

MASON CORRIDOR / MAX BRT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The Vision

IMAGINE... a modern, world-class community, continuing to transform from a small city to a progressive metropolitan center, successfully channeling growth into positive community development. Centered along the Mason Corridor, multiple modes of travel conveniently link vibrant activity centers within Fort Collins and the North Front Range region.

The Purpose and Need

Improve Transit Options

The Mason Express Bus Rapid Transit (MAX) will address several key transportation challenges:

- Offer Transportation Choice for College Avenue – the MAX will provide a faster and convenient alternative to driving in the congestion on College Avenue.
- Boost Transit Ridership – the increased frequency and enhanced connectivity of the MAX will improve travel times and increase the use of transit.
- Improve Connectivity – the MAX will improve connections to local and regional destinations.

Economic Development

The project is anticipated to stimulate development and redevelopment along the corridor. A comprehensive study of the economic impact of the Mason Corridor evaluates construction, residential and commercial opportunities. Visit fcgov.com/mason for the detailed report.

Environmental Assessment General Overview

The Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared under the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluated the potential impacts of the Mason Corridor/MAX BRT Project. The analysis included a thorough evaluation of environmental, social, and economic conditions in the areas listed below.

- Air quality
- Community impacts
- Cultural resources
- Economics
- Threatened / Endangered species
- Environmental justice
- Floodplain
- Hazardous materials
- Land use
- Local/regional plans
- Noise
- Traffic impacts
- Vegetation
- Visual
- Water Quality
- Wetlands
- Wildlife

Results

Overall

The FTA has determined thus far that the Mason Corridor / MAX BRT Project does not result in significant impacts to any of the areas listed above. Prior to issuing final environmental clearance; however, the FTA and the City of Fort Collins are providing an opportunity to review the EA and requesting public input on the proposed Mason Corridor / MAX BRT Project.

Potential Negative Impacts

Although the project does not result in significant impacts, the EA identifies four areas for potential negative impact: land area, business, public lands, and cultural resources.

Land Area

The majority of land proposed for the Mason Corridor / MAX BRT Project is currently owned by the City of Fort Collins; however, approximately 17 acres of additional land along the edge of the 5-mile corridor will be needed. Of that 17 acres, approximate land ownership is as follows: Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (59 %), Colorado State University (11 %), various private land owners (22 %), and other public agencies (8 %).

Business

As a result of proposed right-of-way needs, it is necessary to reconfigure existing equipment at Casey's Car Wash, just south of Troutman Pkwy. This will not impact the continued success of the existing business and the City is working closely with the business owner to minimize overall impact.

Public Land

A retaining wall will be required at the western edge of Creekside Park, near the Spring Creek Trail railroad underpass. The City Parks Department is not concerned about affecting the overall use or appearance of the park.

Cultural Resources

Preliminary design indicates that the Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCO) building, located at the northeast corner of Prospect Road and the BNSF railroad, is in the path of the Mason Corridor and will need to be removed. The PSCO building was constructed in 1927 as a substation for electric power distribution. The building is no longer used for electricity distribution and has been vacant for decades. It is, however, eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office has been initiated. Options being considered include demolition with historic documentation or relocation of the building.

Public Involvement

The Environmental Assessment Public Comment Period Is June 16-July 30, 2008. The public has the opportunity to provide feedback in a variety of ways:

Public Hearing: Wed., July 9, 4-7 p.m. at the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

Online: Fill out the comment form at fcgov.com/mason.

Directly to City Staff

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The EA document is available for viewing at the following locations:

- *Fcgov.com/mason*
- Main and Harmony Libraries
- Fort Collins Senior Center
- Fort Collins City Manager's Office
- Fort Collins Police Services
- Downtown Transit Center
- Transfort Office