

Northern Colorado Truck Mobility / SH 14 Relocation Study  
Position Statement  
(written 12/12/01 by Charles Rogers)

The reason I decided to get involved with the Truck Study was because I am a resident in the Waverly area and am concerned about the possibility of a major thoroughfare going past my front door. I realize that progress is sometimes necessary. If a truck bypass through my neck of the woods is truly the best solution for the majority, then I--by knowing the facts--would hopefully be more willing to step aside and gracefully accept what I should not try to change.

Due to this entire process and all those who have had a part in it, I believe I am better informed about the facts. These facts leave me with the following conclusions:

- (1) Truck traffic volume that would be diverted with an alternative route is not enough to make a sufficient impact.

The 2001 Truck and Destination Study has shown that out of 17 to 18,000 total vehicles traveling through Fort Collins and going by way of the existing truck route, ONLY 600 are trucks that could actually be diverted around Fort Collins. The remaining 16,400 plus cars AND trucks are STILL going to be using the existing truck route. In the year 2020, the total traffic volume is expected to be 24 to 25,000 vehicles with only 1,300 trucks actually being diverted. That translates into only a 3 to 5 percent reduction in total traffic volume. A 3 to 5 percent decrease in traffic will not be noticed.

- (2) The Cost Effectiveness Is Not There.

I think it is clear that the traffic problem along the existing truck route is not going to be minimized by a northern alternate route, and wasn't that the main reason this all got started? Sure, some of the trucks will use an alternate route, but the rest of the traffic will still be there, and by 2020 there will be more traffic using Mulberry, Riverside, Jefferson, and College, than there is now, even if a truck bypass route up north existed. The growth in this area, along with increasing numbers of students attending the University has increased the flow of traffic beyond what the streets were planned to handle. An alternate route may make things a LITTLE better for SOME folks (whether they be businesses along the existing truck route, the truckers themselves, or even some of the folks up north that would welcome an alternate route), BUT, the bang for the buck just isn't there. Its not there now nor will it be in 2020. When you factor in the price tag for this major highway coming in at tens of millions of dollars it just doesn't make since to pursue this issue any further.

- (3) Funding Isn't Available.

There are many other priorities ahead of this project. The burden of securing funding for this project greatly out weighs the benefits of the final outcome. I understand there is around two million dollars left to continue the study. I suggest that it be directed toward researching more viable possibilities that will be cost effective. I would hope that somebody in the City of Fort Collins can come up with better solutions than this.

(4) Non-Route Strategies Will Help.

I believe it would be wise to pursue a plan to divert trucks to use I-80 and I-25, but a word of caution, spend wisely, remember, at best only 3 to 5 percent of the total daily traffic per day are trucks that would actually be diverted.

Yes I am a resident of the Waverly area but I also do business in Fort Collins. I have to drive in, out of, and around your town. It does matter to me what direction the city takes. Spending millions of dollars on a project that obviously will not make a significant improvement to the traffic problems in Fort Collins is an irresponsible use of tax payers' money—regardless whether the impact to the northern residents is negative or positive. It is my opinion that the referendum which mandated this study was a very costly mistake and the only reason it was voted into existence was it was portrayed as a silver bullet that would keep a truck bypass off of Vine St. and solve the traffic problems along the existing truck route. The only silver bullet here is the one that everyone will want to bite once they get the bill to pay for a project that just isn't performing the way they were led to believe it would. Especially when they realize that the same money could have been directed toward a much more practical solution to a growing traffic dilemma.

As I stated at the beginning, I was willing to look at the facts and put my emotions aside... Now, is the City of Fort Collins willing to do the same?

# THE TOP TEN REASONS WHY THERE SHOULD NEVER BE A TRUCK BYPASS IN OWL CANYON

10. Owl Canyon Road is an area of historical significance. In 1999, portions of the road were selected by the White House Millennium Council as an Official Millennium Trail. The purpose of the designation was to allow communities to strengthen their quality of life by "preserving open spaces, interpreting history and culture, and enhancing recreation and tourism."
9. There are many farms ranches and small acreages along Owl Canyon Road. Contrary to general perception, more families and individuals would be impacted by placing a truck bypass on Owl Canyon Rd. than would have been effected had the bypass been constructed on Vine Drive in Fort Collins as originally proposed.
8. An adequate route already exists to handle truck traffic. Interstate 25 and Interstate 80 have been promoted for just this usage.
7. Farming/ranching endeavors and the truck bypass are incompatible uses. The danger to farm and ranch people and their livestock would increase to an intolerable level in the presence of a large volume of high-speed trucks and passenger vehicles.
6. The occurrence of theft, vandalism, trash, trespassers, destruction of fences and harassment of livestock on area properties would increase exponentially with the numbers of vehicles on the bypass.
5. There would be a negative impact on wetlands and a reduction in the wildlife using them for their habitat by pollution from increased vehicles and expanded development. According to the Sierra Club, we have already lost roughly half of our wetlands to development.
4. An adverse impact on air quality will result from emissions from increased trucks and other vehicles. According to the North Front Range Air Quality Study (5/98), vehicular emissions are already responsible for 75% of particulates in rural areas.
3. Water pollution in surrounding wells, watering ponds, streams and wildfowl ponds will lead to loss of livestock and wildlife. Lack of potable water result in reliance on cisterns alone for water supply, and will significantly reduce the value of the property.
2. The construction of a bypass in Owl Canyon will result in additional sprawl by encouraging more people and businesses to move into the area. In addition to the disastrous impact on a very fragile ecosystem, local residents see any such encroachment as a significant reduction in their quality of life and on their chosen method of making a living.
1. The primary reason a truck bypass should not be constructed in Owl Canyon is that the supporters of the idea are based in the Fort Collins urban growth area. They would not suffer the negative economic and environmental impacts of its construction and usage. It is simply not fair for the Owl Canyon area residents who do not want their lifestyle compromised or even destroyed by a truck bypass to be the ones so severely impacted. We believe the Fort Collins truck bypass backers should build their desired bypass and contend with the resulting problems **IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD.**