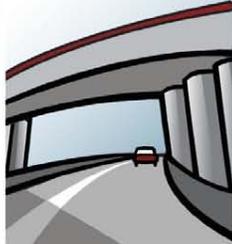


US 6/Wadsworth



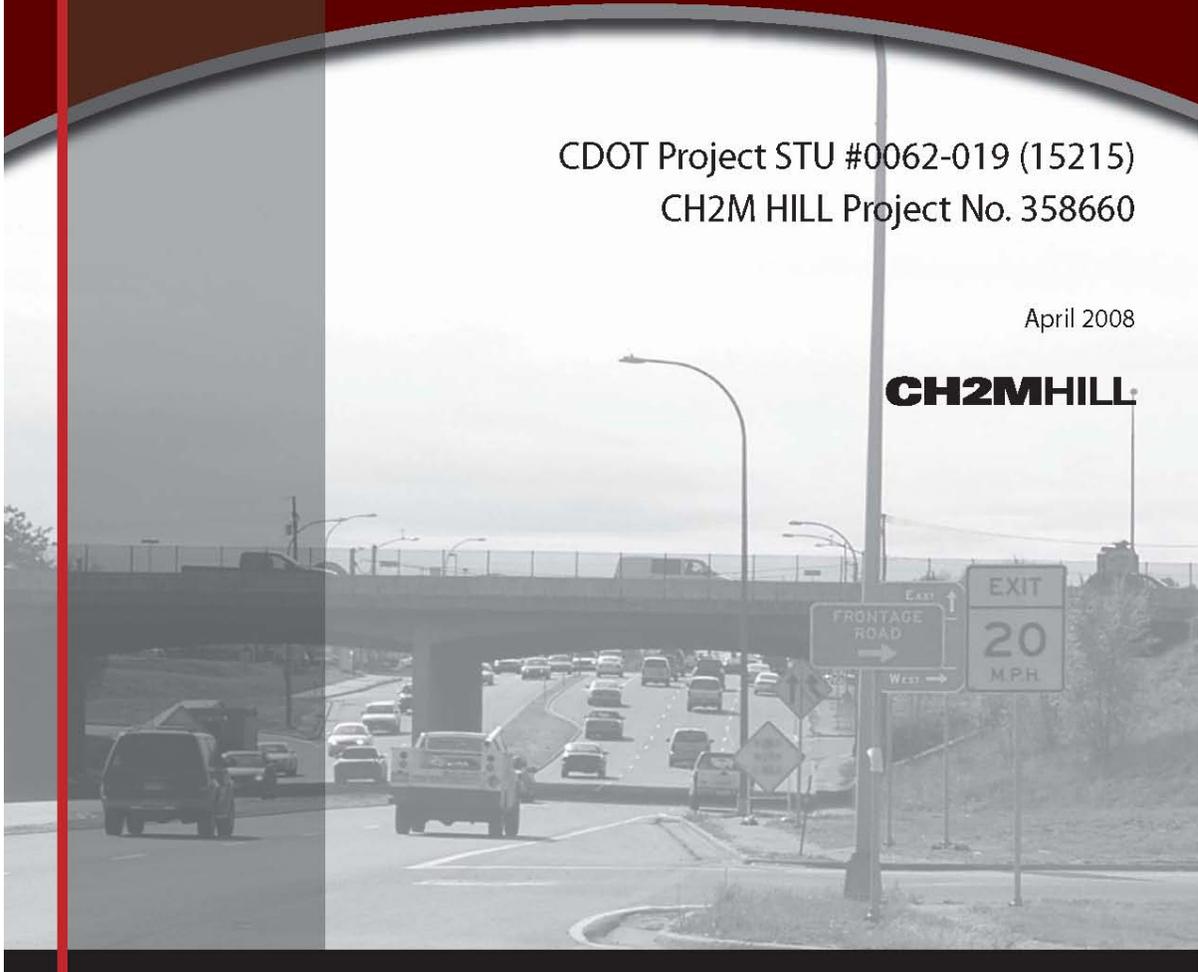
**Environmental
Assessment**

Business Surveys

CDOT Project STU #0062-019 (15215)
CH2M HILL Project No. 358660

April 2008

CH2MHILL



Contents

Section	Page
Contents	ii
Introduction	1
Survey Methodology	3
Survey Instrument.....	3
Sampling Methodology	3
Results	5
Business Profile.....	5
Employee Profile	6
Parking/Facility Profile.....	6
Access Profile	7
Roadway Issues Profile.....	7
Public Involvement	8
Other Issues.....	8
Conclusions	8

Appendixes

- A Survey Instrument
- B Business within Project Area
- C Sample Postcards
- D Survey Responses

Exhibits

- 1 Map of Businesses Surveyed
- 2 Summary of Surveys Requested and Completed (businesses listed from south to north)
- 3 Survey Results - What are the Three Most Important Issues Facing Your Business with Respect to Location?

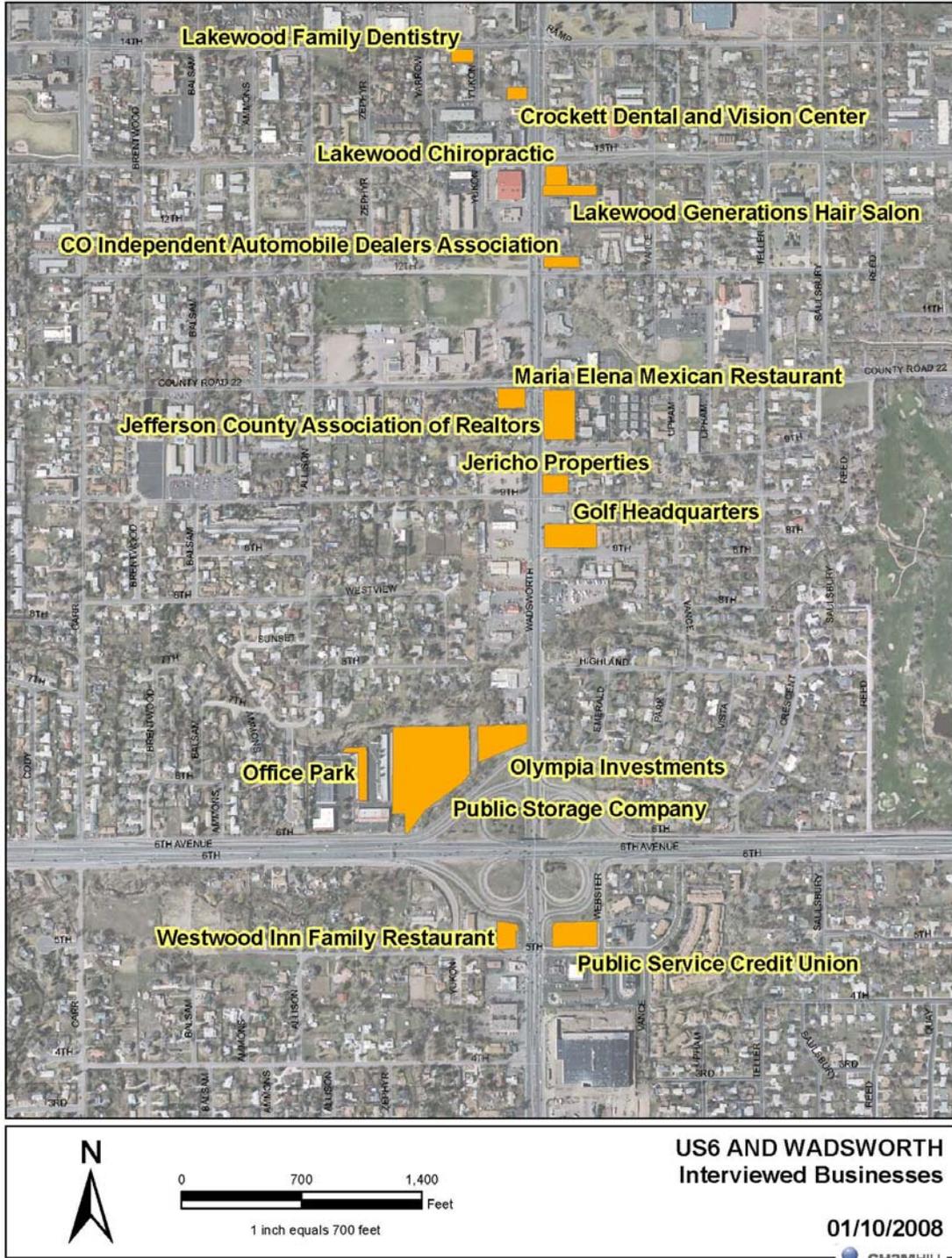
Introduction

Businesses along Wadsworth Boulevard (Wadsworth) and US 6 within the US 6/Wadsworth Environmental Assessment (EA) study area may be affected by potential improvements at the US 6 and Wadsworth interchange and along Wadsworth. To analyze the impacts of future improvements effectively, the project team surveyed a sample of businesses to learn how the businesses in the corridor operate, what concerns or thoughts business and commercial property owners may have about improvements to US 6 and Wadsworth, and how potential improvements might affect the businesses adjacent to those improvements. A secondary purpose of the business surveys was to gather information about minority or low-income owners, employees, or patrons that may be affected by the project to support environmental justice analysis.

The survey was conducted using a questionnaire administered either by phone or in person by CH2M HILL staff. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) project management and right-of-way staff participated in each interview. Each survey used the same survey instrument and took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Business and property owners were provided with a standard information packet, including the survey instrument, prior to the interview.

Exhibit 1 provides a map of the businesses surveyed.

EXHIBIT 1
Map of Businesses Surveyed



Survey Methodology

Survey Instrument

A questionnaire was used as the instrument for the survey interviews. To develop the instrument, the team reviewed other CDOT business survey questionnaires for general guidance and sought input from the Project Leadership Team (PLT) for project-specific issues that might need to be addressed. Questions were developed in the following categories:

- Business Profile
- Employee Profile
- Parking/Facility Profile
- Access Profile
- Roadway Issues Profile
- Project Involvement

A copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Sampling Methodology

Appendix B provides a list of the businesses and office buildings within the study area. The initial list was derived from Jefferson County Assessor records and a field survey. Through the course of conducting the business surveys, the list was updated and augmented. The largest addition to the list was the inclusion of commercial tenants located in office buildings. These new businesses have been added to the project mailing list to receive information about the project.

The team sought to interview a representative number, type, and distribution of businesses operating along Wadsworth, including around the interchange. The businesses were categorized by general business types, such as automotive, restaurant, lodging, and medical. Approximately 25 percent of the businesses in each category were selected for interview. The location of these businesses along Wadsworth also was considered to provide a distribution of locations along the corridor.

Because of the small population size (75 businesses), a statistically accurate representation of business issues in the corridor was not possible without interviewing nearly every business. The purpose of this survey, however, was not to measure business attitude but rather to gain an overview of the sort of issues that may face the businesses that operate in the study area. The sample of 25 percent categorized by business type and location was determined by the PLT to provide a good foundation for evaluating initial effects of project alternatives. Once alternatives are developed, the team plans to meet with all property owners, commercial and residential, with the potential to be directly affected by the project to describe and explore site-specific mitigation measures.

Several types of businesses and non-residential properties on Wadsworth were not included in the list of businesses to be sampled. Area schools and emergency response services were interviewed separately and, therefore, were not grouped with businesses. Businesses that are located within office buildings were also not included in the list of businesses to be sampled. Instead, office building managers or owners were contacted to discuss operations for the entire building and site (as noted previously, these businesses were added to the project mailing list).

Postcards were mailed to all 75 business and commercial property owners on the initial list developed from Assessor records. The postcards indicated that a sample of businesses would be contacted to discuss information that may assist the study, and also provided an opportunity for a business or property owner to be added to the survey. Appendix C contains a sample of the postcards sent to businesses and property owners.

The team requested interviews with 21 businesses in the corridor and interviews were requested by three additional businesses. In all, 14 interviews were completed. The business surveys not completed included businesses that declined requests for interviews, were no longer operating, or did not respond to requests. Exhibit 2 provides a summary of interviews requested and completed, while Exhibit 1 illustrates the names and locations of the completed surveys.

EXHIBIT 2

Summary of Surveys Requested and Completed (businesses listed from south to north)

Businesses	Address	Survey Result
Motel 6	480 Wadsworth Blvd.	No response
Public Service Credit Union	7575 W. 5th Ave.	Completed (11/19/07)
Westwood Inn	7615 W. 5th Ave.	Completed (12/5/07)
Public Storage Company	7701 W. 6th Ave.	Completed (11/13/07)
Olympia Investments LLC (property owner for tenants Rodney D. Young Insurance, Ace Cash Express, and Jackson Hewitt Tax Service) ¹	639, 699 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/28/07)
6th Avenue Business Center (managed by Garofalo Realty, Inc.)	7711, 7717, 7721, and 7727 W. 6th Ave.	Completed (11/01/07)
Diamond Shamrock Gas Station	715 Wadsworth Blvd.	No response
Emergency Cash	787 Wadsworth Blvd., #A	Declined
Universal Tractor Co.	815 Wadsworth Blvd.	Declined
U-Haul	830 Wadsworth Blvd.	No response ²
Jensen's Flowers	845 Wadsworth Blvd.	No response
Golf Headquarters	850 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/29/07)
Office/Commercial Park (Jericho Properties)	902, 900, 906 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/14/07)
Pat's Alterations	902 Wadsworth Blvd., #2	Declined
Jefferson County Association of Realtors	950 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (12/5/07)
Maria Elena Mexican Restaurant	999 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (12/05/07)

EXHIBIT 2

Summary of Surveys Requested and Completed (businesses listed from south to north)

Businesses	Address	Survey Result
Lakewood Muffler	1000 Wadsworth Blvd.	Declined ³
Reliable Car Wash	1080 Wadsworth Blvd.	No response
CO Independent Automobile Dealers Assn.	1200 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/13/07)
Rags to Riches	1200 Wadsworth Blvd.	No longer in business
Far Side Finance	1208 Wadsworth Blvd.	No longer in business
Lakewood Generations Hair Salon ¹	1230 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (10/30/07)
Lakewood Chiropractic Offices	1296 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/14/07)
Crockett Dental & Vision Center	1330 Wadsworth Blvd.	Completed (11/19/07)
Pro-Tint Window Tinting	1398 Wadsworth Blvd.	Declined
Lakewood Family Dentistry ¹	7700 W. 14th Ave.	Completed (11/26/07)

Notes:

¹ Property owner requested survey.

² Agreed to mail in survey questionnaire responses; questionnaire was never returned.

³ Property owner requested (then declined) interview; tenant (Lakewood Muffler) was on list to survey but was not contacted after property owner declined.

Results

Appendix D contains a record of the completed business surveys from each interview. A summary of each of the findings is provided below.

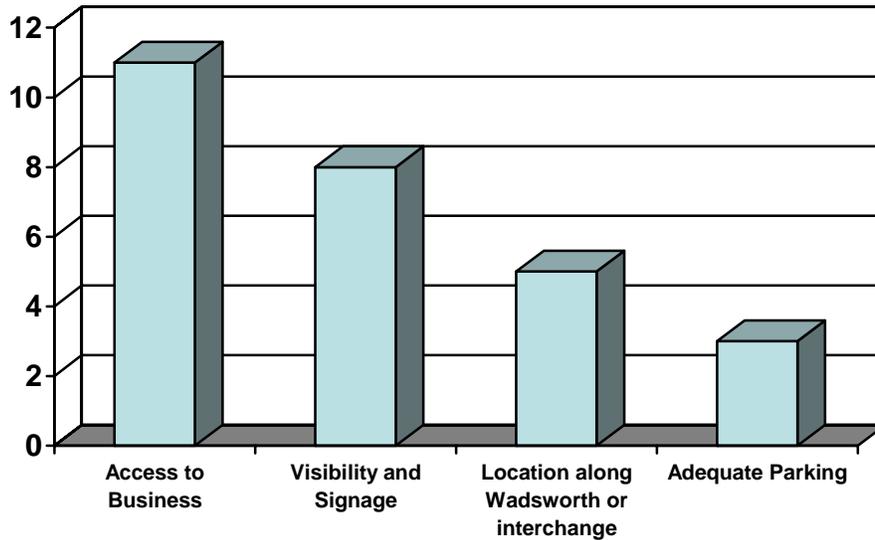
Business Profile

The businesses surveyed included a range of types and sizes of businesses, in accordance with the survey methodology. Many of the businesses in the corridor, including those surveyed, are independent retail and service providers that have been in business in their current locations for many years, generally operating 5 to 7 days per week. Some business operators own their property, and others lease their business space. Some property owners own more than one property and view their operations holistically across their multiple parcels. Many businesses reported that their location in central Lakewood, along the busy Wadsworth or US 6 and Wadsworth interchange, was important to attracting customers.

When asked to identify the three most important issues facing their business with respect to location, respondents identified a wide range of issues. The most common issues are shown in Exhibit 3 below.

EXHIBIT 3

Survey Results – What are the Three Most Important Issues Facing Your Business with Respect to Location?



Access issues were identified predominately by all the businesses surveyed. Discussions about access included issues with traffic cutting through properties to avoid intersections, difficulty making left turns onto or from Wadsworth, and difficulty accessing the frontage roads and 5th Avenue after exiting US 6. Additional discussion of access is included under the Access Profile portion of the survey results.

Employee Profile

All but one of the businesses surveyed have fewer than 10 employees, and several have three employees or less. Nearly all employees drive to work, although the two restaurants surveyed reported that at least one employee takes the bus to work.

Parking/Facility Profile

Every business surveyed indicated that parking was a critical component for their business operations. Most reported having adequate but no excess parking. Potential loss of parking was identified as a concern for many of the businesses surveyed.

Like parking, signage was identified as important to all businesses surveyed. Signage includes pole-mounted signage near the roadway and signage posted or painted on the building or windows. Several business owners noted that their pole-mounted signs do not conform to current City of Lakewood code and were concerned that replacement signs might not be as visible if they had to conform to new requirements. Businesses near the interchange are especially concerned with maintaining visibility from both US 6 and Wadsworth.

All businesses surveyed had delivery and storage needs. The smaller businesses did not identify any special constraints or needs, as the majority of these businesses receive van-sized deliveries and store the inventories within their buildings. Public Storage, Westwood

Inn, and Maria Elena Restaurant were exceptions that do receive deliveries from larger trucks. (Delivery constraints from tight property accesses have been identified by the project team in every field visit.)

Access Profile

The majority of businesses surveyed rely on drive-up traffic for the majority of their business. Only one restaurant, Maria Elena, identified any walk-up traffic supporting its business.

As noted previously, access was identified as a primary concern for the businesses surveyed. Some of the key access findings related to access are summarized below:

- Access is challenging, particularly for those properties close to the interchange.
- Access to business sites (ingress/egress) from Wadsworth is a concern.
- The difficulty turning left onto or off of Wadsworth hinders access to businesses.
- Northbound left-turn lane on Wadsworth to access the westbound frontage road north of US 6 is important.
- The one-way westbound frontage road limits business access.
- Access to businesses off 5th Avenue south of US 6 interchange on the east side of Wadsworth is challenging from the interchange.
- Vehicles cut through business parking lots and neighborhood streets to access Wadsworth. One business owner reported that 100 vehicles per day cut through the business parking lot to access Wadsworth. Other businesses reported that their businesses must be accessed from neighborhood streets because direct access to or from Wadsworth was not feasible or safe.

Roadway Issues Profile

Businesses were asked about roadway and sidewalk improvements they would support along Wadsworth. Businesses were supportive of roadway improvements addressing traffic congestion, safety at intersections, and access to/from Wadsworth from their businesses. Other identified improvement needs included fixing potholes, addressing cut-through traffic on business properties, providing clear road signage (particularly around the interchange), and improving bicycle and pedestrian safety. Most business owners support and recognize the need for upgraded pedestrian and bicycle facilities on Wadsworth, although several stated that pedestrians and bicycle use of Wadsworth is limited and, therefore, facilities may not be warranted.

The difficulty making left turns across Wadsworth was raised both as a safety and access issue. Business owners said accidents occur regularly (several per month) along Wadsworth and at intersections. Unsafe turning movements and excessive speed were identified as causes of these accidents.

Public Involvement

The majority of business owners surveyed were aware of the US 6 and Wadsworth EA project. Some had attended public meetings, received newsletters, or heard about it from neighbors. Owners were more familiar with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) FasTracks West Corridor project and associated City of Lakewood station area planning. Several owners expressed skepticism about the US 6 and Wadsworth project based on experiences with these other initiatives.

Other Issues

Owners expressed concern about right-of-way acquisition and coordination (or lack of) between the US 6 and Wadsworth project and the RTD West Corridor project. The project team explained that CDOT was working with RTD on this study to coordinate activities. The project team also noted that right-of-way discussions would occur at a later date.

Conclusions

The business surveys provided valuable insight to the business operations in the corridor. Many of the businesses in the area are small businesses that have been in business for many years at their current locations. Maintaining or improving access to business properties, addressing difficult left turns onto and off of Wadsworth, and improving safety were the issues receiving the most attention from business and property owners. Business and property owners recognize that there are transportation problems along Wadsworth and at the interchange, and are generally in favor of improvements.

In addition to informing the project team of the issues facing businesses along the corridor, the surveys provided some key benefits to the project. The interviews:

- Provided credibility to the EA process and impact analysis by having property owners identify issues at their properties.
- Provided an opportunity for the project team to answer questions and clarify the scope and schedule for the EA.
- Prompted the project team to reevaluate and augment the project mailing list. Some tenants were not captured on the initial mailing list and have now been included.
- Confirmed elements of the purpose and need for the project.

The business survey provided a venue for business and property owners to provide input on issues concerning business operations within the project area. The business interviews helped the project team to establish an initial relationship with the business community and to augment the project mailing list with more tenant businesses.