

56th Avenue Travel and Safety Improvements Green Valley Ranch Boulevard Project Virtual Open House Meeting Summary

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020 | 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Below you will find a summary of the Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's (DOTI's) first Open House for both 56th Avenue Travel and Safety Improvements and Green Valley Ranch Boulevard (GVRB) Project, which was held virtually via Zoom.

➤ **Number of Participants: 80**

➤ **Key points covered:**

- Introductions
- Welcome
- How did we get here?
 - Planning and Environmental Linkage Study (PEL) 2008
 - For 56th Avenue Travel and Safety Improvements Project
 - Gateway Area Plan
 - For Green Valley Ranch Boulevard (GVRB) Project
 - Denver Moves
 - Far Northeast Area Plan
- Green Valley Ranch Boulevard Project overview:
 - New on-street protected bike lanes (PBLs)
 - New 8-foot detached sidewalk between Peña Boulevard and Telluride Street along south side of GVRB
 - Place new irrigated landscaping on raised medians between Chambers and Tower roads
 - New traffic signal at Green Valley Ranch Boulevard and Kittredge Street intersection
- 56th Avenue travel and Safety Improvements Project overview/goals:
 - **Overview:**
 - Add one lane of traffic in each direction between Peoria Street and Peña Boulevard
 - New multi-use path along the north side of 56th Avenue
 - Enhance safety for people who walk, bike, take transit and drive
 - Revise intersection turning movements
 - Improve drainage along 56th Avenue and Uvalda Street
 - **Goals:**
 - Develop more convenient and safer access to the Montbello neighborhood from 56th Avenue
 - Improve mobility and capacity
 - Provide safe access from the neighborhood to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
 - Connect seamlessly with the Peña Boulevard interchange project
 - Install medians to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety
 - Establish 56th Avenue as a gateway to the Montbello and Parkfield neighborhoods

➤ **Q&A**

The following questions were asked by the public related to the Green Valley Ranch Boulevard project:

- **Q: What is the timeline for this project? When is completion expected, specifically the traffic signal?**
- **A:** Sidewalk construction is slated for early 2021. Timelines for additional construction elements are dependent on additional funding. Project scope and schedule will be finalized once more funding is confirmed.

- **Q: What's the difference between a detached and an attached sidewalk?**
- **A:** An attached sidewalk is directly adjacent to the curb and street. A detached sidewalk is separated from the curb by either a tree lawn or general lawn space. A detached sidewalk is more comfortable for pedestrians and are the City's standard.

- **Q: Any plans for Protected Bike Lanes (PBLs) to connect to streets like Chambers Road and Memphis Street?**
- **A:** There is a broader plan for future bike path connections on Green Valley Ranch Boulevard and throughout the City. You can find more information in the [Denver Moves](#) and [Far Northeast Area](#) plans. There are no plans for Chambers Road due to the existing shared sidewalk. There is not a proposed facility for Memphis Street due to the proposed trail connection to the east.

- **Q: Will the irrigation consist of purple (recycled) water?**
- **A:** Currently unknown. There is recycled water along the corridor, but we are still researching exactly how much is available, and how much the project will be able to use.

- **Q: Has there been early coordination made by the project team with utility companies with key utility stakeholders?**
- **A:** Yes, utility coordination has started between our designer, Muller Engineering, and utility stakeholders. Coordination will continue through design to determine and mitigate potential conflicts.

- **Q: Will there be any Green Infrastructure?**
- **A:** This project will have landscaped medians. The City classifies green infrastructure projects as those with a need for clean water improvements. Since this neighborhood and project are not in a clean water targeted area, there are no clean water infrastructure aspects incorporated in this project.

- **Q: How wide will the median be when completed? It's currently 40 feet wide.**
- **A:** It will be reduced to about 20 feet wide.

- **Q: Will there be opportunities to utilize storm water drainage to improve water quality, rather than rely on irrigation?**
- **A:** Plans and discussions around this topic are being reviewed at this time. However, design is not far enough along to determine a final decision.

- **Q: Will the PBLs include bollards? If so, how far apart will the bollards be placed?**
- **A:** Yes. Bollards will be spaced 40 feet apart, similar to the alignment east of Tower Road.

- **Q: Why is landscaping being used rather than xeriscaping?**
- **A:** The City prefers to see vegetation in the medians, and the City's Parks and Recreation Department does an excellent job of maintaining the landscaping.

- **Q: Will there be protected crosswalks or an overpass?**

- **A:** There will not be a pedestrian overpass, but there will be ADA-compliant, protected crosswalks at signalized intersections.
 - **Q: Will the median on Tower Road also be considered in this project?**
 - **A:** The median on Tower Road will be a separate project. This is one of the City's backlog projects. Project funding was cut due to COVID-19, so this project timeline and schedule is on-hold and not part of the GVRB Project.
 - **Q: What's the timeline on completing the traffic signal at Kittredge Street and Green Valley Ranch Boulevard?**
 - **A:** This will be a full-turning movement signalized intersection. Project timeline will depend on available funding. More information is expected by early 2021.
 - **Q: Is financing for this project supported by the Ebert Metropolitan District, east of Telluride?**
 - **A:** Multiple sources are helping fund this project. Some of the funding was provided by the Gateway District, but the project team will look into other project funding sources.
- **The following questions were asked by the public related to the 56th Avenue Travel and Safety Improvements project:**
- **Q: When will the intersection of 56th Avenue and Telluride Street be completed?**
 - **A:** This is not part of this project. The City is coordinating with the developer for future planning at this time.
 - **Q: Will there be a crosswalk on the south side of 56th Avenue, between Memphis Street and Peña Boulevard, to access the park?**
 - **A:** There will be continuous sidewalk on the south side of 56th Avenue. Through Peña Boulevard, past Peoria Street, there will be sidewalk on both sides of the street. Crosswalks and pedestrian signals will be at every signalized intersection (Peoria Street, Uvalda Street, Crowne Boulevard, Chambers Road, and Memphis Street) and the design team will consider seniors and persons with disabilities when looking at the phasing and timing of the signals along 56th Avenue. To access the Arsenal on the north side of 56th Avenue, we will be adding/enhancing crosswalks at the two current and three new signalized intersections. Also, with the addition of the median, there will be space for pedestrians to stop so they can wait for a safe crossing. A multi-use path on the north side of 56th Avenue will also connect to the trailheads that the Arsenal has completed.
 - **Q: What is the plan for managing additional traffic during construction?**
 - **A:** As part of the process for selecting a design-build team, the City will review the team's plans for managing traffic during construction and look to minimize impacts. We anticipate minimal traffic impacts because the existing 56th Avenue will eventually become the eastbound lanes, so all of the widening will take place north of the existing roadway. Pending Contractor traffic management plans, traffic is expected to remain open, eastbound and westbound (one lane in each direction) for majority of the project, while the roadway is widened to the north; however, certain phases of construction may require short-term closures, traffic shifts and access changes. There is not a Contractor or traffic plan in place at this time.
 - **Q: Will there be a traffic light installed at the 56th Avenue and Uvalda Street intersection?**
 - **A:** Yes. Crosswalk improvements will be implemented, as well.
 - **Q: Will improvements to 56th Avenue extend past Peoria Street? Perhaps along Central Park Boulevard?**

- **A:** There are no plans in place at the moment to extend past Peoria Street. It is not part of this project.
- **Q: Will you be able to turn into the new trailheads if you are travelling east on 56th Avenue?**
- **A:** Not directly, no. However, U-turns will be permitted at the Chambers Road and Uvalda Street signals.
- **Q: Are there any extra safety measures planned to protect deer and other wildlife at the Refuge?**
- **A:** Yes. One-way gates were installed at Chambers Road and Uvalda Street entrances to prevent wildlife from entering the Refuge through the fence.
- **Q: Why is parking be added? Is the parking for ADA trail access?**
- **A:** The new parking lots were installed as part of the recent Rocky Mountain Arsenal Project. However, these lots were for visitors coming by car, rather than biking or walking, etc.
- **Q: Can the project start sooner?**
- **A:** The team is now working on the requirements that the design-builder will need to comply with and the City is working on requesting qualifications from potential teams of contractors and designers related to their experience on this type of project. Once that selection process is complete, the design-builder will submit a more detailed project schedule which could include the ability to accelerate the project.
- **Q: What is the project schedule timeline for sidewalks at Peoria Street?**
- **A:** This is not part of this project. The contract went out to bid, and received no bids. The City is looking to combine it with another project or two before re-bidding it out. Due to the lack of bids received, it will be sent back out in early 2021.

➤ Live Poll Results

There were two live polls taken during the virtual open house. Here are the results from those who participated.

1. What Green Valley Ranch Boulevard improvements will be the most useful and beneficial to you?
 - Additional sidewalk on the south side of Green Valley Ranch Boulevard - 8%
 - Enhanced medians - 8%
 - New on-street protected bike lanes - 23%
 - New traffic signal - 21%
 - **All of the above - 41%**
2. What 56th Avenue improvements will be the most useful and beneficial to you?
 - Continuous multi-use trail – 13%
 - Enhanced median – 3%
 - **Additional travel lanes (traffic congestion relief) – 45%**
 - Additional traffic signals - 8%
 - All of the above - 33%

➤ Meeting Collateral

- [Virtual Open House platform](#)
 - PowerPoint presentation
 - Presentation information boards
 - Meeting recording

- Project information maps, renderings and schedules

➤ **Contact Us**

- 56th Avenue project email address: 56thavewidening@gmail.com
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- Green Valley Ranch Boulevard project email address: gvrbmedians@gmail.com
- Green Valley Ranch Boulevard project website: bit.ly/gvrbproject