

So the Highland and NWSS text amendments have been in the works for quite some time. That's good.

However, the City's IGA with CDOT was only released June 16 and there have been no public hearings or discussion about its contents. Denver taxpayers are chipping in \$83 million toward the largest project in the state's history -- \$1.2 billion -- without any serious public debate commensurate to its scale. That's shameful.

Although I support the drainage project, the City is making a devious attempt to slip in the I-70 project along with it.

Just one of the many concerns of Elyria and Swansea residents about the IGA is the vacation 46th Avenue, a major connector in the neighborhoods.

Most disturbing, however, is the fact that the community and City voiced significant concerns in the I-70 East SDEIS on October 31, 2014. There has been no indication that ANY of our concerns will be addressed in the FEIS, which is expected to be released end this year/next year. A very short, incomplete list of our deep concerns includes:

- 1) Continued use of a very old (10 + years) study showing the need for widening to 10 lanes;
- 2) The unacceptable width of the highway (over 300 feet wide with shoulders, on/off ramps, service roads);
- 3) Funding mechanisms that resort to "privatization" of the highway, including the use of toll lanes;
- 4) Air quality monitoring, and the lack of a sufficient health study;
- 5) Health impacts of noise and pollution on residents and children at Swansea Elementary;
- 6) Keeping non-local trucks/hazmat out of the neighborhoods (re-directing them out of I-70 corridor);
- 7) Establishing connectivity necessary to neighborhood cohesion (47/York underpass, etc.);
- 8) Safety on the highway due to exits being so close together;
- 9) Impact south of highway due to York closure;
- 10) Unresolved traffic study of the Brighton-I-70-NWC nexus;
- 11) Maximization of developable land;

- 12) Title VI issues guaranteeing that this is an inclusive process;
- 13) Environmental justice issues of imposing this project on a minority, low-income population;
- 14) Housing replacement/relocation;
- 15) Sound issues;
- 16) Impacts to the neighborhood during the construction period.

None of these issues have been addressed by CDOT or the City, and we have no faith that they will be addressed by pushing this IGA before the release of the FEIS.

You are giving away everything to CDOT, and the Elyria and Swansea communities have had no time to review this document.

By ram-rodging this agreement through like this you are deepening the cynicism that already exists in the community about the City just being a “toady” to CDOT regarding the I-70 East project. I personally do NOT believe the City is acting in the best interests of residents regarding the I-70 project, and this frenzied vote Monday night confirms that.

We keep hearing from the chorus in the City’s Amen Corner that the I-70 East project is a “done deal”. What’s “done”? There are too many unanswered questions about this project!!!

A public discussion on the IGA with CDOT needs to include the new Council, who will be responsible for its consequences. Many people I have spoken with refuse to participate in Monday’s hearing and have described the hearing as “insulting”; that it “doesn’t smell right”.

The greatest harm, however, is that all the good will that has been built up over the past several years in the neighborhood plans and the citizen involvement in the National Western Center can be undone by this sneaky process slipping through an IGA with CDOT in this way.

Is this the legacy that this Council wants to leave?

I request that Council defer this vote to dedicate the time necessary to this very significant agreement, and include the new Council in part of the discussion.

Sincerely,

Drew Dutcher

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Debbie and Louis Gomez
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Dear Councilwoman Debbie Ortega,

Please submit this letter of my concerns regarding the Interstate 70 project into the file and for the record at this next meeting as I am unable to wait all night to have them heard at the public meeting.

I am writing as a long time citizen and member of the Swansea Neighborhood. My husband was raised in this neighborhood and now 65 years old and I have been associated and lived in this neighborhood for 62 years, as both sets of my grandparents lived their lives in this area while I was growing up and then as an adult I moved myself and raised my family here in the neighborhood. My husband and I own three properties and our daughter owns one in this area. So you can see that we have invested a lifetime into the area.

Our concerns with this project are as follows:

The area is now congested with the many heavy trucks that use the highway and exit at Steele Street to the Pilot facility. This is because it is the shortest route to the main artery of I25 to go north or south. During the construction the ability to limit the drivers from using this will continue to be a problem and we will now find them going into the neighborhood to try and bypass the area looking for the end result of getting to Interstate 25. This is not a new problem but will be exacerbated by the construction.

The environmental impact study is still not complete. I attended a meeting with three out of state gentlemen who were here to listen to our concerns and later stated that they believed placing the highway below grade would create the worlds largest swimming pool highway. No credence was ever given to their concerns by the planners and architects.

We have continually raised concern for our families about the amount of pollution and dust that we are exposed to on a daily basis with the existing highway. I have paid out of my own pocket to replace the windows in all three of my properties to help alleviate exposure to the dust and pollution, but have not heard how the contractors will be required to assist the neighborhood in the alleviation and potential increase due the construction of the pollutants and dust and dirt.

We are also very concerned about the exposure of the children at the school, Swansea Elementary, to an increase of pollution and dust during the construction time. What will they be doing to ensure that they are safe and still able to enjoy some time in the fresh air during recess and free time? Will filters be added to the air quality systems to ensure that they continue to be able to breathe and not exposed to things that could impact them as they get older?

Another big complaint and concern is accessibility to the other side of the highway for both sides, where will we have pedestrian and bicycle access to get across? Where will the emergency vehicles be able to respond quickly to the area? How will they be able to get across to get us to the hospitals quickly and safely when they are needed? How will the fire department be able to get here when they are needed? None of this has been addressed in the plans, we ask, but once again it falls on deaf ears.

Recently I filed a complaint with both the City and the State regarding the properties that have already been purchased for the project the the fact that they are allowing them to remain boarded up or with large trash dumpsters in front of them and some even have the outside and inside walls removed and look like they are about to fall over when the winds kick up with the weather. This has made our neighborhood look trashy and like we don't care about our properties which is far from the truth. We care and take a lot of effort to improve them regularly, but this only adds to the devaluation of the area and lowers our property values, so that many developers who are hoping this area will become the next Highlands area where they can purchase the homes cheaply and tear them down and build three story art deco monstrosities that add no neighborhood feel to the area. As to my complaint, it has been two weeks and I only received one call back from a city employee who stated their co-worker was on vacation and would be getting back to me, and there has been no improvement to the problem and no return call from the State.

Many of us have chosen to live in this area because we like the accessibility to many things. We know that we currently don't have a large grocery store, we know that we have always been the step child to the city, some of the city staff thought we were part of Commerce City not Denver. We are the last to get services from the City, but the first to be guinea pigs for the changes (for example the removal of the dumpsters that we had in our alleys. It has not been as large an issue to change over as we thought but now the alleys have become raceways for vehicles to use at their leisure and calls to police have failed to stop this activity. We probably will have to wait for someone to get injured or killed before something will be done about the problem.

The Sunday Denver Post had an article about the drainage problems in the City and how they will only be alleviated in the Park Hill and Montclair area if we allow this project to move forward and it all ties together. Easy to say when you are not the neighborhood that is impacted the most by the biggest project, easy to say that it is a must to prevent the flooding in their area to tie it to this major project and give the contractors millions of dollars of incentives, but still not hold them accountable for the impact to our small area where many of the families live week to week, it is more important to make sure that the more influential areas get good drainage by tying it to the project that will impact our area the greatest and our families will be the most impacted by these decisions. I know the response of many will be that if we are so concerned why don't we just move, but why should we? There are alternatives that would not have impacted us as greatly, there were alternatives that would have taken this away from our families and area completely and impacted business areas and not residential area but none of them are they plan they want. They want to destroy our neighborhood and hope that it won't be able to rebuild and they will be rid of us all, either by killing us with pollution and dust or making the area unsafe for living, before, after and during the construction.

I know that these problems seem trivial to the council and like sour grapes to many, but it lends itself to the trust level that we have with the empty promises of both the State and the City employees who have said they are here to help us with the issues we are having and nothing is done about our continued concerns. So do we have faith that this big project will help us, NO we do not. Do we believe our lives and our futures are going to be impacted heavily, YES we do. Do we think anyone cares about the few in the area who are here because we love the neighborhood and WANT to live here, NO we do not. But we also know that the State and City will do whatever they want regardless of the environmental impact on our community and the impact on our lives and health because WHY, THAT IS WHAT THEY ALWAYS DO!