

**I-70 PACT Public Meeting
May 7, 2011
Denver**

Small Group Discussion Summary

Note: All commenters supported Current Alignment. Only slightly more commenters supported the south shift over north shift.

Support Current Alignment as more promising, because:

- Less impact on Sand Creek
- Less impact on neighborhood, compared with the realignment's 46th Avenue, which becomes a major artery with huge impacts on the neighborhood; a massive boulevard does nothing to address the issue of Swansea Elementary School, makes it worse by putting the traffic at ground level
- Used to it – the neighborhood has grown accustomed to the highway, and moving it would create growing pains
- Too much industrial built up to change it now
- Greater possibility to access and develop along the South Platte River (realignment would preclude it)
- More affordable/less expensive – realignment would be more costly
- Can't imagine moving its major arterial
- Won't overshadow the light rail station at NWSS
- Maintains a shorter route – versus realignment
 - o Less fuel wasted - commuters would have to travel on the realignment two miles longer (round-trip) every day
 - o Fewer vehicle miles traveled per day (less fuel wasted) - the Governor and the Regional Air Quality Council are trying to reduce VMT and realignment would create more
- Fewer accidents because there is less shadow creating ice, and less sanding of the ice
- Further from the Suncor refinery - realignment would relocate the highway just south of the Suncor refinery and increasing the blast zone risk (explosion at the refinery in 1970s blew cars off the nearby highway)
- Protects properties (e.g. Elyria Guest House)
- Realignment would continue to divide the Swansea community with a larger 46th running through it
- Realignment's mixing of I-70 and I-270 doesn't make sense; I-270 is a problem now
- Only if it is a tunnel
- Better than realignment

Support for North or South shift on Current Alignment:

- Need to get the feedback directly from Swansea neighbors about whether they would support North or South shift
- Support for North, because:
 - o Building a new school would be required
 - Swansea school was built on outdated philosophy; needs a building that meets current philosophy
 - Could be larger (already too small)
 - Moving the school to the Swansea Park would decrease the gang activity in the park
 - Downside is closer to Dunham park
 - o Keeps Purina
 - Purina jobs are important to protect
 - Moving Purina would be too expensive
 - Smell is bad from all of the industry, but it is not just Purina
- Support for South, because:
 - o It seems like there are fewer impacts
 - o Maintains the school, which is a major community asset
 - Leery whether a new school would be built if it is the North shift, with all the budget cuts
 - Concerned about the domino effect on the neighborhood of moving the school; how many families would move if the school was further from the current location?
 - o Decreases the shadow of the structure on the Colonial Manor
 - o Removes Purina
 - Removes the odor issue
 - Reveals a large track of developable land
 - o Fewer residences would be acquired
 - o Mitigates problems with the school in the best way
 - o Better serves Elyria / Swansea neighborhoods
 - o Keeps the school, parks, church and north-side businesses

Outstanding Concerns

- Community needs to benefit no matter which alignment
- Improvements under 46th Avenue would help - it is scary underneath
- Loss of jobs for those in the neighborhood from those businesses being acquired
- Mitigating the presence of the highway on the Swansea neighborhood
- Bottleneck at the I-70 and Brighton intersection
- Shading effect on the neighborhood
- School concerns
 - o Leery that a new school would not be built, with all the budget cuts going on, if it went North
 - o Would need a guarantee that it would be in the same neighborhood; in writing, and to build it within walking distance in the community
 - o Close to the highway is not a good place to have a school
 - o Need to have the school weigh in with its view

- Need a walkable location for the school
- Impact of a larger freeway on the city – smaller is better for cities than larger
- More public transportation, less private transportation

Interests mentioned for any solution:

- Protect the neighborhood from unwanted traffic
- Improve the integration of Swansea from north to south
- Create development opportunities
- Be sensitive to the neighborhoods
- Increase access to the South Platte River, a major amenity
- Relieve congestion
- Improve/maintain public transportation (it is important)
- Ensure a long term solution

Additional Suggestions/Questions:

- Build a tunnel instead of a bridge
- Build businesses under the elevated highway that face onto a frontage road – decreases dark underneath the bridge and improves the look/feel of the highway for the neighborhood
- Build a bike path under the highway; concern - there isn't enough light to make it feel safe
- Have a light-gap between the two decks; concern - would make it wider and require more property impacts
- Put the York exit ramps back in the plan (even if there isn't on-ramps)
- Move the school to:
 - Swansea Park, Clayton and 49th (in the area of Our Lady of Grace church, Swansea Recreation Center and Park)
 - Washington and South Platte River (22 acre site)
 - NWSS when they leave
- Build an extra lane onto I-270 each way to relieve congestion