

Summary of Written and Oral Testimony Received
(During the Public Comment Period from December 17, 2014 to January 21, 2015 Hearing)

This document summarizes the written (letters, emails, online submittals) and oral testimony received by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG).

Oral testimony was provided at the public hearing along with accompanying written testimony by 15 speakers expressing opposition to the I-70 East reconstruction and widening project (from Brighton Blvd. to I-270) included in the Draft 2040 Fiscally Constrained Regional Transportation Plan. CDOT released a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the project in August 2014. The following oral testimony was provided, with DRCOG staff response offered to provide further explanation regarding all oral testimony:

- 1) Becky English of the Sierra Club read into the record testimony from Robert Yuhnke, Attorney and Colorado resident, expressing that the SDEIS does not adequately address pollution impacts, alternatives, or mitigation measures.
- 2) J.D. MacFarlane of United Denver East urged the re-routing of I-70 to I-76 and I-270, and replacing the current I-70 alignment with a boulevard.
- 3) Marty Amble, citizen, said the published cost estimates for the re-route option are unrealistically high, and that the American Planning Association's Transportation Division prepared a white paper in 2014 critical of the currently-proposed I-70 project.
- 4) Jimmy Bacon, citizen, raised concerns about environmental justice, air quality, and adequacy of the data presented.
- 5) Armando Payan, expressed concerns about how the project would be financed vis-à-vis transportation maintenance needs, as well as whether local contractors would be precluded from employment opportunities associated with the project.
- 6) Jude Aiello from Denver Neighborhood Advocates read into the record testimony from Robert Yuhnke, Attorney and Colorado resident, expressing concerns about the SDEIS not adequately addressing pollution impacts, project-level conformity, alternative alignments, or mitigation measures.
- 7) Elisabeth Evans from United North Denver noted potential asthma and respiratory health impacts to children.
- 8) Steve Kinney, a Realtor, discussed property values around the project and expressed concern that the SDEIS under-estimates the number of residential property condemnations the project may require. He also noted that the impact of the widening of the interstate would result in a facility footprint three times as wide as the existing cross-section.

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- 9) Cynthia Thorstad from League of Women Voters of Colorado noted the lack of adequate transportation funding overall and felt that revenue reductions should drive project scope changes to the I-70 project. She stated her belief that the published costs to re-route I-70 are unrealistically high and that the cost of the currently-proposed project is twice as much as the re-route option. She advocated for the “maintenance” alternative until the project could be studied further.
- 10) Frances FranAguirre from United North Denver, a retired teacher, expressed concerns about children’s health, the project’s proposed “cover,” and whether widening I-70 east of I-25 would eventually necessitate widening I-70 west of I-25.
- 11) Glenn Hanley, citizen, raised concerns about respiratory and health issues, childhood brain development. He felt the SDEIS undercounts affected schools and daycare centers and the health impacts of the highway on residents.
- 12) Frank Sullivan felt that CDOT has been cordial but inflexible regarding the I-70 project. He urged DRCOG to request CDOT to re-route I-70 as the current proposal will not make life better.
- 13) Thad Tecza, citizen, expressed the opinion that the project is not fiscally constrained, that other transportation needs will suffer because funding will have to be diverted to this project, and that it is immoral to implement an interstate project that would increase traffic in residential areas. He also stated that opposition to the project is not “NIMBY-ism.”
- 14) Kathleen Butler from the Sierra Club, read into the record testimony from Albert G. Melcher that focused on opposition to the SDEIS-proposed project.
- 15) Ann Elizabeth, Globeville resident, urged that the new CDOT Secretary re-examine the project, strongly consider a smaller 8-lane alternative, and develop a more visionary solution that respects humanistic values. She also stated her belief that there is no further margin of error regarding the potential impacts of additional pollutants.

DRCOG staff response to all I-70 East comments: Staff has documented the concerns expressed regarding the I-70 East project. The 2040 RTP reflects the most up to date proposed scope for I-70 as recommended in the I-70 East SDEIS (August 2014). If the recommended scope for the corridor is changed during the Final EIS process or due to fiscal constraint issues, the 2040 RTP will be amended and the regional air quality conformity will be reevaluated to reflect scope changes.

After receipt of this oral testimony, DRCOG Board member Jim Benson from the City of Commerce City provided comments opposing the alternative to re-route I-70 to the north along I-76 and I-270. DRCOG Board member Deb Perkins-Smith from CDOT said CDOT

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is reviewing comments received through the SDEIS and preparation of the Final EIS. This concluded the public hearing.

The following written materials were received in conjunction with the public hearing, and were referenced or summarized by the speakers during oral testimony:

- Un-authored report: “A Better Option for I-70 East”
- Written testimony from J. D. MacFarlane
- Written testimony from Albert G. Melcher
- Written testimony from Rocky Mountain Sierra Club-Robert Yuhnke, Becky English
- White paper from Steve Kinney: “Impacts on Home Values and City Revenues from Changes on I-70”
- Email correspondence from Marty Amble containing the following links/attachments:
 - American Planning Association Transportation Planning Division white paper on I-70 project (also included in un-authored report)
 - Comments from and Youtube link to John Norquist, former president of the Congress for New Urbanism
 - Colorado League of Women Voters presentation on I-70 project cost comparisons
 - Letter to the Editor from the League of Women Voters (also included in un-authored report)