



# RTD RAIL TRAIL

Community Working Group Meeting #2



**POLL**

# MEETING PURPOSE

1. Review and discuss project updates
2. Describe the inclusion of CWG input
3. Review and discuss the alignments
4. Discuss the next steps

# AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions (30 mins)**
2. **Review and Discuss Project Updates (30 mins)**
3. **Break (5 mins)**
4. **Data Collection and Alignments (15 mins)**
5. **CWG Input (30 mins)**

# INTRODUCTIONS

**Name**

**Organization or Affiliation**

**Any good news?**

# INTRODUCTIONS

## CWG Members

Ron Blackwelder

Judy Blackwelder

Roy Burger

Buzz Burrell

David Butler

Will Chapman

Earl Cornelius

Eric Garner

Debi Garrity

Jerrod Howard

Bob Lichens

Richard Mansbach

Ruth Mansbach

Gary McClelland

Kay Norby Fial

Linda Parks

Timothy Payne

Jim Pendleton

Dave Tazik

Doug Tiefel

Willie Tiefel

Alana Wilson

Randy Winter

## Project Team

Tonya Luebbert, Boulder County

Kathleen Bracke, Boulder County

Alexandra Phillips, Boulder County

Luke Bolinger, Erie

Cliff Lind, Otak

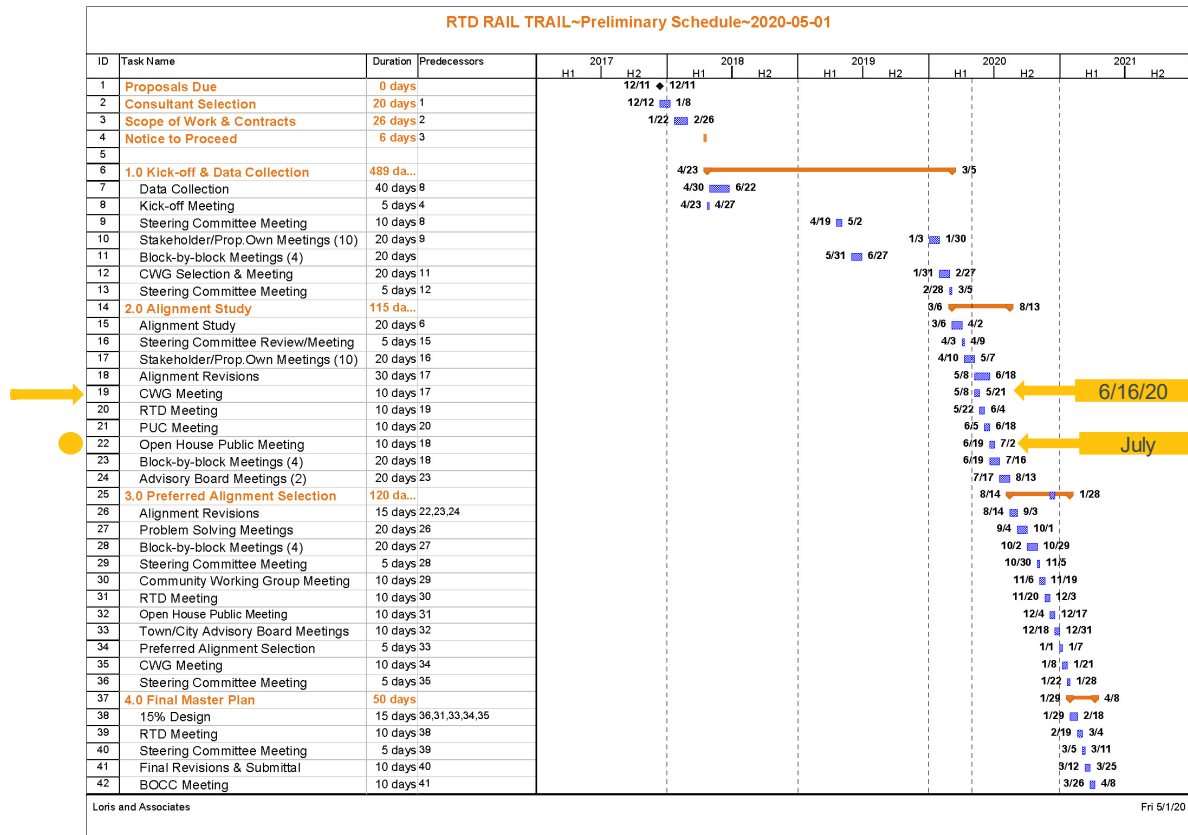
Kelsey Blaho, Otak

Aliina Fowler, ERO

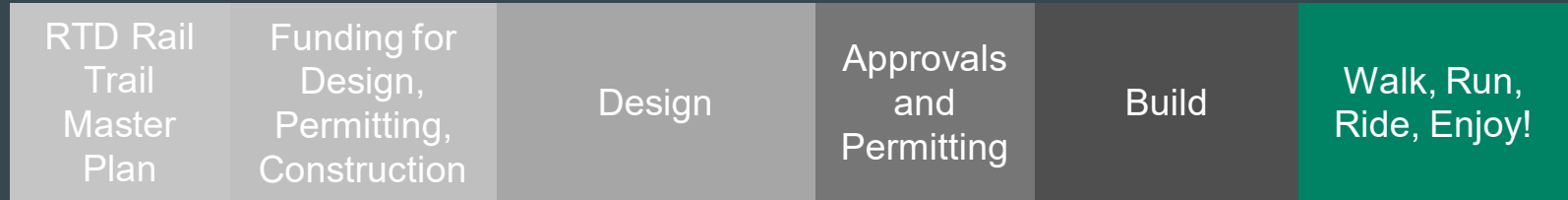
Jeffrey Range, CDR

Melissa Rary, CDR

# PROJECT UPDATES: MASTER PLAN SCHEDULE



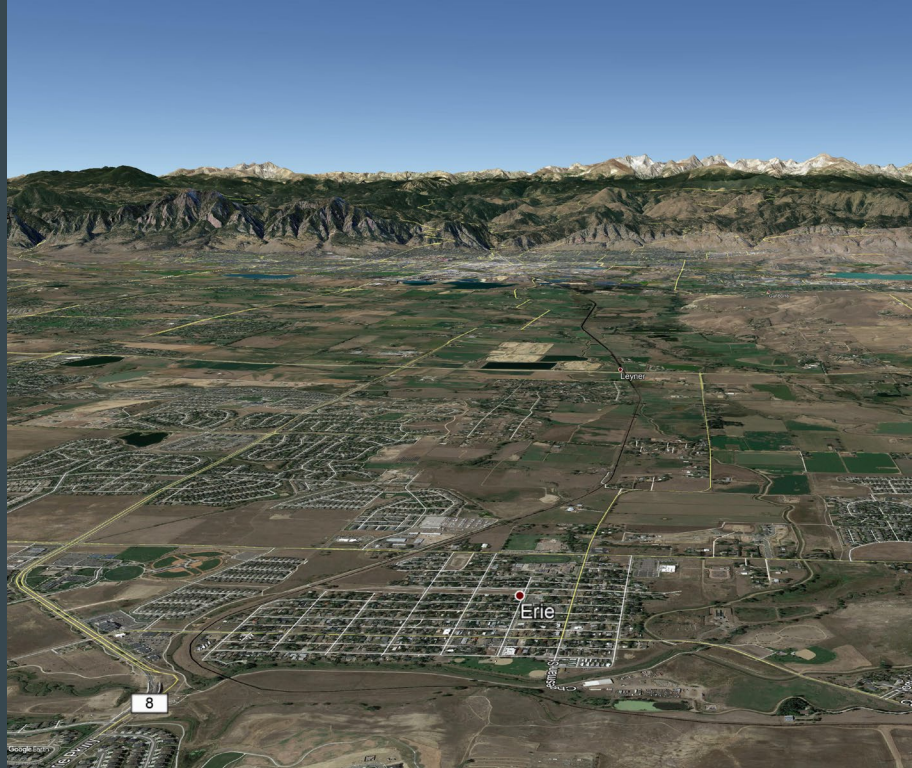
# PROJECT UPDATES: FROM VISION TO REALITY



  
**We are  
here**



# PROJECT UPDATES: CRITICAL TASKS



- **PUC**
- **RTD Approvals**
- **CDOT Approvals**
- **Land Owner Agreements**
- **Environmental Permitting**
- **Municipal Approvals**
- **Design & Engineering**
- **Construction**

# PROJECT UPDATES: INPUT

- **Community Working Group**
- **City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks**
- **Colorado Parks and Wildlife**
- **Boulder County Parks and Open Space**
- **Steering Committee**

**POLL**

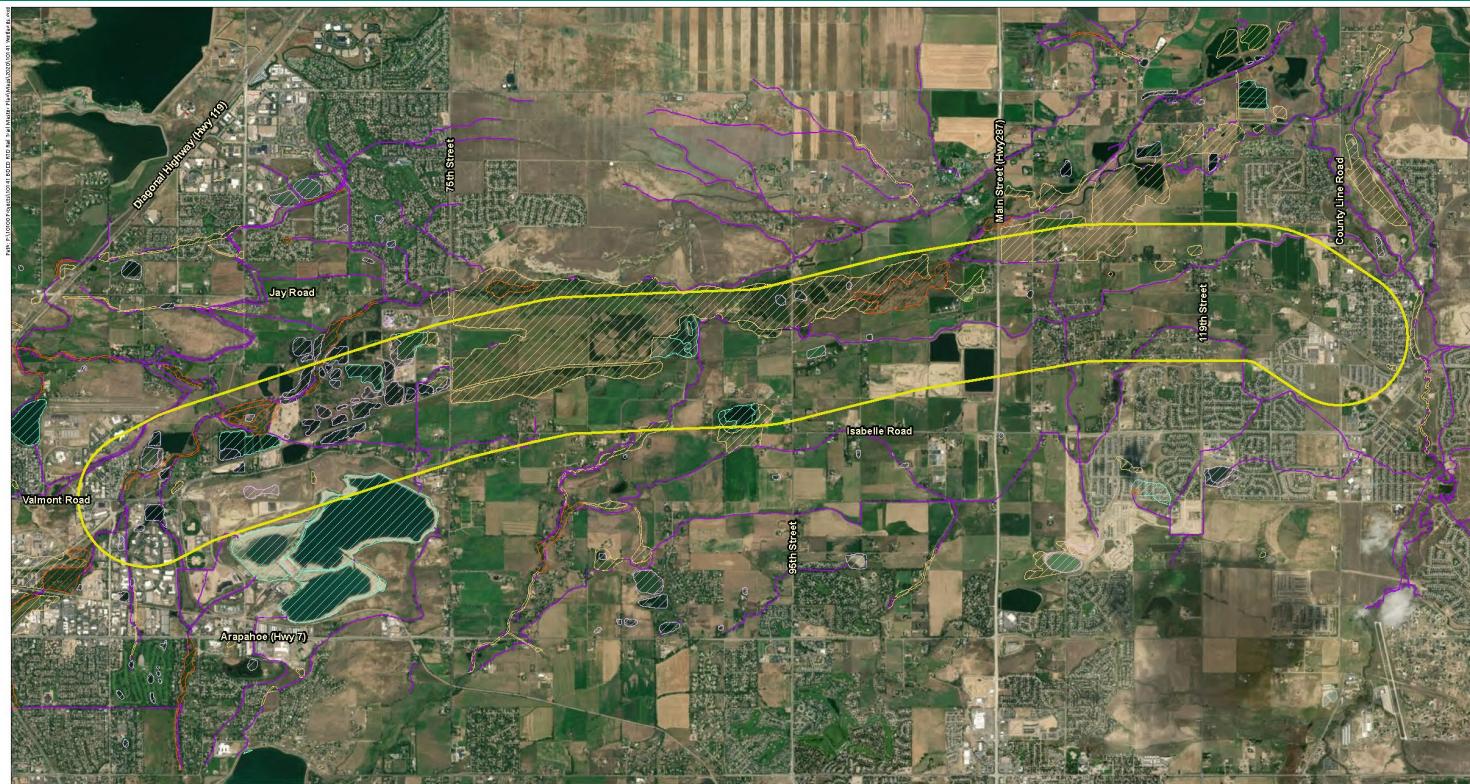
# DATA COLLECTION



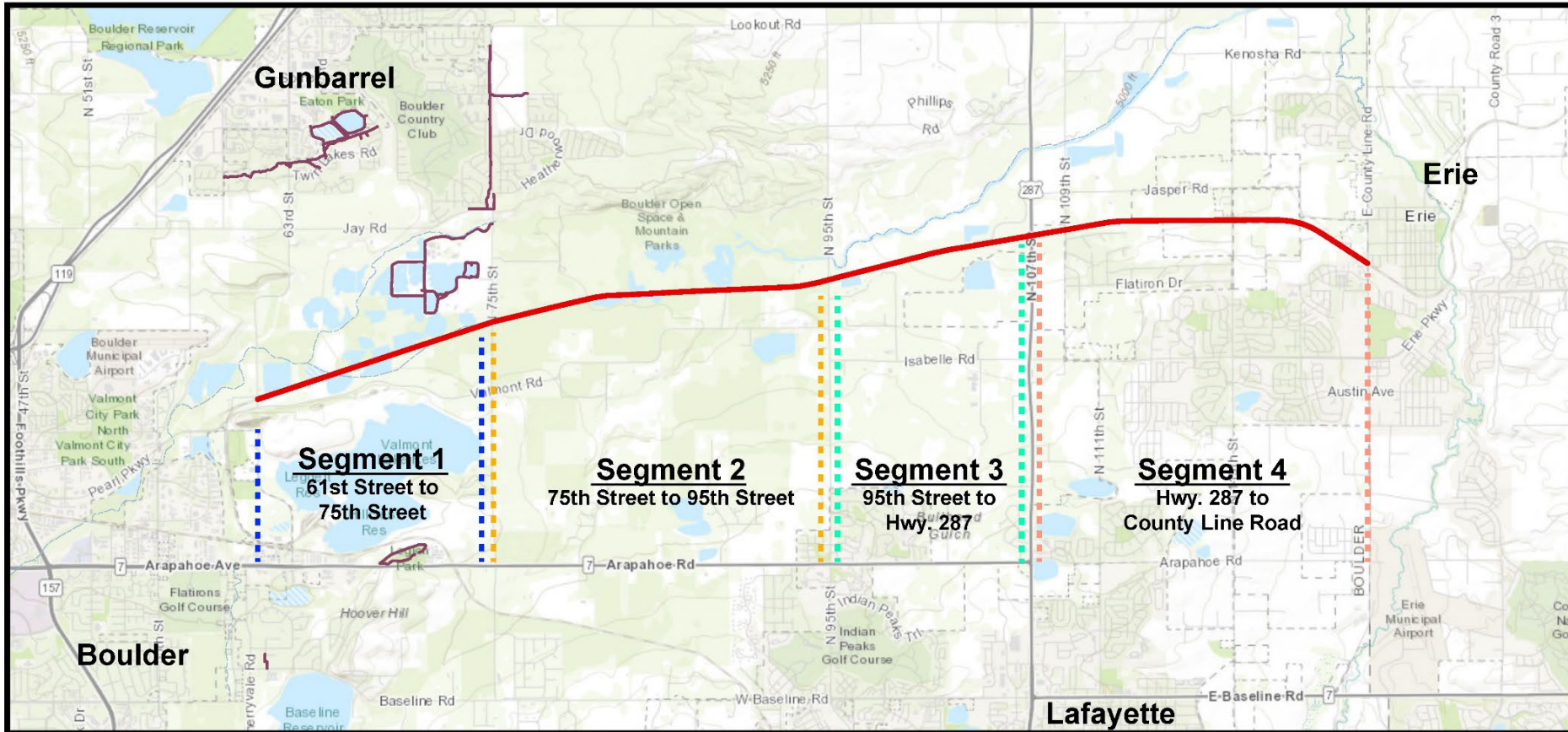
- **Right-of-Way**
- **Alignment Mapping**
- **Environmental**
- **Floodplain**



# DATA COLLECTION



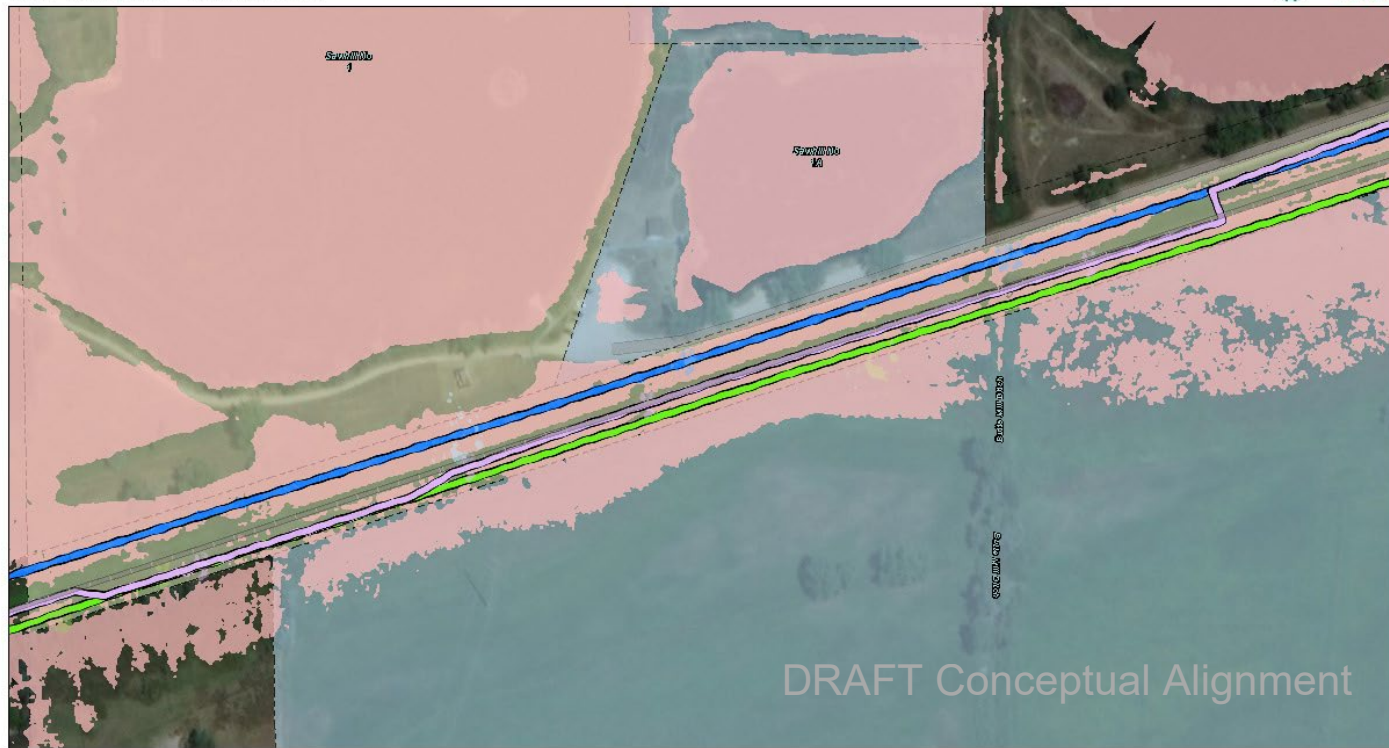
# ALIGNMENT OPTIONS





# ALIGNMENT OPTIONS

## RTD Rail Trail - Alignments



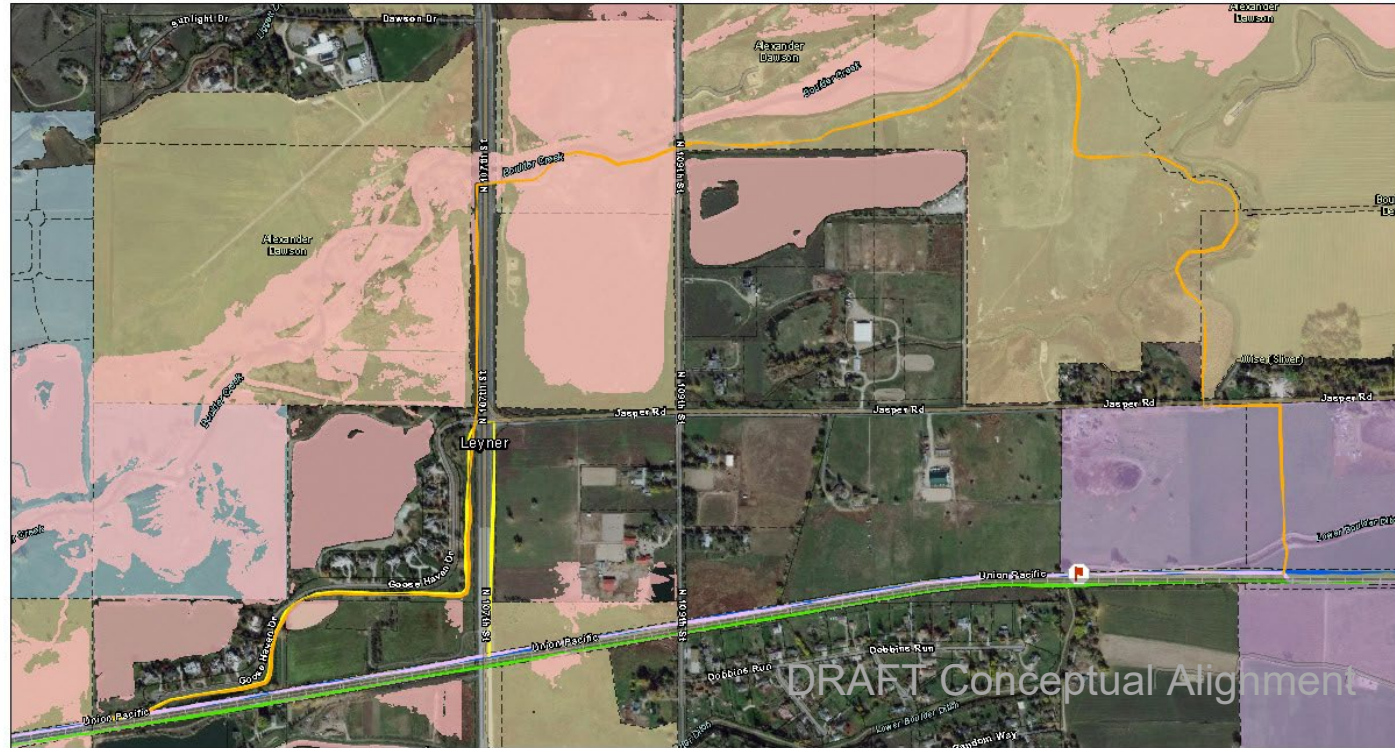
### Legend

Preliminary Alignments	Crossover Alignment	Parcels	CITY OF BOULDER	287 Crossover Options
North	10Yr Extents	BOULDER COUNTY	OTHER PUBLIC LANDS	Option 3
South		CITY OF ERIE		Option 4

150 75 0 150 Feet

# CWG INPUT – HWY 287 CROSSING

## RTD Rail Trail - Alignments



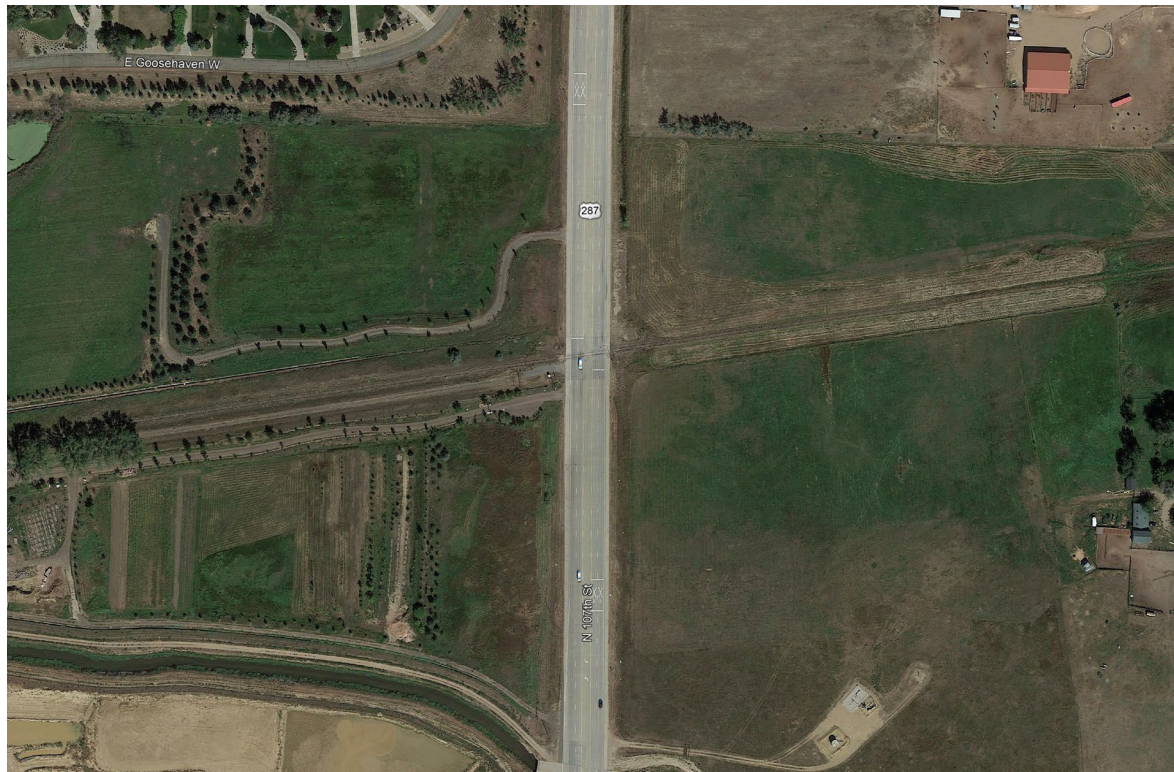
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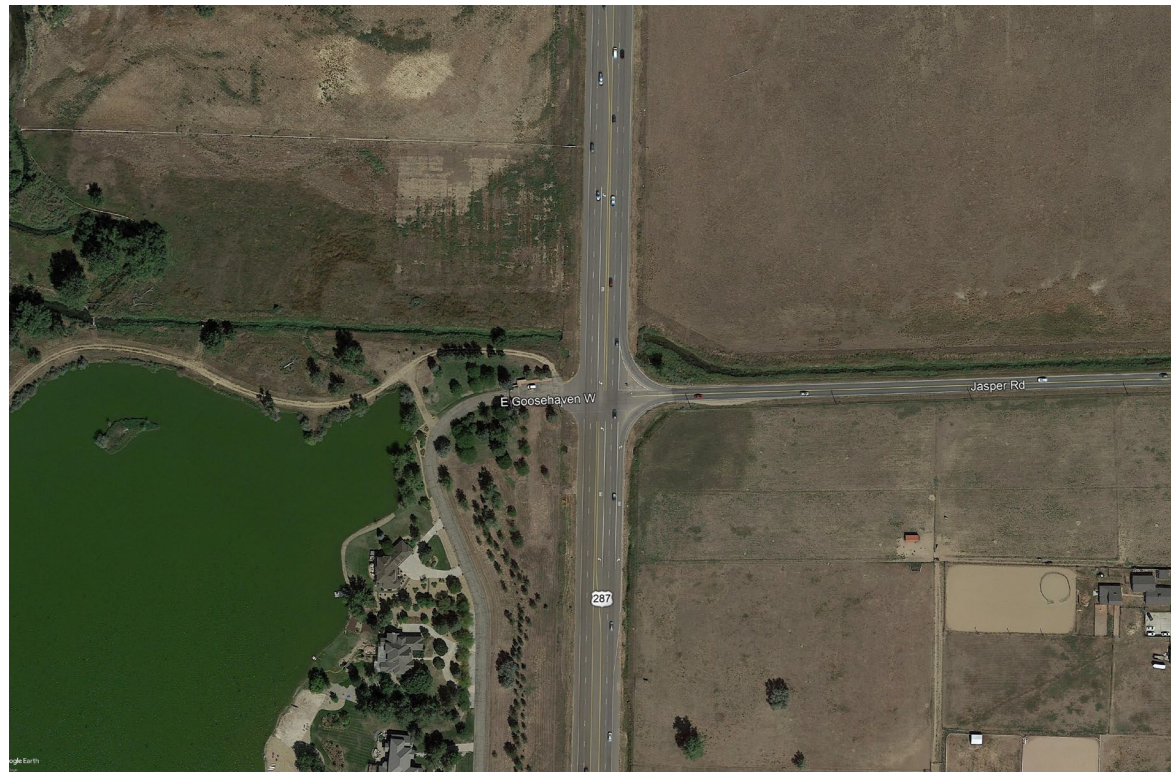


# CWG INPUT – HWY 287 CROSSING AT THE TRACKS





# CWG INPUT – HWY 287 CROSSING AT JASPER ROAD





# CWG INPUT – HWY 287 CROSSING AT BOULDER CREEK



# NEXT STEPS

- **Virtual public meeting**
- **Additional conversations with stakeholders and property owners**
- **Advisory Board meetings**
- **Preferred Alignment Selection Process (Sept-Dec)**





## CONTACT US

Tonya Luebbert, Regional Trails Planner  
[tluebbert@bouldercounty.org](mailto:tluebbert@bouldercounty.org)

Visit the Website: [RTDRailTrail.com](http://RTDRailTrail.com)



# RTD RAIL TRAIL

## COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING #2 SUMMARY

Tuesday, June 16, 2020, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

### Meeting Purpose:

- Review & discuss project updates
- Describe the inclusion of CWG input on the project
- Review & discuss alignments
- Discuss next steps

### AGENDA ITEMS

**4:00 – 4:30 pm Welcome and Introductions**

**4:30 – 5:00 pm Review and Discussion of Project Updates**

- Schedule & Activities
  - Just slightly behind, be mostly caught up by beginning of August (hopefully)
    - Slow down due to working out property and ownership in ROW issues → Final say on uses allowed on trail (eg. RTD vs. OSMP)
  - Hope to get feedback on material for potential inclusion at community meeting
  - Vision → Reality
    - RTD Rail Trail Master Plan → Funding for Design, Permitting, Construction → Design → Approvals and Funding → Build → Fun!
  - Critical Tasks
    - PUC
    - RTD Approvals
    - CDOT Approvals
    - Land Owners
    - Environmental
    - CWG Input:
      - The faster the better!
      - Realistic Timeline?
        - 3-5 years
      - Rails to Trails Funding?
        - Not there yet but will be a time for that later on
      - Link to existing projects to get smaller pieces done as applicable (new sewer project in Boulder county) → Building excitement and community support
  - Stakeholder Input
    - CWG Input
      - Evaluation Criteria
        - Relationships
        - Environmental
        - Phasing
        - Adjacencies
    - OSMP & CPW
      - Met with both agencies—good & productive meetings



- Will continue to meet and keep them in the loop as the project progresses to mitigate impacts
- BoCo POS
  - Supportive of project effort
  - Boulder Creek/ Coal Creek Master Plan goes together nicely with alternative crossing option for 287
    - Nice piece of cohesion between plans
- Steering Committee
  - Luke give update on latest Steering Committee meeting
    - RTD
    - Trailheads
    - Alignments
    - 287 Connection
  - Comments
    - Good to keep tabs on all municipal and county projects going on in the vicinity (eg. Valmont path (Bridge to Nowhere) project, new sewer line, etc.) in order to leverage these existing planning efforts to save on costs  
→ Steering Committee to try and keep project team informed of any work relevant to this project
    - Connection to Erie Town Center
      - More to be done on the Erie trail system side not Boulder County

#### 5:05 – 5:20 pm Review and Discuss Data Collection and Alignment Options

- Data Collected
  - ROW
  - Alignment Options
  - Environmental
  - Floodplain
- Proposed Alignments
  - North, South & Crossover Alignments
    - Q: What happens with crossings if Rail goes in?
      - A: Boulder County is fully responsible for moving trail if RTD chooses to put in rail at some point in the future.
    - Walking the corridor would be useful
- Roadway Crossings
  - 287 Crossing Options
    - Option 3
  - Details of crossing at Jasper road TBD, probably wants to be signalized in some way → conversation with CDOT



## 5:20 – 5:50 pm CWG Input<sup>1</sup>

### ● Hwy 287 Crossing Options

- How much less work to cross at Boulder Creek?
- Issues with short cutting and safety
- Distance of whole option 4 (orange)?
- Signalization – long term plans for CDOT as Erie grows and the residential population grows → use in one-on-one
- Other idea/option = cross at Jasper and stay on Jasper, then come back to rail corridor at some point
- Might be interim solution for crossing 287, might be an eventual underpass
- Boulder Creek Crossing
  - Occasional flooding a strong possibility
  - How often could it be flooded (in last 50 yrs) → Look into it
  - Trade-offs of commute route vs. scenic route
- **General Support for a meandering trail that crosses at Boulder Creek**
  - **Benefits:** Rely on existing infrastructure, scenic views and rest/recreation areas, increased safety for users, opportunity to market as a recreational trail
  - **Challenges:** Potential for flooding, would need additional signage for flooding instances and alternative routes, potential development of unofficial footpaths, likely more environmental concerns and impacts
- Consider alternative crossing at Isabelle/Erie Parkway
  - **Benefits:** Leverage existing planning efforts to include bike/ped crossing, opportunity to connect with existing trails (Baxter Farm Lane/ Erie Pkwy), less expensive to rely on existing infrastructure
  - **Challenges:** Further out of the way than other options
- Overpass/ Underpass along RR are generally not supported due to expense, time to construct, and potential to obscure viewshed
- Jasper Road crossing could be an alternate for flooding or a quicker commuter path – coordinate with upcoming 287 corridor study

### ● Funding/ Construction:

- Interest in finding the best alignment option to build the trail as soon as possible
- Use visual representation of the trail (photos, videos, Google Earth/ Street View) to enhance public interest and potentially support funding/building
- Leverage eager volunteers to assist in trail construction
  - Boulder County currently works with an extensive network of trail volunteers
  - Would help build support for the trail
- Support for approaching this as a multi-step, segmented corridor

### ● Trail Use

- Emphasis on trail as educational tool with ample signage and maps (consider geography, biology, history, geology, ecology, etc.)
- Equestrian Use Considerations:
  - Underpass crossing is difficult for equestrian users due to height considerations and potential for horse to spook
  - Road crossings have the potential to be slippery. Consider a textured road surface for horses

<sup>1</sup> Bolded notes in this section indicate input received from participants via email following the meeting.





- Important to think about dismounting capabilities at roads
- Trail width should be wide enough (8-12ft) to accommodate all users, with opportunity to have side dirt path for passing
- Signage will help to educate all users to be aware of each other
- Ensure all groups (commuters and recreational users) are able to access and enjoy the trail at their leisure
- Consider an extended scenic route that meanders along Boulder Creek to the west of 287 as well as to the east
- While the trail will be used for commuting, commuters will likely adjust their travel times for increased safety. Thus, the route that meanders along Boulder Creek (both east and west of 287) might be a preferred choice for both commuters and recreational users
- Importance to connect trail with existing trail network in the area
- Land
  - Work with landowners to ensure alignment options reflect previous plans and easements
  - Consider impacts of existing irrigation ditches along corridor on alignment options

#### 5:50 – 6:00 pm Next Steps and Action Item Review

- Stakeholder Meetings
- RTD Meeting
- Public Meetings and Neighborhood Workshops

#### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FROM CWG MEMBERS RECEIVED VIA EMAIL BETWEEN 6/16/20 – 6/29/20

1. **Would it be possible for the proposed alignment to be shared as KML, as input to something like Google Earth?**  
*-A fly-through using Google Earth or other platform will be created for the final draft alignment. Sharing the alignment as a KML will be considered.*
2. **Would it be possible to allow a mapping provider (like Bing or Google) to access to the right of way to generate some Streetview-like views along the corridor?**  
*-The project team will investigate the possibility of drone photography along the corridor. Permissions from adjacent landowners and RTD for the photography may be required. If this is the case, then the current project scope does not include that effort and Boulder County staff does not have the capacity to acquire the permissions.*
3. **Would “Option D” (Using existing bridge at Boulder Creek as a trail underpass) save significantly on project budget?**  
*-Based on the initial assessments, crossing under HWY 287 along Boulder Creek, and adding almost three miles of trail would be cheaper than an underpass within the RTD alignment at HWY 287. There is a significant range of cost associated with a trail under HWY 287 along Boulder Creek, so we don’t have enough information at this time to determine the magnitude of any cost savings.*



4. **If OSMP has already completed studies to support their preliminary plans for a trail in the Boulder Creek area, is that information that can be reused to save costs?**  
*- BOCO Parks and Open Space Dept has a plan (not design) for the trail along Boulder Creek. This is helpful because it establishes plan guidance for the trail to be there and eliminates the additional step of editing the plan to allow for the trail to be there.*
5. **We did not discuss the issue(s) of crossing at 75<sup>th</sup>, 95<sup>th</sup>, and possibly 119<sup>th</sup>. Do these intersections need to be discussed?**  
*- We were limited on time during this meeting and wanted to tackle the most challenging crossing first to get the alignment discussion started. Our discussion of other crossings and alignment options will continue in upcoming meetings.*
6. **Will horse trailer parking be available at spots?**  
*- Parking options or locations have not yet been determined. We will capture the interest to have trailer parking available along the corridor.*
7. **Will it be possible for equestrian users to dismount to cross roads? Will there be dismount infrastructure? Will there be easily accessible road crossing buttons for equestrian use?**  
*- At this time, specific trail usage, regulations, and associated infrastructure have not yet been determined. We will capture the interest to have equestrian-related infrastructure accessible along the corridor, in particular, at road crossings.*
8. **What obstacles would prevent this trail from going north before getting to Goose Haven and following Boulder Creek until it crossed under the bridge and then continuing along Boulder Creek as in Option #4?**  
*- Our general goal was to keep the trail in the RTD ROW as much as possible, so this potential trail route has not been evaluated at this time. Boulder County has a designated easement through Goose Haven, and a different alignment to Boulder Creek would require additional agreements or easements and may slow the implementation of the project.*

