the next four years - the Bustang Fountain Mobility Hub at I-25/Exit 128 and the Fort Carson Circulators/Service to Pikes Peak Community College. Although no new regional transit routes are proposed to connect to the new South Powers Extension, the proposed roadway will be able to accommodate potential future transit operations and station infrastructure as to not preclude future transit options. This early planning and coordination will facilitate roadway discussions to serve future transit needs.



Figure 5. Existing Transit Routes

## Goals of Transportation Improvements

The recommended transportation improvements were developed to support the project needs. The project goals should include:

- **Accommodate Local and Regional Plans and Economic Growth** - The recommended alternative should build upon previous local and regional planning efforts that document proposed growth and development and the need for the extension of South Powers Boulevard.
- **Corridor Preservation Footprint** - Recommended project alternatives will be used to define the estimated right-of-way (ROW) needs to support future growth along the corridor. Although the Access Control Plan (ACP) is a separate and concurrent process, it will show the estimated ROW line developed during the PEL process to support local agencies in land use decision-making.
- **Consider Impacts to the Natural & Built Environment** – The proposed corridor should minimize impacts to documented environmental resource constraints to the greatest extent possible. Environmental resource constraints documented in the Existing Conditions Report included wetlands, aquifers, stream channels, floodplains, potential habitat for threatened and endangered (T&E) species and general wildlife, underground and above-ground utilities, historic resources, recreational resources, easements, and hazardous materials. Improvements should also consider impacts to residential, agricultural, and commercial properties.
- **Resiliency** - The rapidly increasing population surrounding the proposed corridor, coupled with the increasing rates of natural disasters and emergency response conditions, means that the corridor should be developed resiliently to withstand potential natural threats, such as fire and flood. Identifying risks that would require resilient solutions to protect the assets will reduce the likelihood of severe damage to those assets.
- **Support Technology and Green Infrastructure** – Improvements should consider that increases in development and traffic volumes will result in changes in implementation and advancement of technology along the corridor. Transportation technology is anticipated to change within the next 20 to 30 years, and improvements should consider the potential for technological advancement and opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and practices. This includes possible utilization of ROW, techniques to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and technology that will facilitate the efficient movement of people, goods, and services.



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- Your El Paso Master Plan, May 2021, El Paso County, CO.



# **Appendix G - Evaluation Criteria and Alternatives to be Evaluated**



# **South Powers Extension**

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





## PEL Study

# Alternatives Development and Evaluation Memo

December 3, 2024





El Paso County, in coordination with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has determined the attached Alternatives Evaluation Criteria (**Attachment A**) and Alternatives to be Evaluated are sufficient to address the established Purpose & Need and Goals of the South Powers Extension (SPE) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study.

## Reason and Vision

In August 2020, El Paso County, CDOT, and FHWA met, discussed, and determined that a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study is the correct study approach for the South Powers Boulevard Extension in El Paso County. Participants of the meeting concluded that a PEL is an appropriate method of study due to the amount of previous planning in this corridor and the need for a redundant route to I-25. As such, the PEL will fulfill a need to understand future growth and demand in this region.

## Purpose & Need and Goals

### Purpose of Transportation Improvements

The purpose of the study is to recommend an alignment to extend South Powers Boulevard (CO 21) from CO 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway to a connection with Interstate 25 (I-25), south of Colorado Springs and Fountain, Colorado. This new corridor aims to enhance regional mobility and integrate future multimodal opportunities. The study will define the phasing and next steps for implementing Powers Boulevard to the south.

### Need for Transportation Improvements

This section discusses the transportation needs for the Fountain Valley area. Transportation improvements are needed to:

**Advance Local and Regional Mobility** - SPE is needed to complete the regional transportation network in the Fountain Valley area to adequately serve future travel demands associated with continued growth. Improvements would enhance north/south mobility in the region by providing a connection to I-25, increasing access to future east/west routes, and adding an alternate route to other destinations.

**Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities** — Stakeholder input and prior planning efforts identified the need to increase connectivity and accessibility to multimodal opportunities. Through improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, enhanced trail network connectivity, and potential public transit connections, SPE would support an integrated transportation network.

### Goals of Transportation Improvements

The recommended transportation improvements were developed to support the project needs. The project goals include:



**Accommodate Local and Regional Plans and Economic Growth**– The recommended alternative should build upon previous local and regional planning efforts that document proposed growth and development and the need for the extension of South Powers Boulevard.

**Corridor Preservation Footprint** - Recommended project alternatives will be used to define the estimated right-of-way (ROW) needs to support future growth along the corridor. Although the Access Control Plan (ACP) is a separate and concurrent process, it will show the estimated ROW line developed during the PEL process to support local agencies in land use decision-making.

**Consider Impacts to the Natural & Built Environment** – The proposed corridor should minimize impacts to documented environmental resource constraints to the greatest extent possible. Environmental resource constraints documented in the Existing Conditions Report included wetlands, aquifers, stream channels, floodplains, potential habitat for threatened and endangered (T&E) species and general wildlife, underground and above-ground utilities, historic resources, recreational resources, easements, and hazardous materials. Improvements should also consider impacts to residential, agricultural, and commercial properties.

**Resiliency** – The rapidly increasing population surrounding the proposed corridor, coupled with the increasing rates of natural disasters and emergency response conditions, means that the corridor should be developed resiliently to withstand potential natural threats, such as fire and flood. Identifying risks that would require resilient solutions to protect the assets will reduce the likelihood of severe damage to those assets.

**Support Technology and Green Infrastructure** – Improvements should consider that increases in development and traffic volumes will result in changes in implementation and advancement of technology along the corridor. Transportation technology is anticipated to change within the next 20 to 30 years, and improvements should consider the potential for technological advancement and opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and practices. This includes possible utilization of ROW, techniques to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and technology that will facilitate the efficient movement of people, goods, and services.

## **Evaluation Criteria and Performance Measures**

Development, evaluation, and refinement of alternatives focused on identifying alignments that met the project Purpose & Need and matched corridor context. Evaluation criteria and performance measures were developed prior to beginning the alternatives development and evaluation process. The Project Team reviewed the proposed Evaluation Criteria with the Project Management Team (PMT) and Technical Team (TT) at several Technical Team meetings, and incorporated their revisions to confirm that the final Evaluation Criteria addressed the established Purpose & Need and Goals. These meetings included representatives from participating local agencies along the corridor, as well as representatives from CDOT and FHWA.



### Three-Tiered Approach

The Project Team developed a three-tiered process to evaluate alternatives which is shown in Figure 1. Evaluation criteria were developed for each level of evaluation and were used to assess alternatives relative to the Purpose & Need and Goals.

Level 1 performance measures assessed the ability of each alignment alternative to meet Purpose & Need.

Level 2 performance measures assessed the extent to which each alignment alternative met the Purpose & Need and evaluated how well alignments met project Goals.

As part of the Level 3 analysis, the Project Team evaluated several corridor widths to determine what future elements could be considered without precluding potential future design ideas. Future corridor elements included multimodal infrastructure and connections, freight considerations, resiliency opportunities, and green infrastructure. These corridor widths were balanced with the consideration of impacts to resources to recommend a width that provides flexibility. This width is also intended to provide a Corridor Preservation Footprint which will inform decision-making at the state and local level in terms of preserving land and making land use decisions to not preclude future transportation improvements. The Level 3 analysis and Corridor Preservation Footprint is discussed further in the PEL.

The final Evaluation Criteria table is included in **Attachment A**.

### Alternatives Development and Evaluation Process

Alternatives were developed through a multi-level iterative process. The process began with an array of varied alternatives that provided a phased sequence of recommended alternatives through a focused evaluation effort. Understanding of previous alignments studied, agency coordination, and public involvement, each played a major role in the alternative development process.

### No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative anticipates future conditions of the transportation network around the study area without completing any transportation improvements that are recommended by this PEL. The No Action Alternative includes required safety and maintenance improvements to maintain an operational transportation system, as well as projects previously identified in the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) adopted 2045 fiscally constrained Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Funding estimates for the 25-year RTP planning horizon are developed through a collaborative process with CDOT and statewide planning partner input. The federal funding that is taken into consideration for distribution comes from FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allocations to all 50 states. The State of Colorado also has transportation generated funds that are allocated to the transportation planning and construction process through legislation and the highway users tax distributions. Local funding and private/developer funded projects comprise the final funding components for the PPACG fiscally constrained RTP. The No Action Alternative does not meet the Purpose & Need of this PEL, but is used as a baseline for comparison to the operational and safety benefits associated with recommended transportation improvements.



Funding for projects included in the PPACG 2045 fiscally constrained RTP is drawn from sources that include funds from the following programs:

- FHWA funding programs
  - National Highway Performance Program [NHPP]
  - Surface Transportation Block Grant Program [STBG, formerly STP]
  - Highway Safety Improvement Program [HSIP]
  - Railway Highway Crossing
  - Transportation Alternatives Program/STBG set-aside [TAP]
  - Emergency Relief Program
- FTA funding programs
  - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and individuals with Disabilities [5310]
  - Urbanized Area Formula Program [5307]
  - Capital Investment Program [5309, 5339, 5314]
- The Colorado Highway Users Tax Fund
  - 65% CDOT, 26% Colorado counties, 9% Colorado cities
- Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009 (FASTER)
  - Senate Bill 09-108, including Statewide Bridge Enterprise [SBE], High-Performance Transportation Enterprise [HTPE], Safety Programs, and Statewide Transit dedicated funds
- Local sales tax-supported funding programs
  - Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA, Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, unincorporated El Paso County, and the towns of Green Mountain Falls, Ramah and Calhan. El Paso County and Colorado Springs)
  - The 2C2 Road Tax (Colorado Springs), and the Moving Fountain Forward (MFF) ballot initiative
  - Private developer funding

**Table 1** provides information on CO21/CO 16/CO 83 (Powers Boulevard) projects included in the PPACG 2045 fiscally constrained RTP that have thus been included in the No Action Model.

Table 1. 2045 Fiscally Constrained Projects Considered in No Action Alternative Model (STIP/TIP)

Facility	Project Name	Project Description	ID	Source
CO 21	CO 21 and Airport Road Diverging Diamond I Interchange Construction	Construction of a diverging diamond interchange at CO 21 and Airport Road	SR26867.118	SB-267 and CDOT's 10-Year Strategic Funds



Alternatives Development and Evaluation Memo

Facility	Project Name	Project Description	ID	Source
CO 21	Powers Boulevard (CO 21) Post FONSI ROW Acquisition	ROW preservation project	SPP6337	CDOT Regional Priorities
CO 21	CO 21 and Research Parkway Diverging Diamond Interchange	Construction of a new interchange at CO 21 and Research Parkway	SPP7006 (Completed)	CDOT Regional Priorities, 10-year strategic funds
CO 16 & CO 21	CO 16 & CO 21 Signal project	Upgrade signals at various locations	SR26644.085 & SR26644.96	Region 2 Signal Pool
CO 21	North I-25 interchange at Northgate/Voyager	Construct new interchange	N/A (Completed)	Private developer funded
CO 21	CO 21 connection between Voyager and CO 83	Construct new connection to replace existing segments of CO 83 and Interquest Parkway that serves as the connection between CO 21 and I-25	N/A	TBD - Private developer, local funding mix



## Alternatives Development

The Project Team utilized data from the existing conditions report, stakeholder input, previous planning studies, and local agency transportation plans to develop a range of alternatives for consideration.

### Connection to I-25

Alternatives were developed by reviewing logical termini along I-25 within the study area and connecting to the proposed South Powers Boulevard Extension. Previous studies labeled alternatives based on the location of the connection to I-25. Letters (B, C, D, E, F, G, H) represent the connections and the numbers represent a variation to that connection.

### Previously Considered Alignments

As shown in the Alignment Alternatives Development Process graphic (**Figure 2**), the previously identified alignments from the South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study (CDOT; Completed 2000) were screened for inclusion in the alternatives analysis process. The previously identified alignments are shown **Figure 3**.

Figure 2. Alignment Alternatives Development Process

Figure 3. Previous Alignment Options from the South Powers Boulevard Feasibility Study

Alternatives that were no longer feasible and/or have fatal flaws due to new development, utility conflicts (solar farms), or that have already been constructed, were removed from consideration (**Figure 4**). The removed alternatives are shown in **Table 2**.

Figure 4. Elimination of Previously Considered Alignments

Table 2. Previous Alignments Retained

Alternative	Status	Reason for Elimination
B	Removed	Existing Mesa Ridge interim connection (No Action Alternative)
C	Removed	Bisects existing neighborhoods and residences; bisects Fountain Creek Regional Park



Alternatives Development and Evaluation Memo

Alternative	Status	Reason for Elimination
D	Removed	Bisects existing neighborhoods and residences; bisects John Metcalf Memorial Park, Adams Open Space, and Christian Open Space
E1	Removed	Bisects existing neighborhoods and residences
E2	Retained	-
F	Removed	Bisects existing solar farm and Clear Springs Ranch
G1	Retained	-
G2	Retained	-
H1	Retained	-
H2	Retained	-
I	Removed	Bisects private conservation lands
J	Removed	Intersects existing and proposed solar farm locations; intersects proposed reservoir location; bisects private conservation lands

**New Alignments**

The Project Team, in consultation with the TT, determined that an additional connection point to I-25, to the South of the El Paso County border and in the northern portion of Pueblo County, should be added to the analysis. This additional connection point was suggested to evaluate a parallel route to I-25 that provides another north-south connection between the City of Colorado Springs and the City of Pueblo.

Four additional alignment variations that avoided new utility facilities and development but retained the same connections points to I-25 were developed and included for analysis (**Figure 5** and **Table 3**).



Table 3. New Alignment Options

Alternative	Status	I-25 Connection
E3	New	E (126.2)
G3	New	G (MP 123.2)
H3	New	H (121.6)
K	New	K (MP 115.8)

Figure 5. Newly Developed Alignment Options

The Project Team retained five of the alignments previously analyzed (**Table 2**) and developed four new alignments to be evaluated as part of the Alternatives Analysis process (**Table 3**). These nine options connect to four different I-25 connection points.

Figure 6. Alignment Alternatives for Alternatives Analysis

The South Powers Boulevard alignment alternatives shown in **Figure 6 and Table 4** start at the southern end of the existing Powers Boulevard (CO 21). This connection point forms the northern terminus of the South Powers Extension PEL Alignments considered. Each alignment then connects at various points along I-25 to complete the southern terminus. The following analysis determines the alignment which best meets project Needs and Goals while still addressing stakeholder concerns.

Table 4. Alignment Alternatives for Alternatives Analysis

Alternative	Status	I-25 Connection
E2	Retained	E (126.2)
E3	New	E (126.2)
G1	Retained	G (MP 123.2)
G2	Retained	G (MP 123.2)
G3	New	G (MP 123.2)
H1	Retained	H (121.6)
H2	Retained	H (121.6)
H3	New	H (121.6)
K	New	K (MP 115.8)

**Level I Evaluation**



The Level 1 Evaluation assessed a full range of alternatives to identify those that meet Purpose & Need. The Needs defined for the corridor were to advance local and regional mobility and incorporate multimodal opportunities. Each alternative was evaluated according to the established evaluation criteria as follows:

- Does this alternative have the potential to improve travel times for adjacent routes?
- Does this alternative have the potential to improve mobility and/or reduce congestion in the study area?
- Does this alternative have the potential to improve connectivity to regional destinations?
- Does this alternative have the potential to increase and not preclude multimodal mobility by way of trail system connectivity, transit opportunities, and freight connectivity?

Level 1 evaluation was limited to qualitative, yes or no, answers to the questions above. Alternatives that met the Purpose & Need advanced to Level 2. The Project Team, in coordination with the Technical Team, had the opportunity to review and discuss inputs to this table as well as the alternatives progressing to Level 2. The Level 1 Evaluation matrix can be found in **Table 5**, as well as in **Attachment B**.

Table 5. Summary of Level 1 Analysis Results

### **Result of Level 1**

The following language was used to document the findings of the Level 1 analysis:

Carried Forward: The alternative meets Purpose and Need, is considered reasonable and feasible, and may be considered for further evaluation in this study or subsequent NEPA and Project development.

Eliminated: does not meet Purpose and Need, has a fatal flaw, and/or is considered unreasonable. A project alternative that is Eliminated is removed from further consideration in the PEL Study.

The Project Team identified that all alternatives met the Purpose & Need of the Study and were carried forward into Level 2.

### **Level 2 Evaluation**

The goal of the Level 2 Evaluation was to introduce more detailed criteria to evaluate the project Needs and to assess how well the alternative met the project Goals. Each Alternative was evaluated according to the established criteria shown in **Attachment A**. The full Level 2 Evaluation Matrix can be viewed in **Attachment C**.

**Attachment C** provides the detailed assessment of the alternatives and shows the initial collection effort and rating system for each performance measure developed. Once data was collected and entered into the Level 2 Evaluation Matrix, alignments were compared against the No Action Alternative and other alignments.

The following values were used to rate each of the alignments:



-1 Value - represents an alternative that was substantially less effective in addressing the Needs and Goals of the proposed corridor, when compared to the No Action and other alternatives evaluated.

0 Value - represents an alternative that was neither substantially more or less effective in addressing the Needs and Goals of the proposed corridor, when compared to the No Action and other alternatives evaluated.

1 Value - represents an alternative that was the most effective in addressing the Needs and Goals of the proposed corridor, when compared to the No Action and other alternatives evaluated.

The following language was used to document the findings of the Level 2 analysis:

**Eliminated:** Does not meet Purpose and Need, has a fatal flaw, and/or is considered unreasonable. A project alternative that is Eliminated is removed from further consideration in the PEL Study.

**Not Recommended:** Will not be evaluated further in this study due to comparatively negligible benefits and higher impacts than other alternatives but may be studied further with subsequent NEPA and project development.

**Carried Forward:** Considered reasonable and feasible and may be considered for further evaluation in this study or subsequent NEPA and project development.

**Recommended:** Considered reasonable and feasible and recommended for consideration as the Preferred Alternative during subsequent NEPA and project development.

A summary of the Level 2 results is shown in **Table 6**. The colors of the values shown above were used as a visual representation to compare alternatives. Alternatives with green cells represent a more favorable alternative. Alignments E3 and H3 scored the same overall when measured against all the evaluation criteria and were Recommended to move forward.

### **Corridor Recommendation**

Based on the Alternatives Analysis, El Paso County selected E3 and H3 as the Recommended Alternatives. Although E3 and H3 scored the same overall, Alignment H3 scored higher in meeting the mobility and multimodal Needs of the corridor compared to Alignment E3, which scored higher in meeting the project Goals. **Figure 7** shows the two recommended alignments (E3 and H3). The Project Team presented H3 as the recommended alignment to the Technical Team on April 18, 2023. During that meeting, the Technical Team suggested moving forward with Alignments E3 and H3 as a phased approach, to provide short- and long-term solutions to improve local and regional mobility.



Alternatives Development and Evaluation Memo

Alignment E3 aligns with current local planning efforts and provides a solution to address urgent needs in the corridor. Technical Team was in agreement that the G2 and G3 alignments were less favorable than the other alternatives evaluated. As shown in the Alternatives Analysis, the G alignments:

- Are less effective in meeting the immediate transportation needs of the corridor in comparison to the E3 alignment;
- Provide less transportation-related benefits (they provide the least reduction in total VMT and VHT); and
- Have greater potential environmental impacts than the other alignments considered.

Since these two alignments are still considered reasonable and feasible, they have been Carried Forward.

Additionally, Technical Team suggested that Alignment K be studied further as a long-range plan to create a redundant route to I-25. This alignment would create another regional connection between the greater Colorado Springs area and Pueblo County. This effort requires collaboration between the El Paso and Pueblo County, which is currently beyond the scope of this PEL study. This alignment will be Carried Forward for further evaluation.

Table 6. Level 2 Results Summary

Column Head	Column Head	Column Head	Column Head	Column Head
Row Head	123	123	123	123
Row Head	456	456	456	456
Row Head	789	789	789	789
Row Head	123	123	123	123
Row Head	456	456	456	456
Row Head	789	789	789	789

Figure 7. Recommended Corridor Alternatives Map



# Attachment A: Evaluation Criteria and Performance Measures



South Powers Boulevard Extension  
 Planning and Environmental Linkages Study and Access Control Plan  
 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION CRITERIA

Category	Criteria	Performance Measures	
		Level 1	Level 2 (Alignments)
<b>PROJECT NEEDS</b>			
<b>Advance Local and Regional Mobility</b>	<b>Mobility and Operations</b>	Potential to improve Travel Time for adjacent routes (Y/N) Potential to improve mobility / reduce congestion (Y/N)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (miles and/or hours)</li> <li>• Out-of-direction travel (miles)</li> </ul>
	<b>Connectivity</b>	Potential to improve connectivity to regional destinations (Y/N)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces travel time and/or creates alternate routes between installations (qualitative)</li> <li>• Reduces emergency response time and/or expands service areas with rapid response (Travel time isochrones) (Model-based; qualitative)</li> </ul>
<b>Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail System Connectivity</li> <li>• Transit opportunities</li> <li>• Freight Connectivity</li> </ul>	Potential to increase multimodal mobility (Y/N)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiuse path connection opportunities (number of existing or planned facilities)</li> <li>• Accommodates/supports Transit Expansion (qualitative)</li> <li>• Reduce freight travel times and/or Improves Route Connectivity (qualitative)</li> </ul>

Category	Criteria	Performance Measures	
		Level 1	Level 2 (Alignments)
PROJECT GOALS			
Accommodate Local and Regional Plans and Economic Growth	Local Agency Transportation and Development Plans	Not evaluated in Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment with local agency plans (qualitative)</li> </ul>
Corridor Preservation Footprint	Landowners/ Business Impacts/ Neighborhoods	Not evaluated in Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complexity of acquisition (qualitative)</li> </ul>
Consider Impacts to Land Use and the Natural & Built Environment	Resource Constraints	Not evaluated in Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource Specific Constraints (potential impacts within 300' of alignment footprint)</li> </ul>
Resiliency	Redundancy Threat identification (Fire, Flood, etc.)	Not evaluated in Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redundant routes opportunities [Network Robustness Index (NRI) values]</li> <li>Identify threats (number)</li> </ul>
Support Technology and Green Infrastructure	Optimize ROW (Level 2-Typical Section)  Reduce GHG Emissions  Inclusion of technology	Not evaluated in Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic Model GHG Reduction (Million Metric Tons (MMT)/Year)</li> <li>Connectivity to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (DICs)(number of DICs within walkable distance from alignment)</li> </ul>



# Attachment B: Level 1 Evaluation Matrix

Category	Advance Local and Regional Mobility			Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities	Action	Notes
Criteria	Mobility & Operations		Connectivity	Multimodal		
Performance Measures	Potential to Improve Travel Time for Adjacent Routes	Potential to Improve Mobility / Reduce Congestion	Potential to Improve Connectivity to Regional Destinations	Potential to Increase Multimodal Mobility		
	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N		
Alignment						
No Action	N	N	N	N	Carried Forward	Carried Forward for comparison to other alternatives.
E2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
E3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
G1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
G2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
G3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
H1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
H2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
H3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	
K	Y	Y	Y	Y	Carried Forward	



# Attachment C: Level 2 Evaluation Matrix





# Appendix H - Public Involvement Memo



# South Powers Extension

*Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*





## PEL Study

# Public Involvement Memo

December 3, 2024





# Public Involvement

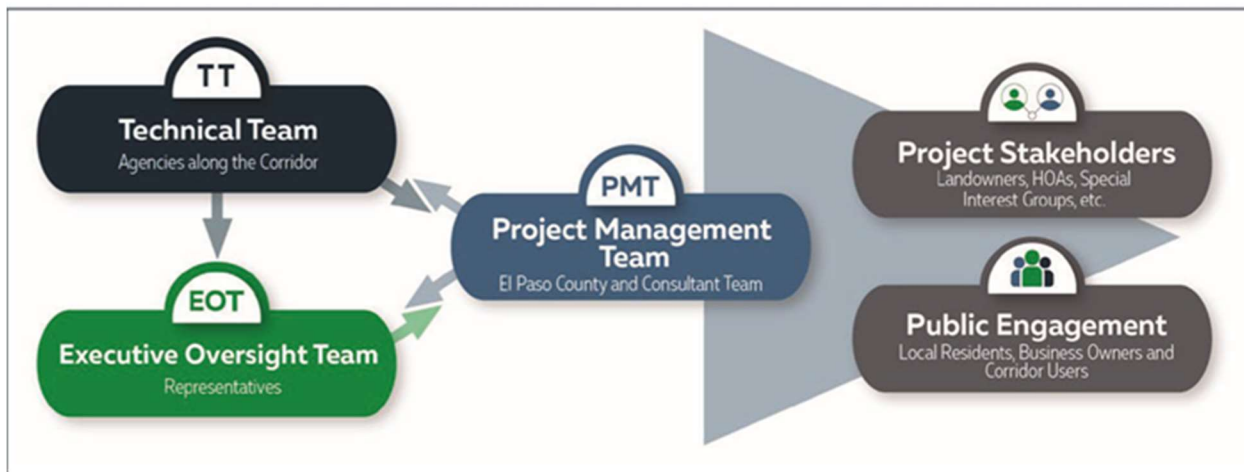
## Introduction

The SPE stakeholder and public engagement strategy was created to obtain input from and provide information with the realization that transportation projects affect stakeholders, property owners, community organizations, military installations, businesses, and travelers in different ways. The PEL process created opportunities to exchange information with entities with varying levels of involvement. This included one-on-one and small group meetings with property owners, engaging local and resource agency representatives, and discussing with elected officials through the creation of an Executive Oversight Team and Technical Advisory Team.

## Project and Agency Coordination

Coordination with the partner agencies throughout the Study was a crucial part of the process. The PMT collaborated with representatives of each agency who served on the Project Management Team, Technical Team, and/or Executive Oversight Team (See Section 1.3) to ensure they were kept informed of the progress of the Study, provided their input, and to assure their support of the final recommendations and that their agency's positions were reflected in the final Study Report.

Figure 24. Project and Agency Coordination



## Project Management Team (PMT)

The PMT included El Paso County representatives of the Public Works Transportation Planning Manager (Victoria Chavez), Engineering Manager (Randy Hergenrether), and Project Manager (Howard Schwartz), as well as the Wilson & Co. consultant team. The PMT met biweekly on Tuesdays from February 2022 through March 2024.



## Public Involvement Memo

The Project Management Team (PMT) was responsible for making project decisions. They monitored the scope and schedule to keep the project moving in the right direction. The PMT reviewed all information before it was presented to the Technical Team, Executive Oversight Team, Stakeholders and public.

### Technical Team (TT)

The TT included representatives from agencies along the corridor, including City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities, El Paso County, City of Fountain, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Federal Highway Administration, Colorado Department of Transportation, Mountain Metropolitan Transit, and the Project Management Team.

The TT met eight times:

2022: February 22, March 22, April 26, June 28, August 23, September 27

2023: April 18, August 29

The Technical Team (TT) was responsible for making project recommendations that are supported by their respective agency and provided input to the PMT on critical issues. A series of meetings were held to communicate what information would be presented at the meetings and any decisions that would need to be made. The helped better prepare TT members for each meeting in order to send important information to appropriate staff, if needed. The most important responsibility of the TT was to keep the Executive Oversight Team (EOT) informed of the project.

### Executive Oversight Team (EOT)

Included in the EOT were representatives with El Paso County (Joshua Palmer/County Engineer and Jeffrey Manchester/Deputy County Engineer), City of Colorado Springs (Gayle Sturdivant/Interim Public Works Director), Colorado Department of Transportation (Shane Ferguson/Region 2 Regional Transportation Director), Federal Highway Administration (Shaun Cutting/Program Delivery Team Leader), Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (Andrew Gunning/Executive Director), City of Fountain (Todd Evans/Deputy City Manager), and the Project Management Team.

The EOT met five times:

2022: March 3, May 5

2023: March 23, May 25, September 28

The Executive Oversight Team (EOT) was briefed quarterly by the PMT to keep them informed on the progress of the project. The PMT and TT were responsible for making the elected official aware of issues that may include funding and grant opportunities. Their understanding and support for the vision for the corridor will generate excitement for the project.

### Resource Agency Coordination

Agency contacts below received a letter via email on June 16, 2022 detailing the scope of the project. At the completion of the Existing Conditions Report, they were sent a copy for review and comment. Each of the agencies were also sent a final version of this PEL document. Any further comments from the agencies will be addressed during NEPA.

- Agroforestry Project
- CDOT/CDPHE Liaison
- Clean Water Coalition
- Colorado Parks & Wildlife



## Public Involvement Memo

- CDPHE Air Quality Division
- CDPHE EPS Oil and Gas Liaison
- CDPHE Hazardous Materials
- CDPHE Solid Waste
- CDPHE Water Quality Control Division
- CDPHE Water Quality Control Division (Permits Section)
- EPA NEPA Transportation Sector
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Resources Conservation Service
- State Historic Preservation Officer
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Comments from the EPA, DNR, and USFWS were received in May 2023 (**Attachment 1 – Resource Agency Comment Response**). A majority of comments were received by the EPA, and an individual meeting was held on May 22, 2023 to discuss the comments and how they should be addressed. All comments received were incorporated into the Alternatives Development process and PEL recommendations.

## Stakeholder Group

A Stakeholder Group was identified early in the Study and solicited for feedback at study milestones. Participants included representatives from El Paso County, CDOT, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Colorado Springs Utilities, Transportation Commissioner, FHWA, several business entities located along or nearby the South Powers Extension Corridor, Chambers of Commerce, community organizations, school districts and colleges, emergency responder organizations, transit organization, and military installations.

The Stakeholder Group participated in virtual meetings twice during the Study process, May 16, 2022, and October 13, 2023. They were also included in the progress e-newsletter distribution and provided opportunities to provide input/comment to the Study recommendations.

Understanding the pressure of competing land uses, new developments and annexations, and differing community objectives helped to define the needs and priorities along the corridor. During the first meeting, members of the Project Team met with stakeholders to understand their concerns and how improvements can accommodate and support the safety, mobility, resiliency, access, land use, and aesthetic goals. The final corridor alignment recommendations were presented to the Stakeholder Group during the second of the two meetings for their feedback.

## Colorado Department of Transportation

CDOT is a partnering agency for the Study, as it serves as a connection to FHWA for ultimate approval, and because this will be an extension of a CDOT owned and access-controlled road (CO 21) that will connect back to another CDOT owned and access-controlled facility (I-25). Since CDOT was a vital stakeholder, the PMT took additional steps to keep CDOT engaged throughout the Study process:

- Representatives from CDOT were included in all Project Management Team, Technical Team, and Executive Oversight Team meetings
- Public presentation materials were reviewed by CDOT staff
- All FHWA Coordination Points were first reviewed by CDOT staff



- A project scoping meeting was completed with CDOT technical experts
- The Existing Conditions report was reviewed by CDOT staff
- This final report was sent to CDOT for review

### **Military**

The military serves as a major stakeholder in the region, as well as a major stakeholder for this study, and any future projects as a result of this study, as previously discussed. For these reasons, the local military installations were considered resource agencies for this PEL process, and were provided opportunities to review the Existing Conditions Report, including the final recommendation. Military representatives were engaged at study milestones as part of the Stakeholder Committee and included in the progress e-newsletter distribution. Installations involved in the study included: U.S. Air Force Academy, Peterson Space Force Base, Schriever Space Force Base, Fort Carson and Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Base. Although outside of the Study Area, Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Base and the U.S. Air Force Academy were also kept informed through the progress e-newsletters and were given the opportunity to provide input/comment. They also received the final recommendations for any comments they wished to provide.

### **Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)**

PPACG is the metropolitan planning organization responsible for developing and funding regional transportation facilities. PPACG will be an instrumental participant in future projects as a result of this Study. For these reasons, PPACG staff was included in Technical Team, Executive Oversight Team and participated in the Stakeholder Committee meetings.

### **Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain**

A connection of I-25 and the existing Powers Boulevard would directly impact local municipalities that the existing and proposed roadway would intersect. This includes the Cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs. Additionally, as the SPE has been included in both of these city's transportation master plans, coordination with these entities was particularly important. Representatives of both cities were included in the Technical Team and Executive Oversight Team, as well as participated in the Stakeholder Committee meetings. Staff from both the City of Colorado Springs and the City of Fountain were included in the progress e-newsletter distribution and received the final recommendations for any comments they wished to provide.

### **Property Owners**

With the proposed alignment requiring the creation of a new roadway, the potential for property acquisition was a consideration of the PMT's efforts from the beginning of the study process. The PMT worked with local property owners directly to inform them about the Study, listened to their input, and to find the best ways to minimize or mitigate potential impacts from a future roadway. This coordination included one-on-one meetings and small group neighborhood meetings with property owners, to understand their thoughts and concerns about a future roadway, and to assure they were informed about the project process and final recommendations.

An initial letter mailed certified April 21, 2022 (**Attachment 2 – Landowner Meeting Invite**) requested that property owners contact the PMT and arrange a one-on-one meeting so that the PMT could provide an overview of the study and the corridor Alternatives Development and Recommended Corridor



Alignment process and to answer any questions the property owners may have had. The meetings took place at the El Paso County offices (3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs).

- 270 certified delivery letters were mailed to property owners located along the potential corridor alignments. The certified letters were sent to both the property physical address as well as to the property owner's mailing address to increase assurance that contact would be made with the property owners one way or the other.
- Of the 270 letters sent, 253 were confirmed to have reached the property owner.
- 74 mailed to the property physical address were returned as non-deliverable, vacant, unable to forward. Of those however, all but 17 did receive the letter at their alternate mailing address.
- 74 property owners contacted the PMT
- 23 individual property owners met with the PMT May 11 and 12, 2022.

A small group meeting took place February 8, 2023, with approximately 7 Furlong Circle property owners in Fountain, Colorado, to discuss the recommended alternative in relation to their properties. A second letter mailed September 21, 2023 (**Attachment 3 – Final Landowner Invitation**), requested that property owners contact the PMT for a second round of one-on-one meetings to discuss the recommended corridor alignment in relation to their properties. Phone calls and emails were also sent to those for whom the PMT had phone numbers and email addresses. The meetings took place at the El Paso County offices (3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs) or at the Wilson & Co. office (5755 Mark Dabbling Blvd. Colorado Springs).

- 160 letters were sent to property owners located along the recommended corridor alignment.
- 63 individual property owners met with the PMT between October 10 and November 2, 2023.

A group meeting with 23 Cherry Creek Farm Homeowner Association/neighborhood members and property owners took place October 18, 2023, at the Hanover Fire Protection District, Fire Station #2 (13325 Old Pueblo Road, Fountain) where the PMT reviewed the recommended alignment.

Input received from the property owners was crucial to the alternatives analysis process by including possible impacts to property owners as one of the impacts measured.

One-on-one meetings took place with property owners located along the corridor on the following dates:

- May 11 and 12, 2022: Initial meetings with 21 separate property owners to discuss the Study in relation to their properties as well as the study goals, process, and schedule.
- February 8, 2023: Meeting with property owners along Furlong Circle, Fountain to obtain their input on the narrowed list of corridor alignments.
- October 11, 12, and 18, 2023: Meetings to review the recommended corridor alignment and obtain property owner feedback.
- October 18, 2023: Meeting with Cherry Creek Farm Neighborhood Group, Fountain, to review the recommended corridor alignment and obtain their feedback.
- October 18, 2023: Meeting with individual property owner to review the recommended corridor alignment and obtain property owner feedback.
- November 2, 2023: Meeting with individual property owner to review the recommended corridor alignment and obtain property owner feedback.

## Developers

As this proposed corridor would be built in a rapidly developing area, land developers were sought out for input which helped with the alignment alternatives process and evaluation criteria. Two meetings for developers were held: once during the development of existing conditions (group meeting, May 9,



2022), and one at the conclusion of the alternatives analysis process (one-on-one meetings, October 10, 2023) to report on the Study's findings and recommendations and to receive developer feedback.

### Other Stakeholders Considered

Other stakeholders involved in the Study included: school districts, businesses along the corridor Study Area, and organizations such as chambers of commerce, Council of Neighbors and Organizations (CONO), Colorado Springs Airport, Amazon, and Front Range Dual-Served Industrial Rail Park; police and fire departments; and the Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain.

## 9.4 - Public Meetings

The public was engaged at various times and through different platforms throughout the PEL process to reach as many of the public, property owners, and stakeholders as possible along the Corridor. The public was updated at important study milestones identified by the PMT.

### Open House # 1 (In-person Open House and Virtual Public Open House)

Both an in-person and a virtual open house option were provided with the intent to enable broader public participation. A summary of the public involvement can be found in **Attachment 4 – PI Summary I**.

The goals of this public engagement were to:

- Inform the public about the PEL study
- Review the Vision for the corridor and the reason for the project
- Review the existing conditions of the area
- Collect comments or questions
- Collect public input to help shape recommendations for the corridor

In-person Public Open House: Approximately 50 citizens attended the Open House held from 5:30 – 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at the Fountain City Hall (116 South Main Street, Fountain, Colorado 80817).

Virtual Public Open House: A Virtual Public Open House remained live on the project website for a three-week period, May 25 through June 15, 2022, for the public to review the virtual display boards and to post comments either geographically on the Interactive Comment Map or in the online open house Comment Form (**Attachment 5 – Virtual Open House Comment Form**).

Communication Tools: The following communications tools were used to promote the in-person and virtual Public Open Houses:

- Project website went live May 12, 2022, with information about the Study and how to sign up to be kept informed of the Study progress as well as the public meeting dates. The in-person and virtual public open houses were promoted on the Study's website and on the El Paso County website *EPasoCo.com*.
- E-newsletters (**Attachment 6 – First eNewsletter**) describing the Study, timeline, and public engagement opportunities and promoting specifics about the public open houses were distributed a total of 10 times to the approximately 570 growing list of email addresses in the database (as of completion of the public engagement process in February 2024).



## Public Involvement Memo

- An article about the study and promoting the public open houses was submitted to El Paso County. It appeared in the May issue of "The Roadway" publication.
- News releases were distributed by the El Paso County Public Information Office to local news media resulting in numerous news stories in local media outlets (**Attachment 7 – First Newsletter**).
- Communication materials were distributed to various community organizations for inclusion in their communications channels to their constituents.
- Social media posts and news releases were provided to project partner agencies of El Paso County, City of Fountain, City of Colorado Springs, CDOT, PPACG, and to the Stakeholder Group to distribute through their communication channels.

### Open House #2 (Virtual Option only)

The second Public Open House for the South Powers PEL Study was virtual to enable wider public participation for a longer duration of to review the PEL materials and provide comment. The approach for promoting this event involved outreach to residents and property owners located along the recommended corridor alignments via post card (**Attachment 8 – Post Card**); including additional outreach efforts to disadvantaged communities, project stakeholders, and the public. A summary of the public involvement can be found in **Attachment 9 – PI Summary II**.

The goals of this second virtual public open house public engagement included:

- Inform the public about the status of the PEL Study, the Vision for the corridor and the Reason for the project
- Inform the public about the resulting recommendations from the Study
- Collect comments and/or questions
- Collect public input for the final PEL report

The virtual public open house remained open for public comment on the project website from January 25 through February 19, 2024, for the public to review the virtual display boards and to post comments either geographically on the Interactive Comment Map or in the online Open House Comment Form (**Attachment 10 – Second Virtual Open House Comment Form**).

Communication Tools: The following communications tools were used to promote the second virtual Public Open House:

- Project website: The Virtual Public Open House was live on the Project website from January 25 – February 19, 2024.
- E-newsletters: with links to the virtual public open house also described the Study, Existing Conditions Report, and timeline were distributed a total of 4 times during this period to the list of email addresses in the database (as of completion of the public engagement process in March 2024).
- News release: was distributed by the El Paso County Public Information Office to local news media resulting in numerous news stories in local media outlets about the virtual public open house and comment period. (**Attachment 11 – Second Newsletter**)
- Communication materials and Project Fact Sheet (**Attachment 12 – Project Fact Sheet**) were distributed to various community organizations for inclusion in their communications channels to their constituents.
- Social media posts and news releases were provided to project partner agencies of El Paso County, City of Fountain, City of Colorado Springs, CDOT, PPACG, and to the Stakeholder Group to distribute through their communication channels.



## 9.5 - Public Communications

### E-newsletters

The PMT distributed 14 total newsletters throughout the course of the Study. Newsletters were distributed at milestones in the Study process to the growing list of 570 email addresses that signed up for project notifications. The e-newsletters described the PEL Study, the process, timeline and promoted public engagement opportunities and public open houses (in-person and virtual). The e-newsletters included a link to the website, to the Virtual Public Open Houses, as well as to the project-specific email address, *SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com*, where the public could submit comments and questions.

### Project Website

The project website (<https://www.SouthPowersStudy.com/>) became available to the public at the start of the Study process on May 12, 2022, and will remain live through and after the conclusion of the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) Study. The Virtual Public Open House documents showing the Study recommendations were posted January 25, 2024, which also signified the start of the second public engagement and comment period. Through the website, the public had an ongoing opportunity to post comments to the interactive corridor map, as well as to sign up to receive e-newsletters with Study updates and notices of opportunities to submit questions and comments.

The website, updated four times throughout the Study process, includes tabs that provide information on the Reason for the Project, the Vision, the Location, and the Estimated Study Schedule. The Overview tab includes a description of the PEL process, definition of an Access Control Plan (ACP), and benefits of combining the PEL and ACP. The Corridor History tab includes background on the current South Powers Boulevard and corridor history extending back to 1963. References to numerous previous planning documents dating back to 1970 are also included. Other documents posted to the website include a list of frequently asked questions and answers, the Purpose & Need and Goals statements, and the Existing Conditions Report. Once completed and approved, the ACP and the final PEL Report will be posted to the website as well.

### Public Project Fact Sheet

A Project Fact Sheet was created and distributed to all organizations that were part of the Stakeholder Group providing an overview of the project and how to provide comments. The Stakeholders were encouraged to distribute the Fact Sheet to their constituents through their individual communication channels.

### Public Comment Tracking

A Project Comment Log (**Attachment 13 – Project Comment Log**) was maintained throughout the duration of the Study (January 2022 through April 2024) to track emails and/or phone calls received from the public. The Project Team received 70 comments through e-mail and phone calls, which were all logged in the Comment Log. An additional 48 comments were received through the project website comment form for a total of 118 comments overall received over the duration of the Study.

The Comment Log noted the date the comment and/or question was received, name of the individual and their comment/question. It also included when available, their email address, phone number, and mailing address. The Comment Log also noted any PMT response and the date the response was sent



back to the individual. Generally, the comments/questions were feedback on the recommended alignment and their location in relation to specific properties.

### **Public Comments Received**

Generally, most of the comments submitted were from self-identified property owners with properties located along the shorter term (E3) and longer term (H3) Recommended Corridor Alignments. Many expressed a desire to not have a new road near their properties due to the impact on residences, agricultural farms, and businesses. Of the comments submitted, there was an even split of those that prefer one section of the alignment over the other, depending on the location of their property.

### **Equitable Engagement**

Communication materials promoting the online Virtual Public Open House included a statement indicating verbal interpretation services were available upon request by email to *SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com*.

E-newsletters and postcards also included a note in Spanish that all Study materials would be made available in Spanish upon request. No requests for Spanish language translation were received. E-newsletters and the Project Fact Sheet were distributed to various community organizations in the southeast area of Colorado Springs, which has the City's highest percentage of minority and low-income populations. These organizations included the RISE Coalition, Solid Rock Youth Center and Community Development Corporation, churches, the local Boys & Girls Club, Deerfield Hills Community Center, Hillside Community Center, City of Fountain City Hall, City of Fountain Library, Sand Creek Library, and the Southeast YMCA.



# Attachment 1: Resource Agency Comment Response

## South Powers Extension PEL: Existing Conditions Report

### Comment Form

Draft Submitted: April 2023

Comments Due: end of day May 1st, 2023

Comments Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer (First Last, Agency)	SECTION #	PAGE	LINE	Revised page	Revised line	COMMENT	A/R/C – Accepted, Rejected with explanation,	RESPONSE (by consultant)
Julie Smith, EPA	Planning Context chapter	13	Header	N/A	N/A	General Comment: EPA suggests consistent use of appropriate citations in the report, particularly when there are conclusions made about impacts or other expected outcomes within the document. This provides for improved understanding of why such conclusions are reached and allows the information to be verified early in the PEL process by agency reviewers, and therefore, helps ensure the accuracy of information from this PEL into any future NEPA process, public outreach and documentation.	A	Additional citations added where possible/necessary.
Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental Overview chapter	56	2	47	2	It would be helpful to include the reference to both FHWA and CEQ regulations (23 CFR Part 771 and 40 CFR 1500, et seq., respectively). <b>Recommend that this is clarified so that the regulatory context is accurate and understood by the reader.</b>	A	Updated.
Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental Overview chapter	56	First paragraph	47	N/A	What is the region of influence (i.e., study area + buffer) for the study based on? In other words, why is 0.15 miles "the" appropriate distance?	A	Revised study area description; clarified reason for study area size (inclusive of previous alignments and possible alignments).
Julie Smith, EPA	Floodplains and Floodways; Next Steps	58	1	49	N/A	It is our understanding that this is one proposed project so this sentence reads a bit unclear here. Consider editing to refer to what will be done for this project for purposes of clarity.  Further, it would seem that the appropriate verb to be used in this sentence is "would" rather than "should." As an important resource in the proposed project study area, having a thorough understanding of not only what floodplains are identified and characterized but also evaluated in terms of observed and expected change, will be an important in considering impacts in a NEPA review <u>once the project is federalized</u> .	A	Paragraph updated for more detail/explanation.
Julie Smith, EPA	Floodplains and Floodways; Next Steps; Design and Project Implications	58	N/A	49	N/A	While we understand that this is an initial study of the proposed project area, early consideration of on-going changes in the existing environment from the effects of climate change and how that may inform the design of the project from the point of view of resiliency are an important consideration for floodplains and other water resources particularly in a semi-arid climate like that in Colorado. On May 20, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order (EO) 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk, reinstating EO 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input (January 30, 2015). EO 13690 amends the original floodplain management standard established in 1977 by EO 11988, and was revoked by EO 13807 in August 2017, though is now reinstated. This action reestablished the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) for projects receiving federal funds. The FFRMS aids to increase the resilience of infrastructure for flooding events caused by climate disasters. FFRMS describes three (3) available approaches for determining the vertical flood elevation and corresponding horizontal floodplain for federally funded projects. These approaches are designed to recognize and incorporate future conditions rather than rely solely on existing data and information. One of these approaches must be used for determining the FFRMS floodplain for federal actions. The approaches currently described in the FFRMS are the following: 1. Climate-informed Science Approach – use best available, actionable hydrologic and hydraulic data and methods that integrate current and future changes in flooding based on climate science and other factors or changes affecting flood risk to determine the vertical flood elevation and corresponding horizontal floodplain in a manner appropriate to policies, practices, criticality, and consequences. 2. Freeboard Value Approach – use the Base Flood Elevation (or 1-percent-annual-chance flood determined using best available data) and an additional height to calculate the freeboard value. The additional height (2' non-critical or 3' critical) will depend on whether or not the action is a critical action (i.e., any activity for which even a slight chance of flooding would be too great). 3. The 0.2-percent-annual-chance Flood Approach – use the 0.2-percent-annual-chance flood elevation (also known as the 500-year flood elevation). Full consideration of influences from the existing environmental setting on the proposed Project may inform necessary design modifications and changes to maintenance assumptions, for determining resource supplies, system demands, system performance requirements, and operational constraints in the project area. EPA recommends that the PEL consider the impacts of changing precipitation patterns on the planning area and alternatives considered, as part of its analysis of impacts to floodplains and other water resources. For example, consideration of the anticipated extent and depth of overland flows (3 above) through the development areas using a 500-year flood event model, as compared to a 100-year event, could be used to capture potential variability in precipitation in the planning area. This would allow CDOT to identify necessary design considerations to accommodate future anticipated effects (e.g., increased intensity and severity of storms) in the PEL process.	A	Entire section revised to add more context provided in this comment.
Julie Smith, EPA	Water Resources section	59	First paragraph	50	N/A	Discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, is regulated under Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404. This permit program is administered jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the EPA. We recommend that North Bend and WAPA consult with USACE to make a final determination as to the applicability of CWA Section 404 permit requirements to wetlands that would be impacted by any new construction in the Project area. EPA encourages this coordination as early as possible in the planning of the proposed Project. The EA should be developed to provide sufficient information and support for decisions in compliance with the EPA's CWA Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines.	R	No changes made; this comment is in regards to an EA, while this is a Pre-NEPA study. The level of detail provided is not appropriate to determine or include at this level of review. No dredging or fill material can be determined at this level of study.

Julie Smith, EPA	Water Resources; Affected Environment	59	N/A	50	N/A	Existing resource conditions provide the basis for an effective analysis of potential impacts. Therefore, the EPA suggests that the final PEL Existing Conditions Report for this project includes the following baseline aquatic resource information to inform project planning and environmental review process:  One or more maps and summaries of project area waters and downstream waters, including streams, lakes, springs and wetlands. It would be helpful if the summaries identified high resource value water bodies and their designated beneficial uses (e.g., agriculture, fisheries, drinking water, treaty rights, recreation); Watershed conditions, including vegetation cover and composition, and soil conditions; surface water information, including available water quality data in relation to current Colorado surface water quality standards, stream functional assessments, stream channel/stream bank stability conditions, sediment loads, and aquatic life; Clear identification of types, functions, conditions, and acreages of wetlands, riparian areas, streams (including perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral), springs, and seeps; Available groundwater information, including information about location and quality of sensitive and shallow aquifers; Location and extent of hydrologically connected zones, including recharge areas, in proximity to proposed Project facilities; Areas of geologic or other areas of instability that may affect water quality; A map and list of Clean Water Act (CWA) impaired or threatened water body segments within, or downstream of, the Project area, including the designated uses of the water bodies and the specific pollutants of concern. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment can identify/validate any such CWA Section 303(d) listed water bodies; and <del>Identification of low water resources important to drinking water, including source water protection areas.</del>	R	Comment was discussed during meeting with Julie Smith, US EPA Region 8, on May 22, 2023. At this meeting, it was agreed upon that this level of detail is not appropriate for a PEL Study, or PEL existing conditions report, but would be considered for future studies. Per this discussion, the following changes were made: 1. added reference to mapbook in this section; 2. info about aquifers was added.
Julie Smith, EPA	Water Resources; Affected Environment; "Table 14. Named Waterways within the Study Area"	59	N/A	50	N/A	EPA recommends identifying and considering all water bodies in the project area, in particular, intermittent and ephemeral streams as these are incredibly important resources in arid and semi-arid ecosystems. See: Levick, L., J. Fonseca, D. Goodrich, M. Hernandez, D. Semmens, J. Stromberg, R. Leidy, M. Scianni, D. P. Guertin, M. Tluczek, and W. Kepner. 2008. The Ecological and Hydrological Significance of Ephemeral and Intermittent Streams in the Arid and Semi-arid American Southwest. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and USDA/ARS Southwest Watershed Research Center, EPA/600/R-08/134, ARS/233046, 116 pp.	R	Comment was discussed during meeting with Julie Smith, US EPA Region 8, on May 22, 2023. At this meeting, it was agreed upon that this level of detail is not appropriate for a PEL Study, or PEL existing conditions report, but will be considered for future NEPA documents.
Julie Smith, EPA	Water Resources; Next Steps	60	Next Steps subsection; Third paragraph	51	N/A	It would be more informative to also indicate that the project sponsor would request use of Nationwide Permit 14 under CWA Section 404(e). In addition, as this would ultimately be a report accessible to the public, explaining what a nation-wide permit "does" as opposed to the individual permit would create early understanding on the part of the various decision makers and stakeholders.	R	Comment was discussed during meeting with Julie Smith, US EPA Region 8, on May 22, 2023. At this meeting, it was agreed upon that this level of detail is not appropriate for a PEL Study, or PEL existing conditions report, but will be considered for future NEPA documents.
Julie Smith, EPA	Federally and State-Sensitive Species; Next Steps	62	Second paragraph, first line of Next Steps section	53	N/A	We encourage involving the USFWS early in this PEL development process. It would seem reasonable that Section 7 would be triggered as the PEL process is a federal one and one that is directly linked to FHWA actions. Early coordination with USFWS and planning for a well-informed Biological Assessment would ultimately better inform a future NEPA process and the public, and result in better planning through avoidance and minimization of impacts to special status or other protected species.	A	Additional information added to this section, in accordance with information provided.
Julie Smith, EPA	Recreational Resources and Open Space; Affected Environment; Existing Resources	65	On subsection title	56	N/A	Parks and open spaces can be very important areas/resources to communities, some of which may identify as having environmental justice concerns. We suggest that the project's planning process understand the demographic/socioeconomic composition of the users of these facilities so as to ensure that potential EJ or overburdened communities are not further impacted by the construction of this new roadway, for example, the potential for bifurcation of communities via the introduction of a new linear infrastructure.	R	EJ considerations are included in the EJ section further in the document; bifurcation is also discussed later in the report.
Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental scan; Water Quality	69	On section title	60	N/A	See related comment above about existing environment baseline suggested information.	C	Comment taken into account and noted for coordination purposes.
Julie Smith, EPA	Water Quality; Next Steps;	70	Second paragraph	61	N/A	Suggest early coordination and engagement with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment with regard to impaired waters in the project area.	A	Added additional context about coordination with CDPHE.
Julie Smith, EPA	Water Quality; Next Steps; Design and Project Implications; Scope	70	Fifth bullet; Nationwide Permit 51	61	N/A	Is this related to the assumption that the project would likely request a Transportation Nationwide Permit from the Corps? Suggest at least identifying that this is an Army Corps permit under CWA Section 404.  Importantly, as of latest (2021) list of nationwide permits under CWA Section 404, we note that Nationwide Permit 51 is for Land-Based Renewable Energy Generation Facilities. Suggest checking for accuracy and updating to reflect the permit that would be appropriate for water control activities related to the project.	A	Updated.
Julie Smith, EPA	Historic and Archeological Resources; Next Steps	73	First paragraph; first line	64	First paragraph; first line	"Would" is more appropriate here as the SHPO is central in the successful compliance with the Section 106 consultation process under the NHPA (36 CFR Part 800) so it is actually a requirement once the project would be a federal action.	A	Updated.
Julie Smith, EPA	Historic and Archeological Resources; Next Steps	73	Last paragraph; last sentence	64	Last paragraph; last sentence	All the better reason to have complete information around parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc. that may be located in the study area so as to avoid as much as possible.	R	Complete information around parks, rec facilities and playground already included; discussed during in-person meeting.

Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental Justice & Equity/Title 6	76	Section Header text	67	N/A	Another useful screening tool to identify communities with equity challenges, see: The Screening Tool for Equity Analysis of Projects STEAP at ( <a href="https://hepgis.fhwa.dot.gov/fhwagis/buffertool/">https://hepgis.fhwa.dot.gov/fhwagis/buffertool/</a> ) is a web-based equity analysis tool for project development. It assists practitioners in identifying a project's impact on EJ, Title VI, and populations with LEP, and disadvantaged populations defined in Executive Order 13985. The tool provides for rapid screening of specified project locations anywhere in the U.S. and is intended to make buffer analysis simple for non-GIS specialists to expand access to EJ and equity screening capabilities. STEAP users can select specific roadway segments (existing or proposed) of up to 25 miles and specify up to two buffers around the roadway up to three miles in the STEAP interface. The tool generates an equity analysis report (in PDF format) for the selected roadway buffer, which includes: Title VI populations: Race, ethnicity, and foreign-born populations EJ populations: Minority populations, low-income populations. Other population characteristics: Age and gender, education attainment, unemployment status, and veteran and disability status. Household characteristics: Household structure, housing affordability, vehicle ownership, and lack of computer or internet connection.	A	STEAP reports pulled and reviewed for additional information to add to EC data.
Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental Justice & Equity/Title 6; Regulatory Framework subheading	76	Regulatory Framework subheading	67	N/A	This context also includes: Executive Order 13985 – Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government – which sets expectations for a whole-of-government approach to advancing equity for all. On April 21, 2023, President Biden signed Executive Order (EO) 14096, "Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All" and should be included here in the regulatory context. Importantly, this EO strengthens the federal government's commitment to provide meaningful opportunities for engagement of environmental justice (EJ) communities among other things. Consistent with these executive orders and CEQ's Environmental Justice Guidance Under NEPA, the EPA recommends the final PEL Existing Environment Report include the following information (as appropriate): Meaningful engagement of any minority and low-income communities with environmental justice concerns with respect to CDOT's decisions on the proposed Project, and with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers if cultural or historical artifacts are or have been found in the project area. Project design measures or alternatives to avoid or reduce any disproportionate adverse impacts. We recommend involving the affected communities in developing the measures as early as possible in the project planning and environmental review process.	A	Updated list of regulatory references.
Julie Smith, EPA	Environmental Justice & Equity/Title 6; Regulatory Framework subheading	76	Third bullet; Regulatory Framework	N/A	N/A	Please review and consider an additional FHWA EJ Order that is now a part of the regulatory context: DOT Order 5610.2(a), Department of Transportation Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (DOT EJ Order), sets forth procedures and guidance for the Department to implement EO 12898 and is of central importance to the continued implementation of EJ principles nationwide in DOT-funded efforts. As the potential NEPA co-lead agency in this effort, CDOT would be responsible for applying these procedures as well. The DOT EJ Order emphasizes that EJ principles apply to planning and programming activities and that requirements, such as NEPA, be administered to identify the risk of disproportionately high and adverse effects early in the development of the program, policy, or activity so that positive corrective action can be taken. EPA believes early consideration about potential impacts to communities with EJ concerns from the proposed Project would lead to more thorough, comprehensive, and targeted measures and commitments to avoid, minimize and mitigate these effects in the Project's final design.	A	Added DOT Order.
Drew Vrbenec, DNR	Federally and State-Sensitive Species; Affected Environment	62	Final paragraph of section	53	Final paragraph of section; final sentence	CPW would like to mention the presence of Arkansas Darters (State Species of Special Concern) in both Jimmy Camp Creek and Fountain Creek. I know this species was mentioned on pg.62 but I wanted to point out specific areas that we know they exist.	A	Understood and noted for future assessment. Line added to last paragraph of this section stating that the darter is known to occur in those areas.
Drew Vrbenec, DNR	Environmental Scan; Wildlife Movement	94	N/A	85	N/A	In regards to the information on pg.94, CPW would like to be apart of the conversation during the design phase. At that time we can comment on the implementation of wildlife crossings and areas to avoid due to wildlife concentrations.	A	CPW will be engaged for further design considerations in developing the final report, and a note will be added to the final report that CPW should be included in any future design of the corridor to implement wildlife crossings.
Kristin Salamack, USFWS	Federally and State-Sensitive Species; Affected Environment	61	N/A	52-53	N/A	Regarding the potential for Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat within the study area – Presence of PMJM is unlikely this far south in its range. The closest positive trapping record and designated critical habitat are approximately 18 miles to the north of Fountain, just south of where E. Woodmen Rd. crosses I-25. In addition, there is a block clearance zone established for the Colorado Springs metro area and given the amount of development within CO Springs it is unlikely that mice would travel that far south to riparian habitats that are available in the Study Area.	A	Mentions of PMJM have been removed for clarity and brevity.
Kristin Salamack, USFWS	Migratory Birds, Raptors; Next Steps	63	Next Steps section	54	Next Steps section	Some clarification – bald eagle nests are under the purview of USFWS per the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and would need to be evaluated for potential for disturbance take resulting from the project if construction activities come close to any active nests. The USFWS does not generally provide guidance or avoidance/minimization measures associated with roosting areas or winter concentration areas – that would come from CPW.	A	Modifications to text completed to clarify.



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 2: Landowner Meeting Invite I

Department of Public Works

**Engineering Division**

719-520-6460  
Chuck Brown Transportation Complex  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922  
www.ElPasoCo.com

**Board of County Commissioners**

Holly Williams, District 1  
Carrie Geitner, District 2  
Stan VanderWerf, District 3  
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4  
Cami Bremer, District 5

**Date:** April 21, 2022  
**RE:** South Powers Extension PEL Study  
**From:** Howard Schwartz, PE, El Paso County Project Manager  
**Subject:** Property owner meeting

El Paso County has initiated a collaborative Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study intended to document the specific purpose and need for improvements of South Powers Boulevard (CO21) extending from south of Mesa Ridge Parkway and connecting to Interstate-25 south of the City of Fountain. This project was identified in the 2000 South Powers Corridor Feasibility Study and referenced in the 2010 Powers Link Environmental Assessment.

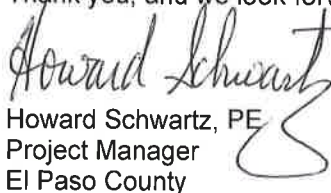
The purpose of this study is to provide the necessary transportation planning and early decision-making for the South Powers Boulevard multimodal corridor that can provide the basis for future projects and studies while preserving right-of-way for future growth. The planning process will develop and screen a range of reasonable alternatives, identify a recommended alignment, and develop an access control plan.

We anticipate significant community interest along the existing Powers Boulevard Corridor and along potential alignments of the South Powers extension. Duration of the study is anticipated to extend to summer 2023. No schedule has been determined for construction as funding is not currently available.

**As a property owner within the study boundary area, we would like to meet with you** and provide an overview of the study and the corridor Alternatives Development and Recommended Corridor Alignment process and to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to include any others you may wish to bring to this meeting as well.

Please call our public involvement/communications representative, Lisa Bachman at 719-488-5908 to let her know which day and time is most convenient for you **between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Wednesday, May 11 and Thursday, May 12. The meetings will take place at the El Paso County facility located at 3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs, 80922.**

Thank you, and we look forward to meeting with you.

  
Howard Schwartz, PE  
Project Manager  
El Paso County

**NOTE:** For additional project information, please also consider attending the public open house scheduled from 5:30 – 7 p.m., Wed., May 25 at the City of Fountain City Hall, 116 S. Main Street, Fountain CO 80817. A virtual open house will also be available for a period of time following the May 25 mtg. To be notified by email of these public meetings -- send an email requesting to be added to the South Powers Extension project distribution list to: [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com)



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 3: Final Landowner Invitation

Department of Public Works

Engineering Division

719-520-6460  
Chuck Brown Transportation Complex  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922  
www.ElPasoCo.com

Board of County Commissioners

Holly Williams, District 1  
Carrie Geitner, District 2  
Stan VanderWerf, District 3  
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4  
Cami Bremer, District 5

**Date:** September 21, 2023  
**RE:** South Powers Extension PEL Study and Access Control Plan  
**From:** Howard Schwartz, PE, El Paso County Project Manager  
**Subject:** Property owner meetings



The South Powers Extension PEL Study Team has analyzed several potential alignments for the extension of South Powers Boulevard beyond where it currently ends at Mesa Ridge Parkway. **As a property owner within the study area, your property may or may not be potentially impacted** (the attached map shows the two recommended alignments). **At your option, we would like to give you the opportunity to meet with the project team** for an update of the study, to review the narrowed list of two recommended corridor alignments that have risen to the top during the study process, and to answer any questions.

**Background:** In spring 2022, El Paso County initiated a collaborative Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study intended to document the specific purpose and need for improvements of South Powers Boulevard (Colorado Highway 21) extending from south of Mesa Ridge Parkway and connecting to Interstate-25 south of the City of Fountain. This project was identified in the 2000 South Powers Corridor Feasibility Study and referenced in the 2010 Powers Link Environmental Assessment.

The purpose of this study is to provide the necessary transportation planning and early decision-making for the South Powers Boulevard multimodal corridor that can provide the basis for future projects and studies while preserving the corridor footprint for future growth. The planning process developed and screened a range of reasonable alternatives and has now identified recommended alignments and is developing an access control plan.

We anticipate significant community interest along the existing Powers Boulevard Corridor and along the recommended alignments of the South Powers extension. Duration of the study is anticipated to extend to late 2023. No schedule has been determined for construction as funding is not currently available.

Please call our public involvement/communications representative Monica Ramey at 719-339-4109 with questions, and to let her know if you would like a meeting with the South Powers Extension PEL Project Team, and which day/time is most convenient for you. **The meetings will take place at the El Paso County facility located at 3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs, 80922.**

Meetings will be held in 45-minute intervals over two days:

**8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 10, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 11**

Feel free to bring any others you would like to include in your meeting. Thank you, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Howard Schwartz, PE  
Project Manager, El Paso County

**Attachments:** S. Powers Extension Study Alignments Considered Map and Recommend Alignment Map

**NOTE:** A virtual public open house and opportunity for public comment will be posted to the project website from mid-October to early November. For more information: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>  
Sign up for progress enewsletters by sending an email to [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com)



# Attachment 4: PI Summary I

## South Powers Extension PEL Study – Public Engagement Public Open House / Virtual Open House Summary – May 2022

### Event Overview



*Figure 1. Project Team staff reviewing a large map of the Project Area with members of the public*

An in-person Public Open House for the South Powers Extension PEL Study was held May 25, 2022. In addition, a three-week online Virtual Public Open House was available on the project website from May 25 to June 15, 2022. The combination of online and in-person participation events was conducted to enable broader public participation.

Approximately 50 citizens attended the in-person Public Open House for the South Powers Extension PEL Study held from 5:30 – 7 p.m., May 25, 2022, at the City of Fountain, City Hall (116 S. Main St., Fountain CO, 80817). The room was arranged with a large, printed map of the entire study area on a table in the center of the room. Meeting attendees could engage with the project team to discuss the project and mark comments and concerns directly on the map. Ten stations were set up around the perimeter of the room staffed with project team members who discussed the particular topics of the display boards with the public and addressed their questions. Topics included the Reason for the project; Vision for the South Powers Boulevard corridor; existing conditions of environmental resources, land use, traffic & safety; benefits of combining a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) and an Access Control Plan (ACP) into one study; and the history of the corridor.

All displays at the May 25 in-person open house were made available through the "Go to Virtual Open House" button on the project website as part of the Virtual Public Open House.

<https://www.SouthPowersStudy.com/>

The Virtual Public Open House remained live on the project website for three weeks, between May 25 and June 15, 2022, for the public to review the display boards and to post comments either geographically on the Interactive Comment Map or in the open house Comment Form.

### Public Open House Display Boards included:

[Station 1 - Welcome](#)

[Station 2 - Process](#)

[Station 3 - History](#)

[Station 4 - Access Control Plan](#)

[Station 5 - Traffic](#)

[Station 6 - Crashes](#)

[Station 7 - Land Use](#)

[Station 8 - Environmental](#)

[Station 9 - Next Steps](#)

[Station 10 - Comments](#)

### Goals of Public Engagement



*Figure 2. Project Team staff speaking with member of the public at the May 25th Open House*

- Inform the public about the PEL study;
- Review the Vision for the corridor and the Reason for the project;
- Review the existing conditions of the area;
- Collect comments or questions; and,
- Collect public input to help shape recommendations for the corridor.

### Tools Provided for the Public to Submit Feedback

- Website: <https://www.SouthPowersStudy.com/>
- Email address: [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com)
- E-newsletters
- Comment forms on the website and at the in-person public open house
- Comments on the Interactive map as part of the website Virtual Public Open House

### Website

The project website went live on May 12, 2022. Through the website, the public has an ongoing opportunity to sign up to receive e-newsletter study updates and submit questions and comments. The website includes tabs that provide information on the Reason for the project, the Vision, the location, and the study schedule. The Overview tab includes a description of the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) process, a definition of an Access Control Plan (ACP), and the benefits of combining the PEL and ACP.

The Corridor History tab includes background on the current South Powers Boulevard and corridor history extending back to 1963. References to numerous previous planning documents dating back to 1970 are also included on the Corridor History tab. Both a list of Frequently Asked Questions & Answers and an Interactive Map of the area are available on the project website. Additional documents that will be added include; the Purpose & Need and Goals statements, the ACP, the PEL Report, and the Existing Conditions Report.

### Outreach

The following communications tools were used to promote the in-person and virtual Public Open Houses:

- Enewsletters describing the study, timeline, and public engagement opportunities were distributed on May 12, May 17, May 23, June 2, and June 13, 2022 to the approximately 250 email addresses on the database at that time.
- An article about the study and promoting the public open houses was submitted to El Paso County. It appeared in the May issue of "The Roadway" publication.
- News releases were distributed by the El Paso County Public Information Office to local news media.
- Communications materials were distributed to various community organizations for inclusion in their e-newsletters to their constituents.



Figure 3. Snippet of May ENewsletter 7

- Social Media posts and news releases were provided to project partner agencies of El Paso County, City of Fountain, City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Department of Transportation, and Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments for them to distribute through their communication channels.
- Open House information was posted on the project website and the El Paso County website

### **Equitable Engagement**

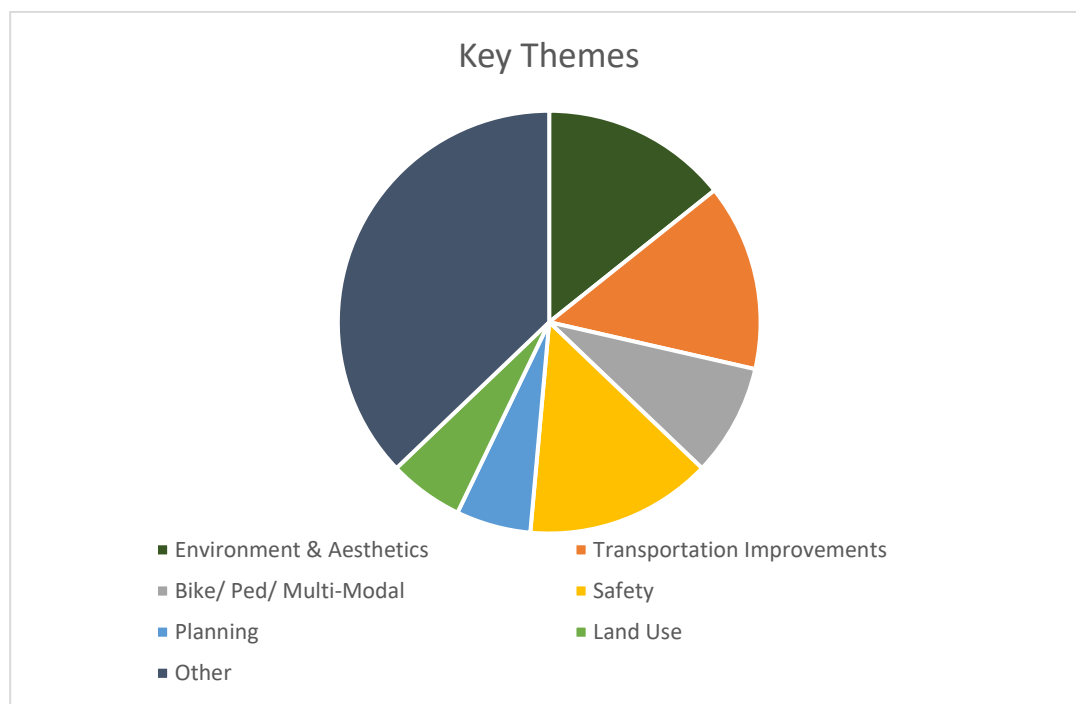
The communications materials promoting the public open house and online virtual option open house included a statement that American Sign Language and Spanish interpretation services were available upon request by email at least five days in advance to [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com)

No members of the public requested either of these services.

In addition, the newsletters regarding the study and the Public Open House were distributed to various organizations in the Southeast area of Colorado Springs, which has the City’s highest percentage of minority and low income populations. These organizations included the RISE Coalition, Solid Rock Community Development Corporation, several churches, the local Boys & Girls club, the Deerfield Community Center, and the YMCA.

### **Participation Overview**

The project team reviewed input collected during in-person and virtual Open House events and categorized input into 'Key Themes.' This information is intended to provide a high-level overview of what was heard from the public. The complete list of comments received is included below in Figure 4.



*Figure 4. Key themes of Public Input*

The 'Key Themes' noted in the chart above identify high-level categories of information collected by the project team during the Public Open House events. The concepts and ideas mentioned by stakeholders and the public include environment & aesthetics, roadway use, bike & pedestrian considerations, planning considerations, land use considerations, safety needs, and access control.

### **Participation Metrics**

Between the online and in-person Public Open House events, the amount of public input was moderate.

- Number of Site Visits/views: 531
- Attendees to the in-person Public Open House: approximately 50

- Number of people on the project database/contact list: 277
- Survey responses/Comment forms completed: Online (3); In Person (7)

**Written comments received during the May 25, 2022 in-person Public Open House**

Don't break up the City of Fountain, it has a small own feel. Send the Freeway (Powers) east, not through Fountain. There needs to be another north/south road in Colorado Springs, or a loop like 470. No tolls. Don't connect Link Rd to Mesa Ridge Pkwy. If I was coming south on Powers, I'd choose to get on the freeway at Mesa Ridge Pkwy, unless the further south connection to the freeway had a higher speed. Fountain Rd could use a King Soopers, on the E/S side.
I want a hospital, we need it. There should be a separate trail for pedestrians and bicyclists as well.
Add post markers on maps like traffic circles at the intersections. We participated in the South Powers Study over twenty years ago. There were maps, drawings, meetings, and nothing was done. Why wasn't anything done? There were proposed bike lanes that were never built.
My concern for the region is water and population. I would like more town meetings for more information.
There would be too much traffic if pedestrian and bicyclist modes of transportation were to be accommodated. This project needs to be done ASAP.
We need access to a hospital on the south end of Powers Blvd.
The well water is contaminated.
And hoping to know the exact location of this new road very soon. I understand that's yet to be determined - I want to keep informed.
I would love to receive information on this project. I live in downtown Fountain and it's so desperately needed to divert traffic away from downtown.
Thank you for the information and update. Nicely done.
I think this is a great idea to do to help traffic and to expand businesses and grow Fountain area to keep up.
The interactive map is not active yet. I would like to see the proposed roadway on a map please. I will be at the meeting in Fountain as well.
Do you have a map that shows in detail the path the road would take? Why not do this with Mark Sheffel Rd. instead of Powers? It seems like it would be easier since with Powers you're going to have to cross Mark Sheffel to get by anyway.

**Public comments written on corridor maps during the May 25, 2022 in-person Public Open House**

**include:** Eighteen public open house comments were made on the corridor maps at the in-person Public Open House.

These comments were spread across four main categories:

- Safety/Security (5)
- Transportation Improvements (2)
- Environmental Stewardship (3)
- Other (8)

**Safety/Security:**

- Identified existing Fire Station Location near Mesa Ridge Parkway
- High Accident Location at Marksheffel Road / Mesa Ridge Parkway
- North of Wigwam Road, the bridge washes out here about every 5 years and then floods across I-25
- Same location, flash floods happen here across I-25 (rarely, but happens)
- Hanover Fire Chief Carl Tatum location

**Transportation Improvement:**

- Add bypass to connect parts of Meridian Road to Hanover Road
- Include a Meridian Road to Overton Road Connection

**Environmental Stewardship:**

- Identified conservation lands (Hanna Ranch and Frost Ranch)
- Wigwam Water District PFAS (polyfluoroalkyl substances) 172 pps
- Aquifer Location Identified

**Other:**

- Proposed alignment starts in people front yards (at Marksheffel Road)
- Autoimmune Disease Research Center Health Affects from PFAS
- Add a Hospital
- We don't have a hospital, north of Platte Avenue has seven
- Future Solar Farm locations (2)
- Located Midway Substation E-W Transmission
- Also located transmission lines from Comanche to the west side of I-25

**Summary of public comments posted to the Interactive Map on the project website include:** There was one comment received on the interactive map on the project website indicating the location of the Ray Nixon Power Plant and two sections of high electric power lines.





Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 5: Virtual Open House

## Comment Form



Public Open House Comment Form

[Sign me up to receive project update e-newsletters](#)

# VIRTUAL PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The El Paso County Virtual Public Open House for the South Powers Extension PEL Study is [LIVE!](#)  
The Public Open House Comment Form will be available until **June 15, 2022**.

Here are some helpful tips for first-time virtual meeting attendees.

1. Use your mouse or finger if you are using a device with touchscreen display, to pan around the room to the different exhibits.
2. Click on the informational button (blue square with the letter i) to learn about what information will be presented at that particular exhibit.
3. Review the information being presented at each exhibit by clicking on the other blue button at each exhibit.

[Go to Virtual Open House](#)

The Virtual Public Open House will be offered in addition to the Public Open House. The information presented will be the same. Before or after touring the Open House you can still use the [Comment Form](#) until June 15, 2022 to let us know your thoughts about the project. Alternatively, you can comment on specific locations along the corridor using the [Interactive Comment Map](#) available on this website. For full detail, you can check the boxes to the right of the interactive map to turn on embedded layout layers for the approved and planned developments along the corridor.

## CONTACT

South Powers Extension Project Team



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Enter Your Name

Enter Your Email \*

Enter Your Subject

Message



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 6: First eNewsletter



## County launches study to extend South Powers Boulevard

*Public invited to an Open House to learn more*

El Paso County, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation, has initiated a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study and Access Control Plan (ACP) for the extension of South Powers Boulevard (CO21). The project extends from the existing portion of South Powers Boulevard, connecting south of Mesa Ridge Parkway and extends to Interstate-25 (I-25) south of the City of Fountain.



The PEL Study will identify existing conditions to determine the needs within the corridor. The study will develop and evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to identify a recommended alignment and list of potential projects which will provide the basis for future projects and studies. The project will identify a corridor preservation footprint which will facilitate transportation planning and decision-making for the corridor, recognizing the amount of planned development already present in this corridor.

### Public Open House

The public is invited to learn about the project and provide input during an Open House:

**Time:** 5:30 – 7 p.m.

**Date:** Wed., May 25

**Location:** City of Fountain City Hall  
116 S. Main Street, Fountain CO 80817

The Open House is an opportunity for the public to:

- Learn about the PEL study;
- Review the Vision for the corridor and Reason for the project;
- Review the existing conditions of the area;
- Submit comments or questions to the project team; and,
- Provide valued input to help shape the recommendations for the corridor.

American sign language and Spanish interpretation services available upon request by sending an email at least five days in advance to:

[SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com)

**Virtual Open House:** A Virtual Open House will be available between May 25 and June 15 in which comments can be submitted geographically on an Interactive Comment Map. To receive a link to this virtual open house, and/or sign up for updates on the study, please email [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com) and request to be added to the distribution list. Contact information provided for this distribution list will be used exclusively by the project team for project updates.

## Background

Since 1963, Powers Boulevard has been planned as a by-pass alternative to Interstate-25 along the eastern edge of the City of Colorado Springs. As one of Colorado's 28 strategic corridors and a key element of the National Highway System, Powers Boulevard is a critical corridor supporting local, regional, and national mobility.



As a critical component of the Region's Congestion Management Plan, South Powers Boulevard provides access to five major military installations, shall be the major north/south thoroughfare for the rapidly developing eastern edge of the City of Fountain, and provides direct access to the City of Colorado Springs Airport and its surrounding business park.

This project was identified in the 2000 South Powers Corridor Feasibility Study and referenced in the 2010 Powers Link Environmental Assessment. The PEL study will build upon these previous planning documents to identify a South Powers Boulevard Extension corridor alignment. It will support El Paso County, local agencies, stakeholders, and the public to determine future improvements.

## Project Partners



Pikes Peak Area  
Council of Governments  
Communities Working Together



## Stay in touch

Find more information about this project:

<https://www.SouthPowersExtensionStudy.com>

**Note:** If you wish to no longer receive this specific project newsletter but want to continue receiving other project communications that you previously expressed interest in, please hit "reply" to this email and key in the message "REMOVE." Thank you.

El Paso County, Centennial Hall | 200 S. Cascade Avenue, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903

[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [lisa@bachmanpr.com](mailto:lisa@bachmanpr.com) powered by



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Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 7: First Newsletter

**Natalie Sosa, Public Information Office**

**O:** 719-520-6250

**M:** 719-344-4231

Nataliesosa@elpasoco.com

Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

**Board of County Commissioners**

Holly Williams, District 1

Carrie Geitner, District 2

Stan VanderWerf, District 3

Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4

Cami Bremer, District 5

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## News Release

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### El Paso County launches study to extend South Powers Boulevard

*Public invited to an Open House to learn more*

**El Paso County, CO, May 12, 2022** - El Paso County, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation, has initiated a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study and Access Control Plan (ACP) for the extension of South Powers Boulevard (CO21). The project extends from the existing portion of South Powers Boulevard, connecting south of Mesa Ridge Parkway and extends to Interstate-25 (I-25) south of the City of Fountain.

The PEL Study will identify existing conditions to determine the needs within the corridor. The study will develop and evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to identify a recommended alignment and list of potential projects which will provide the basis for future projects and studies. The project will identify a corridor preservation footprint which will facilitate transportation planning and decision-making for the corridor, recognizing the amount of planned development already present in this corridor

#### Public Open House

The public is invited to learn about the project and provide input during an Open House:

**Time:** 5:30 – 7 p.m.

**Date:** Wed., May 25

**Location:** City of Fountain City Hall, 116 S. Main Street, Fountain CO 80817

The Open House is an opportunity for the public to:

- Learn about the PEL study;
- Review the Vision for the corridor and Reason for the project;
- Review the existing conditions of the area;
- Submit comments or questions to the project team; and,
- Provide valued input to help shape the recommendations for the corridor.

American sign language and Spanish interpretation services available upon request by sending an email at least five days in advance to: [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com)

**Virtual Open House:** A Virtual Open House will be available between May 25 and June 15 in which comments can be submitted geographically on an Interactive Comment Map. To receive a link to this virtual open house, and/or sign up for updates on the study, please email [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com) and request to be added to the distribution list. Contact information provided for this distribution list will be used exclusively by the project team for project updates.

For more information about the South Powers Extension PEL Study, visit: <https://www.SouthPowersExtensionStudy.com>



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 8: Post Card

### South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

*You are invited to a Virtual Public Open House*

A study was initiated in Spring 2022 to provide transportation planning for the South Powers Boulevard (Colorado Highway 21) southern extension, from where it currently ends at Mesa Ridge Parkway to I-25, south of the City of Fountain. This PEL Study will provide a recommended alignment for future projects and assist in preserving a corridor footprint.

The planning process, led by El Paso County, involved developing a range of possible corridor alignments and analyzing those potential alignments for how well they address the needs of the area. Two recommended alignments have been identified and an access control plan is being developed for the extension of South Powers Boulevard.

**What:** A Virtual Public Open House

**Where:** Visit the project website, [www.southpowersstudy.com](http://www.southpowersstudy.com)

**When:** Now through February 19, 2024 to review the documents and provide comment

**STAY INFORMED:** To receive project e-newsletters, please send an email to: [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com) and you will be added to our contact list.

### Estudio de Planificación y Conexión Ambiental (PEL) de la Extensión de South Powers

*Los invitamos a una reunión pública virtual*

En la primavera de 2022 se inició un estudio para proporcionar planificación de transporte para una extensión sur del South Powers Boulevard (Carretera Colorado), desde donde termina actualmente en Mesa Ridge Parkway hasta la I-25, al sur de la ciudad de Fountain. Este estudio PEL proporcionará una alineación recomendada para proyectos futuros y ayudará a preservar la huella del corredor.

El proceso de planificación, liderado por el condado de El Paso, implicó desarrollar una variedad de posibles alineamientos de corredores y analizar esos posibles alineamientos para determinar qué tan bien abordan las necesidades del área. Se han identificado dos alineamientos recomendados y se está desarrollando un plan de control de acceso para la extensión de South Powers Boulevard.

**Qué:** Una reunión pública virtual

**Dónde:** Visitar el sitio web del proyecto en [www.southpowersstudy.com](http://www.southpowersstudy.com)

**Cuándo:** Desde ahora hasta el 19 de febrero de 2024, para revisar documentos y compartir sugerencias

**MANTÉNGASE INFORMADO:** Para recibir boletines electrónicos del proyecto, envíe un mensaje a [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com) y será agregado a nuestra lista de contactos.



**COLORADO**

**Department of Public Works  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922**



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 9: PI Summary II

## **South Powers Extension PEL Study: Public Engagement and Outreach Approach**

Public Open House Summary #2 / Virtual

January 25 to February 19, 2024

### **Overview**

The second Public Open House for the South Powers PEL Study (the Study) was entirely virtual to enable wider public participation and a longer duration of time for the public to review the PEL materials and provide comment. The approach for promoting this event involved outreach to residents and property owners located along the shorter term (E3) and longer term (H3) recommended corridor alignment; including additional outreach efforts to disadvantaged communities, project stakeholders, and the public.

### **Goals of Public Engagement**

- Inform the public about the status of the PEL Study, the Vision for the corridor and the Reason for the project
- Inform the public about the resulting recommendations from the Study
- Collect comments or questions
- Collect public input for the final report

The virtual Public Open House occurred over a three-week period from **January 25** through February 19, 2024. Documents were posted to the Study website (<https://www.SouthPowersStudy.com/>) for the public to view and provide comments.

Public Open House documents posted to the project website included:

- Description of the Project history
- Project location map
- Links to relevant transportation and land use planning studies
- Review of approved and up-coming developments in the area
- Current and forecasted traffic volumes and congestion maps
- Environmental resources identified during Existing Conditions
- Alternatives Development/Analysis Processes and Evaluation Criteria
- Typical section and corridor width recommendations
- Location map of the shorter term (E3) and longer term (H3) recommended corridor alignment
- The rationale for refinements to the recommended alignments, as well as the refined recommended alignment
- Next steps and a generalized development timeline
- Ways to submit comments

The public and stakeholders were able to engage with the virtual event at their leisure by viewing the documents posted to the Public Open House page on the Study website. They were able to add comments on the website through the interactive map tool, which allowed commentors to geographically indicate the location their comment was related to. The website provided two areas to provide comments and questions about the project. One opportunity was through the Public Open House Comment Form and another was by completing a comment form on the Home/Landing page of the website. All materials for public review were accessible through a "Go to Virtual Open House" button on the website home screen.

## Public Comments Received

During the Virtual Public Open House comment period January 25 – February 19, 2024, there were 33 comments from the public submitted to the project gmail address or through the website, and 47 submitted through the Open House Interactive Map or Comment Form. A total of 126 total comments have been submitted since the May 2022 start of the Study to either the gmail address, through the website, or through the two Virtual Public Open House Interactive Maps or Comment Forms.

Topics of Comments submitted: Generally, most of the comments submitted were from self-identified property owners with properties located along the shorter term (E3) and longer term (H3) recommended corridor alignment. Many expressed a desire to not have a new road near their properties due to the impact on residences, agricultural farms, and businesses. Of the comments submitted, there was an even split of those that prefer one section of the alignment over the other, depending on the location of their property.

### Summary of other comment topics:

- A new road/extension of S. Powers:
  - Is a great benefit to the area and an alternative route for I-25
  - will help move some of the traffic off CO16 to Powers
  - a great addition; an alternative to I-25
  - benefits jobs and increased tax revenue to the City of Fountain
  - completion dates are too far out; needs to start right away
  - get it done
  - once an alignment is decided on, start property acquisition right away, even if the project doesn't happen for 20 or 30 years.
  - would add increased traffic and safety
  - do not support an extension of Powers
  - prefer other roads and bridges be fixed before adding new roads
  - need on-/off-ramps at the intersection of Marksheffel Road and the proposed S. Powers extension
  - plan for the aesthetics of the highway
  - would be better to emphasize widening Marksheffel Road and add lights
  - Mesa Ridge Parkway would be ideal in meeting the project goals
  - E3 would need an overpass at the dangerous intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and Fountain-Mesa Road
  - neither alternative will alleviate the traffic congestion already on Powers and I-25.
  - prefer an interstate bypass to the east
  - don't make it a toll road
  - little improvement to regional mobility
  - expedite the conversion of the existing Powers to a freeway
- Environmental:
  - impact to wells
  - impacts to properties, agricultural land, and residents
  - consider robust sound mitigation
  - avoid impact on Clear Springs Ranch and natural areas
  - would negatively impact private rural properties, conserved land, the landscape, open spaces, and the livelihood of multi-generational ranchers

- Developer Input:
  - new alignment, ROW width and adjacent exits have been changed from prior which eliminates commercial parcels, affects location of a park and school site, and potentially affects the mix of housing options.
  - cost of ROW is not being shared fairly among the affected property owners
  - support the alignment as an important connection, will reduce travel time and congestion
  - the project promotes multi-modal transportation opportunities adjacent to travel and freight demand
  - the project adds a connection between I-25 and the Colorado Springs Airport as well as eastern Colorado Springs, Banning-Lewis Ranch and Schriever Space Force Base.
- Multi-modal
  - Prefer density and other modal options instead of more auto traffic

### **Other Methods Used to Collect Public Input**

- One-on-one and small group property owner meetings
- Meeting with local HOA/neighborhood group
- Virtual presentation and meeting with Stakeholder Group
- Website and virtual Public Open House comment forms, both be available on <https://www.SouthPowersStudy.com/>
- E-Newsletters distributed to a growing contact list managed by the Study team, distributed at milestones in the Study process and throughout the Virtual Public Open House Comment Period (January 25 – February 19, 2024). Included a link to the website as well as to the project-specific email address [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com) where the public could submit comments and questions

### **Round #2 of one-on-one and small group property owner meetings**

A letter (Figure 1) was mailed by regular US Postal Service to 163 potentially impacted property owners along the study corridor inviting them to attend a second round of one-on-one meetings with the Study Team. As a result, a second round of one-on-one meetings took place with 63 individual property owners October 10 through November 2, 2023. The meetings took place at the El Paso County offices (3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs) or at the Wilson & Co. office (5755 Mark Dabbling Blvd. Colorado Springs).

In addition, a group meeting with 23 Cherry Creek Farm Homeowner Association/neighborhood members and property owners took place October 18, 2023, at the Hanover Fire Protection District, Fire Station #2 (13325 Old Pueblo Road, Fountain).

### **Stakeholder Virtual Meeting**

The group of 50 Stakeholder organizations (Figure 2.) were invited to participate in a virtual Stakeholder Group meeting October 13, 2023, in which the Study team presented the status of the Study and discussed the Alternatives Analysis Process and the recommended corridor alignment (short term and long term phased approach). There were 20 organizations that attended the meeting. This was the second Stakeholder Group meeting; the first took place May 16, 2022.

### **Website**

The project website initially went live at the start of the Study process May 12, 2022, and will remain live through and after the conclusion of the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) Study. The

Virtual Public Open House documents showing the recommended short term (E3) and long term (H3) phased approach alignments were posted January 25, 2024 which also signified the start of the round #2 public comment period. Through the website, the public has had an ongoing opportunity to sign up to receive e-newsletters with Study updates and notices of opportunities to submit questions and comments.

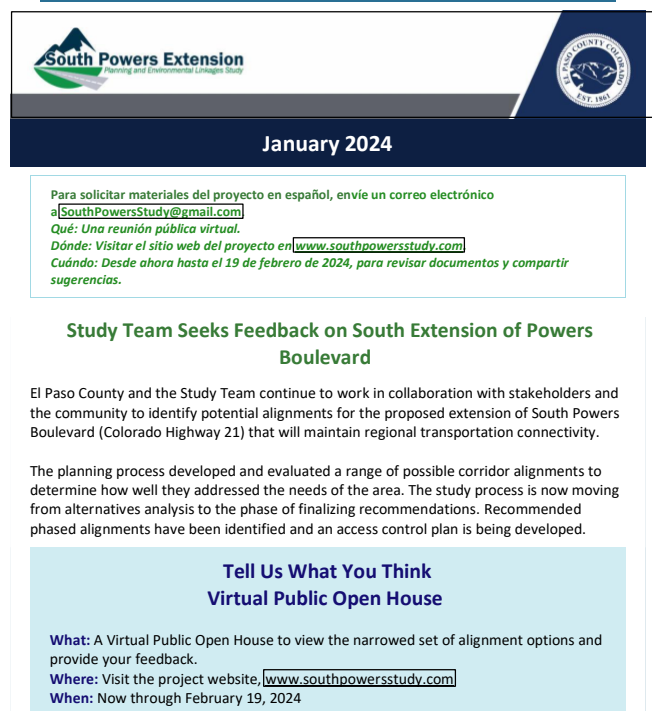
The website includes tabs that provide information on the Reason for the Project, the Vision, the Location, and the Estimated Study Schedule. The Overview tab includes a description of the PEL process, definition of an Access Control Plan (ACP), and benefits of combining the PEL and ACP. The Corridor History tab includes background on the current South Powers Boulevard and corridor history extending back to 1963. References to numerous previous planning documents dating back to 1970 are also included. Other documents posted to the website include a list of frequently asked questions and answers, the Purpose & Need and Goals statements, and the Existing Conditions Report. Once completed and approved, the ACP and the final PEL Report will be posted to the website as well.

## Outreach Materials

The following communication tools were used to promote the Virtual Public Open House:

- E-newsletters (**Figure 4.**) were distributed to 570 email addresses in the project database four times throughout the Virtual Public Open House public comment period (January 25 – February 19, 2024). The e-newsletters included links to the Virtual Public Open House webpage with a map of the recommended short term and long term phased alignment, comment form, and reminders that the comment period would be open through February 19, 2024. The newsletter database included:

- Property owners
- Public and 1-on-1 meeting attendees
- Sign-ups through the website
- Stakeholder group
- Elected officials
- Military installations
- Community organizations
- Emergency responders
- Schools and school districts
- Agency public information staff
- Study Team, Executive Oversight Team and Technical Team
- Staff with CDOT, FHWA, CSU, EPC, PPACG, Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain



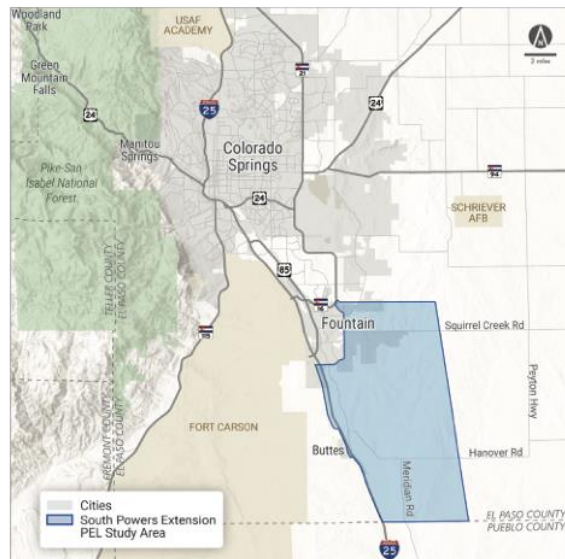
**Existing Conditions Report:** The PEL Study completed an [Existing Conditions Report](#) in early 2023. This report documents current regional traffic, operations, and safety data to provide a baseline for identifying needs and potential transportation improvements in the corridor. The report also documents existing environmental resources to identify critical resources, design constraints, and improvement opportunities. The Existing Conditions Report incorporates input from local agencies, resource agencies and government entities (El Paso County, the Colorado Department of Transportation, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG), Colorado Parks and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.).

**Figure 4.** First page of newsletter with links to Virtual Public Open House.

- Postcard mailing (Figure 5.) to 250 property owners (properties located within 1000' of the recommended corridor alignments).
- News releases were provided to the El Paso County and City of Fountain Public Information Office to distribute to their media lists, and to post to their websites.
- Copies of news releases, social media posts, flyers and e-newsletters (Figure 4.) were also sent to partner agency Public Information Offices (CDOT, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Cities of Fountain and Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Colorado Springs Utilities), and stakeholders (such as CONO, Colorado Springs and Fountain Chambers, Trails and Open Spaces Coalition) to distribute through their communications channels.
- A Project Fact Sheet (Figure 6.) was distributed to all organizations that were part of the Stakeholder Group (Figure 2.) providing an overview of the project and how to provide comments.



El Paso County, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Access Control Plan (ACP) for the extension of Powers Boulevard to the South. This project will provide a long-term vision for the corridor by selecting a recommended alignment and prioritizing transportation improvement projects.



**What is the purpose of these improvements?**

The purpose of the study is to recommend an alignment to extend South Powers Boulevard (CO 21) from CO 16/ Mesa Ridge Parkway to a connection with Interstate 25 (I-25), south of Colorado Springs and Fountain, Colorado.

**Needs for the Corridor:**

- ★ Advance Local and Regional Mobility
- ★ Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities



**Figure 6.** Front of 2-page Project Fact Sheet

**Equitable Engagement**

Communication materials promoting the online Virtual Public Open House included a statement that verbal interpretation services were available upon request by email to [SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com). E-newsletters and flyers also included a note in Spanish that all Study materials would be made available in Spanish upon request. No requests for Spanish language translation were received.

E-newsletters (Figure 4.), Fact Sheet (Figure 6.) and flyers regarding the Study and the Virtual Public Open House were distributed to various community organizations in the southeast area of Colorado Springs, which has the City’s highest percentage of minority and low-income populations. These organizations included the RISE Coalition, Solid Rock Youth Center and Community Development Corporation, churches, the local Boys & Girls Club, Deerfield Hills Community Center, Hillside Community Center, City of Fountain City Hall, City of Fountain Library, Sand Creek Library, and the Southeast YMCA.

A postcard was mailed to 250 property owners within 1000' of the short term and long term phased recommended corridor alignment, written in both English and Spanish (Figure 5.).



## Tell Us What You Think -- Virtual Public Open House

<p><b>South Powers Extension Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study</b> <i>You are invited to a Virtual Public Open House</i></p> <p>A study was initiated in Spring 2022 to provide transportation planning for the South Powers Boulevard (Colorado Highway 21) southern extension, from where it currently ends at Mesa Ridge Parkway to I-25, south of the City of Fountain. This PEL Study will provide a recommended alignment for future projects and assist in preserving a corridor footprint.</p> <p>The planning process, led by El Paso County, involved developing a range of possible corridor alignments and analyzing those potential alignments for how well they address the needs of the area. Two recommended alignments have been identified and an access control plan is being developed for the extension of South Powers Boulevard.</p> <p><b>What:</b> A Virtual Public Open House <b>Where:</b> Visit the project website, <a href="http://www.southpowersstudy.com">www.southpowersstudy.com</a> <b>When:</b> Now through February 19, 2024 to review the documents and provide comment</p> <p><b>STAY INFORMED:</b> To receive project e-newsletters, please send an email to: <a href="mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com">SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com</a> and you will be added to our contact list.</p>	<p><b>Estudio de Planificación y Conexión Ambiental (PEL) de la Extensión de South Powers</b> <i>Los invitamos a una reunión pública virtual</i></p> <p>En la primavera de 2022 se inició un estudio para proporcionar planificación de transporte para una extensión sur del South Powers Boulevard (Carretera Colorado), desde donde termina actualmente en Mesa Ridge Parkway hasta la I-25, al sur de la ciudad de Fountain. Este estudio PEL proporcionará una alineación recomendada para proyectos futuros y ayudará a preservar la huella del corredor.</p> <p>El proceso de planificación, liderado por el condado de El Paso, implicó desarrollar una variedad de posibles alineamientos de corredores y analizar esos posibles alineamientos para determinar qué tan bien abordan las necesidades del área. Se han identificado dos alineamientos recomendados y se está desarrollando un plan de control de acceso para la extensión de South Powers Boulevard.</p> <p><b>Qué:</b> Una reunión pública virtual <b>Dónde:</b> Visitar el sitio web del proyecto en <a href="http://www.southpowersstudy.com">www.southpowersstudy.com</a> <b>Cuándo:</b> Desde ahora hasta el 19 de febrero de 2024, para revisar documentos y compartir sugerencias</p> <p><b>MANTÉNGASE INFORMADO:</b> Para recibir boletines electrónicos del proyecto, envíe un mensaje a <a href="mailto:SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com">SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com</a> y será agregado a nuestra lista de contactos.</p>
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Figure 5. Postcard mailed to Property Owners

## Stakeholder Groups involved in the Study:

Amazon	Fort Carson Army Installation
American Medical Response	The Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control & Greenway District
Army Space and Missile Defense Command Headquarters	Fountain Fort Carson School District 8
The Colorado Department of Transportation	Fountain Police Department
Council of Neighbors and Organizations	Front Range Dual-Service Industrial Rail Park
CDOT Transportation Commission	Hanover Fire Protection District
Bustang	Harrison School District 2
The City of Colorado Springs	Juwi Inc. & Pikes Solar
The City of Fountain	Mountain Metropolitan Transit
The City of Fountain Chamber of Commerce	Palmer-Williams Creek Solar
The City of Fountain Transit	Peterson Space Force Base and Commands
Colorado Motor Carriers Association	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
Colorado Springs Airport & Peak Innovation Park	Pikes Peak International Raceway
Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC	Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management
Colorado Springs Fire Department	Pikes Peak State College
Colorado Springs Police Department	Schriever Space Force Base and Commands
Colorado Springs School District 11	Security Fire Protection District
Colorado Springs Utilities	Security Fire Department
Colorado State Patrol	Security-Widefield Fire Department
Council of Neighbors and Organizations	Trails and Open Space Coalition
Duke Energy/ Deriva Energy	U.S. Space Command Headquarters
El Paso County Sheriff's Office	Widefield School District 3
Federal Highway Administration	



**Figure 2. Stakeholder Group List**

Department of Public Works

Engineering Division  
719-520-6460  
Chuck Brown Transportation Complex  
3275 Akers Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922  
www.ElPasoCo.com

Board of County Commissioners  
Holly Williams, District 1  
Carrie Geitner, District 2  
Stan VanderWerf, District 3  
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4  
Cami Bremer, District 5

Date: September 21, 2023  
RE: South Powers Extension PEL Study and Access Control Plan  
From: Howard Schwartz, PE, El Paso County Project Manager  
Subject: Property owner meetings



The South Powers Extension PEL Study Team has analyzed several potential alignments for the extension of South Powers Boulevard beyond where it currently ends at Mesa Ridge Parkway. **As a property owner within the study area, your property may or may not be potentially impacted** (the attached map shows the two recommended alignments). **At your option, we would like to give you the opportunity to meet with the project team** for an update of the study, to review the narrowed list of two recommended corridor alignments that have risen to the top during the study process, and to answer any questions.

**Background:** In spring 2022, El Paso County initiated a collaborative Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study intended to document the specific purpose and need for improvements of South Powers Boulevard (Colorado Highway 21) extending from south of Mesa Ridge Parkway and connecting to Interstate-25 south of the City of Fountain. This project was identified in the 2000 South Powers Corridor Feasibility Study and referenced in the 2010 Powers Link Environmental Assessment.

The purpose of this study is to provide the necessary transportation planning and early decision-making for the South Powers Boulevard multimodal corridor that can provide the basis for future projects and studies while preserving the corridor footprint for future growth. The planning process developed and screened a range of reasonable alternatives and has now identified recommended alignments and is developing an access control plan.

We anticipate significant community interest along the existing Powers Boulevard Corridor and along the recommended alignments of the South Powers extension. Duration of the study is anticipated to extend to late 2023. No schedule has been determined for construction as funding is not currently available.

Please call our public involvement/communications representative Monica Ramey at 719-339-4109 with questions, and to let her know if you would like a meeting with the South Powers Extension PEL Project Team, and which day/time is most convenient for you. **The meetings will take place at the El Paso County facility located at 3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs, 80922.**

Meetings will be held in 45-minute intervals over two days:

**8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 10, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 11**

Feel free to bring any others you would like to include in your meeting. Thank you, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Howard Schwartz, PE  
Project Manager, El Paso County

**Attachments:** S. Powers Extension Study Alignments Considered Map and Recommend Alignment Map

**NOTE:** A virtual public open house and opportunity for public comment will be posted to the project website from mid-October to early November. For more information: <https://www.southpowersstudy.com/>  
Sign up for progress enewsletters by sending an email to SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com

**Figure 1.** Invitation letter mailed to 163 property owners along the corridor Study area to schedule Round 2 one-on-one meetings.



### Virtual Public Open House Comment Form

(Comments about the South Powers Extension Study PEL are required to be submitted prior to Feb. 19, 2024)

1. I am a: (check all that apply)
- resident at zip code \_\_\_\_\_
  - business owner \_\_\_\_\_
  - commuter \_\_\_\_\_
  - bicycle rider \_\_\_\_\_
  - other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. OPTIONAL: The street I live on is:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Recommended alignment E3 best meets the following needs and goals (check all that apply):
- improves regional mobility
  - provides multimodal opportunities
  - minimizes environmental impacts
  - follows local agency transportation and development plans
  - minimizes impacts to landowners, businesses, neighborhoods
  - improves opportunity for a resilient/redundant transportation network
  - provides future opportunities for technology and innovation

4. Recommended alignment H3 best meets the following needs and goals (check all that apply):
- improves regional mobility
  - provides multimodal opportunities
  - minimizes environmental impacts
  - follows local agency transportation and development plans
  - minimizes impacts to landowners, businesses, and neighborhoods
  - improves opportunity for a resilient/redundant transportation network
  - provides future opportunities for technology and innovation

5. What comments do you have for the Project Team regarding the South Powers Extension PEL Study?

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You may also email your completed comment form to: [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com)  
 Or, mail it to: South Powers Extension Study, El Paso County, Department of Public Works, 3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80922

(Figure 3. Virtual Open House Comment Form)

[Click here to download](#)



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 10: Second Virtual Open House Comment Form

## Virtual Public Open House Comment Form

(Comments about the South Powers Extension Study PEL are required to be submitted prior to Feb. 19, 2024)

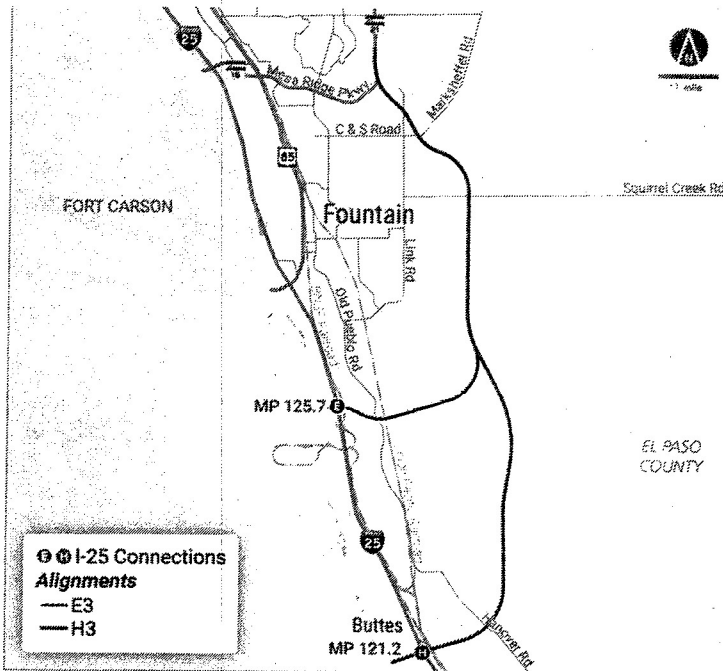
1. **I am a:** (check all that apply)
- resident at zip code \_\_\_\_\_
- business owner \_\_\_\_\_
- commuter \_\_\_\_\_
- bicycle rider \_\_\_\_\_
- other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. **OPTIONAL:** The street I live on is:

---



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3. **Recommended alignment E3 best meets the following needs and goals (check all that apply):**

- improves regional mobility
- provides multimodal opportunities
- minimizes environmental impacts
- follows local agency transportation and development plans
- minimizes impacts to landowners, businesses, neighborhoods
- improves opportunity for a resilient/redundant transportation network
- provides future opportunities for technology and innovation

4. **Recommended alignment H3 best meets the following needs and goals (check all that apply):**

- improves regional mobility
- provides multimodal opportunities
- minimizes environmental impacts
- follows local agency transportation and development plans
- minimizes impacts to landowners, businesses, and neighborhoods
- improves opportunity for a resilient/redundant transportation network
- provides future opportunities for technology and innovation

5. **What comments do you have for the Project Team regarding the South Powers Extension PEL Study?**

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You may also email your completed comment form to: [SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com](mailto:SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com)  
Or, mail it to: South Powers Extension Study, El Paso County, Department of Public Works, 3275 Akers Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80922



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 11: Second Newsletter

**Natalie Sosa, Public Information Office**

**O:** 719-520-6250

**M:** 719-344-4231

Nataliesosa@elpasoco.com

Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

**Board of County Commissioners**

Holly Williams, District 1

Carrie Geitner, District 2

Stan VanderWerf, District 3

Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4

Cami Bremer, District 5

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## News Release

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### **El Paso County seeks feedback on South Extension of Powers Boulevard** *Public Invited to comment on recommended alignment*

**El Paso County, CO – February 1, 2024** – In Spring 2022 El Paso County, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, initiated a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study to provide regional transportation connectivity for the Powers Boulevard (Colorado Highway 21) southern extension, from where it currently ends at Mesa Ridge Parkway to I-25, south of the City of Fountain. This study will provide a recommended alignment for future projects in the area and assist in preserving a corridor footprint.

The planning process has involved developing a range of possible corridor alignments and analyzing those potential alignments for how well they address the needs of the area. Recommended alignments have been identified and an access control plan is being developed for the extension of South Powers Boulevard.

The public is invited to participate in a virtual public open house to learn about the study, review the two recommended alignments and provide feedback. **Public comments will be taken now through February 19, 2024, by visiting the project website, [www.southpowersstudy.com](http://www.southpowersstudy.com).**

**STAY INFORMED:** To receive project update e-newsletters, please send an email to: SouthPowersStudy@gmail.com to be added to the project contact list.

For more information and questions

Website: [www.elpasoco.com](http://www.elpasoco.com)

Email: [dotweb@elpasoco.com](mailto:dotweb@elpasoco.com)

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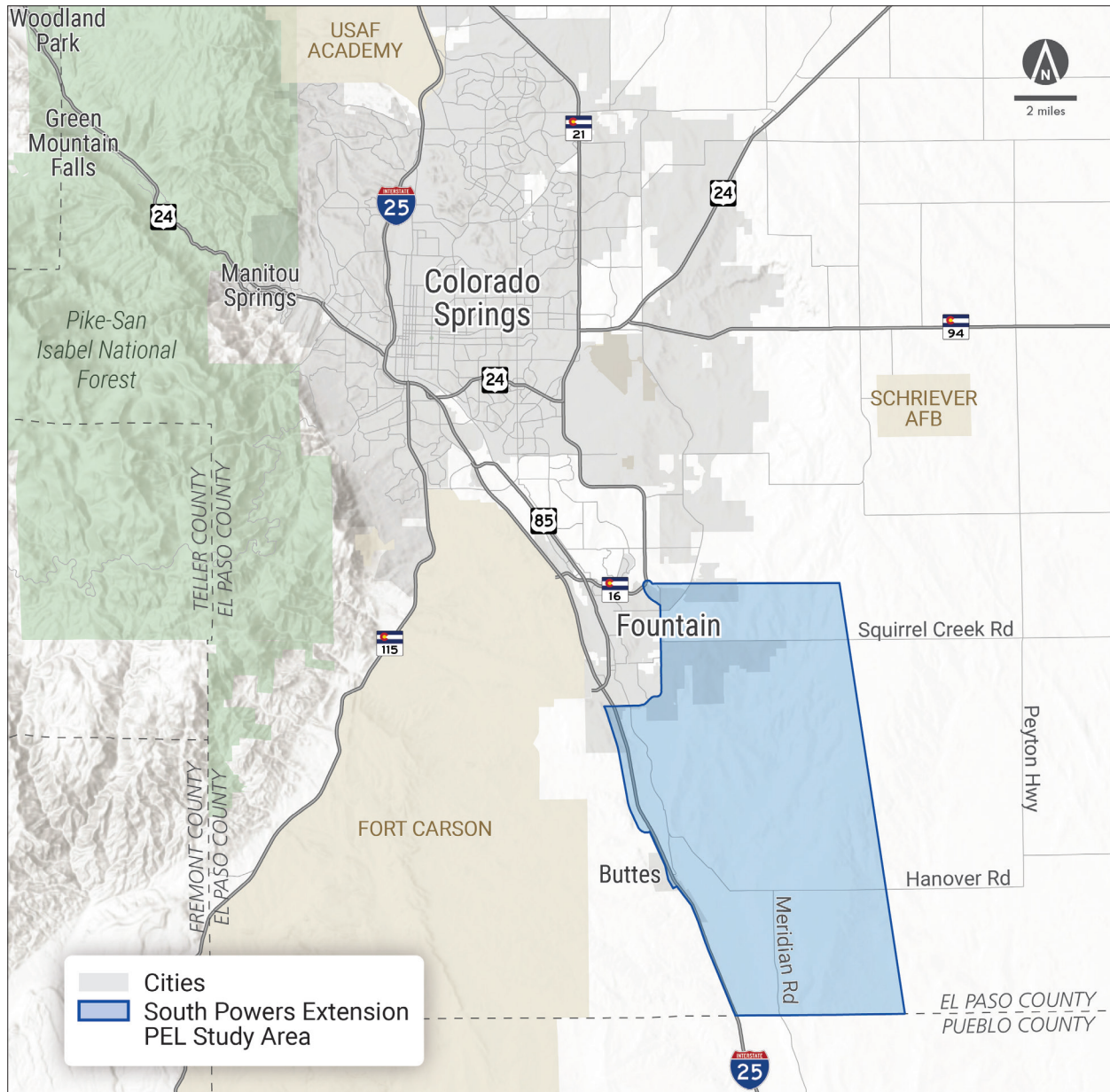
[www.ElPasoCo.com](http://www.ElPasoCo.com)



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 12: Project Fact Sheet

El Paso County, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Access Control Plan (ACP) for the extension of Powers Boulevard to the South. This project will provide a long-term vision for the corridor by selecting a recommended alignment and prioritizing transportation improvement projects.




### What is the purpose of these improvements?

The purpose of the study is to recommend an alignment to extend South Powers Boulevard (CO 21) from CO 16/ Mesa Ridge Parkway to a connection with Interstate 25 (I-25), south of Colorado Springs and Fountain, Colorado.

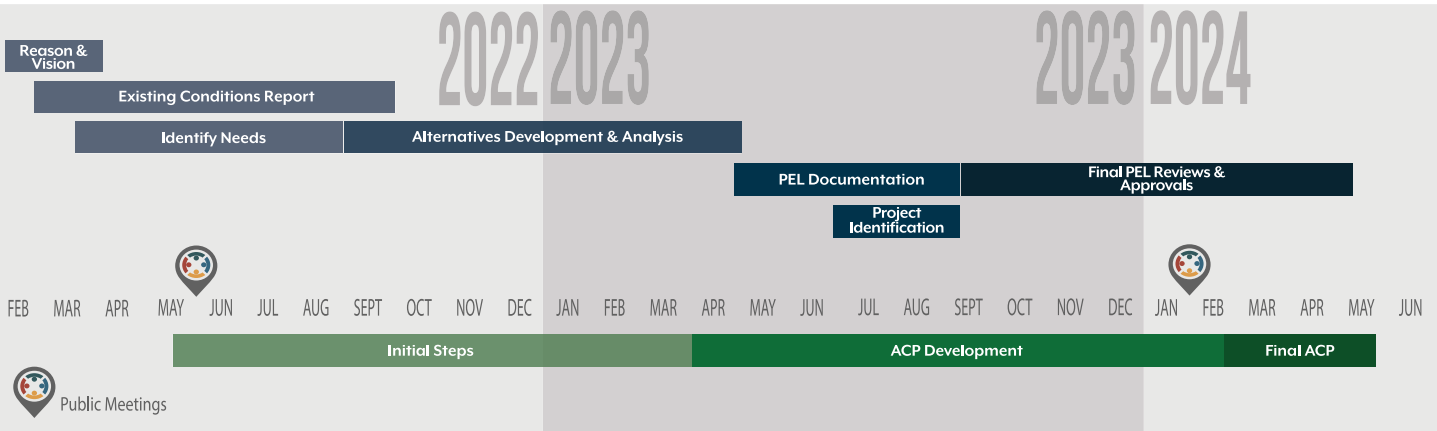
#### Needs for the Corridor:

 **Advance Local and Regional Mobility**

 **Incorporate Multimodal Opportunities**

## What is the current Study schedule?

The following graphic highlights where we are in the PEL study process.

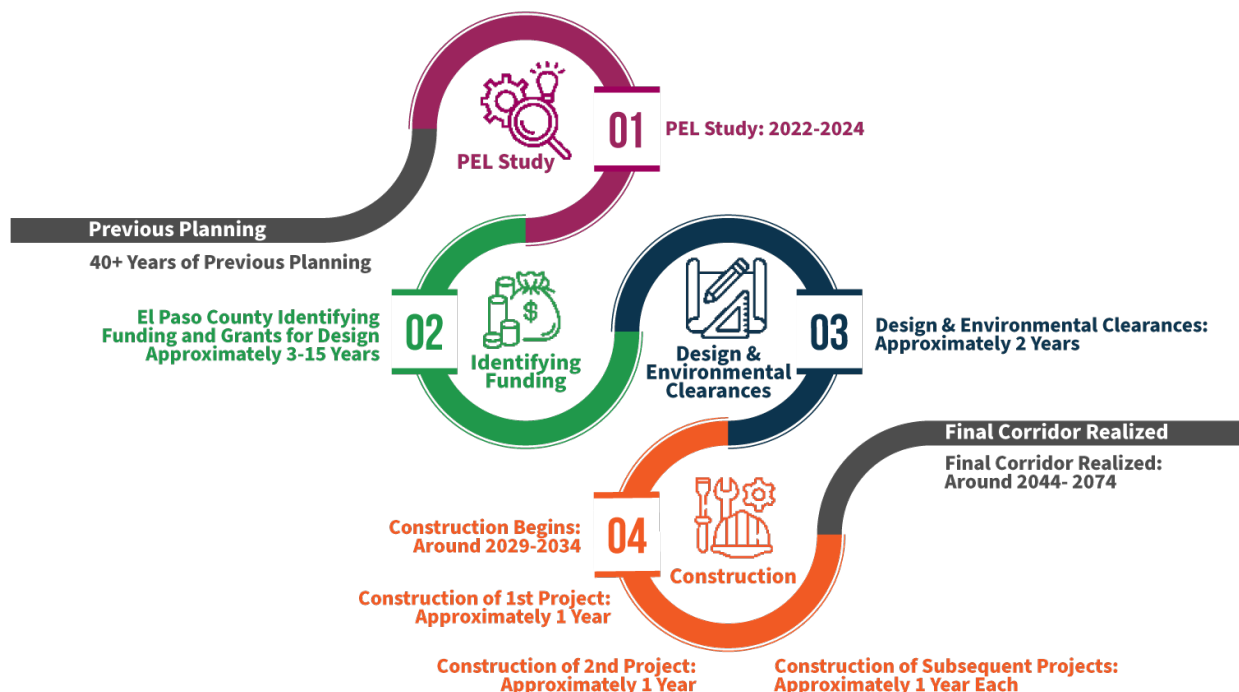


## What will be the additional benefits of these recommendations?

- Create enhanced air, rail, bus, and bicycle transportation opportunities for local residents, military facilities, tourists, and commercial freight carriers
- Accommodate local and regional economic growth
- Create an alternate route to I-25
- Identify and preserve a corridor footprint
- Minimize impacts to land use and the natural and built environment
- Improve local and regional emergency preparedness
- Incorporate new and future transportation technology

## What are the next steps for this Corridor?

The planning process is just the start to implementing the final connection from the existing South Powers Boulevard to I-25. Although construction funding has not been identified to date, the PEL has developed segments that can be built over time in phases. The Project will continue to apply for grants and look for funding solutions. Knowing there is a plan in place will allow project to move forward with a consistent vision to increase local and regional mobility while providing multimodal opportunities while traveling the corridor.



For more information, visit:

[www.southpowersstudy.com](http://www.southpowersstudy.com)



Public Involvement Memo

# Attachment 13 – Project Comment Log



**SOUTH POWERS EXTENSION PEL STUDY -- COMMENT LOG  
EL PASO COUNTY - As of 4/9/24**



Contact #	Date	Source	Organization or Public	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Address	Comment/Issue/Question	Response Sent / Date Sent	Status
79	4/2/24	Response to Newsletter	Organization; Fountain Creek Watershed District	Allie Schuch	fountainckdist@gmail.com	719.650.7474		It appears that part of the project may be subject to the Watershed District's notice and comment land use authority. See attached map and our website <a href="https://www.fountain-crk.org/land-use-checklist-application-fees">https://www.fountain-crk.org/land-use-checklist-application-fees</a> If the project falls within the "Corridor" - the 100 year floodplain S. of Fountain, you will need to complete our land use application and present to the Citizen Advisory Group, Technical Advisory Committee, and the Board for approvals. They meet monthly and I am happy to coordinate those when the time comes.	Responded 4/2/2024: Allie, Thank you for sending the information below and attached. It will be helpful once the S. Powers Boulevard Extension project moves forward. But, since currently this is a planning study, there are a lot of details to work out before any kind of property acquisition, if needed, would be discussed. At that time the County and project team would work with the FCMSD through that process. I have copied here the S. Powers Extension Study consultant and County project managers to keep everyone in the loop and tied in. Thanks again, Alli.	CLOSED
78	4/2/24	Response to Newsletter	Public	Jay Frost	jayfrost49@gmail.com			In the Existing Conditions Report of 2023, the name Hanna was misspelled (it's Hanna, should not be Hannah) Also...The irrigation ditch that goes through Hanna-Frost is Talcott and Cotten....not Talcott and Gott	Responded 4/2/2024: That is very helpful, Jay. Thank you so much. I will pass this info on to the engineering team that drafted the reports and ask them to kindly make those corrections.	CLOSED
77	4/1/24	Response to Newsletter	Public	Joe Munch	joemonch@gmail.com			Your showing the Race track in the wrong place, it's at exit 122.	Responded 4/1/2024: Thank you Mr. Munch for letting us know. I have notified the project management team about correcting that in the final project report.	CLOSED
76	2/19/24	Response to Newsletter	Public	David Kinnischtzke	dkinnits@gmail.com		16995 Old Pueblo Rd, Fountain, CO 80817	E3 just seems to be the best choice for expansion, if one can call that the best choice. Coming down with H3, impacts areas that really aren't on the development radar. E3 is much closer to development. Having lived in the H3 corridor since 1989 has given me a fairly long view of Fountain and surrounding areas growth and potential. Down and along the H3 option is people with a deep love for ranchland, wetlands, agricultural practices, conservation easements, wildlife, etc. It is also an area in and around Fountain Creek that is unstable when it comes to storm water peak flows. Encouraging development with Powers Blvd expansion only exacerbates this ongoing water quality problem. The highway stretch of I-25 in the H3 model is already an area that experiences wildlife migration across the highway along with bird migration. Additionally, it is a hazardous stretch of highway. Funneling more traffic into the I-25 corridor at this point adds to the problem. The H3 corridor also plows right through the Hannover/Midway community further dividing the area into two zones. Its an unusual community by design however, placing H3 into and through the area makes it worse by dividing it further. Planners should have the foresight to see this before working towards degrading the area for expedience. From a personal level, H3 seeks to cut in two our farm. Seeks to put Powers Blvd out my front window literally. Seeks to fill an already busy corridor with more noise, more traffic, more impacts to wildlife, more impacts to water quality, more impacts to a quality of life so cherished by those who steward this area of our county.	Responded 2/20/2024: Thank you Dave for your email below regarding the South Powers Extension PEL Study. We will share your comments with the project team and will also include them with the study public input documents.	CLOSED
75	2/19/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	pamela galchutt	pam.galchutt@gmail.com			PLEASE! DO NOT TAKE THIS HIGHWAY THROUGH CLEAR SPRING REGIONAL PARK!!!! Clear Spring is a gem that should be preserved and a highway across it will destroy the entire ambience of one of the few trails in El Paso County that is safe and easy and useable year round, particularly in the winter. My friends and I love being able to ride our horses there especially in the fall--- gorgeous old cottonwoods all along the river... and in the winter next to the open hayfields on safe footing. Powers extension across there would be devastating to it!	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
74	2/19/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	Gene Krull	elk353@gmail.com			Do not support. Current roadways are a deteriorated mess. Need to take care of the damaged/potholed roads we have now before creating additional roadway.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
73	2/19/24	Email with Comments	La Plata Communities	Ryan Ruebenson	ruebenson@laplatailc.com			Below are the reasons La Plata Communities supports and opposes the new alignment. ( See email with document attached; same from all La Plata individuals emails)	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
72	2/19/24	Response to Newsletter	Public	Sue Ward	suesdiamond@hotmail.com			No way do I want you to go thru H E.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
71	2/19/24	Email with Comments	La Plata Communities	Guy Childs	gchilds@laplatailc.com			See attached comments on proposed re-alignment of Powers Blvd. ( See email with document attached; same dunnet from all La Plata individuals emails)	Responded 2/19: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
70	2/19/24	Website Comment Form	Public	Michael Remington	Remingtons150@msn.com			Connecting Powers extension to Highway 21 will be a mistake due to the high traffic during commuting times on Highway 21. The multiple intersections and limited off ramp access to highway 24 will create a slow commute. The failure to construct large traffic circles along this corridor has made longer wait times and a dangerous situation with highspeed traffic. Marksheffel would bypass much of the problem areas and give faster easier access to highway 24 and the multiple military bases on the East side of El Paso. Mesa Ridge connecting to Fort Carson is already highly congested and the intersection at Mesa is a dangerous connection due to lack of sight lines and sun glare. Use traffic circles when ever possible to enable continuous flow of traffic.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED



**SOUTH POWERS EXTENSION PEL STUDY -- COMMENT LOG  
EL PASO COUNTY - As of 4/9/24**



Contact #	Date	Source	Organization or Public	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Address	Comment/Issue/Question	Response Sent / Date Sent	Status
69	2/18/24	Email with Comments	La Plata Communities	Sue Renfro	suzrenfro@gmail.com			I am asking that CDOT reconsider the recent decision to realign Powers Blvd. The extension of Powers Blvd is definitely needed as an alternative to I25. It will provide important connections for military routes and mobility of freight, in addition to being a key component for future housing and industrial growth in this area. However, in July/August 2020 La Plata Communities worked directly with CDOT to finalize an alignment for Powers. In late August 2020 CDOT agreed to the proposed alignment that La Plata provided to them for review. Both the City of Fountain and CDOT's design engineer, Wilson and Company were integral in the planning and review of the approved-upon alignment. This alignment has remained the same for the last 3.5 years. Not only is this alignment shown on La Plata's Master Plan for Amara, it is also shown on the recently approved amended Mesa Ridge ODP to the north. Now, without prior coordination with La Plata or the City of Fountain, CDOT has decided to realign the Powers extension which will greatly and negatively impact both projects - Amara and the Mesa Ridge ODP. It is very disappointing and concerning that CDOT has made this decision to realign Powers without consulting either party, who had worked with CDOT previously in good faith. Over the last 3.5 years, plans for Amara have been finalized and submitted for approval. Now La Plata has been told the previously agreed upon Powers extension has been changed. If approved, this realignment will cost La Plata a lot of money to revise already submitted plans and valuable time.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
68	2/18/24	Email with Comments	Resident	Harah Frost	harahfrost@gmail.com			Respectfully, are you crazy? This extension was a bad idea 25 years ago. The idea has not improved. I thought Colorado was FOR small business. I thought Colorado was a FRIEND to the rancher. Why would you therefore put a four lane highway through a legacy family ranch? Why would you send traffic through a (conserved) bosque wetland, elk and bird habitat? It makes no sense. You may think you are planning for a "new" economy but you are not. You are planning for an obsolete and rapidly fading transportation system. This does not constitute "foresight." This is not remotely responsible. Why not go south if you absolutely have to. Also where is the most up-to-date NEPA study? Has Fish and Wildlife signed off? Have the archeologists signed off? There are archeological sites on the ranches you are proposing to drive through, and handy for lawsuits if need be. What does make sense is spending federal transportation money on an electric train from Denver to Pueblo. Now there is a good idea.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
67	2/17/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	Steven Clark Hanna	stevenhanna2@aol.com			If you are going to cut off 1/5 of our land usage and potential, your purchase for lease for easement will exceed 5 million in cash, water, and/or ranch and farmland.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
66	2/17/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	Jann Bach	mntndgrnch@aol.com			Please do not choose option E for the extension. It makes no sense to cross a residential area with numerous homeowners when you have an option that crosses very little developed land. If you feel you must have a more northerly exit than H, why not use the already existing exit that goes to the Nixon power plant. That power plant is due to be decommissioned by 2030. It will then be an unused exit on and off of I 25. What is the sense in building another exit about half a mile north of that? you will destroy a small, quiet residential and light agricultural community when you have a clear choice to do otherwise.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
65	2/16/24	Response to Newsletter	Resident	Mr. Bam	bam719bam@gmail.com			Ok quit sending me the same "H" & you bot. Mr Bam responded to Study Team's response of 2/16/204: If you're going to keep sending me the same exact redundant fear porn every week then yes take me off your land grabbing awareness program. I'm fed up of worrying if you mafia bosses plan on plowing thru mine or my neighbors lots. Enjoy your weekend planning to ruin the lives of others at a desk from afar you leech. (He was removed from our database)	Responded 2/16/2024: Mr. Bam, I have received your email below. I would be happy to remove you from the distribution of the South Powers Extension PEL Study newsletters if that is your request. Just want to be sure that is what you are asking us to do.	CLOSED
64	2/16/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	Maurice	mauricemichael333@gmail.com			I'm trying to find out, how close or if you are taking my property? These lines don't show exactly where... I'm at 12410 old pueblo road.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. Here is a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4704a9034476b091aacd6.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4704a9034476b091aacd6.pdf</a>	CLOSED
63	2/15/20254	Email with Comments	Public	Don Gravette	dgravette@gmail.com	719-963-3236	2603 Ashgrove Street Colorado Springs, CO 80906	Please see attached material regarding my public comments about the Study. (See email for document with comments)	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
62	2/15/20254	Letter	Director of Open Lands, Colorado Open Lands	Cheryl Cufre	ccufre@coloradoopenlands.org	303.988.2373 ext. 219	1546 Cole Boulevard #200 Lakewood, CO 80401	El Paso County Public Works Department, Attached we have provided our comments for the Virtual Open House public comment period for the South Powers Boulevard Extension Study. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions. (See letter with complete comments)	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
61	2/15/24	Email with Comments	President and CEO, Plata Communituies	Doug Quimby	dquimby@laplata.com	719-867-2285		I am the President and CEO of La Plata Communities, Inc., which is a member of a company that owns substantial acreage in the area affected by the proposed southerly extension of Powers Boulevard/Colorado Highway No. 21, including a large portion of the proposed right-of-way. The most recently proposed alignment is significantly different from the alignment previously agreed to by various property owners, including the largest landowners, and governmental entities, including CDOT, and is not acceptable to us. Our comments concerning the extension of Powers Boulevard are contained in the attached document. (see email for corresponding document)	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED



**SOUTH POWERS EXTENSION PEL STUDY -- COMMENT LOG  
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Contact #	Date	Source	Organization or Public	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Address	Comment/Issue/Question	Response Sent / Date Sent	Status
60	2/15/24	Comment	Director of Development, La Plata Communities	Steve Rossoll	rossoll@laplatallc.com			I am the Director of Development for La Plata Communities, the developers of Amara. I am reaching out to voice my support and concern for the proposed South Powers Extension. Amara is generally located North and East of the intersection of Squirrel Creek and Link. Over the next few decades, Amara will bring 9500 new SF's plus the accompanying commercial development to the area. As such a major transportation corridor will be needed to support the growth as well as the entire region. As Colorado Springs continues to expand east and south an alternative to I-25 is imperative and South Powers is the logical solution. The corridor will allow the region, including Banning-Lewis Ranch, Space Command, CS Airport and Peterson AFB, easy access to a highway, effectively eliminating congestion on the surface roads. The extension of Powers will provide needed connection and exposure to Amara's commercial and retail development, as well as connectivity to multimodal transportation (trails, mass transit and potentially rail line). The South Powers Extension will also provide direct routes for military freight and personnel. In the summer of 2020, La Plata Communities, the City of Fountain, CDOT and Wilson & Company worked collaboratively to determine an alignment for the South Powers Extension through Amara that met the needs and design criteria of the entities. In late August of the same year, an alignment was agreed upon. The agreed to alignment, now three and a half years old, has been incorporated into all of La Plata's Master Planning documents currently working through the City of Colorado Springs as part of our Annexation process. Changing the alignment of South Powers now would require extensive changes the Master Plan.	Responded 2/19/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
59	2/14/24	Website Comment Form	Resident	Deborah Lowder	deborah.lowder@usopc.org			Affected land owner, hoping this goes away.	Responded 2/15/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
58	2/14/24	Comment	Director of Planning, La Plata Communities	Cody Humphrey	chumphrey@laplatallc.com			Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this. Please see the attached pdf for my comments on the South Powers Extension Study, specific to the proposed alignment through the Amara property. (Reference PDF saved)	Responded 2/15/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
57	2/12/24	Question	Resident	Jay Frost	jayfrost49@gmail.com			1. Do I understand that one corridor will be chosen, E 3...OR H 3? 2. Also...what is the total width of the proposed road easement? 3. Also...if the southern route is chosen, will I-25 exit 122 be re-developed to make one exit?	Responded 2/19/2024: Mr. Frost, Here is what we received from the project team: 1) The current recommendation is to proceed with Corridor E3 in the near term (0-20 years) and H3 in the long term (30-50 years) depending on growth and future needs. 2) The E3 corridor is planned at 330' and the H3 corridor at 380'. 3) Yes—if/when that connection would be made the interchange at that location would be reconstructed to be one. If you have any further questions please feel free to reach back out. Thank you!	CLOSED
56	2/8/24	Comment	Public	Peggy	puralewski@aol.com			I don't drive, I rely on bus service. Please, expand your bus service to include additional bus stops. I'm hoping, with all the new roads improvements, bus service will improve too.	Responded 2/8/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
55	2/8/24	Question	Public	Catherine Mesa	Chamorita49@gmail.com			Would like to see info regarding this study please.	Responded 2/8/2024: Thank you for your interest in this project. We have added you to our project database so you will receive project information as we move forward.	CLOSED
54	2/7/24	Question	Public	Joel Midkiff	masoncity@aol.com			Markshffel not far enough East. By the time this is constructed it will be bottled in by new housing. It needs to be farther East and then loop back to H	Responded 2/8/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
53	2/6/24	Comment	Resident	Michale Smolik	smolikmd@hotmail.com			Due to the number of accidents near PPIR and north to Fountain, it is likely a better decision to incorporate the more southern interchange as a way to bypass these accidents. The northern interchange would not be as beneficial in this regard because exit 122 is often too far north to provide bypass up Old Pueblo Road.	Responded 2/7/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
52	2/6/24	Comment	Public	John Adams	johnadamsii@yahoo.com			Seems unnecessary, feel like dollars could be better spent elsewhere.	Responded 2/7/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
51	2/6/24	Comment	Resident	Gene Krull	elk353@gmail.com			NO!! VOLUME OF TRAFFIC DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS PROJECT. LETS RESURFACE SOME NEIGHBORHOOD SIDE STREETS THAT ARE A MESS OF CRACKS, POOR PATCHING JOBS, AND POT HOLES. MY STREET WAS LAST RESURFACED OVER 30 YEARS AGO....I'M DILIGENTLY PAYING MY TAXES AND NOT GETTING ANY RETURN.	Responded 2/7/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
50	2/5/24	Question	Public	Harry Johnson	hjohn61251@comcast.net			What is the proposed route from Mesa Ridge Parkway to I25?	Responded 2/10/2024: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. Here is a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aac66.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aac66.pdf</a>	CLOSED
49	2/5/24	Comment	Public	Larry Barrett	barrettlarry@comcast.net			The purpose of this email is to comment on plans to explore limited access highway expansion connected to Powers Blvd to the south. Of particular interest is the need to plan for the aesthetics of the highways, regardless of the chosen option. Colorado Springs and El Paso County are highly regarded for our natural beauty and community attractions. It is recommended that any highway expansion consider the following important scenic objectives: Compatible highway designs and materials, Attractive landscaping, Limited signage, No billboards, especially no electronics and Purchase of existing billboards to improve safer driving and scenic views.	Responded 2/7/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
48	2/3/24	Comment	Resident	Eric Ecklund	usafecklund@aol.com			Choose option H3, Option E is a poor choice for lots of reasons. I had submitted comments to the virtual open house.	Responded 2/5/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
47	2/2/24	Question	Resident	Jay Frost	jayfrost49@gmail.com			If possible, I want to see a more detailed map of the two alignments.	Responded 2/12/2024: Mr. Frost thank you again for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aac66.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aac66.pdf</a>	CLOSED



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46	2/2/24	Question	Resident	Jann Bach	mtrndgrnch@aol.com			I would like to see a map of the alternate routes overlaid on a private property map so we can see exactly which properties are effected.	Responded 2/5/2024: Thank you again for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf</a>	CLOSED
45	2/2/24	Comment	Public	Michael L Osburn	michaelmsm1@yahoo.com			The state needs to enforce speed limits, Jake/Engine braking along Hwy 21/16. The state does not respect the residences along the road. Why are you expanding when you have not corrected issue/complaints prior to expansion. Signs need to be installed notifying fines to trucks for engine braking. Walls need to be installed to reduce noise and dust. The police never monitor the highway tickets need to be written. Use the military tax dollars to resolve the problems these installations are creating for the community.	Responded 2/2/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
44	1/31/24	Question	Director of Planning: La Plata Communities	Cody Humphrey	chumphrey@laplatallc.com			I've had time to review the PEL. I'm trying to better understand the alignment that is being proposed through the Amara property. I see the E3 option below shows what is currently on our MP. But on the recommended green alignment, it doesn't look like either dark or light blue option shown below. So what is really being proposed here? Is the green option suppose to be a hybrid between the light and dark blue options?	Responded 2/5/2024: Good morning Cody—The green option is the refined alternative based upon the public comments and minimizing impacts to existing homes. This should be the same alignment reviewed with you at the one-on-one meeting in October. We haven't modified that alignment in this area since then.	CLOSED
43	1/31/24	Question	Resident	Deanna Johnson	dflower1988@gmail.com		10755 Shumway Road	Is it possible to get a more detailed map so I can see exactly where the proposed roads will go? I can't tell how close or if it will go thru my property on all the maps in the power points.	Responded 2/5/2024: Thank you again for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf</a>	CLOSED
42	1/31/24	Question	Public	Carmelia Davis	carmeliadavis28@gmail.com			How about fixing roads that taxes are constantly being raised to fix@ least 3xs over the past 8 yrs or more? I live in pikes peak park,the streets are terrible,certain streets are actually separating,potholes are terrible,parking lots are terrible,my car has so much wear&tear,tires,wheel alignments,costly. I really wish the city officials would come drive around in this neighborhood. If an ariel view was taken,I'm sure it would look similar to a patchwork quilt. Taxes are steady rising,but no kind of work is being done. Downtown,Northern communities as well as particular other areas are getting rejuvenated. Why is that?????	Responded 2/2/2024: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
41	1/31/24	Question	Public	Donald Chagnon	springsopr@gmail.com			Your interactive maps fails to include Mesa Ridge Parkway where it extends east at what I'm guessing would be the new interchange and also fails to show Marksheffel Road at all. This bypass will obviously provide an alternate route to/from Peterson/Schriever Space Force bases and east Colorado Springs north/south increasing traffic on Marksheffel. Marksheffel Road is currently a rural two-lane road from where this bypass appears to cross Marksheffel to just south of Bradley. With all the new development, Marksheffel would require extensive improvements with this plan. What is on the plan for that??	Responded 1/31/2024: Mr. Chagnon, Thank you for your email regarding the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. We have added you to the database to receive the progress newsletters. Your comments will be added to the PEL Study public input record, and we will forward your questions to the project team.	CLOSED
40	1/30/24	Question	Public	Pam Galchtt	pam.galchutt@gmail.com			So far this website is not intuitive or easy to get more information off of. Are you going to have a real, in person public input?	Responded 1/31/2024: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. We have now signed you up to receive the progress newsletters. Also, we apologize that the website virtual public open house is causing difficulty for you to be able to pull information off. Although we are not planning to have an in-person version of the meeting, we'd be happy to assist you in getting any of the information and documents you are wanting but unable to access online. Please do let us know.	CLOSED
39	1/30/24	Question	Resident	Debbie Cusack	debcius@hotmail.com			I appreciate the maps you have supplied. It is mentioned that the two possible locations are E3 and H3. I am having trouble finding these locations in relations to my property. My address is 11585 Orleans Rd, Fountain. I need to see how both of the locations will affect my property. Do you have another map that gives me a better view of the locations? Thanks much!	Responded 2/5/2024: Thank you again for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091a1ac66.pdf</a>	CLOSED
<b>Round #2 shaded above: Virtual Open House Official Comment Period January 25, 2024 - through February 19, 2024</b>										
38	1/19/24	Wanting Update	Public	Jim McCormick	milton770@aol.com			I was looking for any new information on the project. I thought I would've received a news letter or something by now. Thanks	Responded 1/22/2024: Thank you for reaching out. Over the last two months the project team has been working to finalize all the study documents in preparation for posting them on the project website. There have been several of the project team on vacations over November and December for the holidays so it took longer than anticipated to finalize the documents. We do anticipate the documents will be posted within the next three weeks. Once they are, we will be distributing a newsletter and other outreach to inform everyone where/how to view them. Thank you for your patience and again for reaching out.	CLOSED
37	1/18/24	Petition	MONSON, CUMMINS, SHOHEI & FARR, LLC	W. James Tilton	wjt@cowaterlaw.com	(719) 471-1212	13511 Northgate Estates Drive, Suite 250 Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921	Good afternoon, my name is James Tilton. I'm an attorney with Monson, Cummins, Shohet & Farr. I am reaching out to follow-up on an email sent to you on December 12th, 2023. The previous message was regarding our client Eric Ecklund, and his and his neighbors' opposition to a potential South Powers Extension Route Option "E" that is being considered. I wanted to follow up with you on this matter to confirm your receipt of my previous message and the documents provided. The documents include a signed petition, information on Mr. Ecklund's property, and the South Powers Extension routes that the County studied. Our understanding is that you are the project manager of the South Powers Extension Study. Any information or update you can provide on the decision making process and planned next steps would be appreciated. Please confirm whether you received the prior message and if you have any questions we may be able to address. (Petition was attached signed by 29 property owners)	Responded 1/22/2024: Mr. Tilton, thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension PEL Study. We are confirming that Mr. Howard Schwartz/El Paso County and the South Powers Extension PEL Study project team have received your comments/letter from Dec. 12, 2023 and your email below and will include them with the study public input documents. (Howard was copied).	CLOSED



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Contact #	Date	Source	Organization or Public	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Address	Comment/Issue/Question	Response Sent / Date Sent	Status
36	1/8/24	Website comment form	Resident	Patricia L Alward	palward49@gmail.com			What is the progress on this project. What has happened in the last 2 months.	Responded 1/11/2024: Thank you for reaching out. Over the last two months the project team has been working to finalize all the study documents in preparation for posting them on the project website. There have been several of the project team on vacations over November and December for the holidays so it took longer than anticipated to finalize the documents. We do anticipate the documents will be posted within the next three weeks. One they are, we will be distributing a newsletter and other outreach to inform everyone where/how to view them.	CLOSED
35	12/8/23	Website comment form	Resident	Eric Ecklund	usafecklund@aol.com			When and where is the next public meeting?	Responded 12/10/2023: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We will be sure to send out information regarding the next public meeting.	CLOSED
34	11/10/23	Website comment form	Public	Chuck Erwin	erwinddd@yahoo.com			Powers must be planned as a GULL FREEWAY. No DDI interchanges. Standard only. We drive in the right side of the road. Interchanges, yes. DDI, no. I don't want to be Eurotized	Responded 11/10/2023: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
33	11/8/23	Website comment form	Resident	Eric Ecklund	usafecklund@aol.com			Dear EPC Team Our family owns Wedgewood Farms at 13030 Old Pueblo Rd. We are against proposed option E as it either crosses our North property boundary or crosses the middle of our land. Options G and H route south of our land and go south around the homes on Old Pueblo Rd. These options cross open ranch land to the east then across the CSU Clear Springs Ranch open land to I-25. Choose one of these. We understand the need and applaud the foresight. We do not agree with proposing a plan over private property and residences, especially when other routes over open and municipal land are available.	Responded 11/10/2023: Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED
32	10/14/23	Website comment form	Public	Garrett Peterson	gipeterson84@gmail.com			Hello, I am considering a property at the the I-25 and Old Pueblo Rd intersection which surrounds the little electric substation to the southeast of that exchange. It is not clear whether or not this is the intersection chosen for the SPE end point. Can you assist?	Responded 10/15/2023: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. Here is a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf</a>	CLOSED
31	10/4/23	Website comment form	Resident	Wanda Brooks	ajwb64@gmail.com			Is it coming down Bonnie Cap Lane Fountain, Co 80817	Responded 10/5/2023: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. Here is a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf</a>	CLOSED
30	10/4/23	Website comment form	Resident	Patricia Alward	palward49@gmail.com			My husband is having surgery Oct 6. If we make an appointment for the 11th and he isn't able to attend will that be an issue? Can we get information from the meeting?	Responded 10/4/2023: Thank you for your interest in the project, if you can not make your meeting on the 11th you will be able to get information at the meeting.	CLOSED
29	10/3/23	Website comment form	Resident	Heather Smalley	Ahsmalley@yahoo.com			Hello, I'm needing to understand how this project may impact us at 13575 Old Pueblo Road.	Responded 10/5/2023: Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. Here is a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf</a>	CLOSED
28	9/30/23	Website comment form	Public	Dawn Harrick	hometownelegance@gmail.com			Hi I recently received a notice regarding the south power's extension Please let me know where I can find a better map of the impact area directly related to the proposed road expansion and extension. I would like to see neighborhoods listed in the maps as well as schools and businesses. Please let me know where I can find this before meetings	Responded 10/1/2023: Thank you again for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors, so letting you know that one has now been added to the website under the Project Documents tab. Here is a direct link to it. You can Zoom in as needed. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacdf.pdf</a>	CLOSED
27	1/11/23	Website comment form	Public	Luke McDonald	luke.j.mcdonald08@gmail.com			Location says "Powers Boulevard is located south of Colorado Springs in El Paso County. It is approximately 36 miles in length, with its northern terminus connecting to Mesa Ridge Parkway (CO 16) and southern terminus connecting with I-25 (between the existing interchange locations of Pikes Peak International Raceway and the unnamed interchange located north of MP 123). The yellow shading on the map below shows the location of the potential future alignment. Highly confusing. Powers goes all the way north to Interquest. Did you mean to say "proposed future northern terminus of the South Powers section...?"	Responded 1/17/2023: Thanks so much for reaching out with your question. We are sorry for any confusion. The proposed extension that we refer to is from Mesa Ridge Road (CO 16) heading south and connecting to I25 (somewhere south of the City of Fountain). Several alignments are under consideration, but a preferred alignment has not yet been determined. Although Powers Boulevard is 36 miles long, this study is only looking at the South Powers area near Fountain. We are NOT looking at anything up north. I hope this explanation helps. Please reach out with any additional questions. We will make certain to add you to our project database so that you receive project updates.	CLOSED
26	1/5/23	Website comment form	Citizen	Reynolds Black	reynoldsblack@gmail.com			E-Newsletter sign-up	Responded 01/05/2023 - confirming he's been added to project database.	CLOSED
25	1/5/23	Website comment form	Citizen	Detra Duncan	detraduncanphdfountain@gmail.com	719-640-0152		Please include me on the newsletter distribution list to detraduncanphdfountain@gmail.com.	Responded 01/05/2023 -I confirming she's been added to project database.	CLOSED
24	1/4/23	Website comment form	Resident	James Snare	snarebear1@aol.com	719-339-9152	8435 Furlong Circle, Fountain, Colorado	My name is James C. Snare, Sr. I reside at 8435 Furlong Circle, Fountain, Colorado 8817. My e-mail is snarebear1@aol.com, my phone number is 719-339-9152. As the latest Nor Wood development plan #5 shows a proposed Powers lining up directly with Furlong Circle, I just wanted to let you know that would disrupt four 5 acre lots with four different families. That would be quite expensive to buy these four properties, pay for moving 4 families, just to keep that line up. It will be much cheaper for the state and county to continue the Powers South Extension either to Link Road or turn before Marksheffel Road thereby missing Furlong Circle and messing up four families rights to quiet enjoyment. Please keep me informed of the meetings for the study and keep me on the list to send out notifications. Thanks for your time,	Responded 01/05/2023 -Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Extension Study PEL. We have received your comments and will include them with the study's public input documents.	CLOSED



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Contact #	Date	Source	Organization or Public	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Address	Comment/Issue/Question	Response Sent / Date Sent	Status
23	10/27/22	Website Comment Form	Resident	Anna Auwae	aauwae719@gmail.com			Where do I find the proposed location? The map doesn't show it and isn't working / displaying correctly (menu bar to the left is not on the actual screen - minimizing screen doesn't fix either)	<b>Responded 11/01/2022:</b> Thank you for your interest in the South Powers Boulevard Extension Study. The project is currently in the Alternatives Development phase and as such, there is not yet a specific recommended alignment determined as part of this study. Once a recommended alignment has been determined, it will be posted to this website and will be presented during a public meeting in early 2023. With regard to the website issues you described, we will check things out with the webmaster and make any needed corrections. In the meantime, you might check to see if you may have accidentally hidden the menu bar. There is a button at the top of the map that says Map Menu that brings it back. After further investigation, it appears that the project website interactive map only works on computers, not mobile devices. You may want to try to view it on your computer while we investigate the fix for the mobile application. Thank you again for letting us know."	CLOSED
22	6/3/22	Website Comment Form	Resident	James C. Snare	snarebear1@aol.com	719-339-9152	8435 Furlong Circle, Fountain, Colorado	I am most interested in maps showing possible route and extensions to I-25.	<b>Responded 6/4/2022:</b> Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors. As soon as one is available, we will provide it to you. Link to map sent 02/05/2023. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacd6.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacd6.pdf</a>	CLOSED
21	5/27/22	Website Comment Form	Resident	Joanie McNiece	joncniece@yahoo.com			Hi, could you please send any maps or info that were available at the public meeting at Fountain City Hall on May 25th? I only just heard about that event now after the fact. Thanks in advance, J. McNiece, PO Box 361, Fountain, CO 80817	<b>Responded 5/28/2022:</b> Thank you for your interest in the S. Powers Extension PEL Study. You had requested a more detailed map of the Recommended Corridors. As soon as one is available, we will provide it to you. Link to map sent 02/05/2023. <a href="https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacd6.pdf">https://www.southpowersstudy.com/_files/ugd/f29967_0c676c7b4707404a9034476b091aacd6.pdf</a>	CLOSED
20	5/26/22	Email with Comments	Public	Michael Remington	Remingtons150@msn.com			I attended the May 25 meeting covering the projected South Powers/ I 25 extension plans. My wife and I attended several studies on the same project over twenty years ago. The new maps don't even show the 1-25 mile markers for the proposed connections. Just one of many details missing from a couple of maps. Why has the project not been posted to the County Master Plan? We have a El Paso County Planning Commission that is a worthless waste of my money. When Jeri Howells was my county commissioner over a decade ago, the county board voted to zone El Paso Country. Why wasn't a project that was envisioned 60 odd years ago, not placed on the master plan and zoned appropriately? Why do I pay for the various county offices and plans and you didn't work with each other or actually plan a road connection? Where did the money for the current study come from? How many employers are on the staff project? Who requested the new study? I smell a developer. Why isn't the previous twenty odd year old study posted or briefed? Does the State of Colorado have a plan for the extension of Powers or other roads to I-25? Map? Why do you need another study of the extension and after 60 years not have a route fixed and mapped out? The El Paso county master plan has already identified various barriers and areas best avoided. There maps seem to be a duplicate of the efforts done by the new study. I consider the El Paso County planning work at best a case of waste fraud and abuse.	<b>Responded 5/28/2022:</b> We appreciate you attending the Open House meeting on May 25. Several project team members were pleased to talk to you about the project and answer your questions. You made an excellent suggestion about adding milepost markers to maps, which our project team will implement in the future. The EPC 2016 Major Transportation Corridors Plan (Corridor Preservation Plan), which is an element of the County Master Plan, includes South Powers Boulevard. The South Powers Extension is also included in several other planning documents back as far as 1970. Those studies and plans are listed on the project website and were included in the public open house displays. The PEL was initiated by El Paso County in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation, City of Fountain, City of Colorado Springs, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Federal Highway Administration, and other stakeholders. The Pikes Peak Region has a long history of cooperative and collaborative planning to include a multimodal regional transportation network to serve the region. These regional partners are working together to continue planning for the South Powers Boulevard corridor that will help preserve right-of-way, plan for limited access for the freeway standard, plan for multimodal use and crossings of the corridor, and provide predictability to development by studying an alignment. The budget for this PEL study is \$1,000,000 with funding thorough Multi-Modal Opportunity Funding and CDOT Regional Project Priority Funds. The PEL study builds upon previous planning documents to identify a South Powers Extension corridor alignment. This South Powers Extension PEL Study is a required next step in the planning process. This study will identify corridor preservation needs and will provide a framework for the short and long-term implementation of multimodal transportation improvements. I want to thank you again for your input. For future updates on this study, I encourage you to sign up for the e-newsletter. You can join the distribution list by emailing SouthPowersExtensionStudy@gmail.com.	CLOSED
19	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Lisa Vinton	lisa_vinton@hotmail.com			Don't break up Fountain, has a small own feel. Sned freeway (powers) east, not through fountain. There needs to be another north/south road in the springs, or a loop like 470I. No tolls. Don't connect Link Rd to Mesa Ridge. If I was coming S. on Powers, id choose to get on the freeway at Mesa Ridge, unless the further south connection to the freeway had a higher speed. Fountain Rd could use a King Soopers, on the E/S side.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
18	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public					I want a hospital, we need it. There should be a separate trail for pedestrians and bicyclists as well.	No contact info	CLOSED
17	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Michael Remington	Remingtons150@msn.com			Maybe post markers on maps like traffic circles at the intersections. We participated in the Sought Powers study over twenty years ago. There were maps, drawings, meetings and nothing was done. Why wasn't anything done? There were proposed bike lanes that were never built and your organization has contributed nothing of merit except your own wages and benefits.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
16	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public					My concern for the region is water and population. I would like more town meetings for more information.	No contact info	CLOSED
15	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public					There would be too much traffic if pedestrians and bicyclists modes of transportation were to be accommodated. This project needs to be done ASAP.	No contact info	CLOSED
14	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public					We need access to a hospital on the South end of powers.	No contact info	CLOSED
13	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public					The well water is contaminated.	No contact info	CLOSED
12	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Theresa Gwynn	taghomenet@gmail.com			And hoping to know the exact location of this new road very soon. Yes I understand that's yet to be determined - I want to keep informed. Thanks.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
11	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Cassie Grim	cgrim1979@gmail.com			I would love to receive information on this project. I live in downtown Fountain and it's so desperately needed to divert traffic away from downtown.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
10	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Michele Maldonado	zillawho@gmail.com			Thank you for the information and update. Nicely done.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
9	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Daniel Peterson	thump77er77@msn.com			I think this is a great idea to do to help traffic and to expand businesses and grow Fountain area to keep up.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED
8	5/25/22	Public Open House Comment Form	Public	Randy	samsr@rocketmail.com			The interactive map is not active yet. I would like to see the proposed roadway on a map please. I will be at the meeting in Fountain as well.	Written comment form acknowledged, added to the project newsletter database	CLOSED

