

Effort to 'Complete Beltway' Isn't Good for Arvada, Either

By JIM SMITH
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At first glance, it's easy to accept the concept that Denver's emerging "Beltway" should be completed.

The more I study this project, however, the more convinced I am that the project is unwarranted, even in the long-term, and that it will harm not just Golden but the entire Northwest Quadrant, which includes Arvada and some of unincorporated Jeffco.

The latest revelation is that the tollway authority negotiated "non-compete" agreements with the various jurisdictions it traverses to improve the chances of financial success. It's reasonable to assume that Arvada is being asked to sign a similar agreement.

Commerce City, for example, agreed to slow the speed limit on Tower Road from 55 to 40 mph, to install three unnecessary traffic lights, and to limit future improvements on Tower Road to shoulder work, turning lanes at intersections, development-specific widening, and normal maintenance. In other words, Commerce City agreed to make travel worse on Tower Road so that people would be encouraged to use the toll road. Similarly, Aurora agreed not to build or improve any roads that might compete with E-470.

These non-compete provisions were considered essential to encourage investors to buy the bonds to build the toll road. They will be considered equally essential in any toll road built to "complete" the beltway.

It is crystal clear to me, a Realtor, that this highway is not intended to meet the transportation needs of Arvada (or Golden) resi-

dents, but rather to meet the development needs of special interests, which are well represented on the Arvada City Council.

Arvadans need to realize that their traffic situation will only be worsened by the building of this highway, not only because of the non-compete agreement which their developer-friendly Council will agree to, but because the very development which the highway is intended to stimulate will increase the northwest-southeast traffic burden which the proposed tollway does nothing to satisfy.

This entire effort to push a superhighway through the Northwest Quadrant is corrupt at its heart. Two CDOT-funded studies proved that arterial improvements and *not* a superhighway would best serve the quadrant. Undeterred, CDOT's head, Tom Norton, said publicly, "I don't care about the studies, I want a beltway!" Recently, the very firm that was hired to manage public input for the EIS process now underway resigned their contract due to ethical concerns.

The pro-beltway forces want the people of Arvada to believe that Golden's opposition is anti-Arvada, when in fact Golden is leading the fight to fund arterial improvements in both cities instead of building the highway in either city — just like CDOT's own studies have recommended.

I believe so strongly in the importance of stopping this billion-dollar boondoggle, that I have joined the board of Citizens Involved in the Northwest Quadrant (CINQ). For more information, visit www.GoTheBetterWay.com. Or call their hotline, 720-221-6766. Together we *can* stop the madness.

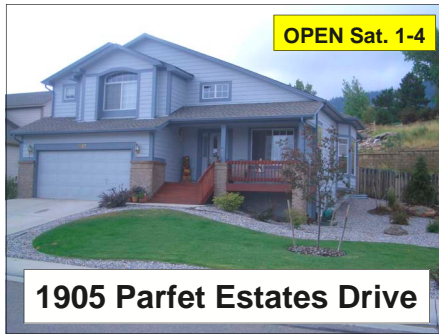


This Week's Featured Listing

Another Great Golden Home!

This home under the "M" in Golden's Beverly Heights offers great views, both across the valley to North and South Table Mountain, and also uphill toward Lookout Mountain and Mt. Zion. Located on the quiet, uphill side of Parfet Estates Drive, it has minimal highway noise,

especially in its backyard, where the soothing sounds of a splendid water feature enhance your enjoyment of the shaded wood deck. To fully appreciate this home, visit www.BeverlyHeightsHome.com, where you'll find lots of pictures, including an aerial photo and virtual tour. You can also print out the same 2-sided brochure that is in the brochure box. Then call Jim for a private showing. **\$449,000.**



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