



Update

Powers Environmental Assessment

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Powers Environmental Assessment

INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Department of Transportation along with the Federal Highway Administration is in the process of conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate various transportation alternatives that will help reduce the congestion projected for Powers Boulevard by the year 2025. As a first step in the process, a Mode Feasibility Study/Corridor Assessment (MFSCA) was conducted to identify all reasonable alternatives and select the most appropriate alternatives to be carried into concept design and detailed environmental studies.

PROJECT UPDATE

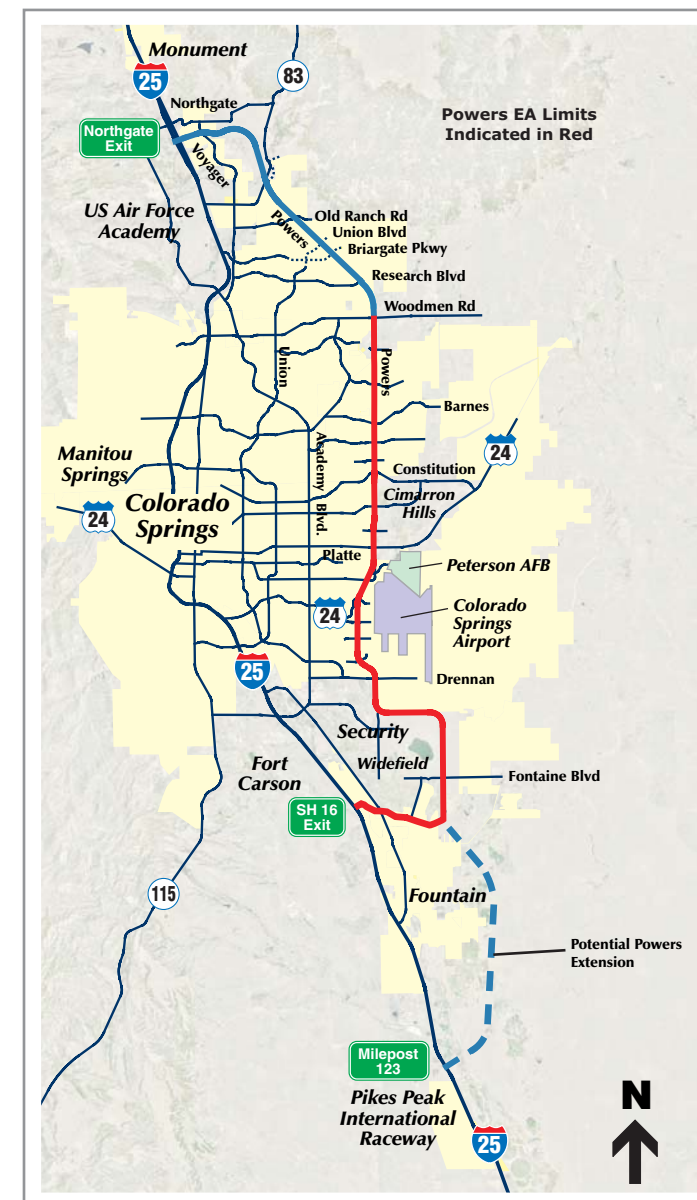
This newsletter provides an update on the MFSCA results, the status of the EA, and the next steps.

Summary of Comments from the February Open Houses

Public Open Houses were held February 18th and 20th at Sand Creek High School and Mesa Ridge High School, respectively. Project team members were available at each meeting to answer questions and provide additional information. Comments were received on the following topics:

- Congestion at Mesa Ridge High School and Leadership Academy
- Support for Bus Rapid Transit on Powers
- Support for bicycle/pedestrian paths in the corridor
- Opposition to tollway on Powers
- Support for ramp metering onto Powers
- Support for and opposition to grade-separated interchanges along Powers
- General interest in east-west mobility
- Concerns about SH 16 traffic congestion
- Concern that it is too late to improve Powers
- Support for region-wide transit system

Each comment has been reviewed and will be considered as the EA progresses into concept design and environmental studies. Public input is crucial because it often reveals subtle aspects of the environment that technical study methods might not detect, such as community needs and interests.



Contact Information

Please feel free to contact a project representative to submit comments, ask questions, or be added to the project mailing list.
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Important Information Inside!

Powers Environmental Assessment

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE SECOND LEVEL SCREENING

It was determined that the Highway family of alternatives will provide the greatest potential for congestion relief on Powers Boulevard by the year 2025 - also providing significant travel time savings or congestion relief at key intersections. Some segments of Powers Boulevard are forecasted to exceed current capacity by nearly 100 percent by the year 2025, so it's important to advance alternatives that will best maintain the viability of this regionally-significant economic and community link.

HIGHWAY ALTERNATIVES TO BE STUDIED FURTHER



Freeway
Highway with access only at grade-separated interchanges, no at-grade intersections.



Enhanced Expressway
A limited access arterial highway which contains both at-grade intersections and grade-separated interchanges. "Enhanced" refers to a higher proportion of interchanges than intersections, which results in increased capacity. The highest-volume intersection locations are converted to grade-separated interchanges.



Tollway
Highway with access only at grade-separated interchanges and no at-grade intersections. User tolls required.

Several alternatives by themselves do not meet the need of reducing congestion, but because of their ability to enhance the efficiency of Highway alternatives they are being considered for repackaging with the Highway alternatives.

ALTERNATIVES TO BE POTENTIALLY REPACKAGED WITH HIGHWAY ALTERNATIVES



Express Bus Service in High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Designated bus lanes on arterial streets or operating express buses in HOV lanes. Traffic signal priority for transit vehicles can also speed operation on streets.



Express Bus Service

These buses link selected origins to selected destinations without any intermediate stops.



Local Bus

Local bus service is the predominant type of service provided by U.S. transit agencies. As the term local implies, there are multiple intermediate stops along a specific corridor(s), with a major travel generator attracting a high proportion of destinations.



Transportation Management

Transportation management strategies are used to enhance traffic movement on an existing highway.



Bicycle/Pedestrian

An off-street bicycle/pedestrian facility is planned to parallel Powers Boulevard from just south of Airport Road to Bradley Road. There are also five primary Corridor bikeways, four off-street bikeways, and nine on-street bikeways that currently cross or are planned to cross Powers Boulevard in the study area.

THE NEXT STEPS

With the completion of the MFSCA, the project enters a phase of developing conceptual designs for the various potential improvements on Powers. Development of these designs will be accomplished with extensive input from the public. The designs will take into consideration issues and concerns identified by those who reside and conduct business and other day-to-day activities along Powers.

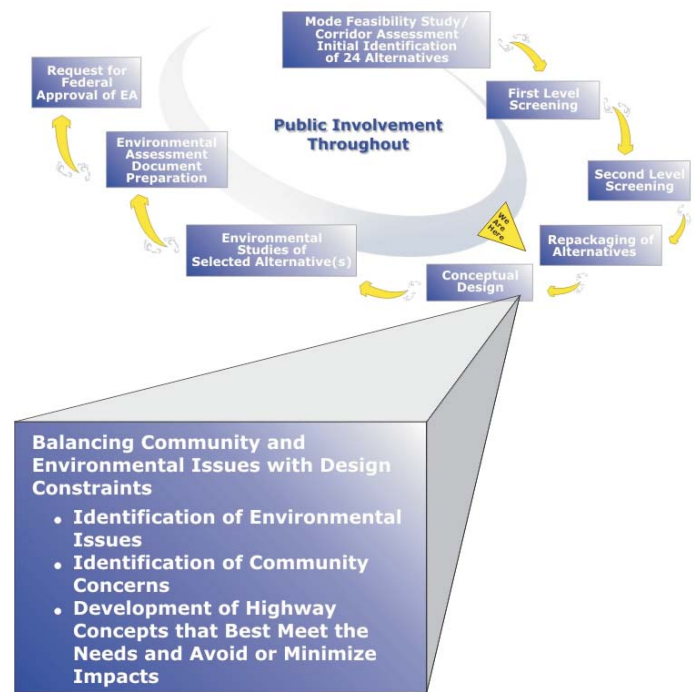
PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

An extensive and highly interactive public outreach program will be conducted over the next 12 months to identify and inform the public about any potential effects associated with any type of proposed improvement. The Public Outreach Program has been tailored to focus on eight segments. This will allow each segment to receive a high level of attention; however, keeping in mind the continuity needed in the overall corridor. These segments are:

- Woodmen to Stetson
- Barnes to Constitution
- Palmer Park to Galley
- Platte to Airport
- Aeroplaza to Fountain
- Astrozon to Drennan
- Grinnell to Potential S. Powers Extension
- SH 16/Mesa Ridge Parkway

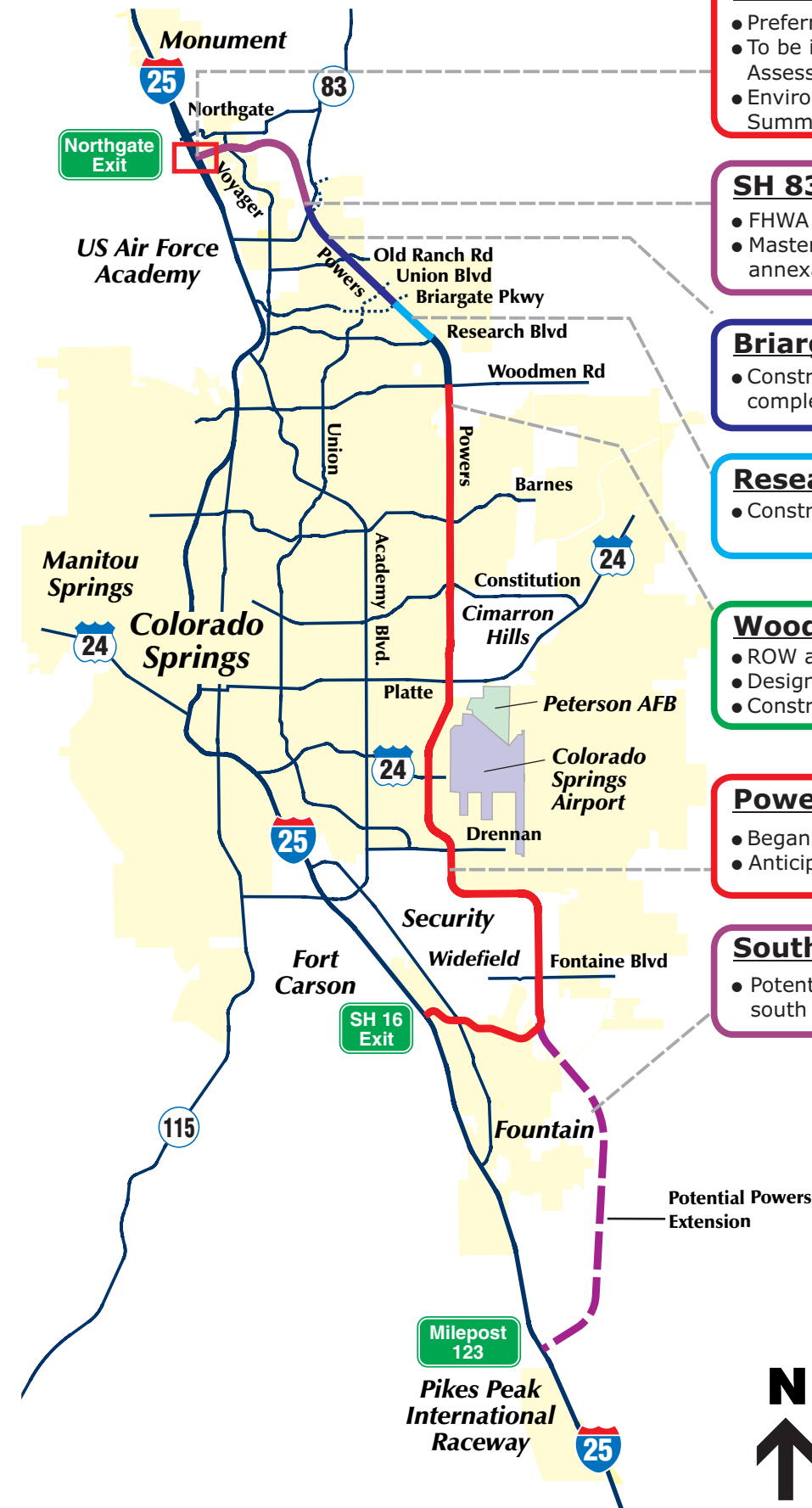
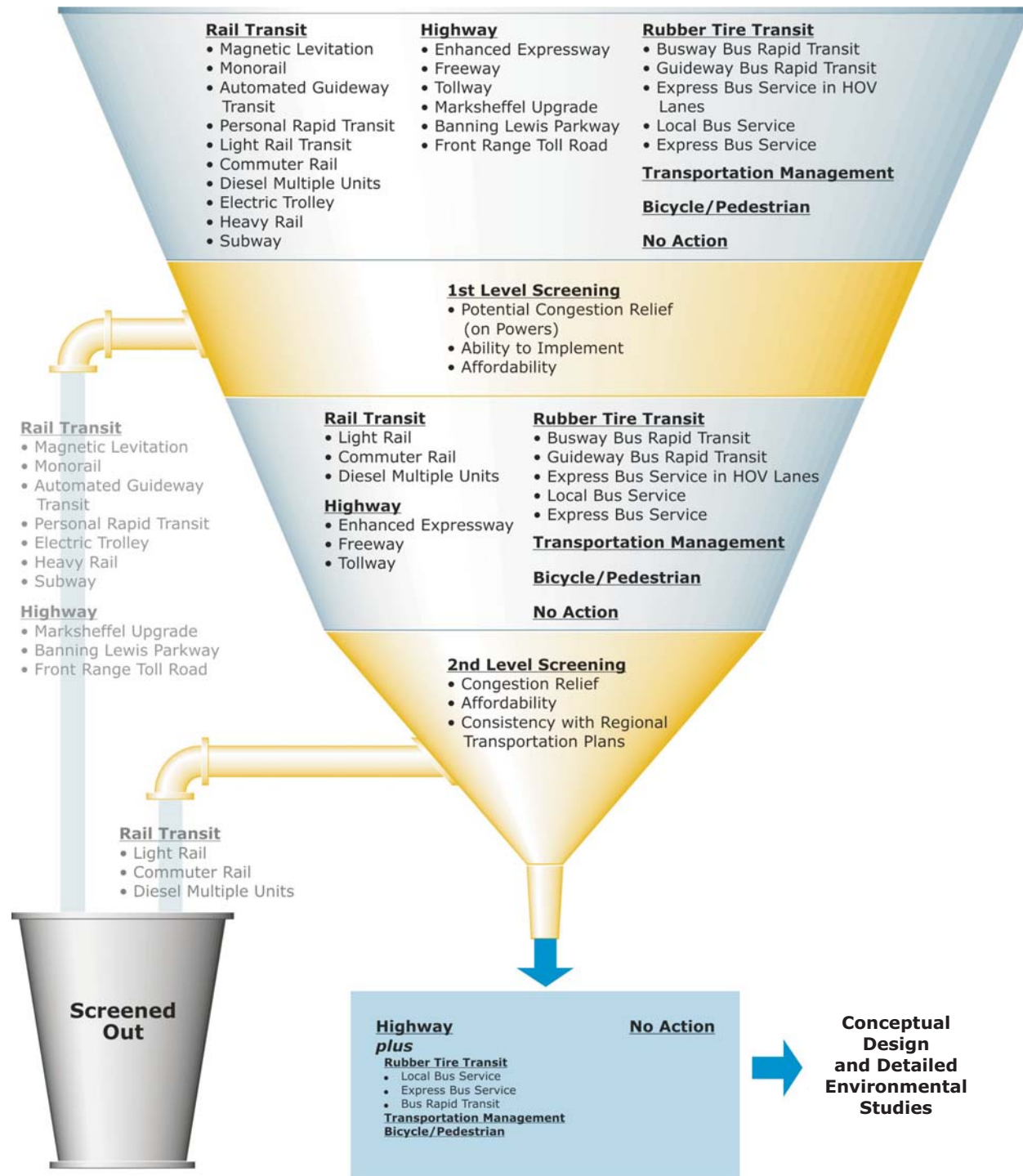
Within each segment, meetings will be held with project stakeholders. These meetings will be based on the participant's location within, and association with the project area (e.g., business owners, residents, commuters). The types of meetings include:

- One-on-one
- Small Group
- Segment Open Houses



MODE FEASIBILITY STUDY/CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT (MFSCA)

The MFSCA process identified five families of alternatives which included: Rail Transit, Rubber Tire Transit, Transportation Management, Highway, and Bike/Pedestrian - along with the No Action alternative. Under these five families, 24 different alternatives were identified. The first level of screening evaluated each alternative for its potential to relieve congestion on Powers Boulevard, affordability, and the practicality of implementation. In the second level of screening, each alternative was evaluated using the same criteria as in Level One, plus a more detailed evaluation based on effectiveness in reducing travel times, consistency with regional transportation plans, and cost-effectiveness. The graphic below illustrates first and second level screening results.



Northgate Interchange

- Preferred interchange concept identified
- To be incorporated into I-25 Environmental Assessment
- Environmental Assessment to be completed Summer 2003

SH 83 to Voyager

- FHWA approved alignment
- Master Plan has been submitted for review and annexation

Briargate to SH 83

- Construction began in December 2002 and will be completed in 2005

Research to Briargate

- Construction to be completed by La Plata

Woodmen Road Interchange

- ROW acquisition underway
- Design scheduled to be completed in spring 2003
- Construction dependent on future funding

Powers Environmental Assessment

- Began in spring 2002
- Anticipated completion in late 2004

South Powers

- Potential Powers extension to connect with I-25 south of Fountain

