



COLORADO

Department of
Transportation



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

WELCOME

to the

US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS Public Hearing

This is a formal hearing to provide the public an opportunity to learn about the project and offer input on the US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS

The agenda for today's public hearing includes:

11:00 a.m. – Open House

Learn about the project and ask project team members questions

11:30 p.m. – Brief CDOT Presentation

12:00 p.m. – Public Hearing

Provide your comments regarding the
US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS

For more project information, please visit the website at:

www.codot.gov/projects/US50e

THANK YOU

for taking the time to join us and provide input



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US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS Public Hearing

This is a formal hearing to provide the public an opportunity to learn about the project and offer input on the US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS

The agenda for tonight's public hearing includes:

5:00 p.m. – Open House

Learn about the project and ask project team members questions

5:30 p.m. – Brief CDOT Presentation

6:00 p.m. – Public Hearing

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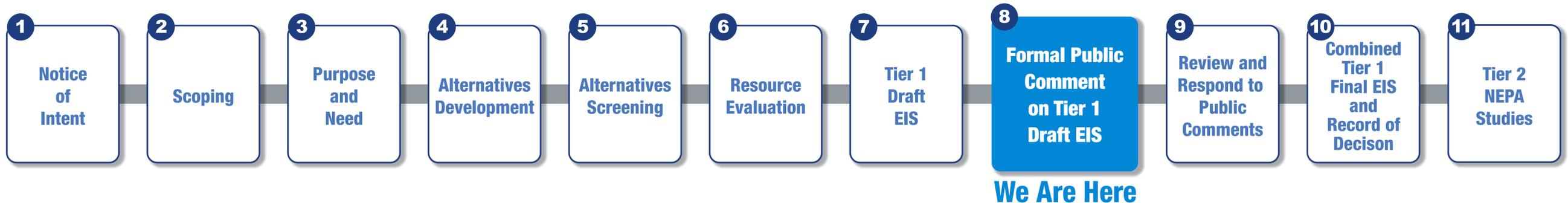
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Tiered EIS Process

- 1 Notice of Intent** — CDOT published a Notice of Intent for the project in the Federal Register, in coordination with FHWA. Additional advertising for the project was posted in local papers and media outlets.
- 2 Scoping** — Agency and Community scoping discussions were held with the project communities. The goal was to develop a consensus between individual agencies/communities regarding the project's scope of work.
- 3 Purpose and Need** — Input gathered from agency and community scoping was used to produce a purpose and need statement for the project. The statement serves as the basis for alternatives development and screening.
- 4 Alternatives Development** — A full range of alternatives were developed for the Tier 1 corridor location. Consultations with the public and agencies were held as appropriate.
- 5 Alternatives Screening** — With input from participating agencies, project communities, and relevant project team members, an alternatives screening process was developed to determine which alternatives best meet the project purpose and need.
- 6 Resource Evaluation** — A resource analysis was conducted to address system-wide elements of the corridor.
- 7 Tier 1 Draft EIS** — The alternatives carried through the screening process were analyzed in this Tier 1 Draft EIS. The Tier 1 Draft EIS is an official document issued during the process, including alternatives screening, resource evaluation, and an identified Preferred Alternative.
- 8 Formal Public Comment on Tier 1 Draft EIS** — The public and agencies have an opportunity to review and comment on the Tier 1 Draft EIS. During the public review period, CDOT is holding these public hearings and offering many methods for the public to provide their comments.
- 9 Review and Respond to Public Comments** — The project team will review all of the public comments after the comment review period has concluded. Responses will be developed and included as part of the combined Tier 1 Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD). At this stage, input received during the public review period can still influence project decision making.
- 10 Combined Tier 1 Final EIS and Record of Decision** — This is the final step in the Tier 1 EIS process. The ROD will select a Preferred Alternative, identifying a project route for implementation. When the ROD has been approved by FHWA and funding has been established, individual projects may advance to Tier 2 NEPA studies.
- 11 Tier 2 NEPA Studies** — As federal funding becomes available, individual projects along the Preferred Alternative route will need further NEPA clearance. The Tier 2 NEPA process will provide a more detailed environmental analysis identifying specific projects for implementation.

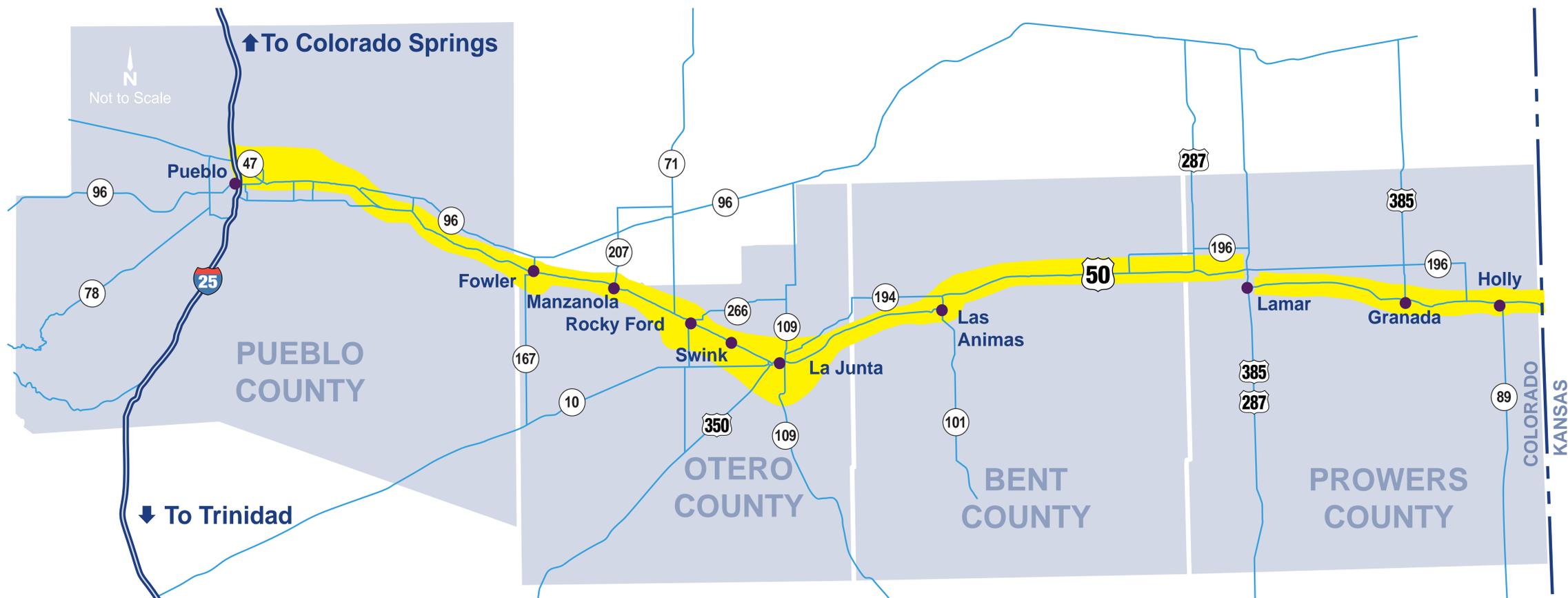


Project Overview

The Tier 1 Draft EIS addresses a 150-mile-long portion of US 50 through southeastern Colorado, from Pueblo east to the vicinity of the Colorado-Kansas state line. FHWA, CDOT, and local governments have identified the need to improve safety and mobility on this mostly two-lane highway.

The **purpose** for undertaking transportation improvements along the US 50 Corridor East is to improve safety and mobility for local, regional, and long-distance users of US 50 for present and future travel demand.

The **need** for improvements on US 50 results from the combined effects of multiple safety and mobility issues. These issues are both directly and indirectly influenced by the differing needs of the road users, highway deficiencies, roadway geometrics, access (the ability to enter, exit, or cross US 50), numerous speed reduction zones, and lack of passing opportunities.

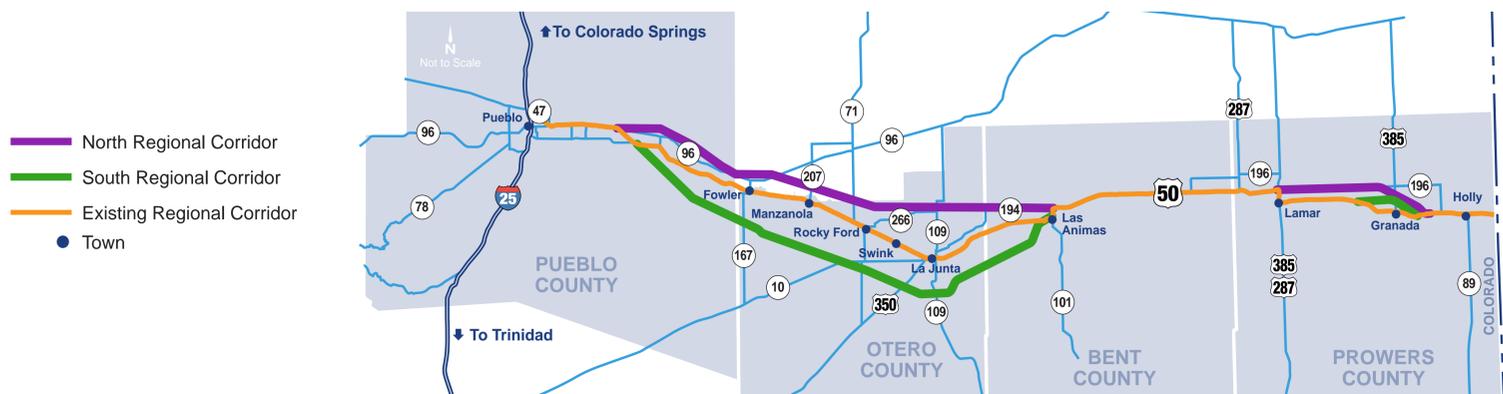


Alternatives Screening Process Overview

The alternatives development process followed four steps to arrive at the range of reasonable alternatives, which are outlined through the following questions:

Step 1: Regional Corridor Location

At a regional level, where would transportation improvements be made?



- North Regional Corridor**
- Located 1 mile to 10 miles north of the current US 50 alignment
 - Remains entirely north of the Arkansas River

- Existing Regional Corridor**
- Remains on or near US 50, generally on the existing alignment or within 1 mile

- South Regional Corridor**
- Located 1 mile to 10 miles south of the current US 50 alignment
 - Would remain south of the existing US 50 alignment to Las Animas

Step 2: Transportation Mode

What type(s) or mode(s) of transportation improvements would meet the needs of the corridor?



- Rail**
- Existing freight and passenger service with stations in La Junta and Lamar
 - Eliminated because current demand is not sufficient

- Bus**
- Existing route between Pueblo and Lamar, stops in Rocky Ford
 - Eliminated because current demand is not sufficient

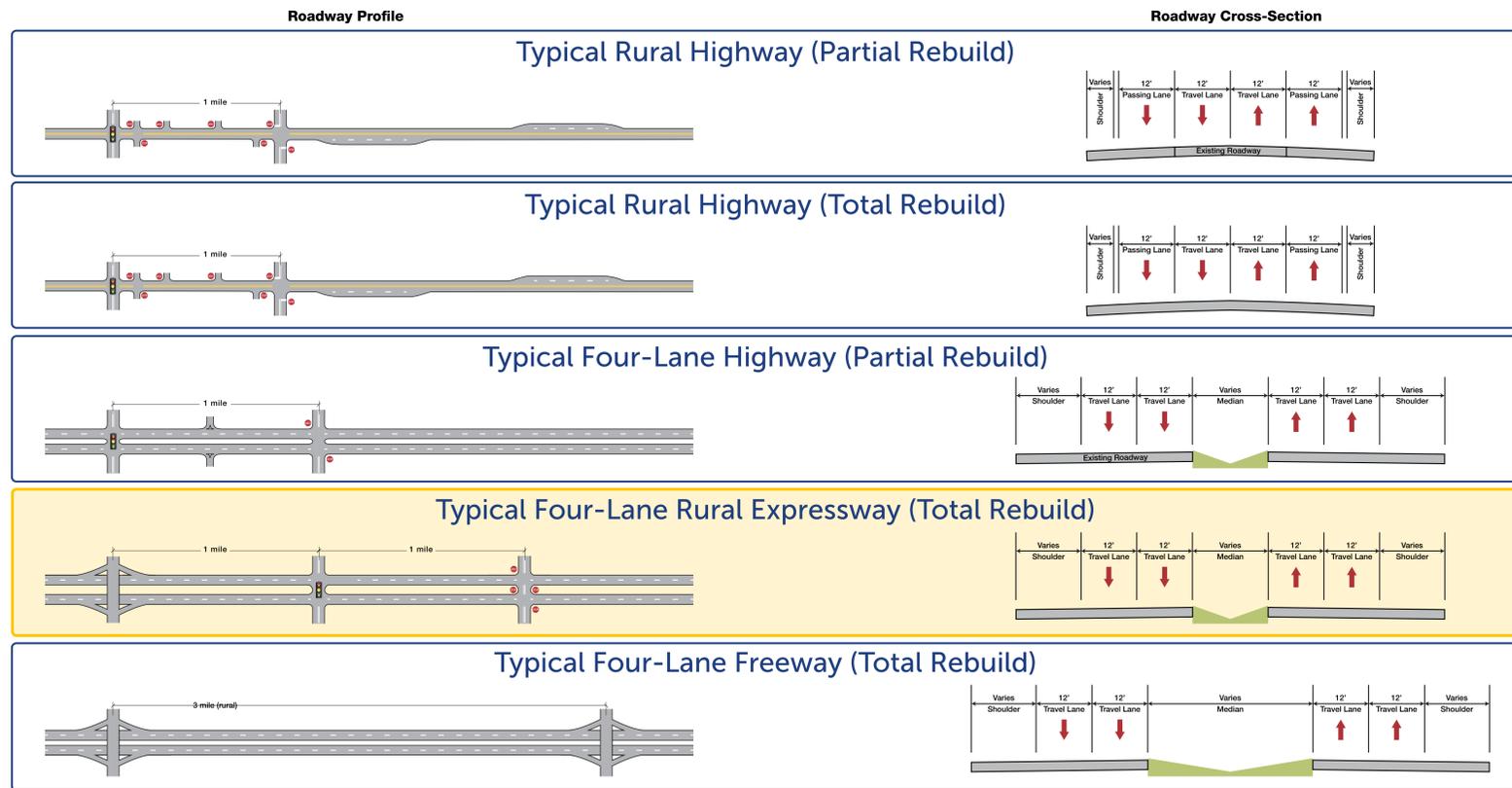
- Transportation System Management (TSM)**
- Includes carpooling programs, park-and-ride lots, and traffic signal synchronization; is designed to make existing roadways more efficient
 - Eliminated because TSM strategies wouldn't make a significant difference

- Highway**
- Highway use is well suited to the type of trips made and the low-density development patterns along the corridor

Alternatives Screening Process Overview (Continued)

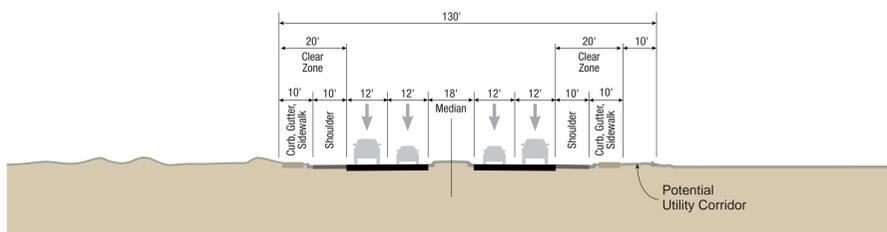
Step 3: Facility Type

What type of facility/facilities would meet the needs of the corridor?



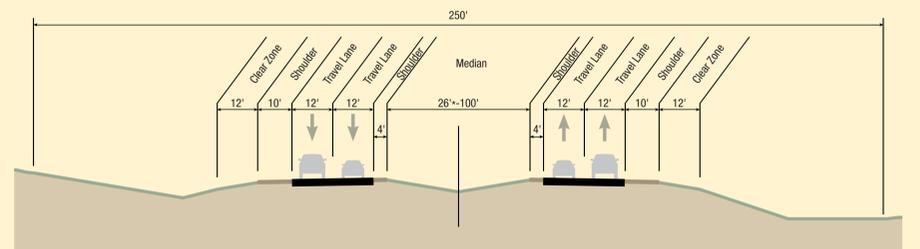
Step 4: Through Town or Around Town

Would transportation improvements be made through communities along the corridor or around them?



Through-Town Corridor

- Existing right of way through the towns along US 50 is 60 feet to 80 feet
- The new through-town road would require 130 feet
- Accommodates through-traffic lanes, a center median, turn lanes, outside shoulders, sidewalks, and clear zones for vehicles to recover
- Could lead to homes, businesses, historic resources, and other community assets being displaced



Around-Town Corridor

- Potential around-town corridor options — or bypasses — explored, in consultation with the local communities
- At the request of the communities, the bypasses were kept close to the existing US 50 alignment
- Provides a wider median (typically 100 feet) serving as a refuge for trucks and farm equipment crossing the highway
- Access points would be provided from crossroads no closer than one-half mile apart. Generally, no direct access would be provided for driveways or field roads



Environmental Resources Analyzed in the Tier 1 Draft EIS

Studies were conducted to determine the impacts of the project alternatives on different environmental resources, including:

Rural and Agricultural Environment

- Prime and Unique Farmland
- Farmland and Ranchland
- Feedlots
- Irrigation Canals and Ditches
- Permanent Roadside Produce Markets
- Agricultural Product Storage Facilities
- Livestock Sales Facilities



Natural Environment

- Wetlands and Riparian Resources
- Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat
- Water Resources
 - Surface Water
 - Ground Water
 - Stormwater Runoff
 - Floodplains
- Geology and Paleontology

Community and Built Environment

- Historic Resources
- Archaeological Resources
- Land Use
- Parklands and Recreational Facilities
- Social and Economic Considerations
- Environmental Justice
- Aesthetic and Visual Resources
- Air Quality
- Traffic Noise

Other

- Transportation
- Hazardous Materials
- Section 6(f) Resources
- Energy
- Global Climate Change
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources
- Short-Term Uses versus Long-Term Productivity
- Section 4(f) Evaluation



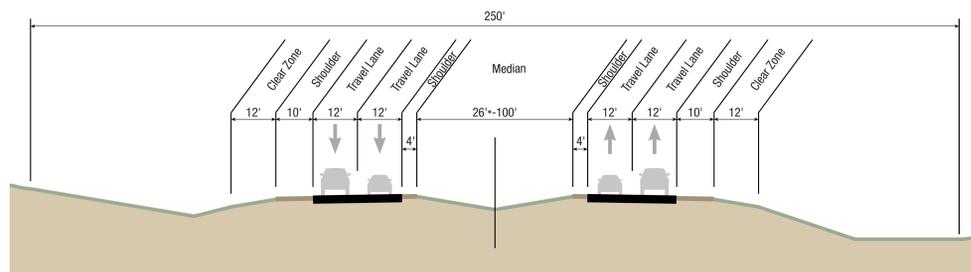
Alternatives Carried Forward for Further Consideration

No-Action Alternative

- Ongoing maintenance of pavement and bridges
- Bridge replacement
- Ongoing or planned minor safety improvements
- Provision of passing-lane sections
- Routine pavement overlays
- Repair of any weather or crash-related damage

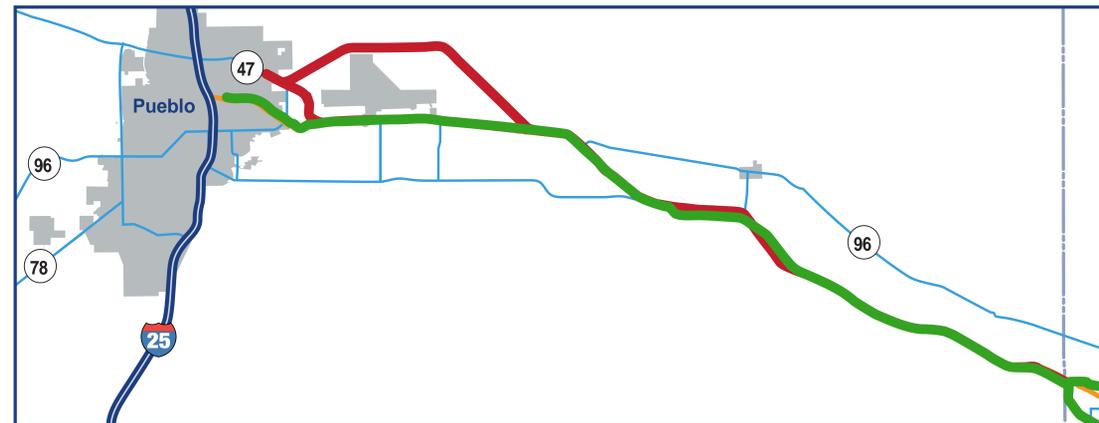
Build Alternatives

- Four-lane expressway on or near the existing U.S. 50 alignment
- Around-town alignment(s) for each community, except in Pueblo
- Wide median with sufficient room to accommodate a vehicle

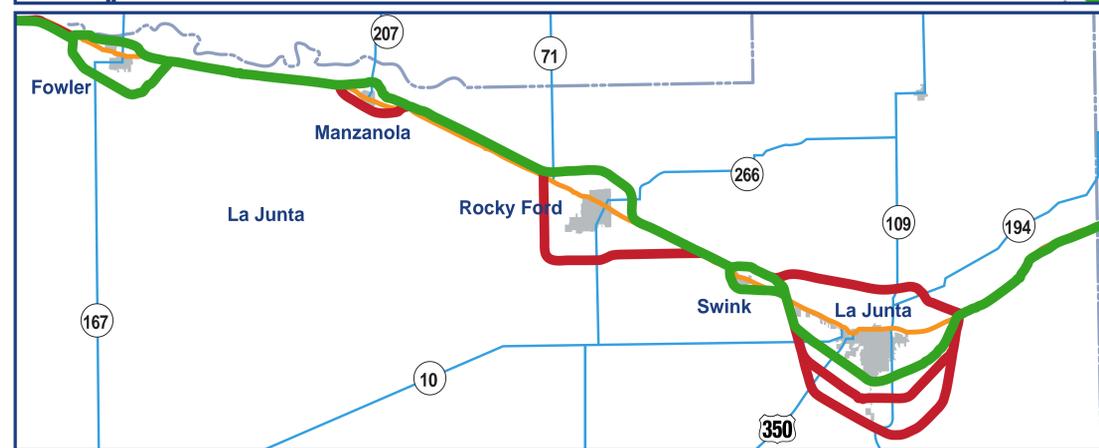


* 26' median would require a median barrier

Pueblo County



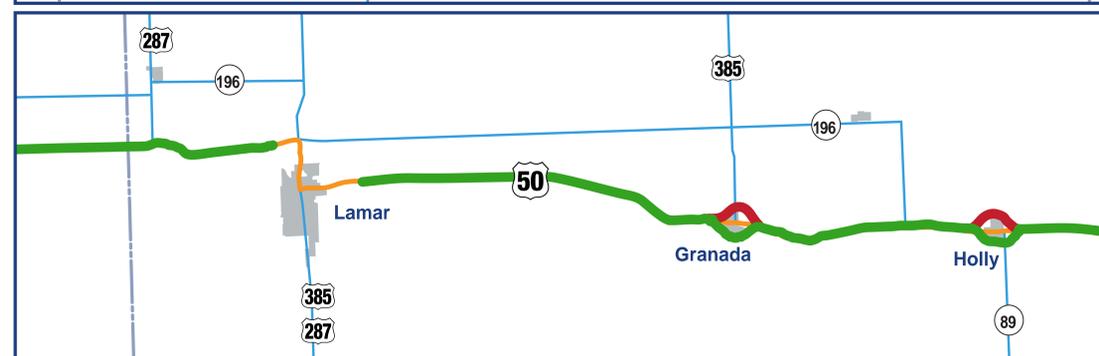
Otero County



Bent County



Prowers County



- Preferred Alternative
- Eliminated Alternatives
- Existing U.S. 50
- City / Town
- - - County

Mitigation Strategies

- Avoidance and minimization of impacts will be pursued to the greatest practicable extent during the development of Tier 2 studies, but the need for some compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts will still exist.
- Legally binding agreements will be created among all participating agencies so that any mitigation activities performed by CDOT for the US 50 Corridor East Project are honored by these agencies in the future.
- CDOT will review and revise impact calculations, regulations/guidance, state and federally listed species, and other information, as needed, so that mitigation strategies can be revised to address issues as they arise.

Below is the mitigation strategy development process for the US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Draft EIS:

