



1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT SCOPE

As tremendous growth continues to occur in Northern Colorado, and in particular along the SH 392 corridor, development pressure continues to pose the question to local and regional planners of what transportation facilities will be needed in the future, and what ROW will be necessary to support those improvements. In order to provide these planners with some guidance on these issues, CDOT initiated the SH 392 EOS to identify transportation solutions along the SH 392 corridor to meet 2030 mobility needs.

The desired outcome of the EOS is to identify a transportation solution that has the support of local and regional planning partners, and which identifies ROW that must be preserved for those improvements. This plan would then be used by planners to set aside ROW as development occurs along the corridor.

The SH 392 EOS study limits are from US 287 on the west to Weld County Road (WCR) 23 on the east. Although the section from US 287 to I-25 was not officially designated SH 392 at the time the study was conducted (it is Carpenter Road within the City of Fort Collins, and LCR 32 within Larimer County), it was included in the EOS because it was in the process of being designated SH 392. The designation would occur as a result of a pending “road swap” agreement between CDOT, Fort Collins, and Larimer County. The study area is shown in Figure 1.1.

1.1 Level of Analysis

As a high-level planning document, the EOS is not intended to provide detailed design solutions or environmental analysis. In order to understand the context in which the study was conducted, the following sections briefly describe the level of detail accomplished.

1.1.1 Environmental Resource Inventories

Environmental data was collected for all physical, natural, and socioeconomic resources that are typically evaluated in a NEPA study. Resource inventories were limited to readily-accessible information from existing sources (local, state, and Federal agencies, Web sites, and published literature). Generally, field-truthing and resource delineations were not conducted; however, limited field reconnaissance was performed in the form of “windshield surveys” to determine the presence of certain resources and to confirm mapped data for others. Resources were mapped in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format using ArcGIS Version 9.0. Existing conditions are documented in the *SH 392 EOS Existing Conditions Technical Memoranda*.

1.1.2 Engineering Design

The design of alternatives was performed at a level consistent with a high-level planning study. The level of design varied with each subsequent screening phase as described below, and was progressively more specific with each level of screening. However, even in the final screening phase, the engineering work was limited to basic design concepts. As such, the reader should not interpret alignments or specific design elements as being designed to a high degree of accuracy. The design was performed so as to identify feasible corridors and concepts rather than specific



design elements. The primary objective was to preserve a ROW corridor, generally encompassing the majority of the ROW that will be needed in the future. However, it was recognized that because of this low level of detail, it may be necessary to acquire small portions of additional ROW in the future after more design work is completed.

In the Initial Screening Phase, the alternatives were simply two-dimensional routes on an aerial map with limited attention to horizontal curve design requirements. In the Qualitative Screening Phase, horizontal geometry was developed and overlaid on the aerial photography, but no vertical geometry was developed. In the Quantitative Screening Phase, the design was still primarily two-dimensional, profiles were generated for new alignments (i.e., around Duck Lake and the Town of Windsor) or where it was believed that the existing profile may need to be adjusted (e.g., across the Cache La Poudre River Floodplain). In these areas, design was based on a three-dimensional model obtained from United States Geological Survey (USGS) mapping with a contour interval of 30 feet. In all other areas, no profile work was performed, and it was assumed that the profile would follow the vertical existing alignment.

For the purposes of determining earthwork quantities for cost estimating purposes, catch points were determined from the three-dimensional modeling where performed. In all other areas, limits of disturbance were calculated using the theoretical dimensions from the typical section.

1.2 Relationship to Other Studies

The SH 392 EOS was one of several environmental studies being conducted concurrently by CDOT Region 4. Also being performed were the US 287 EOS and the SH 60 EOS, the US 34 Environmental Assessment (EA), the SH 402 EA, and the North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). All of these study teams participated in quarterly coordination meetings to ensure consistency in data collection/sharing, methodology, messaging, and outcomes. In addition to these environmental studies, Access Control Plan (ACP) studies were also conducted for each of the EOS corridors.

For SH 392, an ACP was conducted from west of I-25 to US 85, excluding downtown Windsor. The purpose of the ACP was to maintain highway safety and operational efficiency, to identify appropriate access to existing properties and known planned developments along the highway. EOS and ACP efforts were coordinated to ensure data sharing, to avoid duplicative effort, and to share public outreach efforts.

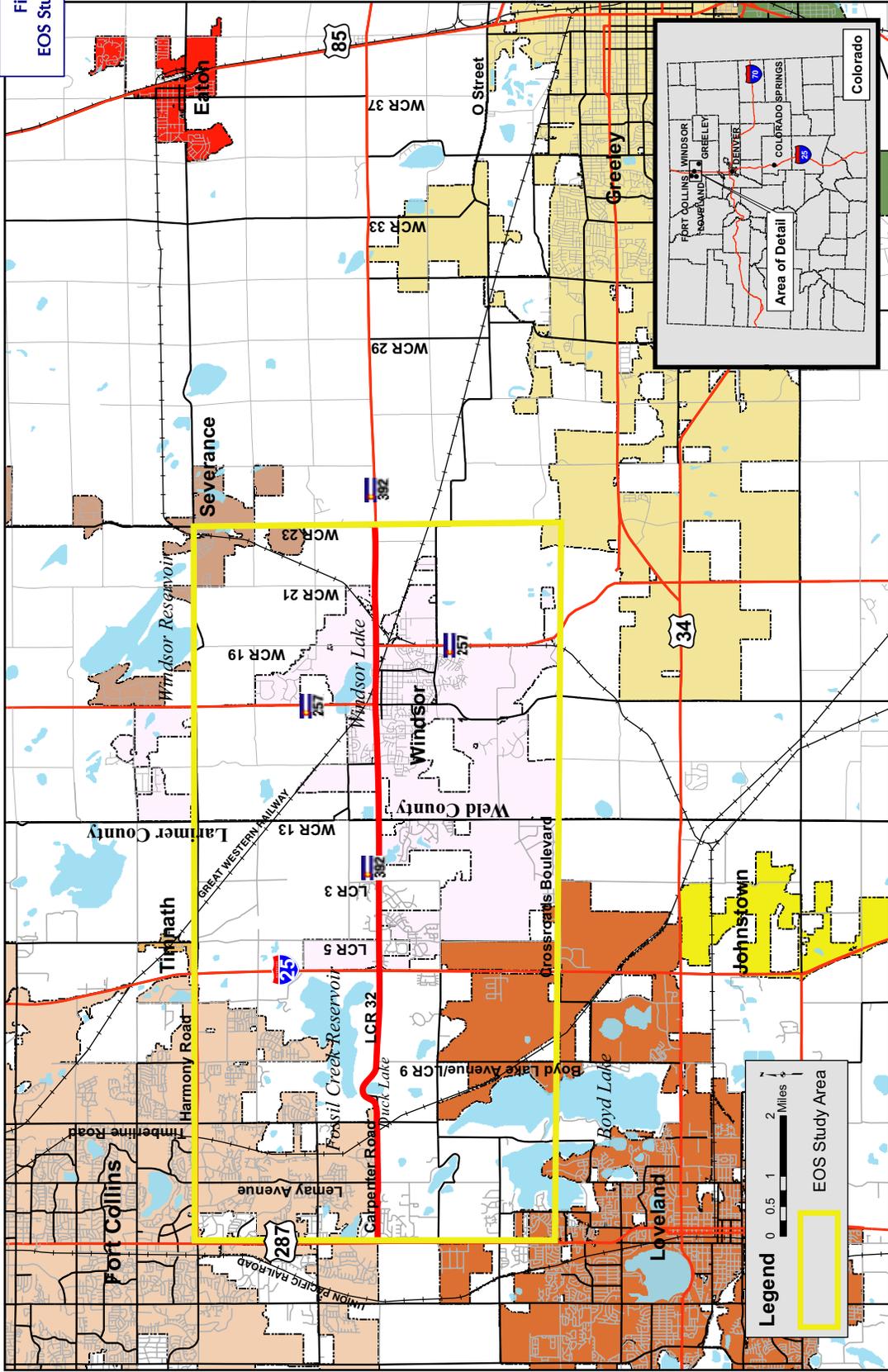
1.3 Relationship to NEPA

This EOS study was not a substitute for a NEPA study. The study did not screen nor evaluate alternatives in adequate detail to meet NEPA requirements, nor was agency and public involvement extensive enough to select alternatives. With a few exceptions, regulatory and resource agencies were not consulted.

At the time the study was initiated, no funding was identified for any improvements to SH 392. As a result, a study complying with NEPA could not be signed by FHWA, so another type of study needed to be conducted. CDOT Region 4 was proactive and developed the innovative



Figure 1.1
EOS Study Area





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concept of the EOS as a planning study that would serve as a precursor to a NEPA study and facilitate corridor planning. At such time that Federal funds are pursued for the corridor, a study complying with NEPA must be conducted. The EOS is a high-level planning study which seeks to be consistent with a NEPA study by identifying potential transportation solutions that balance mobility needs with environmental effects, and which is conducted with extensive agency and public input.

All attempts were made to conduct this study consistent with NEPA processes, principles, and criteria in order to replicate an eventual NEPA study, but there is no guarantee that a NEPA study will draw the same conclusions as were developed in this EOS study.

1.4 Report Content

This report documents the background issues and study purpose, the study process conducted, the outcomes and recommendations made, and next steps of implementation.

The report is organized as follows:

- *Section 1.0, Introduction and Project Scope* describes EOS study process and objectives
- *Section 2.0, Corridor Identification* presents study purpose and need, and logical termini statements
- *Section 3.0, Project Context* discusses affected environment of the study area
- *Section 4.0, Alternatives Development and Screening* documents screening process and environmental consequences
- *Section 5.0, Public Involvement* discusses public and agency outreach efforts
- *Section 6.0, Recommendations* presents recommended alternative, opportunities for alternative alignments, and multi-modal elements
- *Section 7.0, Next Steps* describes implementation steps to advance the project
- *Appendix, Recommended Alternatives Concept Plan Sheets* presents ROW to be acquired for the recommended alternative and illustrates designs and ROW for alternative alignments

The Appendix, *SH 392 EOS Recommended Alternatives Concept Plan Sheets*, contains ROW plans for the recommended alternative and the other alternatives considered but not recommended. These plans are intended to be used to acquire ROW for corridor preservation. The intent is for local planning departments to use that document to specify what ROW should be requested from developers in the form of dedications and reservations as development review plans are submitted.



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STUDY



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