

Colorado Highway 119 Boulder Canyon Improvements Project

PROJECT UPDATES

Thank you to everyone who attended the Nederland community town hall and have since provided comments, suggestions and ideas in the recent weeks since.

The Colorado Highway 119 project team has been working to reduce the impacts of this construction project on the Nederland and Boulder Canyon community while ensuring the critical parts of the project are completed.

Where we are now: The project team will continue blasting through mid-January, to safely complete the rock face mitigations that are already underway. This work must be completed to ensure the safety of those rock faces. As this work continues, CDOT will continue to collect community input and feedback while researching ways to further expedite the project schedule - including the possibility of reducing project scope.

Additionally, we are optimistic that we will be able to open two lanes to traffic this winter to allow more reliable and safe travel, but more detail and design is required to make a final decision. We hope to have additional

information in the coming weeks and are focused on working toward a two-lane scenario for the height of winter.

While we still have design plans to work out, we have addressed many of the other concerns raised during the meeting, including:

- Resident passes for canyon residents to use Fourmile detour
- Improved traffic signals and message boards
- Plan to use two-lane road during winter rather than signals
- Exploration of potential options for temporary cell service

Can I get a resident permit? Residential permits are now available for residents who live in areas above the Fourmile/Boulder Canyon intersection and need access to Fourmile Canyon and Poorman Road during the Boulder Canyon blasting closures. This includes Sugarloaf, Magnolia, and upper Boulder Canyon residents. Residents living in Fourmile Canyon do not need a pass to travel back and forth between Boulder.

To obtain a permit, please contact:

Kelly Lucy with the Boulder County Sheriff's Office at 303-877-1720 (Monday - Wednesday), or klucy@bouldercounty.org (anytime). You must provide your full name, phone number, house address, mailing address, and the license plate number for each vehicle needing a pass. Passes will be sent by U.S. mail to the mailing address supplied.

Additionally, residents of Nederland who live in the Library taxing district and are open to other modes of transportation qualify for free RTD eco-passes. More information can be found [here](#).

CDOT is currently researching ways to connect cycling commuters with eco passes as well.

Can CDOT improve the temporary traffic signals? The project team has increased the use of flaggers and is committed to improving automated signals. Temporary traffic signals are being upgraded with remote control ability. This will allow for manual operation throughout the night and in bad weather, when the signals were automatic. Overnight the signals will be timed, and photo ticketing options are currently being researched. Additional enforcement options are also being developed with local agencies.

Can CDOT close Boulder Canyon to all cyclists? CDOT has worked through several iterations of bicycle closures during the project, and each has been criticized for either being too lax or too harsh. Cycling closures are due to safety. Heavy cycling usage and commuting cyclists mean we cannot close the canyon to cyclists completely. We are striving to balance cycling access with safety by maintaining downhill (eastbound) travel. As stated in the meeting, cycling uphill (westbound) is closed, as cyclists cannot safely navigate through the single lane closures before the eastbound light turns green.

Can CDOT blast overnight to reduce traffic impacts? Unfortunately, blasting and scaling of rock cannot occur at night for safety and regulatory reasons. This is CDOT's biggest schedule driver. Other items that can be built overnight are being evaluated to determine if there would be any schedule improvements that would offset the additional resources, equipment (ie. lighting, shifting of barrier) and added closures to the

roadway to safely perform the work.

Can you update the VMS boards with real-time delay information? The project team is committed to finding ways to improve VMS board messages. The VMS boards have been equipped with the ability to update the messages in real-time near Hurricane Hill and near Broadway/Canyon. This will allow the project to display current delay times. Other real-time VMS boards are also being installed near Estes Park and Lyons.

Can CDOT send more informative text alerts? CDOT is working with the communications team to provide more frequent and useful text updates for residents and commuters.

When will the full closures for blasting end? Full closures are needed throughout mid-January to safely finish the rock blasting that is already in progress. Evaluations of the remaining two rock faces will continue to determine if they will remain in the project scope or not. A very limited number of full closures may be needed to complete the new trail alignment in the Spring.

Full closures will be limited during the week of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Every effort is being made to limit this impact to residents, visitors and businesses. Coordination with Eldora Mountain Resort and the Nederland Downtown Development Authority are ongoing. Full-closures are planned for 4 days a week but may be canceled at times due to weather or schedule impacts. Notice of closure cancelations will be sent out via all project channels on days when closure will not happen.

Will there be a two-week full closure in the spring? CDOT is evaluating this option and will come back to receive your input.

How will CDOT maintain the CO 119 this winter? CDOT Maintenance is working hard to maintain safe roads all winter long. Snow removal will always be challenging in this canyon, but CDOT has some lessons learned from the first snow event and is working to maximize efforts. Improved signal operation and eventual removal of signals will help keep the roads clear of snow and ice.

The project team has met with plow drivers and maintenance supervisors to address public concerns. The single-lane areas are wide enough for plows. The project team is also coordinating with Eldora Mountain Resort to promote alternate routes for ski traffic.

Maintaining desired driving conditions and travel times on CDOT roadways during blizzard or freezing rain conditions is a challenge statewide, but canyons pose even more risk due to lack of sunlight, terrain, temperatures, narrow widths and visibility. CDOT has a strategic approach to tackling snow and ice removal for every event and every roadway. CDOT maintenance crews in Boulder Canyon pretreat the roadway to create a bond so ice doesn't form and then use plows and slicer (salt & sand) to maintain traversable conditions. If conditions become unsafe, CDOT will close the canyon.

Preliminary conversations with the contractor were positive and the idea now, after the current blasting, is to build two-lane detours around each of our river-armoring sections. This will require a complete closure of the Boulder Creek Trail due to the roadway that will need to be built over the

trail. Signals will be required again in the spring after ski season for roadway reconstruction.

We request that all vehicular travel adhere to posted speed limits, as well as construction speed limits and signage during winter weather. It should be noted that the accidents on Oct. 10, from the first snowfall were outside of the construction work zone areas and were caused by drivers driving too fast for conditions.

Please make sure your vehicle is [prepared](#), and be mindful of [Colorado's Traction Laws](#). Sunshine or snowstorm, even when two lanes are open, please continue to drive with caution and at reduced speeds through the active construction site.

Does CDOT plan to reduce the project scope? The project team is currently reviewing options to decrease the scope in some areas.

The Boulder County Trail Extension is included in the CDOT project to help provide Boulder County achieve a better price and product; the funding for the Trail construction is from Boulder County and not CDOT or the state. CDOT cannot change the work, but CDOT is working on plans to limit impacts. The current traffic alignment at Chapman Drive is expected to be improved by Oct. 25. Options for how and when to build the final concrete box culvert are being considered, with a focus on reducing the duration of temporary signals needed to complete the work.

Can CDOT provide any additional schedule updates? To safely complete the rock faces that are already underway, blasting will continue through mid-January. Rock reinforcement operations will continue through the winter as well.

Nederland Downtown Development Authority has voiced that weekend closures would be detrimental to local business. Weekend work will impact Nederland's economy significantly and will not be scheduled.

Thank you again for your patience and participation in this process. Please contact the project at CDOTCO119@gmail.com or (720) 500-9912 with additional input or questions.