

Colorado Springs Intermodal Mobility Plan: Connect COS

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #4, July 19th, 2021

Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

- Establish common understanding of where we are in the technical process.
- Report out on feedback received to date.
- Encourage / promote digital engagement participation from CAC and their constituents.
- Engage CAC members in offering insight and feedback to goal framework areas and their relation to the critical corridors.

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting facilitator, Angela Woolcott (K&W), welcomed attendees and provided opening remarks which included an overview of the meeting participation guidelines and sharing the meeting purpose and goals listed in the sections above. Angela then introduced the project team and outlined the meeting agenda. A full list of project team members as well as CAC members and guests who were in attendance is included at the end of the meeting summary.

At the onset of the meeting Angela reviewed its importance for where we are in the process. Over the course of the meeting, the project team reviewed which corridors have been identified as “critical corridors” in the ConnectCOS process, how the critical corridors score in terms of achieving the ConnectCOS goal framework, and how the project team will engage CAC members in a discussion around needs and opportunities for enhancing goals within a few critical corridors.

Critical Corridors Review

Ted Ritschard, Olsson, provided background to where the project team is in their analysis and how they are reviewing ways the transportation system can better serve the ConnectCOS goal framework. He reviewed the six areas of the ConnectCOS goal framework which include: safe, equitable, sustainable, efficiently reliable, accessible, and connected. He discussed that there are two ways to improve the transportation system as a whole. The first is identifying needs which requires assessing how the system parts serve the system goals; the second is identifying solutions which are actions that would generate a high return in overall performance.

A key element of this meeting is to discuss specific strategies to increase performance in each of the six goals areas. This will inform current efforts to define specific actions that should be taken to make necessary improvements in each of the critical corridors.

Ted reviewed the East-West and North-South critical corridors which include more than 15 major roadways throughout Colorado Springs. Although some of these corridors were discussed in the last CAC meeting, a number of new corridors have been identified, including Woodman Road from I-25 to Towers Boulevard and Garden of the Gods from 30th street to Nevada Avenue, among others. Some critical corridors have been further defined into segment areas to better reflect the context along those corridors and how the context changes from one segment to another. Below is a complete list of critical corridors broken out by segment and direction.

East-West Corridors:

- Interquest Parkway
 - I-25 to Powers
- Briargate Parkway
 - Voyager Pkwy to Black Forest Rd
- Woodmen Road
 - I-25 to Powers Blvd*
 - Powers Blvd to US24
- Garden of the Gods Road
 - 30th Street to Nevada Ave*
- Austin Bluffs Road
 - Nevada Ave to Barnes Rd
- Fillmore Street/31st Street
 - US24 to Mesa Road*
 - Mesa Road to I-25
 - I-25 to Union Blvd
- Colorado Avenue
 - 31st St to Cascade Ave
- Platte Avenue/US24 East
 - I-25 to Academy Blvd
 - Academy Blvd to Marksheffel Rd
 - Marksheffel Rd to Woodmen Rd*
- Hancock Expressway
 - Circle Dr to Milton Proby Pkwy
- US24/Fountain Blvd*
 - I-25 to Powers

North-South Corridors:

- Nevada Avenue
 - I-25 to Fillmore St
 - Fillmore St to Uintah St
 - Uintah St to UPRR
 - UPRR to Lake Ave
- Union Blvd
 - Powers Blvd to Academy Blvd
 - Academy to Fillmore St
 - Fillmore St to Pikes Peak Ave
 - Pikes Peak Ave to Hancock Expy
- Academy Blvd
 - I-25 to Austin Bluffs Pkwy
 - Austin Bluffs Pkwy to Platte Ave
 - Platte Ave to Milton Proby Pkwy
- Powers Blvd
 - Shoup Rd to Woodmen Rd
 - Woodmen Rd to Constitution Ave
 - Constitution Ave to Milton Proby Pkwy
- Marksheffel Road
 - Woodmen Rd to US24
 - US24 to Drennan Rd

How do we define a corridor? A corridor includes the major roadway but also any adjacent roadways or networks that exist such as trail and transit routes as well as the context of adjacent neighborhoods.

Evaluating Goal Areas & Needs

Amy Garinger, Kimley Horn, further defined each of the goal framework areas and discussed outstanding needs identified by the project team for each goal.

To achieve the **Safe** goal, we should invest in a transportation network that reduces vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian crashes. This includes prioritizing projects that improves emergency response, promotes safe work zones, and increases personal safety.

To achieve the **Equitable** goal, the plan should identify context specific transportation projects and investments that reflect the unique opportunities and challenges of surrounding neighborhoods and the travelers that use different corridors.

To achieve the **Sustainable** goal, the plan should prioritize projects that encourage economic development and social and environmental sustainability.

To achieve the **Efficiently Reliable** goal, funds should be invested in projects that focus on moving more people, support more reliable trips for all travelers regardless of mode and keep the network in good repair.

To achieve the **Accessible** goal, the plan should focus on creating a transportation network that is intuitive to use and navigate, provides a comfortable travel experience, and allows for seamless connections between modes of travel.

To achieve the **Connected** goal, we should invest in a transportation network that is compatible with existing land uses and provide connections to key activity centers and regional economic generators.

Public Engagement Update

Angela Woolcott, K&W, then gave a number of updates on recent and ongoing public engagement. Recent public engagement efforts include ongoing meetings with the EOC and CAC, a series of “open-door” virtual office hours offered throughout month of April, and the creation of a publically available FAQ document. All materials, including a summary of stakeholder comments from the virtual office hours, are available on the project website: <https://coloradosprings.gov/project/connectcos>. In October, the project team anticipates holding a second public open house. Details are forthcoming.

The project team is excited to announce the recent launch of a public survey, announced through a press release on July 15th, an email to a city-wide distribution list on July 16th, and promoted through a bilingual flyer delivered to more than 20 locations and distributed on city buses.

Colorado Springs residents are invited to provide input now through Aug. 8 on draft scenarios and priorities to improve the city’s transportation plan as part of [ConnectCOS](#). Residents are encouraged to weigh in on strategies for enhancing the city’s transportation system to create more safe, efficient, accessible, equitable, sustainable and connected modes of travel. The City will integrate public comments from this survey and past input to help shape the draft citywide transportation plan that is anticipated to be ready for public review later this fall.

CAC Members are urged to promote the survey opportunity to their networks. The project team led a conversation that presented a series of ideas for how CAC members could help promote the survey. The top suggestions included sharing the survey link to their facebook and social media pages, sharing the flyer at their office and with colleagues, and sending an email to their contacts with the survey link and encouraging message to participate.

Metroquest Demonstration

Annie McFarland, FHU, then gave a demonstration of the metroquest tool which is being used to conduct the virtual public survey. The tool utilizes a series of brief exercises that asks users to rank and prioritize the goal framework areas and respond to additional probes about the goal framework that explore specific actions participants would be willing to take in order to increase performance of the framework goals.

Corridor Discussion Warm-up: Group Polling

To further demonstrate the survey tool and test the survey questions with CAC members, Angela Woolcott led attendees through a series of polling questions that came directly from the survey. The questions and CAC members responses (in red) are included below.

- 1) ConnectCOS identified six major goal areas that build on a range of opportunities. Please rank that goal areas by importance.
 - a. Connected – 2nd place
 - b. Accessible- 3rd place
 - c. Safe- 1st place
 - d. Equitable- 6th place
 - e. Efficiently Reliable- 4th place
 - f. Sustainable- 5th place

- 2) Which 3 strategies do you feel would best promote safety? (choose three)
 - a. Pedestrian lighting and lighted bus stops where appropriate – 18%
 - b. Create safe roadway crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists – 29%
 - c. Invest in new technologies that may improve safety through data collection and automation – 15%
 - d. Develop education programs to encourage compliance with traffic laws – 10%
 - e. Change intersection layout and/or signal timing to reduce conflicts between vehicles or between modes – 24%
 - f. Prioritize projects across that encourage walking and bicycling for short trips – 6%

- 3) Which 2 strategies do you feel would best promote equitability? (choose two)
 - a. Reduce the number of lanes on major roadways that are adjacent to residential land uses, even if it means there is more congestion on the overall network – 0%
 - b. Provide enhanced transit services to key community destinations to encourage people to use transit instead of personal vehicles – 50%
 - c. Prioritize sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities to areas/destinations in the City that provide residents with essential services (schools, healthcare, groceries) – 50%

- 4) Which 3 strategies do you feel would best promote sustainability? (choose three)
 - a. Create opportunities to spur development by investing in enhanced transit options like light-rail or bus rapid transit – 9%
 - b. Improve tree cover and green space along roadways – 4%
 - c. Prioritize multimodal access to critical services such as hospitals, grocery stores, and educational institutions – 21%
 - d. Support opportunities to live, work and play within close proximity to each other, especially along public transit corridors – 30%
 - e. Parking – 0%
 - f. Invest and install more electric vehicle charging stations – 4%
 - g. Create opportunities to spur development by constructing new roadways or reconstructing existing roadways – 6%
 - h. Increase access to parks and open space from existing roadways – 0%
 - i. Prioritize multimodal access to higher density development – 13%
 - j. Invest in more transportation infrastructure and programming resources in historically vulnerable communities.- 13%

- 5) Which 3 strategies do you feel would best promote reliability? (choose three)
- a. Widen roads to add vehicle lanes, even if it means eliminating medians or purchasing new land adjacent to a roadway – 11%
 - b. Invest in more shared mobility options, such as expanding PikeRide or providing shared scooter options – 11%
 - c. Invest in enhancing the transit system so travel times are more competitive with vehicles – 20%
 - d. Prioritize travel choices, such as taking public transit, walking, or bicycling, making them more convenient and efficient – 18%
 - e. Construct more overpasses and underpasses at priority intersections – 11%
 - f. Improve traffic signal timing along corridors – 13%
 - g. Invest in new technologies that further advance emerging electric, connected, and autonomous vehicle technologies – 16%
- 6) Which 3 strategies do you feel would best promote accessibility? (choose three)
- a. Reconstruct sidewalks or ramps to improve ADA compliance – 27%
 - b. Invest in more or better wayfinding signs for roads, sidewalks, and trails – 7%
 - c. Prioritize projects that create more physical separation between different travel modes – 18%
 - d. Invest in more ADA accessible transit options – 11%
 - e. Invest in all-weather bus transfer stations – 11%
 - f. Construct transportation hubs that can create activity centers and connection points for various modes of travel – 27%
- 7) Which 3 strategies do you feel would best promote connectivity? (choose three)
- a. Increase the number of roadways that provide access to key destinations in the City, such as key shopping areas, key employment areas, or key community features/destinations – 11%
 - b. Invest in local transit that connects to current or future regional transit services – 28%
 - c. Improve specific roadways throughout the City to better accommodate truck traffic from current and new developments – 13%
 - d. Increase transit and non-vehicle connections to key destinations in the City, such as key shopping areas, key employment areas, or key community features/destinations – 30%
 - e. Expand current roadways to accommodate demand that is expected from future, known developments – 19%

Breakout Group Activity

The CAC split into three groups to examine corridor specific examples and discuss how they relate to the goal framework: safe, equitable, sustainable, reliable, accessible, connected.

The three corridor examples included:

- 1) Academy Blvd (with a focus on reliable & accessible goals)
- 2) Fillmore Street (with a focus on equitable & sustainable goals)
- 3) Hancock Expressway (with a focus on safe & connected goals)

Each group had a subject matter expert, a facilitator, and a note-taker. Report outs were then given based on each of the three corridor examples. Below is a summary of feedback from all three groups broken out by corridor example. *Please note that comments and notes were preserved to keep their original meaning and intent.*

Academy Boulevard

Challenges:

- Academy itself is not comfortable for biking and making it comfortable would require significant changes (e.g., lane repurposing)
- Drivers drive too fast – people weaving in and out
- Lots of right turns in the northern portion of the corridor – stacking of traffic on the right side
 - Ways to improve lane positioning so it is easier for drivers to know what lane they should be in based on their destinations
 - Especially at voyager and briargate
- Design of the curb cuts and the size of the intersection is a challenge.
- Geometry of crosswalks/ramps makes it particularly hard for visually impaired people to line up properly to cross
- More balance needed between new traffic signals and traffic flow
- Big intersections and driver behavior makes it harder for pedestrians to cross safely.
- Terrible condition & congested

Opportunities/ recommendations/ general comments:

- Parallel routes for biking should be identified/improved
- Enhanced crossings of Academy, potentially including overpasses, would improve bike/ped travel in the corridor
- Sidewalks along Academy should be widened/detached where possible
- Cottonwood creek overpass was great – may need more ped bridges/crosswalks particularly on the north end
 - Also looking near Austin Bluffs
- Would not bike commute (hills & speed on Academy), would plan for extra time due to traffic
- Increase transit to pull cars off the road
- Trip purpose & duration impact how they decide to travel
- Improved access to major destinations that do not rely on major roadway
- Better light timing to improve flow?

Fillmore Street

Challenges:

- The parallel network is limited but probably better for bikes than trying to accommodate them along Fillmore
- Bike/ped crossings are well-spaced, but the waits to cross can be very long – consider retiming signals
- Congestion on Fillmore is a concern for emergency vehicles, but there isn't really a good alternate route for them to use
- Start over – this is a hard corridor
- Utility polls are so close to the right lane – large trucks have to use the center lane so they don't hit mirrors
- People use this to get to Union and Briargate area

- This is a key truck route – balance between lots of pedestrians and some heavy truck movement
- Traffic signal timing and geometry improvements might help safety
- It is a narrow roadway with a lot of congestion
- Visibility coming out of some of the driveways is not good

Opportunities/ recommendations/ general comments:

- The future function of the Fillmore corridor is closely tied to considerations for extending Constitution; the Constitution extension could be a better facility for bikes and transit
- Opportunities for potential redevelopment – improving nonmotorized facilities
- Possibly develop a parallel route to pull traffic off (possibly along Constitution)
- “Invisible cyclist” here, people using bikes to access goods/services but not really commuting
- Making sure crossings are visible and clear
- Potential need to widen or do something for the commuters
- Potentially do away with individual drives & share access

Hancock Expressway

Challenges:

- Bike lanes and ped needs to be improved since the recent addition of the new bus line
- The abundance of expressways and other high-speed roads in southeast Colorado Springs is a hindrance to biking

Opportunities/ recommendations/ general comments:

- Sidewalk gaps should be filled
- Hancock probably doesn't need to be an expressway; transforming it into a multimodal corridor would benefit the surrounding neighborhoods
- Multimodal improvements would enhance transit linkage to Academy and support future transit connection between downtown and the airport
- Who is using the corridor, neighborhoods on north, but industrial to the southwest
- Connectivity of the airport to Downtown, specifically transit
- Logical route for transit
- Dedicated bus lanes could be useful here

Next Steps

In closing, Angela reiterated the important of the CAC's participation in the online survey and sharing the opportunity with their networks and constituents. The next CAC meeting is expected to build from the results of the public survey and stakeholder findings received to date in order to focus on potential tradeoffs of proposed alternatives and solutions. Ted Ritschard then reviewed the project schedule through the end of the year. The project team anticipates sharing a draft of the plan by late Summer or early Fall.

Participants

Project Team Attendees

Ted Ritschard	Olsson
Annie McFarland	FHU
Matthew Downey	FHU
Amy Garinger	Kimley Horn
Kyle McLaughlin	Kimley Horn
Karen Aspelin	MaxGreen Engineers
Zach Barr	Kearns & West
Angela Woolcott	Kearns & West
Sarah Franklin	Kearns & West
Todd Frisbie	City of Colorado Springs
Tim Roberts	City of Colorado Springs

Committee Attendees and Guests

Cindy Aubrey	Pikes Peak United Way
Rachel Beck	Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC
Brett Lacey	COS Fire Department
Pat Rigdon	COS Police Department
Chelsea Gondeck	Downtown Partnership
Mark Hopewell	Active Transportation Advisory Committee
Karen Palus	Parks, Rec and Cultural Services
Carrie Bartow	Housing and Building Association of Colorado Springs
Katherine Brady	COS Planning/Bicycle
Jim Godfrey	Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)
Victoria Chavez	El Paso County Public Works
Scott Lee	COS Parking Enterprise
Elena Nunez	Colorado Springs Utilities
Nicole Odell	Bike Colorado Springs
Kevin Keith	COS Airport
Paul Spotts	The Independence Center
Elizabeth Robertson	Transit Passenger Advisory Committee
John Lauer	Colorado College
Kate Brady	COS Planning/Bicycle
Kim Melchor	City of Colorado Springs
Autumn Booths	Transit Passenger Advisory Committee
Jen Furda	UCCS
Gayle Sturdivant	Public Works, City of Colorado Springs