

TIGER Discretionary Grant (\$1.5 Billion)

1. **CDOT Region: 3**
2. **Planning Region: Intermountain Planning Region**
3. **Congressional District: 2**
4. **Project Name: Eagle County Airport Interchange and Connector Rd Project**
5. **Project Request Amount: \$70,000,000**
6. **Brief Project Description: The purpose of the project is to provide a direct intermodal connection between I70 and Eagle County Regional Airport. The need for this project is to relieve traffic congestion that currently occurs in critical chokepoints on the existing route between the Eagle County Regional Airport and I70. Because of continued growth in airport use and residential and commercial development in the area, traffic volumes predicted for US6 are likely to overload the roadway's capacity, causing severe congestion and stop-and-go conditions. This project will enable the Eagle County Regional Airport to better serve the surrounding communities and more distant recreation areas.**

As an international resort destination, Eagle County Airport is the gateway to world class rocky mountain resort communities (Vail, Beaver Creek, and Aspen). Historically, Eagle County Airport was the second fastest growing airport in Colorado and has fluctuated as the 2nd & 3rd busiest in Colorado. Each year, the airport, through the ski and tourism industries especially, adds almost \$1B to the local economy, and in turn has a great effect on Colorado's economy as a whole.

7. **Project Benefits vs. TIGER Criteria (briefly explain the project benefits in one or more of the following categories):**

Selection Criteria (Primary):

- Long Term Outcomes
 - a) State of Good Repair: the US DOT will give priority to projects that have a significant impact on desirable long-term benefits (an emphasis on projects that minimize the life-cycle costs and improve safety);

Project Benefits:

- Provides direct intermodal connection between Eagle County Airport and I70 for air travelers, regional residents, and freight.
- Over 232,000 enplanements in 2007. Per 2004 Environmental Assessment (FONSI), projected enplanements will hit 582,000 by 2025 which translates to 1,574,400 annual vehicle trips
- Upgrades existing surface transportation system that would otherwise threaten economic growth due to congestion and poor condition/access of other surfaces
- Mitigate safety & congestion concerns at critical choke points in the region. Existing route for Airport is substandard and fails daily at peak travel times

- Provides multimodal options for I70 travelers and may mitigate regional congestion from Denver

b) Economic Competitiveness: contribute to the economic competitiveness of US (Medium to Long Term);

Project Benefits:

- Eagle County is a world class resort community (Vail & Beaver Creek) with visitors from around the world. Eagle County Airport has made over \$40M of improvements in the last 3 years. This project will provide a more attractive air alternative and quick access to resort centers
- Keep pace with airport growth and expansion efforts (airport master plan: customs & immigration improvements for international travel) and allow for continued growth in our region and state. Nearly \$8M local and private dollars were/will be spent on widening the airport frontage road in preparation for the Airport Interchange and Connector Road project.
- Project is ready for construction immediately and ready to put people to work
 - Per American Public Works Association, 35,000 jobs are created per \$1B of construction. This project will immediately generate 2,500 jobs
- Stimulates housing construction with better access to regional housing/commercial center to include affordable housing communities
- Provides long term viability to regional commercial center with better access
- Provides regional workforce better access to the interstate
- Long term employment through development will be more attractive

c) Livability: improve the quality of living and working environments;

Project Benefits:

- Supports the region's vision of growth and quality of life while maintaining environmental quality
- Will mitigate safety & congestion concerns at critical choke points in the region
- Provides better access to regional housing and commercial centers to include affordable housing communities and reduces travel time to employment centers significantly
- Provides multimodal transportation hub for commuter/destination travelers/freight via air and highway

d) Sustainability: improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil, reducing green house gas emissions and benefiting the environment;

Project Benefits:

- Will mitigate safety & congestion concerns at critical choke points in the region which reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- Provides better access to regional housing and commercial centers to include affordable housing communities and reduces travel time to employment centers significantly
- Provides a more attractive air alternative and quick/shorter access to the resort centers thus reducing VMT and pollution from a 170-mile drive with current Denver alternatives.
- Provides multimodal options for I70 travelers and may mitigate regional congestion from Denver

e) Safety: improving the safety of U.S. transportation facilities and systems.

Project Benefits:

- As identified in the 2004 EA, accident rates on US6 have increased through the years and the number of accidents would be expected to increase with higher traffic volumes. This project will reduce the potential for increase crash rates by providing a continuous flow of traffic directly onto I70 while reducing traffic volumes on the local US6 route.
- US6 fails during peak travel times. Project will mitigate safety & congestion concerns at critical choke points in the region
- Provides multimodal options for I70 travelers and may mitigate regional congestion from Denver
- Provides secondary access to the region

- Job Creation and Economic Stimulus

- a) Quickly create and preserve jobs and stimulate rapid increases in economic activity that benefit economically distressed areas

Project Benefits:

- Project is ready for construction immediately and ready to put people to work
 - Per American Public Works Association, 35,000 jobs are created per \$1B of construction. This project will immediately generate 2,500 jobs
- Construction is the second leading employment industry in the region
- Stimulate housing construction with better access to regional housing/commercial center to include affordable housing communities
- Provides long term viability to regional commercial center with better access
- Provides regional workforce better access to the interstate
- Long term employment through development will be more attractive

Selection Criteria (Secondary):

- Innovation

- a) Priority to projects that use innovative strategies to pursue long-term outcomes listed above

Project Benefits:

- Provides for multimodal hub (Air, vehicles, future rail/advance guideway system, bicycles, and buses)

- Partnership

- a) Priority to projects that demonstrate strong collaboration among a broad range of participants and/or integration of transportation with other public service efforts

Project Benefits:

- Project has region-wide support (aeronautical industry (private & public), rocky mountain resorts, regional counties, municipalities, regional chambers of commerce, and emergency services.) As an example, \$550,000 of local funds was contributed to meet CDOT shortfalls for design and ROW acquisitions.