



**CIG CASE STUDY:
Noise Wall Public Process Provides Options;
Saves Money on T-REX, FasTracks**



COMMUNICATION
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GROUP



Challenge

While projects receiving federal funding are required to identify noise impacts and provide adequate noise mitigation, the construction of sound walls is an often controversial public/neighborhood issue and can add significant cost to a project's bottom line.

Solution

We developed a public process that drove the sound wall construction for the Transportation Expansion Project (T-REX) and was the model for the RTD FasTracks West Corridor project. Our T-REX Public Involvement Team worked closely with CDOT and RTD to develop a Noise Wall Opt-Out Policy approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The new policy allows neighborhoods to determine the existence and height of sound walls directly impacting their property owners.

Results

- Happy homeowners and significant project cost savings
 - o Noise mitigation was de-mystified and property owners opted out of sound walls at several locations along both corridors
 - o T-REX contractor savings: approximately \$2 million
 - o West Corridor project savings: approximately \$1 million

Lessons Learned

- Educate the public about issue
 - o The more people understand, the more informed decision they can make
 - o Don't shy away from controversial issues – PI can help!
- Provide opportunity for public to have direct input into decision
 - o Create clear step-by-step process
 - o Gain necessary approvals from project owner and regulatory agencies

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Communication Results