

JEFFERSON PARKWAY PUBLIC HIGHWAY AUTHORITY
Frequently Asked Questions
July 25, 2017
Ralston Valley High School

SUMMARY

At the open house, people were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions regarding various aspects of the Parkway. Those have been grouped into various interest areas and answers have been provided.

Questions about Noise and Light Pollution

Q: What noise standards is the JPPHA going to adhere to?

A: The JPPHA has contracted with the HDR/ Atkins team to perform a noise analysis through the Leyden Rock and Candelas neighborhoods. The consultants met informally in late June with a group of residents to share information on how such studies are conducted and to identify appropriate measuring sites. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) noise standards are the guidelines being used in the data-gathering and analysis being performed. The report should be completed in early September.

Q: What about noise in the Leyden Rock noise abatement zone? How would residents get noise measured at their homes?

A: While JPPHA has not used the term “noise abatement zone,” the noise analysis is developed in such a way that a forecast of noise from the parkway can be extrapolated to any point along the right of way.

Q: When will a decision be made regarding the acceptable noise level and resulting need for noise mitigation to the surrounding communities?

A: CDOT guidelines for noise are being utilized in this analysis. Until the analysis is completed, it is not possible to determine the appropriate level of mitigation measures. On the jppha.org website under the ‘community open house’ tab, there is a graphic depicting noise analysis standards. Typically, 66 decibels (dB) or less at the exterior wall of a residence are not considered to be excessive noise levels.

Q: What is being done to establish a baseline for current noise levels near Highway 93 near Golden?

A: Since the Parkway terminus is a mile north of the West 64th Avenue intersection on Highway 93, no noise levels are being analyzed in the Golden area.

Q: What can residents near Golden expect for noise mitigation measures? Will there be any? If not, why?

A: Please see response above.

Q: How did JPPHA get the right of way across public-owned open space south of Leyden Road?

A: The Pattridge Open Space was acquired by the City of Arvada in the mid-90’s with assistance from Jefferson County Open Space. Arvada applied to the County to release the land needed for the

right of way by substituting an equivalent amount of land to be added to the open space inventory, which was approved by the County in 2014.

Q: Will noise mitigation measures actually be taken, considering that federal regulations do not apply to this project?

A: Once the noise analysis is completed in mid-September, the Authority will meet with community members to review the results and discuss what mitigation measures would be appropriate.

Q: What is being done to mitigate the increase in illumination (highway, not traffic lights) caused by the tall light posts on the length of the highway and at interchanges?

A: Arvada adopted a night sky ordinance more than 10 years ago to reduce excessive illumination from street lights, parking lots, and commercial development. The Jefferson Parkway will be subject to those standards. Most, if not all lighting will be at intersections and interchanges, similar to the Northwest Parkway and E-470.

Q: Will walls be put up near the homes to reduce noise, light, and visual highway activity?

A: There are several mitigation measures that could be taken to reduce noise. Mitigation measures include walls, lowering the roadway below the level of residences, creating berms between the road and homes. Once the results of the noise analysis are completed, there will be further conversation on which measures may be an appropriate solution.

Questions about Wildlife

Q: Will wildlife be relocated to a refuge? There was an article in the Denver Post about a prairie dog colony getting relocated to a refuge, which is fabulous. Will the same be done for the local wildlife population?

A: Relocation of wildlife is beyond the scope of the project unless threatened or endangered species are on or adjacent to the right of way. If that turns out to be the case, the Authority will work closely with the State Division of Parks and Wildlife and US Fish and Wildlife Service to identify and implement appropriate mitigation.

Q: With the new highway development, will any of the wildlife (prairie dogs, jumping mice, coyotes, elk, etc.), be moved to a wildlife refuge?

A: See answer above.

Q: What is JPPHA doing to protect endangered and threatened species in the area?

A: As part of its environmental stewardship, the Authority is producing an overall environmental and engineering review of the right of way. This will identify significant environmental issues, including any endangered/threatened species, and serve to guide further actions in the design and development of the parkway.

Questions about regional traffic

Q: The bulk of traffic issues are currently along Highway 93. What is the plan to improve that roadway and traffic?

A: The WestConnect process, involving CDOT and a number of local west metro area jurisdictions, has been examining, evaluating, and determining transportation priorities on the C470/US 6/SH93 corridor through Jefferson County from Wadsworth Boulevard on the south to Marshall Road on

the north. Understanding that there currently are no funds for improvements, the object of WestConnect is to establish priorities if and when dollars do become available in the future. You can learn more by going to this link: <http://www.westconnectcoalition.com/>

Q: What about the traffic dumped at the ends of Jefferson Parkway? Highway 93 is bad already, and there will be no improvements when this road is added. What about Interlocken and Broomfield?

A: Unfortunately, traffic will continue to increase on State Highway 93 and Interlocken regardless of the Jefferson Parkway. The WestConnect process mentioned above is analyzing 2040 traffic conditions both with and without the Jefferson Parkway and both scenarios show significantly increased traffic. Interlocken Boulevard is identified as the future extension of the Northwest Parkway. There are conceptual plans to both expand Interlocken and/or create lanes for strictly regional traffic in this area, but there is no identified funding source at this time.

Q: Why does JPPHA's proposed solution fail to address the critical need for inclusion of relief/development to the Indiana corridor that CDOT emphasized as critical in its recommendation for a hybrid solution in the northwest corridor environmental impact study (EIS)? What is the logic in pursuing a privately-funded project? The EIS already indicated that would not be a viable standalone solution.

A: The Northwest Corridor Environmental and Transportation Planning Study (TEPS) was a five-year \$15 million study that considered alternatives to connect the 20 miles between the terminus of the Northwest Parkway and the terminus of the C-470 extension. 73 different alternatives were evaluated. It is available here: <https://www.codot.gov/library/studies/northwest-corridor-eis> In 2008, CDOT determined that it could not identify a method for 10 miles of a new tolled roadway to pay for itself plus all the improvements to Interlocken, SH 93, US 6, and SH 72 (Indiana Street). The identified route for the 10 miles of tolled roadway is now the Jefferson Parkway. CDOT has still not identified a method to pay for improvements to Indiana Street or the other state highways evaluated in TEPS.

Questions about Connectivity and On-/Off-ramp Issues

Q: Unless people are traveling from Broomfield to I-70 in the mountains and vice versa, how will there be enough traffic to support this toll road?

A: The anticipated use for the Jefferson Parkway includes local, metro, regional, and interstate motorists. Ultimately, the private sector will have to determine whether there will be sufficient demand to justify the investment needed to design, construct, operate, and maintain the Jefferson Parkway. Population projections for the metro area and northern Colorado indicate continuing growth over the next 30 years, with the state demography office estimating 8.5 million Coloradoans in 2050 (3 million more than today). This will likely have an impact on the use of the Jefferson Parkway.

Q: Will the Highway 93 intersection provide long enough feed lanes for a right turn onto Highway 93 to Boulder?

A: Yes.

Questions about Bicycle and Pedestrian Use

Q: In previous meetings and drawings of Jefferson Parkway, paved bike paths were proposed from the Flatirons to Golden. Is this still part of the plan?

A: While the Jefferson Parkway does not connect Boulder to Golden, this question is referencing the work of the WestConnect Coalition mentioned above. Information about this effort is available here: <http://www.westconnectcoalition.com>. The Jefferson Parkway does contemplate trails parallel to the roadway. However, no specific design has been developed at this time.

Q: Will separate bike paths be pulled away with the new design?

A: See answer above.

Q: What kind of planning has been done to ensure pedestrian and bicycle access across Highway 93 near Golden? Is this being considered?

A: Since Highway 93 is within CDOT's jurisdiction, the City of Golden or Jefferson County would be the best agencies to contact regarding this question.

Questions about Tolls and Funding

Q: With expensive tolls and likely low usage, who is studying the benefits of widening Indiana?

A: Indiana Street north of 86th Avenue is a local road, a portion of which is in Arvada and the balance is held by Jefferson County. In the absence of any alternative this local road is having to serve as a de facto regional facility but is maintained solely by Arvada and the County. Resolving this issue requires development of a regional transportation facility to accommodate regional traffic (i.e. the Jefferson Parkway) and keep the local road for local needs. This is one of the goals of the Jefferson Parkway.

Q: Who is funding the interchanges?

A: Construction for interchanges will ultimately be the responsibility of JPPHA.

Q: While traffic could use some help, why would residents want to pay a toll and know that CDOT will be thinking about this and not fixing what it already has?

A: Using the toll road will always be a voluntary choice of the motorist. People will be able to choose whether they are willing to pay for the convenience and savings in time. Toll roads have a long history in Colorado – many mountain pass roads, such as Berthoud Pass - were originally toll roads in the 1880's. More recently, US 36 was originally constructed as the Boulder Turnpike Toll Road in the 1950's. E470 and the Northwest Parkway are both operated by Public Highway Authorities, separate from CDOT, as is the case with the Jefferson Parkway Public Highway Authority. JPPHA is a joint partnership of Broomfield, Arvada, and Jefferson County.

Q: What are the projected toll rates and have these been factored into the estimates for how many people will actually use the road?

A: The short answer is that toll rates have yet to be determined. Toll rates will be determined through one or more traffic and revenue studies, yet to be commissioned. These studies utilize complex and advanced computer modelling to address the question being asked above, weighing anticipated population projections, future land uses, construction, financing and operating costs against revenues generated by the number of users expected at various possible toll charges.

Q: How does this fix or improve the traffic issues on Highway 93?

A: The Jefferson Parkway will serve to take regional traffic off of existing state highways and local roads off of those roads onto a high speed limited access facility financed through a public-private partnership. Unfortunately, the alternative is that future traffic volume will continue to overload

the existing system. In the case of Highway 93, there will be relief for north-bound traffic wanting to connect to the Northwest Parkway, I-25, and points north and east.

Q: What kind of contract is being looked at? How long? 25 years is a very long time in today's world.

A: There has been no determination on the structure of the public-private partnership or the duration of the concession agreement. Those will be matters of negotiation once a preferred private partner is identified.

Questions about Parkway Construction and Maintenance

Q: Will construction along Indiana/Rocky Flats be required to follow certain procedures to avoid further contamination/exposure from Rocky Flats?

A: When the cleanup of Rocky Flats was completed, the lands transferred to US Fish and Wildlife Service (including the Transportation Corridor paralleling Indiana Street) has been declared safe for unlimited use. This determination was unanimously ratified by the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments (City of Boulder, Boulder County, Town of Superior, Broomfield, Westminster, Arvada, and Jefferson County.) The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has an oversight role during construction and has initially determined that no special or extraordinary measures will be required outside of normal dust control and storm water management practices.

Q: Will the parkway from Highway 72 to Highway 128 be raised to, submerged below, or at grade?

A: The elevation of the roadway will vary from place to place. For example, the Parkway will go below existing SH 72 and the railroad track, but will be elevated over the edge of Welton Reservoir. The exact elevation of the Parkway north of 96th Avenue to the Indiana Street interchange has yet to be determined. Many of these design decisions will be made once a private partner has been selected and a long-term lease (sometimes known as a concession agreement) has been negotiated.

Q: How deep will the road be cut into the ground from the bridge over Barbar Gulch? What will the speed limit be?

A: The design speed for the Parkway will be 70 miles per hour (mph) and the posted speed will be 65mph. The maximum elevation of the Parkway over Barbara Gulch will be in the order of 80 to 90 feet at its deepest point.

Q: Could a bond issue be put forth to enable use of these existing roadways for plowing?

A: Bonds are typically used for the new construction or major reconstruction of capital projects and are thought of as 'one-time' revenues -- much like a mortgage is issued for a one-time purchase of a house. Since maintenance costs like snow plowing are ongoing, the revenues to pay for such operational costs will also be ongoing. In the case of the Parkway, a portion of the tolls collected would pay for items like snowplowing, street lighting, landscape maintenance, re-striping lines, etc.

Public Comments

Participants were invited to submit written public comments. The comments are written below, separated by topic. Most of the comments are answered in the questions page.

Noise and Light Pollution

- The lack of commitment to noise mitigation is concerning and an insult to surrounding neighborhoods.
- The elevated roadway crossing at 82nd seems likely to cause excessive noise in the surrounding area. (It is a peaceful park and quiet neighborhood.)
- Noise mitigation must be implemented throughout the corridor to be consistent with Colorado regulations. Anything else is unacceptable.
- Please consider light pollution at the SH93/SP intersection. Minimize stoplights and avoid other white lights. The neighborhood currently has beautiful pitch black nights, and one poorly-designed intersection one mile across the field would ruin the nighttime beauty.
- Sound abatement needs to be done by Candelas. Noise and light pollution will be a huge problem, especially since the proposed grading is at level and not below.
- Noise abatement along 82nd Avenue is critical.
- There should be noise abatement near neighborhoods to comply with state standards.
- Increased traffic through this area will increase visible CO₂ pollution, noise pollution, and light pollution. The bridge across from Leyden Road/Gulch will cause excessive noise in the existing open space (south of Leyden Road) and will most likely cause more noise outside of the noise-testing area.
- This project will create light pollution. JPPHA should consider light pollution and its impacts on wildlife and humans. They should use the strictest standards and the best available technology when designing the lighting.
- While JPPHA is using Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) noise standards, JPPHA has not determined what standards will trigger mitigation. JPPHA should use CDOT levels to determine what types of mitigation are needed.
- Light pollution is a serious concern, particularly for Highway 93 near Golden.
- There are concerns about lighting close to and along the bridge area. There are also concerns about the noise mitigation in that area. Noise should be kept to a minimum.
- Federal regulations do not apply to this project because it is not federally funded. It is important to control the noise that impacts the surrounding areas. This should be dealt with during the original design of the project.

Wildlife and Environmental Concerns

- JPPHA should involve CDOT and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to do a wildlife study and use cameras to track wildlife crossing in the project area. This should be used to inform the plan in terms of crossings and mitigation.
- A lot of prairie dogs from Longmont are being relocated to the refuge. It would be wonderful for local wildlife to be served as well. The Candelas were moved because local community members love wildlife.
- While this project is privately funded, JPPHA should meet the standards of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and involve the EPA in the process.

Traffic Issues

- Traffic will kick up debris and contaminants, possibly from Rocky Flats.
- Residents need relief from increased traffic on Indiana, McIntyre, and Highway 93. Please approve this project and proceed as quickly as possible.

- Jefferson Parkway is long overdue! Indiana and McIntyre Streets cannot handle the additional traffic from Candelas, Leyden Rock, etc. Denver is a rapidly growing major metropolitan area that needs a complete beltway. Please proceed with the Jefferson Parkway as quickly as possible.
- It seems there should be access from the north part of Indiana onto this toll road. When Indiana gets backed up during rush hour or snowy/rainy days, people might choose to use the toll road if there is a way to get on it.
- If Jefferson Parkway is used, traffic on Highway 93 will become untenable (this fact is supported by a traffic study).
- Indiana is already a backed-up nightmare. If the toll road is unreasonable, people will not pay it and growth at Candelas will continue to pour onto Indiana. The fear is that this parkway will not pull enough traffic off Indiana or Ward.
- Please get this done! Traffic is so bad and hopefully this will relieve it. Do not be swayed by Candelas and Leyden Rock complaints. This is fully supported.

Connectivity and On-/Off-ramp Issues

- This is a terrible idea. There is no connection to 470 at either end. It would be a toll road to serve less than 15,000 cars a day and there would be extreme disruption to a number of communities.
- The lack of connection to or reliance on local roads at the ends of the parkway seems to be a huge missing piece of the plan.
- It is currently semi-treacherous to navigate around all the bike traffic in the Highway 93 intersection and not get hit by speeding oncoming north-bound traffic around the bend.
- With only three on- or off-ramps, the parkway does not help those who might want to use it or pass through.
- There is concern that the parkway is being built with no foreseeable connection on either end to complete the beltway.
- Jefferson Parkway needs to connect to US-36 to have any use.
- It is as though a ten-mile stretch of highway is being plopped down in an area where it simply is not necessary. There are other roads in the area that could be altered to meet the goals of Jefferson Parkway.

Local Neighborhood Concerns (Leyden Rock and Rocky Flats)

- Do not put a highway through the Rocky Flats contamination.
- There should not be a plutonium parkway.
- Look at adding an interchange for Leyden Rock.
- Residents of Leyden Rock are concerned about adverse impacts to the area, specifically noise and aesthetics. They are opposed to the construction of Jefferson Parkway. Additionally, there are concerns about the safety of kids and families that live in Leyden Rock. Residents suggest improving or widening Highway 93 and Highway 128.
- Leyden Rock residents do not know how this project could benefit them. It would be nice if it was usable for the residents it impacts the most. An access point other than the ones that are out of the way may change the minds of these residents, but they are currently against the plan.
- The residents in the Leyden Rock community purchased their homes and land because they wanted to be away from the noise, congestion, traffic, and development that follows building a parkway. Residents do not want this “convenience” for others to compromise their quality of life and property values.

Aesthetic and Development Concerns

- This parkway may be necessary to move traffic; however, we do not want businesses, housing etc., built up along this highway. Leave the beautiful open space for everyone to see and enjoy.
- Residents paid a lot of money for their view. They do not want to look at an overpass of a road at 82nd going through Partridge Park. Jefferson Parkway should go underground from 82nd to Highway 93 to keep the view as it is.
- Golden is the last section of the Denver metro area that still has some semblance of the beautiful Colorado landscapes without being turned into an urban parking lot. Golden's niche is its rural-esque atmosphere and natural beauty. Completing the beltway and continuing the urban sprawl into Golden would destroy everything that makes Golden unique and beautiful. Golden is the last place that has not been tarnished by overbuilding. Do not destroy this home by putting up another roadway here.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Issues

- The current bicycle route along Indiana is inadequate and dangerous. A better, safer route is needed. It must be similar to the path along US-36.
- There is no real north/south bicycle path. Everything goes east/west.
- JPPHA should incorporate a “complete streets” concept into the project and include bike paths with safe crossings.

Intersections

- No more traffic lights on SH93.
- Traffic lights at SH93 seem poorly conceived.
- The planned intersections at SH93 seemed poorly planned and inadequate. Those intersections will have hugely negative impacts on the local existing roadways.

Parkway Construction and Maintenance

- The main concern is whether the parkway from Highway 72 to Highway 128 would be raised to, submerged below, or at grade. The views and noise would be much better if it was submerged, but wildlife crossings and the cost would be better if it was raised.
- The parkway should go through Rocky Flats with an elevated road.
- Someone will need to pay for the improvements and impact mitigation on Highway 93, Highway 6, and the Highway 6/Highway 68 interchange. Without such actions, traffic flow and connectivity will not improve on the Highway 93/Highway 6 corridor. As build-out in western Arvada continues, the traffic will probably increase on the Highway 6/Highway 93 corridor so unintended (or even intended) consequences may/will happen.
- Please look into how to manage ice/snow buildup on the section that runs next to Indiana.
- Plowing the highway through some of the most premier home developments in Arvada seems nonsensical, especially when there are existing roadbeds near Highway 93, Highway 72, and Highway 128 that could carry the new beltway.
- When construction begins, please create requirements related to wind for all construction trucks, equipment, and materials. There is a tremendous amount of dust, trash, and debris from SH93. Construction will make dust and trash accumulation much worse. Assume that it will be 70 mile-per-hour winds each day for construction. This is a major safety concern.