

## Mayor Jacob Smith Responds to Column about Toll Road "Surrender"

---

**From:** jacobzsmith@gmail.com on behalf of Jacob Smith [jsmith@cityofgolden.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 06, 2011 7:54 AM  
**To:** Jim Smith  
**Subject:** Re: Your response to my column

First, Jim, I agree with you: from Golden's perspective, building the Jefferson Parkway - a ten-mile toll road between 93 and 128 (but which doesn't overlap 93 at all) - doesn't make sense as a transportation project. It's a dumb idea.

The bad news is that some other communities really, really want to build it anyway. Those folks - Jefferson County, Arvada, and Broomfield - are going to keep looking for ways to build the new road however bad an idea it might be.

The good news, though, is a point that you make well. The Jefferson Parkway will almost certainly fail as a toll road because it won't ever produce much traffic or revenue. It will fail much like the neighboring Northwest Parkway is failing; drivers on that toll road are so few and far between that the toll highway's owner just keeps hemorrhaging cash despite the impressive congestion that clogs the Turnpike, I-70, I-270, and I-25. People in Colorado would rather deal with congestion than pay a toll even when the toll road would save them time.

What does all this mean for Golden? Golden has fought hard for decades to keep the six- or eight-lane high-speed superhighway - the beltway - out of our town. And we've succeeded. There is no beltway through Golden and the beltway proponents have now scaled back their vision to the Jefferson Parkway. But because the proponents are now trying to build a much smaller road, entirely outside Golden, that doesn't overlap Highway 93 at all, our ability to stop it is substantially diminished. The Jefferson Parkway proponents are approaching the point where they may be able to move forward regardless of what Golden thinks, and that means Golden will soon have to make a choice.

Our job is to make sure we keep the beltway out of Golden forever, and we have two main options - each with trade-offs and disadvantages - for doing that:

Option #1: Golden can continue to fight the building of the Jefferson Parkway five miles north of Golden by filing litigation against the road but make no progress on fixing existing and future transportation problems on U.S. 6 and Highway 93 in town.

or

Option #2: Golden can reach an agreement with Jefferson County that allows us to begin implementing Golden's own Muller Plan for improving City connections and protecting against traffic impacts on 6 and 93 in exchange for not suing to stop the Jefferson Parkway north of town.

Continuing the fight has the advantage of potentially stopping the Jefferson Parkway and potentially reducing the intensity of development (how dense the development might be). The big downside is that it will prevent us from implementing our own community-based Muller Plan for fixing transportation problems within Golden. This is a big deal because Golden will suffer continued traffic increases on U.S. 6 and 93 in the coming decades

with or without the Jefferson Parkway. Most of it is coming anyway. As Jim points out in his article, the Jefferson Parkway itself simply won't produce much additional traffic.

Reaching an agreement - only if it's a good agreement - will mean we can start implementing our Muller Plan for improving safety, connections, congestion, noise, and pollution in the city. Because of a separate but related agreement, it will also probably mean less sprawl in northern Jefferson County because the 640-acre "Section 16" - a critical piece of wildlife habitat on the southwest corner of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge - would be permanently protected, which also helps prevent developing from wrapping all the way up the west side of the Refuge as well. The downside is that the Jefferson Parkway proponents will have one less obstacle to building their road.

These are our choices and the main trade-offs between them. Please join us at one of four neighborhood meetings in late January and early February to learn all the details of both options, kick the tires of the potential agreement, get all your questions answered, and weigh in with your thoughts. Check the city's web site for details in the next week or so ([www.cityofgolden.net](http://www.cityofgolden.net)).

Two key corrections to at least one version of your article. First, neither the City Council nor the staff believe the outcome of the effort to build the Jefferson Parkway is clear. Even if Golden withdraws its opposition, they still have substantial additional hurdles to clear. Second, the city and the City Council brought this potential agreement to the community precisely because we need to make a decision and need the community's input. We'll make a decision after answering everyone's questions and listening to all of the community input on our two options.

Jacob Smith  
Mayor of Golden  
(303) 810-6017  
Twitter: jacobzsmith

---

---

: cfa Yf`7 ]mi7 ci bW]cf`; k nb`; fYYbfj FYgdcbgY'hc`7 c`i a b/`hc`A Uncffj`9a U]

---

**From:** Gwyn Green [gwyngreen@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 07, 2011 8:32 AM  
**To:** Jim Smith  
**Subject:** Jacob's response to your column

Thank you, Jim, for writing about the threat Golden faces from City Council's naivete in negotiating with Jefferson County and Arvada, entities which have a history of going back on their word - i.e., they both inked an agreement to abide by the recommendations of the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study, and neither has ever abided by this agreement but instead has advocated for a beltway. The NW Quadrant Feasibility Study recommended improvements to arterial roads. I understand Arvada is actually degrading the arterial road of Indiana...in other words, already implementing a non-compete function for Indiana.

A non-compete agreement is one in which roads parallel to a toll road are degraded, making it less likely that drivers will use the degraded road and more likely they will use a road whereby they have to pay tolls.

Furthermore, in working for a truncated version of the Muller Study, Golden's City Council chose two components which address safety and noise for some people, but do not address congestion.

Most importantly, the present City Council has turned their back on the historic approach to the Muller Study by Golden City Council. In Resolution 1439 unanimously passed October 23, 2003 Golden City Council stated that Golden's position on transportation would be the Muller Study **continugent upon arterial road improvements parallel to SH-93 and US 6.**

This is the same recommendation of the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study.

We put that amendment in Resolution 1439 because we knew that without it, implementation of some parts of the Muller Study could actually encourage a beltway or toll road....like widening SH-93 without that protection of improving arterial roads parallel to SH-93.

Now our Council is consiidering 1) breaking Golden's word to follow the Northwest Quadrant Feasibility Study's recommendations and 2) turning their back on previous Golden City Council positions to support the Muller Study **only** with arterial improvements. In so doing, they are turning their back on Golden.

I call it The Golden Giveaway.

Sincerely,  
Gwyn Green, former Golden City Council and former State Representative