



May 7, 2018

Mr. Kurt Kionka  
Colorado Department of Transportation  
4670 Holly Street  
Denver, CO 80216

**RE: US 85, I-76 to 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue, National Environmental Policy Act Process**

Dear Mr. Kionka,

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is underway with the US Highway 85 from Interstate 76 to 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to evaluate ways to improve safety, reduce congestion, and improve connectivity between all modes of transportation. It is the city's understanding that CDOT will also be looking at ways to improve regional mobility for cars and freight, while also providing efficient access for existing and future land uses.

US 85 is a major thoroughfare in our community. The City of Commerce City is committed to participating in the NEPA effort and collaborating with CDOT, other communities along the corridor, and all stakeholders to find solutions that balance critical regional mobility needs while minimizing impacts of the roadway on adjacent neighborhoods.

While the City supports the need for improvements to address safety, access & connectivity to and across the highway continues to be a primary concern for Commerce City residents. The interchange options at 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue need to be considered in light of this concern and how connectivity can be enhanced in order to:

- Maximize access choices for businesses and residents
- Minimize noise impacts
- Decrease delay on side streets

Regional mobility along the corridor cannot be achieved at the expense of local access across US 85 and within Commerce City. Comments on each Commerce City-impacted access point are detailed below:

**104<sup>th</sup> Avenue & US 85 Interchange**

Commerce City generally supports alternatives for an interchange at this location which will 1) minimize impacts to the businesses and residents in the area while, 2) maximizing

use of the CDOT-acquired parcel in the southeast quadrant of the intersection. The city feels that further refinement of the alternatives is needed to minimize impacts to the parcels in the southwest & northwest quadrants while also incorporating the relocated intersection of Belle Creek Boulevard, west of US 85. For example, the ¾ Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) option should continue to be evaluated and considered in the upcoming screening process.

#### **Longs Peak Drive Access**

While Commerce City understands the safety issues related to this access onto US 85, there has been no analysis of the impacts this closure could have on the adjacent neighborhood, including increased, out-of-direction travel & increased traffic through residential areas. The City requests these impacts be evaluated and mitigation measures, such as enhancement of the local roadway network to access 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue, be included in the final analysis.

#### **112th Avenue & US 85 Interchange**

Commerce City does not support closure of 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue at US 85 as there has been no analysis of the impacts of this closure on adjacent neighborhoods & businesses. Instead, the city requests that a full access interchange, such as the Skewed SPUI alternative, be included as the recommended alternative. The city is supportive of further refinement & analysis of the alternatives to verify this conclusion.

#### **120th Avenue & US 85 Interchange**

Constructing an interchange at this location continues to be one of the city's priority transportation projects. The City supports the alternative that will provide access while limiting impacts on neighboring properties. At this time, it appears that the Tight Diamond alternative, which was identified as the Preferred Alternative in the 1999 Environmental Assessment and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), best meets the needs of the agencies, surrounding property owners & stakeholders. The city is supportive of further refinement & analysis of the alternatives to verify this conclusion.

#### **124th Avenue & US 85 Intersection**

Commerce City does not support closure of 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue at US 85 as there has been no analysis of the impacts of this closure on adjacent neighborhoods & businesses. The city would consider supporting a bridge over US 85 in order to continue to provide access to both sides of the highway if access to US 85 cannot continue to be provided at this intersection.



Thank you to CDOT for a robust process to work with affected communities to find the right solutions for US 85. The NEPA process is a critical step to reaching a thoughtful conclusion in order to move forward with further analysis and, ultimately, construction. Commerce City is committed to partnering with CDOT, Adams County, and its neighboring communities to ensure this regional transportation project finds an appropriate balance that benefits both the system users and adjacent property owners.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sean Ford  
Mayor

cc: City Council of Commerce City  
Adam County Board of Commissioners  
Colorado Transportation Commissioner Karen Stuart  
Paul Jesaitis, Region 1 Transportation Director

