



Newsletter #2 August 2017



- Environmental Assessment (EA) and FONSI Complete
- Town Board Votes to Proceed with Project
- Design and Right-of-Way Acquisition Begins

July 2016 Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Review and Hearing

The Downtown Estes Loop Environmental Assessment was released for public review and comment between July 5 and August 5, 2016. The project team hosted a one-on-one question and answer session on July 14, 2016. The purpose was to answer technical questions on the EA. A Public Hearing for the project was held on July 20, 2016 at the Estes Park Event Center. Public comments could also be submitted in writing at any time during the 30-day comment period. A total of 229 commenters provided comments on the EA.

Special Meeting of the Town Board

A special meeting of the Town Board was held on November 29, 2016 to discuss the project and the *de minimis* finding. New renderings of the Riverside Drive and Riverside/ Baldwin Park areas were presented to better illustrate the

Park Replacement plan. At that meeting, the Board voted to proceed with the project and concurred with Central Federal Lands Highway Division's (CFLHD) determination that the impact on Baldwin Park and Children's Park is *de minimis*.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Publication

The FONSI for "Phase 1" was signed on April 19, 2017. Phase 1 involves the conversion of existing roadways from two-way to a 0.9 mile one-way loop through downtown Estes Park along portions of Elkhorn Avenue, Moraine Avenue, and Riverside Drive, as shown in the figure on the following page. Phase 1 includes pavement rehabilitation on Elkhorn and Moraine Avenues, realignment and reconstruction of Riverside Drive and reconstruction of the Ivy Street Bridge. The issuance of this FONSI allows the project team to move forward with final design, right-of-way acquisition, and ultimately construction of the Phase 1 of the project.

FONSI Summary

The FONSI contained a summary of the Purpose and Need for the project and a description of the elements of the selected alternative. It also described the

decisions that had been made since the release of the EA, the Section 4(f) *de minimis* finding, and a list of environmental commitments and permit requirements. Finally, the FONSI contained responses to all comments received during the EA comment period. A list of common responses was provided as an introduction to the detailed comments.

Two intersection options at the Moraine Avenue/Crags Drive/Riverside Drive Intersection were evaluated in the EA. Since the public hearing, CFLHD (in cooperation with the Town of Estes Park and CDOT) selected the roundabout configuration based on technical review and community input. This decision was documented in the FONSI.

Town Hydrology Study

The Town of Estes Park commissioned Wright Water Engineers, Inc. (WWE) to perform a hydrologic study of Fall River, Upper Big Thompson River, Black Canyon Creek, and Dry Gulch. The study was completed in January 2017. The recently published WWE Study discharges are generally less than the Environmental Assessment (EA) design discharges. This does not substantially change the project design; any design modifications will be detailed during final design.

Downtown Estes Loop Phase 1 Improvements

