



# Appendix B:

# Community

# Engagement

## OUTREACH SUMMARY

- Public Open House (March 3)
- Public Workshop (March 31)
- Planning Chats (4 total)
  - *Red Buffalo Coffee (March 5)*
  - *Recreation Center (March 6)*
  - *St. Mary's Catholic Church, Spanish Mass (March 9)*
  - *Recreation Center (March 11)*
- Stakeholder Interviews (approximately 17 total)
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- MindMixer – “Engage Silverthorne” Outreach

## EVENT RE-CAPS

### PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE (MARCH 3)

#### ENTHUSIASTIC TURN-OUT

The Public Open House, the first of two public meetings for the Comprehensive Plan Update, was held at Silverthorne Pavilion from 4 to 7 p.m. on March 3, 2014. Approximately 100 people attended over the course of the evening (91 people signed in, and a handful of people either didn't care to sign in or were with a companion that did sign in, so chose not to). It was an informal event, with plenty of staff and consultants

to speak individually with people about their observations and goals for the town, particularly related to commercial areas. Dinner was served, which also allowed people to sit and mingle, in addition to talk about the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Many people were familiar with at least portions of the planning efforts that have taken place in recent years, in particular the Urban Renewal Plan, likely because it was the most recent. They also were generally familiar with the community's goals to establish a downtown, become more walkable, and promote the redevelopment of the commercial districts. Most people were very supportive of these ideas, although some raised concerns about how feasible they were. The most overwhelming suggestions that the team heard at the open house was the need for more restaurants and places to go out, in Silverthorne.

#### TODAY'S VISION

In addition to background information boards, there were several exercises that community members participated in. The first was a station directed at the Town Vision. People reviewed the current Vision Statements and offered their input on how to improve it for today's outlook. While many of the comments were more specific than the Vision Statements are written, they spoke to:

- The need for diverse, high quality housing
- The need to encourage redevelopment, especially currently blighted properties

- The desire to incorporate existing businesses and historic or nostalgic properties into future plans
- The appreciation for open space and view corridors
- The desire to promote and invest in public art
- The desire to promote walkability

### ***“ALIVE/VIBRANT FEEL/ENERGY”***

The second exercise was a visual preference exercise, to explore the community’s perspectives on architectural styles, patterns, densities, etc. They were also asked to provide input on “What elements make a great downtown?” People wrote their ideas on sticky notes and placed them next to pictures, or wrote directly on the board, to address the question itself. On the topic of creating a great downtown, people focused on the experience that they’d like to see, such as “a consistent feel,” “more walkable,” “live music,” “walk by river with access to shops and restaurants,” “a square as a focal point gathering spot,” “interesting unique shops, a beautiful setting along the river,” “accessible by foot/bike,” and “incorporate small town feel.”

On the visual preferences photos, the most positive feedback was centered around examples of more classic, mountain town/downtown architecture (e.g., Telluride, Burlington, Durango, Glenwood Springs, and Park City), and places that are new, but incorporate similar styles with brick facades, two to four stories, etc. (e.g., Eagle, Steamboat Springs, Boulder). Very contemporary architecture was generally frowned upon, particularly when there was a very modern feature (black glass angular building), or use of materials (concrete, glass, etc.). Strip malls that were placed in the exercise as a way to test existing conditions, were met with the most amount of negative comments. Large buildings were also met with concern, generally leaning towards “too urban,” though this exercise was specifically oriented towards downtown development and did not include other areas where those might be more appropriate.

### ***THE BIG PICTURE***

The last activity that people participated in was drawing their ideas on an 8’ by 10’ floor aerial map of Silverthorne. People placed colored dots on the map to indicate where they live

(blue), work (yellow), see problems with transportation or land use (red), and where they would like to see investments made (green). Many people wrote in local landmarks to get oriented with the map, as well as opportunities for the future. The map generated discussions around key areas of town, namely the Town Core District and its future. It will be used at the second meeting to continue those conversations, as well as introduce potential policy solutions for the future.

## **PUBLIC WORKSHOP (MARCH 31, 2014)**

### ***GREAT TURN-OUT, AGAIN!***

The Public Workshop, the second and final public meeting for the Comprehensive Plan Update, was held at Silverthorne Pavilion from 5 to 7 p.m. on March 31, 2014. Approximately 85 people attended the Workshop with 75 people signing in, and several more people who participated that chose not to sign-in. The Workshop was a more structured than the Public Open House held earlier in the month, with an agenda that required participants to be at the meeting for the entire length of the event. Town staff members and consultants were available to speak individually with people about their thoughts and goals before the start of the meeting and after the end of the structured segment of the Workshop. Dinner was served, which also allowed people to sit and mingle, and talk about the Comprehensive Plan Update.

### ***KICK-OFF PRESENTATION***

A Kick-Off Presentation started off the Workshop as those in attendance enjoyed dinner and provided an overview of the “Blueprint Silverthorne” planning process. The presentation covered the purpose and goals for the Comprehensive Plan Update, the public process to this point, an overview of what the community brought up at the Open House and other public outreach events, and the opportunities and “Givens”—or existing strengths—for Silverthorne, as identified by the consulting team.

As community members arrived at the Public Workshop they were given nametags, which included a number printed at the bottom, to group people by stations. The format of the Workshop was loosely referred to as “speed planning,” in which people rotated through five stations, facilitated by

members of the planning team, to hear potential concepts and then discuss their attributes. The five stations were: Gateways, Neighborhoods, Connections, Built Environment, and Gathering Spaces. Each group spent ten minutes before rotating to the next.

The following is a summation of many of the ideas that were heard at each station.

### **GATEWAYS**

The Gateways station focused on the gateway areas of Silverthorne and how they can be improved to present Silverthorne's identity and attract visitors. In addition to the gateway areas of Silverthorne, discussion involved the types of features that could serve as a gateway to the Town and Town Core area. Ideas included:

- Getting people to slow down and enjoy Silverthorne
- Ensure that people know they are "in the mountains" from the gateway
- Consider an 'Iconic' landmark to attract visitors and give Silverthorne an identity
- Improve the arrival experience off of I-70 to make it less confusing
- Integrate with Outlet Malls to make a gateway
- Use a gateway to connect the commercial areas of Silverthorne
- Use the gateway to communicate "what's happening" to those who stop
- Consider a gateway feature on SH 9
- Define what is unique about Silverthorne and market that: Buffalo, Blue River, fishing, year-round, sunshine, Gore Range, "banana belt," bicycle friendly
- Consider a public welcome center to capture passers-by and welcome them to Silverthorne
- Balance the needs of the community with tourism
- Consider the potential for I-70 Rail and need for a gateway

- Differentiate the gateway area from the core; use architecture as a gateway
- Include the south side of I-70 in the gateway
- Consider banners/archway and use landscaping/signage to help with way finding
- Identify Silverthorne as the gateway to Summit County, mountains, wilderness

### **NEIGHBORHOODS**

At the Neighborhoods station, community members discussed roles of different neighborhoods in creating a vibrant community. Participants focused on housing, public space, and the local environment. Some of the key ideas shared included:

- Consider a boardwalk/pathway along the river
- Public access to river via commercial establishments along river
- Make sure there is open environment along the river and buildings don't create a wall
- Mixed use and restrict ownership type to ensure critical mass of residents in Town Core
- Consider mixed use along the river
- Four stories may be too high, but three stories with great architecture is good
- Accommodate housing for locals; there is a need for permanent resident housing for singles, low income, seniors, etc., but keep building sizes appropriate
- Preserve the river corridor, natural environment, and views
- Ensure that dense housing offers storage and parking

### **CONNECTIONS**

The connections station of the "speed planning" session promoted a lot of interesting dialogue and highlighted some of the transportation concerns and interests of the community members in attendance. Overall, the community was supportive of the concepts presented. They are very

interested in making SH 9 easier to cross as a bicyclist or pedestrian, so thought the only way to do so was with grade separated crossings. They are also very supportive of an additional connection across the river at 4th Street, though some engineering feasibility was raised. Residents are very interested in having accessible parking that allows for park once and then walk in the town core. Concerns were raised about I-70 traffic impacts on the community, particularly during snow events that shut down or significantly delay travel back to Denver. Participants are supportive of transit in the community and would like to see continued service, some even mentioned the idea of a small circulator route to help facilitate “park once” for those who may not be comfortable walking longer distances. Key ideas included:

- Balance slowing traffic to facilitate pedestrian crossing of SH 9 with mobility needs of the corridor
- Enhance pedestrian accommodation on SH 9 with detached sidewalks on both sides
- 4th Street full multi-modal connection is great, make sure to reuse the current 4th Street pedestrian bridge
- Work to remedy bicycle/pedestrian conflicts on the trail – concern about bicyclist speed
- Separate sideways from streets so that snow removed from the street can be stored, rather than end up on the sidewalk
- Provide sidewalks all the way to Smith Ranch
- Ensure adequate parking, people are interested in free parking and park and ride configuration
- Provide on-street parking
- Important to consider semi-truck parking and I-70 closure parking
- It may be important to consider bike facilities on SH 9 as there are some very nice road bike rides either way out of Silverthorne.
- SH 9 N to UTE Pass and Back, SH 9 south to Keystone and up to Montezuma

- Enhance the bike path and wayfinding to the shopping center
- Develop an emergency plan for the Town, with particular attention paid to I-70 emergency events and closures
- Crossing SH 9 is important
- Mid-block crossings with Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons
- Better wayfinding and pedestrian infrastructure connecting to transit
- There was some concern over adding new signals; also concern about some of the signal timing, particularly at 6th.
- Some interest in under/overpass crossing of SH 9; this was not strongly encouraged as grade separated crossings are only effective in limited situations.
- Expand the river trail; focus on vitality along the river
- Introduce some kind of bike rental/share program

Non-transportation comments:

- Senior Housing – Smith Ranch Continuum of Care

### **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

At the Built Environment station, discussion was focused on how the design, architecture, and infrastructure of Silverthorne—especially the Town Core—can improve the community and meet the needs of local residents and tourists. Ideas included:

- Use lighting and signage to slow down traffic through Silverthorne; could be a landmark or iconic architecture
- Three-story buildings are most preferred, with some people ok with four stories or just two stories
- Higher buildings could have step-back
- Consider that tall buildings can block views and allow snow/ice to buildup in shadows

- Consider a bypass to get traffic around Town Core
- Look at potential for building a parking structure for overflow parking needs
- Extend sidewalks outside of Town Core, too and keep open space between buildings to allow access to river

### **GATHERING SPACES**

The Gathering Spaces station focused on the community need for event space and places for gathering outside. Community members raised concerns, shared ideas, and commented on some to the ideas proposed by the consultant team. Ideas included:

- The Town Core is a small area and the plan should look beyond that to include other areas
- Look at on-street parking, have free parking, parking garage, and make the Summit Stage transfer station a gathering place
- Consider the needs of semis and emergency vehicles in addition to pedestrian and bike access
- Attract bike riders and have them stop along their rides
- Capitalize on views, especially to the west, and consider rooftop patios and picnic areas
- Make space for live music, cultural events, performing areas, and key spots to access the river
- Connect Silverthorne with what we have already, including ball fields to south; “after a game, families can go for pizza, beverages”
- Ideas: Plazas, community gardens, Segway stations
- Partner with library/CMC to expand students in community
- Festival bridge should have visibility from both sides, have no cars; may be too wide and create a dark place on the river
- Consider a greenspace/buffer from I-70

### **FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

To conclude the workshop, each facilitator gave brief presentations (five minutes) of the range of ideas that they heard, which were summarized above. The meeting ended at 7 p.m.; community members were encouraged to keep informed of the process through MindMixer and the Town website, and to expect a Draft document in early May before Planning Commission.

### **PLANNING CHATS**

#### **COFFEE TALKS**

There were four planning chats, with distinctly different input at the three locations. The Red Buffalo chat had about 7 to 8 participants, several of whom came specifically for the chat. They sat down to share a cup of coffee and their broad ideas about the future of the community. The desire for more restaurants resounded once again. One gentleman came specifically to offer his input on the Riverfront Mixed Use zoning district; that it needs to be refocused solely on high density residential, and not include a commercial use. Other people that dropped by shared their general support for more locally-owned/oriented commercial that improved the character and small-town feel of Silverthorne, and recognizing the important role as a regional commercial hub.

#### **GRAB ‘N GO**

The planning chats at the Recreation Center were quick conversations with people either arriving for or leaving from their workout, and their input reflected that. Most people grabbed a flyer to take information home with them, see the schedule, and get the website information for Engage Silverthorne. In total, over the course of two sessions, we spoke with approximately two-dozen individuals, including many children. Those that did take a few minutes to chat with us, shared their ideas for opportunities such as a family-friendly hotel complex, more venues for “nice” restaurants (though not fine-dining), riverfront dining. The recreation-oriented mindset of many people showed through in their comments as well, such as an outdoor climbing wall—perhaps as the centerpiece to a public plaza, more entertainment such as comedy shows and concerts, an

archery ranch, an outdoor hockey rink, and more sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented developments. Children had great ideas too, such as a place for a hot air balloon festival, a park with a train or a fire truck, an indoor play gym (bouncy house, trampolines, etc.). Specifically regarding commercial, we heard a variety of perspectives, most leaning towards the desire for a “family friendly,” “inviting,” “charming” and “walkable” commercial district.

### **NEW VOICES**

The planning chat that was held at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, following Spanish Mass, was also a success, in that it reached a portion of the Silverthorne community that ordinarily would not come out to a public meeting or formal event. It consisted of quick conversations, as families were leaving Mass, but many people took flyers and asked about what we were doing. More children took part in the kids’ activities (coloring pages and design-your-own hard hat) than at any of the other events, which was likely because there were treats (donuts and cookies) and enough kids to make it feel fun and relaxed. Individuals who spoke with a member of the planning team shared desires for more indoor play areas, more year-round restaurants and jobs, and the need for more apartments. They recognized Silverthorne as an important place for the working class, and that businesses and amenities that the town has now serve them well. Some people believe that that aspect of Silverthorne should be emphasized, instead of focusing on the needs of tourists. People were very enthusiastic about the recreation amenities that the Town currently provides, and would like to see even more year-round places for families to enjoy in the future.

### **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

#### ***ONE GOAL, MANY WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT***

The SE Group Team conducted approximately 17 stakeholder interviews, mostly in person, and a handful over the phone (some of these will be ongoing, as we learn of more people to meet with). Interviewees ranged from Town Councilors to local business owners and members of the EDAC and/or Planning Commission. Generally, stakeholders—as one person stated it—“are in favor of the concept, but now need to figure out how to make something happen.” That

is, they all agreed that there is an opportunity to bolster the Town’s economic vitality, identity and long-term sustainability through the right strategic investments and land use opportunities.

Business owners had a wide spectrum of perspectives of what those opportunities were. Some were completely on-board with a downtown concept, while others would like Silverthorne to recognize what it is today and continue to be very good at that (a regional commercial hub). Similarly, while most stakeholders agreed that the town is in dire need of restaurants, there was a great deal of variety in what people thought was most appropriate: Outback’s and familiar chains to appeal to overnight travelers and Outlet customers; an anchor brew pub; places along the river to capitalize on views and connections to nature. The common thread was that a restaurant of any kind first needs a desirable place to locate, and the Town Core and the Gateway are opportunity areas.

Hotel accommodations were another opportunity that were widely commented on, with several suggested locations including along the river, the Gateway, and in the heart of a future downtown. Each of these options were lend themselves to different product types and characters, so could be explored for development concepts.

Another frequently mentioned idea was that in order to make a downtown work, Silverthorne needs a destination that can’t be found anywhere else in Summit County. This might be a unique entertainment venue (theatre), a recreational amenity (outdoor climbing wall as the centerpiece to a public plaza), or downtown shops and restaurants with national brand recognition. The Blue River was widely supported as a feature of Silverthorne that is unlike any other in the County and that where possible, it should be celebrated and integrated into future development.

Stakeholder input varied greatly based on individuals’ experiences. Those that had been involved with commercial development either in Silverthorne, or elsewhere, offered their ideas on how the Town can encourage private investment in commercial properties (partnerships, clear expectations and approval processes), as well as challenges that are associated with today’s economic climate (funding

requirements for mixed use projects). Most agreed that there is a great need to enhance Silverthorne at a very basic level to get rid of blighted properties and capture more economic activity from locals and visitors.

A sampling of specific comments:

- We need to create a draw, a sense of place
- Need to incorporate demographic profile in the future, when meeting with potential investors
- Don't let opportunities slip away because of lengthy development processes
- We need to shift the momentum in Summit County back towards Silverthorne, create opportunities for investors
- Need to be realistic about what the market will support
- Recreation is a differentiator that sets Silverthorne apart
- Re-invent Silverthorne as a modern mountain town, with a highway-oriented context
- Make this place somewhere that kids will come back to
- Opportunities today are all critical to Silverthorne's long-term future; don't place individually-owned residential property in the downtown, as it limits the building's ability to adapt and evolve to changing conditions (single-owner building with apartments ok)
- Need the guidance to influence quality design, but also the flexibility to adapt if an anchor steps forward (e.g., Rock Bottom Brewery); one anchor will influence the design of the entire corridor
- Need design that is enduring, not a moment in time
- Policy must support unique and local businesses
- We need an iconic gateway coming from the north
- We lack a high quality employer (medical, professional, research/academic)
- Establish a small business liaison to encourage locating in the town
- An arts district would draw people in
- Public buy-in is the missing piece of the puzzle currently; thus the importance of the Comprehensive Plan
- Connectivity is lacking (incongruent sidewalks), which prevents people from exploring
- Incorporate the Mint and ODI into future development
- Silverthorne needs an event venue; ideas ranged from hotel/conference center, river-oriented festival space, fairgrounds, community theatre
- Big box is okay- don't turn our back on what supports our community, there is still room to serve this market
- Need high density to support a commercial downtown
- Main Street on HWY 9 is reaching
- Signage is critical; people need to know that there is activity beyond the outlets; this could be banners over-arching the highway to announce events, as well as more basic navigational signage
- Emphasize the bike path and moving people about on feet and bikes
- Town needs a family-oriented "base camp" hotel property to "stay and play" here, not just shop and leave
- Anchors are vital within downtown and throughout all commercial to draw people there
- Up to 85% of the Outlet's 4.5 M customers are visitors
- The URA strategy is important to convey to the public, so that they understand why large anchors and a downtown are mutually beneficial
- Silverthorne does not need more parking lots
- Housing opportunities need to be carefully evaluated in respect to how they would support commercial
- Need to maintain the mountain character of Silverthorne
- Small conferences would be a great opportunity, with the right hotel facility
- The Comprehensive Plan needs to be a document that lives beyond Town Council terms; a long-term guide

## MINDMIXER: ENGAGE SILVERTHORNE

The Town of Silverthorne launched the online public engagement tool MindMixer™ in early 2014 to gather public input on a variety of topics, including many that pertained to the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update. Representative comments pertaining to the Update included:

**More of home town feel:** “Silverthorne has done a great job of attracting the retail operations (outlet mall, Lowes, and Murdocks). Would like to see that continue (maybe our own Costco?) but would like to balance that with more newer and more mainstreet style developments with restaurants and entertainment venues of our own (Dillon has the ampitheater and the free concents).”

**Make Hwy 9 more attractive:** “Silverthorne has a great location, great shopping, and is the gateway to summit county. If HWY 9 is developed in a way that encourages foot traffic, through mixed use development, more restaurants (non-chain), etc. It will be the place to be in Summit.”

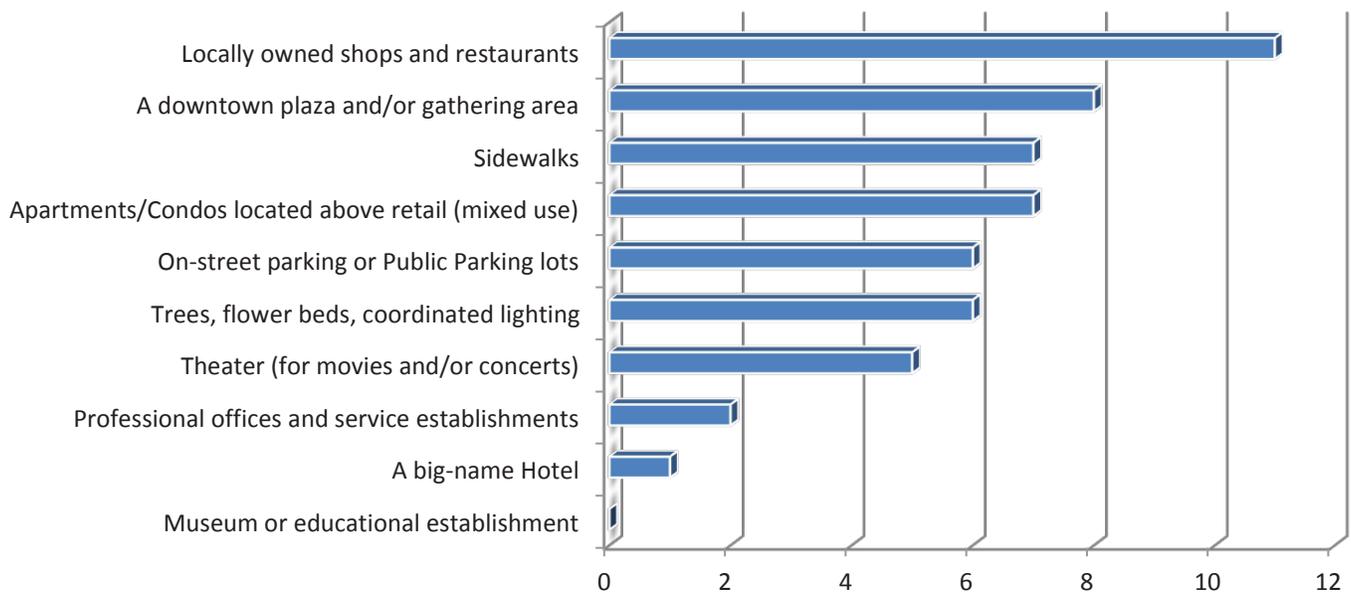
**Continued development of town center near 6th and highway 9:** “Silverthorne need a town hub similar to Main Street in frisco. Also some of the shabby buildings along highway 9 could be spruced up or removed.”

**Local nightlife/attractions/transportation:** “My biggest beef with Silverthorne is the lack of a “scene” for people to want to check out and/or linger in. I enjoy the free shows at Dillon Amphitheater, the bars and restaurants in Frisco and Breck.”

**We need a core central pedestrian friendly zone:** “To make Silverthorne have more of a “town” feeling, rather than simply being a home for strip malls, and big box stores, we need to create a pedestrian friendly area that has bars, restaurants, & shopping.”

## WE ARE WORKING TO REVITALIZE SILVERTHORNE’S DOWNTOWN. WHAT ELEMENTS DO YOU THINK ARE KEY TO SUCCESS OF THIS EFFORT?

### Elements of a Great Downtown



## STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

### *Colorado Department of Transportation*

Over the course of Blueprint Silverthorne, the project team facilitated a variety of conversations with stakeholders. Fehr & Peers spoke with CDOT representatives in February and April. Initial conversations included information about concurrent CDOT projects:

- I-70 Interchange – A recently completed study recommended changing the I-70/SH 9/US 6 interchange from the existing diamond configuration to a diverging diamond interchange to help with existing and future congestion with minimal interchange footprint expansion. This improvement is probably at least 10 years from going to construction.
- Rainbow Drive Upgrade – CDOT is planning improvements at Rainbow Drive and SH 9 to allow for improved signal timing that will reduce delay. This improvement should be completed by the summer/early fall of 2014. A roundabout was evaluated in this location but was not a feasible option.
- I-70 Westbound on-ramp improvements – CDOT has proposed widening on-ramp to help mitigate backups. This can happen sooner than the full interchange improvement.

Early ideas from the plan update were discussed as well.

- Parking on SH 9 – CDOT is open to discussing parking along SH 9. Some caveats were discussed.
  - » Parallel parking only, diagonal parking is not allowed within the State Highway Access Code.
  - » Snow removal from a parking lane would be the responsibility of the Town. CDOT would plow into the parking lanes and the Town would remove from there.
  - » CDOT expressed some concern about roadway capacity impacts.
- Road diet of SH 9 – A road diet (five lane to three lane conversion) was not highly desirable.

- Narrower lanes on SH 9 – Lane diets (tightening lane widths to 11 feet) may be considered. However, roadway capacity impacts would need to be considered.

In general, CDOT feels that SH 9 functions very well currently. They feel that there are nice amenities along the corridor, such as landscaped medians and meandering sidewalks. They were cautious of trying to create a main street on SH 9 and were much more supportive of main street being on another roadway such as 4th Street, similar to what is found in Frisco. They were supportive of the idea of extending 4th street across the river and felt that could potentially relieve some of the congestion at Rainbow Drive/SH 9 as well as the interchange as a whole (though the emphasis of the Comprehensive Plan is maintaining this as a pedestrian bridge, with emergency vehicle access).

Materials from the community meeting held on March 31, 2014 were also provided to CDOT for their review and comment. In general, they are supportive of the ideas presented. Parallel on-street parking on SH 9 can be provided, though not at the expense of a travel lane; diagonal parking will not be considered. CDOT would prefer to see pedestrian crossing take place at the signalized intersections. Controlled mid-block pedestrian crossings are envisioned in select locations along SH 9 when new land uses develop that dictate an increased pedestrian/bicyclist demand for crossing SH 9. Continued dialogue will be needed to understand CDOT's concerns as well as to provide additional information about mid-block crossings and their potential safety benefits over some traditional signalized intersections. Currently, the signal at 4th Street is adequate for facilitating pedestrian crossings. Enhancements such as median nose extensions to provide refuge, stamped or colored pavement and crossings, leading pedestrian interval (LPI) timing, and narrowed curb radii could make the 4th Street crossing could be considered to increase the comfort of pedestrians crossing the street.

CDOT indicated that they would prefer the focus of enhancement to take place on local streets in Silverthorne with minor modifications to SH 9 as new development occurs.

## ***Summit Stage***

Fehr & Peers spoke with a Summit Stage representative in April. The Summit Stage provides transit for Summit County and runs four routes that serve Silverthorne. The Transit Transfer Station is currently located on the corner of Adams and 4th.

Summit Stage began a planning process last fall that raised concern about the currently location of the Silverthorne Transfer Station. They would like to see the transfer center closer to the interchange. One of the potential locations discussed for relocation was 3rd and Adams. There is currently a storage yard for public works that could potentially relocate when the Fire Department relocates. This location would allow Summit Stage closer proximity to I-70 and would take idling buses away from proposed development on 4th Street. At this point, this is just an idea and would require much more research and conversation before action would be taken.

The proposed CDOT service was also discussed during the conversation. This service will begin as a single round trip leaving Glenwood Springs in the morning and a return trip from Denver in the evening. The service will stop in Summit County and tie into the Summit Stage service.

Bruce encouraged the Town to continue to stay involved with Summit Stage through the Transit Board.