

## Colorado Springs Intermodal Mobility Plan: Connect COS

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #5, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### Meeting Summary

## Meeting Purpose

- Provide an update on public involvement and recent community survey
- Establish common understanding of where the project team is in the technical process
- Inform CAC members on project development and collect feedback

## Welcome and Introductions

The meeting facilitator, Angela Woolcott (K&W), welcomed attendees and provided opening remarks which included an introduction to the project team who were in attendance, an overview of the meeting agenda and meeting purpose, and a review of the meeting guidelines as well as the roles and responsibilities of the ConnectCOS Community Advisory Committee (CAC). A full list of project team members, CAC members, and guests who were in attendance is included at the end of the meeting summary.

In outlining the meeting guidelines and the roles and responsibilities of the CAC, Angela asked all in attendance to (1) be collaborative and provide productive ideas and feedback to the team to help the project be successful, (2) respect the ideas of others, and (3) focus on the task at hand. CAC members are tasked with acting as a representative of the community and their constituents, vetting and sharing information, sharing the perspective of their organization rather than their individual interests, bringing community concerns back to the group, and serving as a project partner throughout the ConnectCOS process.

The agenda for the meeting was organized into four parts: (1) a public engagement update, (2) a review and update on the technical analysis of the project, (3) an introduction to the development process of a project list which will accompany the ConnectCOS Plan, and (4) an overview of next steps and the schedule through the remainder of this year (2021) and into early next year. Most importantly, Angela asked for CAC members to reach out and be in touch if anyone in their networks would like to have a meeting with the project team regarding questions or concerns surrounding the ConnectCOS process.

Angela announced the project team would take questions throughout the entirety of the meeting, as they worked their way through the agenda, and there were scheduled breaks after each section of the agenda to allow for open conversation and questions.

## Public Engagement Update

### Recent Activities

Angela Woolcott (K&W) began the update on public engagement by discussing recent activities and accomplishments with key project stakeholders. The CAC last met in July, where the project team shared the recently completed needs assessment for each of the critical corridors of ConnectCOS and CAC members participated in breakout groups where they discussed three critical corridors (Academy, Fillmore, and the Hancock Expressway) to provide their own reflections regarding the existing challenges and outstanding needs of these major arterials. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the project team met with the

ConnectCOS Executive Oversight Committee (EOC), where much of the same information that was covered in this CAC meeting was shared.

Angela Woolcott also discussed the recent activities that engaged the broader public, most notable of which was the ConnectCOS digital community survey which was offered publically through the project website from July – August 2021. The results of the public survey are shared in more detail in the sections that follow.

The project team anticipates a number of other public engagement activities to take place before the end of the year and into early 2022. Between now and then, the project team has offered to meet one-on-one with stakeholders and the community upon request. They anticipate holding a virtual public open house before the 2021 Thanksgiving holiday to introduce projects that are being recommended as part of the ConnectCOS Plan.

### **Results of the ConnectCOS Digital Community Survey**

The ConnectCOS digital community survey was reviewed in advance with the CAC and offered to the public from July 15th, 2021 - August 8th, 2021, using an online platform called MetroQuest. Colorado Springs residents were invited to provide input during this timeframe on draft scenarios and priorities to improve the city's transportation plan as part of ConnectCOS. Residents who participated in the five-step digital survey provided perspectives and responses towards incremental and transformational strategies for enhancing the city's transportation system and addressing potential tradeoffs. The results from this survey are publicly available on the project website (<https://coloradosprings.gov/project/connectcos>), and included as part of the technical analysis that will help shape the draft citywide transportation plan that is anticipated to be ready for public review in early 2022.

More than 800 Colorado Springs residents responded to the survey, with more than fifteen unique zip codes represented. While responses came from 80907 (UCCS to Patty Jewett Golf Course / Garden of the Gods to Palmer Park), 80903 (Downtown and Middle Shooks Run), and 80904 (Red Rock Canyon Open Space / Old Colorado City), a majority of responses came from central Colorado Springs and the Old North End. City Project Manager, Tim Roberts, mentioned that overall the City was pleased with the number of responses to the survey as planning studies such as this don't typically receive this many responses. Even though we received less response than the State of the System survey which was offered to the public in early 2021 and received nearly 1,500 responses, the MetroQuest survey was a much more in depth survey. The primary goal of this survey was to achieve a good rate of completion where participants completed all five survey steps.

Angela Woolcott then walked the CAC through a summary of the survey questions and their results.

The first question asked survey respondents to select their top four of the six identified goals within the ConnectCOS goal framework and to rank their top four in order of priority. The six goals of the ConnectCOS goal framework include: (1) safe, (2) equitable, (3) sustainable, (4) efficiently reliable, (5) accessible, and (6) connected. The results show that safety had the highest average ranking, while other goals ranked between 2.46 and 2.7 (Figure 1), meaning that people felt similarly about the other five goals.

WHICH OF THE SIX GOAL AREAS DO YOU THINK ARE MOST IMPORTANT?



Figure 1: Ranking of participants top four goal areas.

The questions that followed asked respondents to prioritize specific strategies that could achieve each of the goal framework areas. The answers highlight a common interest in improving the overall environment and experience for user’s of active transportation modes such as walking and biking, as well as for people living with disabilities and transit riders.

As Angela Woolcott reviewed each of the questions and their subsequent answers, she made comparisons in the responses between CAC members and the general public (Figures 2 – 7 below highlight answers received to this portion of the community survey where the blue dots show how members of the CAC answered these same questions). During the meeting, CAC members discussed the discrepancy in responses and agreed that the variance is most likely due to the subjectivity of terms and different ways individuals may choose to define the goals within the goal framework. The term “sustainable” for example can be fairly subjective.

In relation to potential strategies that would best meet the goal of safety, both CAC members and the broader public ranked “create safe roadway crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists” as their top strategy and “change intersection layout and/or signal timing to reduce conflicts between vehicles or between modes” as their second preferred strategy (Figure 2).

Under the accessibility goal, “reconstruct sidewalks or ramps to improve ADA compliance” ranked highest with both the CAC and the general public (Figure 3). Though, this response from the CAC tied for top priority with “construct transportation hubs that can create activity centers and connection points for

various modes of travel”. Under this same goal, “invest in more or better wayfinding signs” ranked lowest with the CAC, though much higher with the general public.

Under the efficiently reliable goal, the general public’s highest priority was to “improve traffic signal timing along corridors”, whereas the CAC preferred “invest in enhancing the transit system so travel times are more competitive with vehicles”. Both the general public and CAC were aligned in their second highest ranking of “prioritize travel choices” (Figure 4).

Under the connected goal, the general public and CAC’s answers matched exactly, with both selecting “increase transit and non-vehicle connections to key destinations” as their top strategy (Figure 5).

Under the sustainability goal area, many responses between the general public and the CAC were aligned, though their top priority differed (Figure 6). The broader public responded that “improving tree cover and green space along roadways” is the most effective strategy to reach sustainability, though CAC members responded “support opportunities to live, work and play within proximity to each other, especially along public transit corridors”.

The final question covered the goal of equity and showed responses were aligned. The top strategy was to “prioritize sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities to areas/ destinations in the City that provide residents with essential services.”

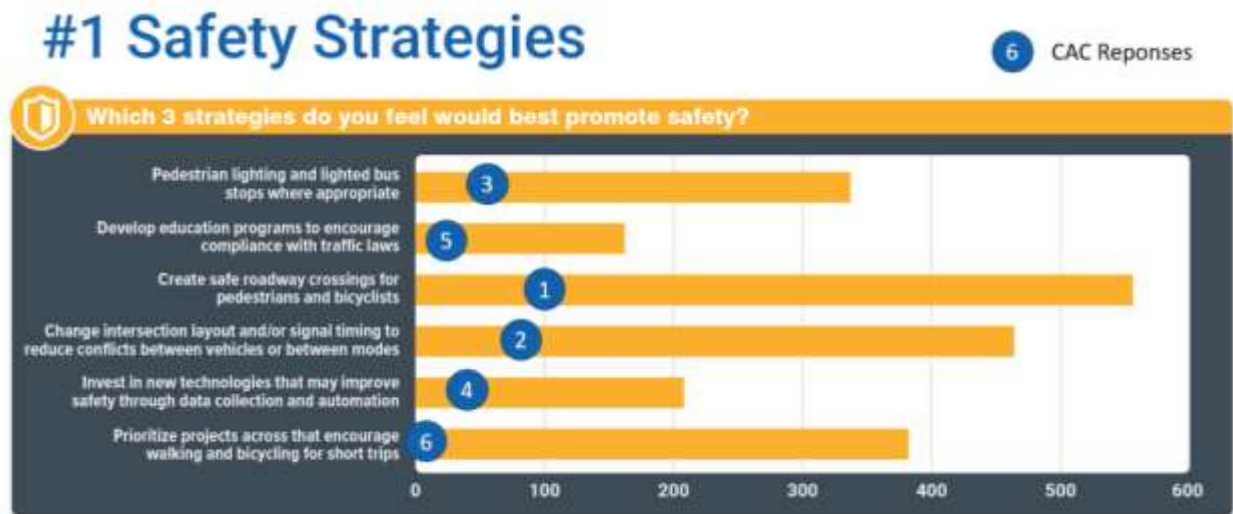


Figure 2: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of safety.

## #2 Accessible Strategies

6 CAC Responses

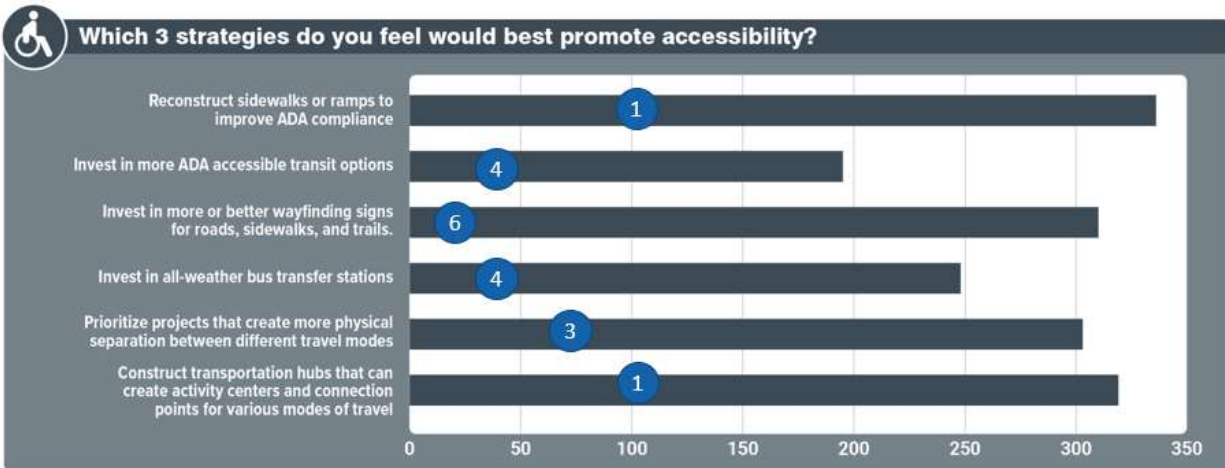


Figure 3: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of accessibility.

## #3 Efficiently Reliable Strategies

6 CAC Responses

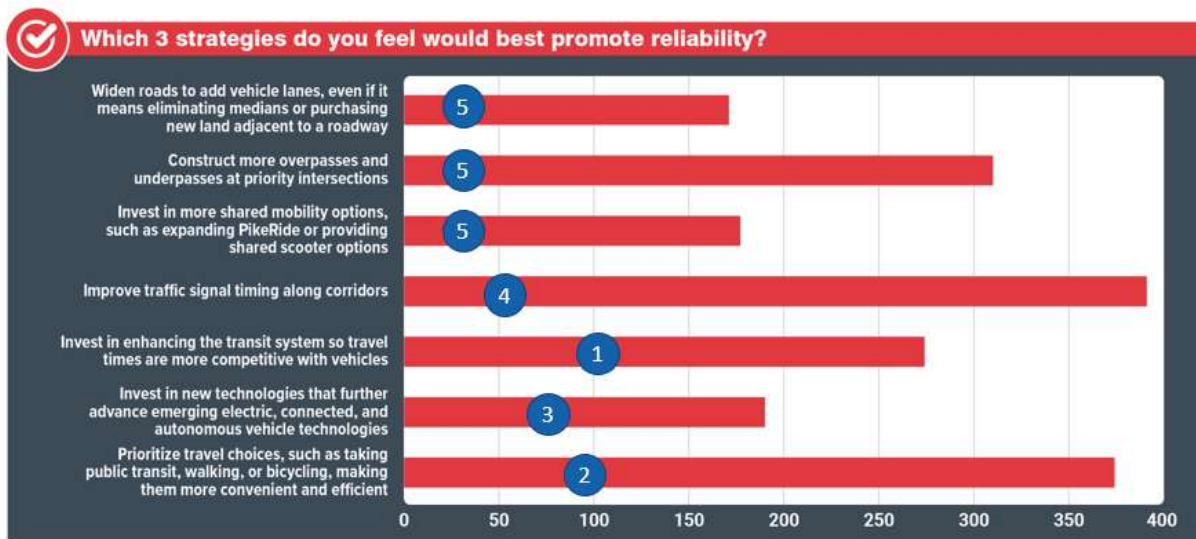


Figure 4: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of efficiently reliable.

## #4 Connected Strategies

6 CAC Responses

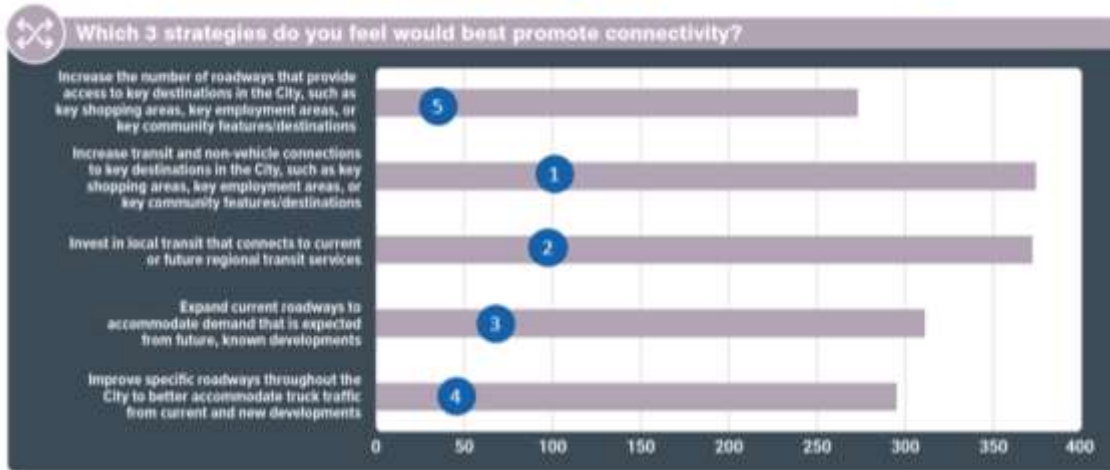


Figure 5: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of connectivity.

## #5 Sustainable Strategies

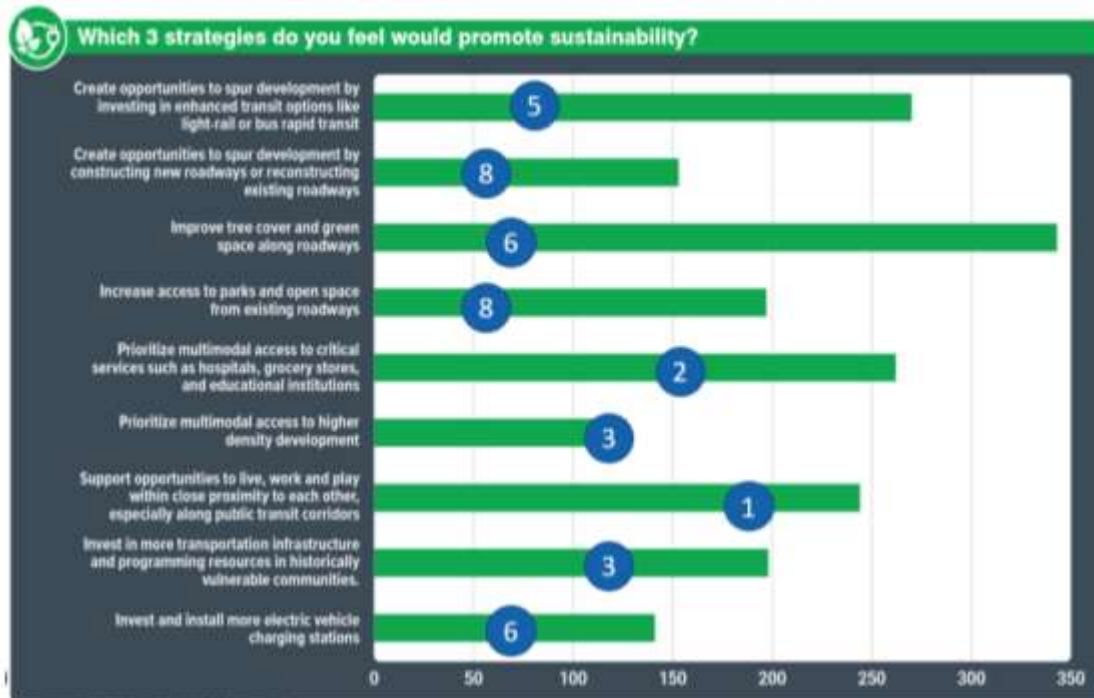


Figure 6: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of sustainability.

# #6 Equitable Strategies

6 CAC Reponses

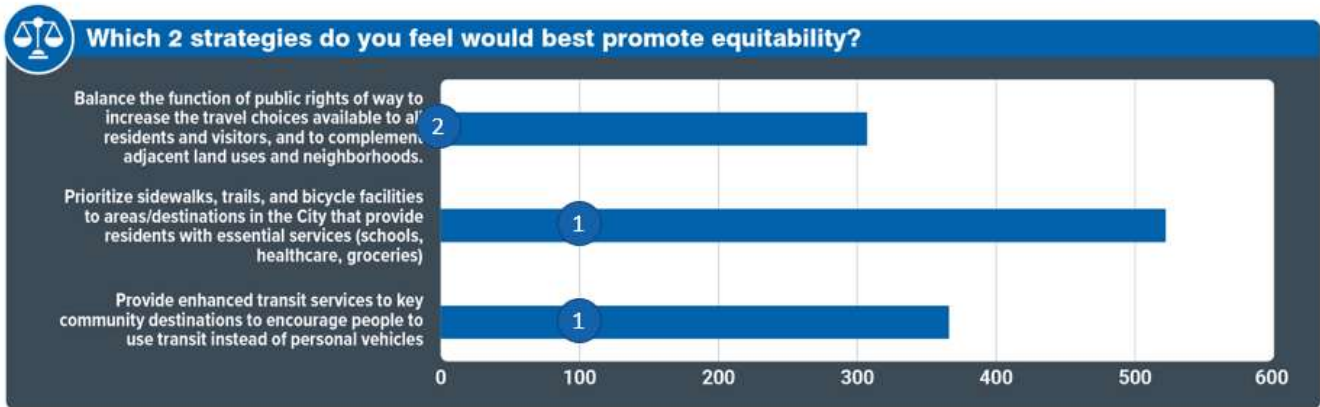


Figure 7: Ranking of participants preference for potential strategies that meet the goal of equity.

Next, Angela Woolcott discussed the final set of questions in the survey which asked participants to consider incremental versus transformational improvements and their associated tradeoffs. An incremental improvement is the type of improvement that may require less resources and have the ability to be implemented in the near future. Whereas a transformational improvement may be much more impactful over the long-term but may also require significantly more resources as well as sacrificing investments in other areas (this is defined as a tradeoff). The results (Figure 8) show that survey respondents were divided in their response. This is an important indicator that there is not a one-size-fits-all scenario. The project team will need to consider a transportation plan that serves all peoples interests and needs to the best of their ability. The responses also indicate a need to be both strategic, in terms of providing city-wide solutions, as well as granular to reflect the differences across the project area.



Figure 8: Participants responses to potential tradeoff scenarios.

Angela Woolcott closed the survey discussion by summarizing the key takeaways:

- 1) Safety rises to the top for the most supported project goal
- 2) Stakeholder preferences were not always consistent with preferences of the general public
- 3) Tradeoff responses were rarely neutral and distributed to both ends of a continuum
- 4) Travel choice has been a consistently supported theme since the study began
- 5) Higher preference for local investments over regional

She also mentioned that the open comments and feedback which were collected as a part of the survey were still under development and would be shared separately to the project website within the next few weeks.

## Technical Analysis Update

Next, Ted Ritschard (Olsson), gave a brief overview and progress update on the technical analysis of the project. Much of the information shared in his overview was a review from previous meetings. Ted provided a reminder of the six-goal goal framework that was established with input from the CAC and other stakeholders to guide the technical process. He reminded the group that the project team refers to the six goals for data driven analysis of the current system condition. Particularly, it is important to consider how well the current system is meeting the goals in the goal framework and where the deficiencies or needs exist.

Ted reviewed the importance of evaluating corridor needs to the overall project development process. The steps of project development include:

- 1) Considering the state of the system;
- 2) Defining the most critical corridors;
- 3) Evaluating goal-defined needs for each of the critical corridors;
- 4) Consider a full range of actions to address these needs; and
- 5) Reconcile with previous recommendations/ existing plans.

Ted Ritschard then gave an overview of critical corridors and provided further detail on the needs evaluation process undertaken for each of the corridors. The critical corridors are places where investments can make the biggest difference and where improvements would have the largest overall impact on system wide performance. When analyzing critical corridors, the project team takes into account the relationship of a corridor to the overall transportation network. Ted emphasizes the concept of interdependence and the need to consider the entire transportation network; a solution that may work well in one area may also create a deficiency or gap in another area.

The project team is also considering new connections and overall capacity. Specifically, the team is looking at larger travel sheds and assessing where facilities are inadequate, where connectivity is lacking, and where transit or other modes might be underserved.

The US 24 Corridor is one example of this. This corridor in particular shows some of the highest traffic growth rates in the City and the region. The project team is looking at the future of US 24 and whether it should continue to be designated the way it current is or whether there are other, perhaps better, alternatives.



## Introduction to Project Development Process

Amy Garringer (Kimley Horn) then led the group into a discussion around the project development process. She mentions that everything done to this point has been getting to the crux of the effort which is the list of solutions and potential projects that help address the identified needs and priorities. The referenced list contains approximately 200 potential projects and it is still a working list not yet ready to be shared.

There are a variety of inputs and sources that contribute to the working project list (Figure 9) . An important part of identifying projects is to consider other city sources and plans that may still be relevant to today’s transportation needs. These are projects that may have been brought forward in past planning processes that went unfunded or fell behind.

City Plans including:	Regional/State Plans	Other Inputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Envision Shooks Run</li> <li>Experience Downtown</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moving Forward 2045</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs Analysis and project team workshops</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renew North Nevada, Transportation, and Transit Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PPRTA B List</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City Staff Input</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Midland Corridor Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colorado Freight Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public and Stakeholder</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COS Bikes!</li> <li>Las Vegas Street Corridor Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Non-motorized Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emerging Needs <i>BLR, Annexation, FRPR, etc.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platte Ave Corridor Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Transit Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridge Program</li> </ul>

Figure 9: This table shows the multiple sources utilized in the process for developing the list of potential projects.

Projects are also identified through collaborative efforts between the project team and City staff from many different departments as well as collaborative efforts with the communities and the broader public through neighborhood level community planning.

The next step is to ground potential projects in the context of the ConnectCOS critical corridors and goal framework. The project team has developed a comprehensive scoring method to help them analyze and better understand this context which will ultimately help prioritize the list of projects.

The scoring system can be organized into three primary factors:

- 1) **Degree of need factor:** how many goal element needs does a project address and to what extent (indirectly, partially, or targeted) does it address those needs.
- 2) **Range of goals factor:** does the project address multiple goals? Consider each element that makes up each goal area, and award 1 point for each.
- 3) **Sphere of influence factor:** what is the geographic impact of the project (consider streetlight data and size of travelshed)? What is the relative volume of key user groups? Does the project positively impact other critical corridors? Eighty-two projects are associated with multiple critical corridors, for example, and fourteen are associated with more than two critical corridors.

Dependent on how a project scores, the project will be placed into one of three relevancy tiers (Figure 10):

- 1) "Good": the project addresses goal driven needs.
- 2) "Better": the project addresses a range of goals and has a larger impact.
- 3) "Best": the project has the most impact for the broadest range of goals.

All projects are important to meeting the mission of ConnectCOS, though some projects (considered "best") will have a larger impact.

### ConnectCOS Project Relevancy Tiers



Figure 10: This table depicts the relevancy tiers used to gauge and organize projects based on impact.

Any discussed the efficiently reliable category further. Under this category, the reliability of existing infrastructure was of primary concern. Thus, in the working project list, there are 58 major bridge projects. The magnitude of the bridge program in Colorado Springs is significant. Many of the bridges were built in the 70's and are approaching the end of their life span. It is important to consider that along with growth, Colorado Springs also has maintenance needs, and the maintenance of existing infrastructure will need to be calculated into the overall expectation of what can be accomplished.

Next, Ted Ritschard reviewed a framework for potential funding sources to support project implementation. The current project list is what the project team calls unconstrained, meaning they have not put limits yet as to what each of the projects will cost and how or when the project might get funded. When the project list is final, the next step is to consider how that list connects to potential funding, and then prioritize projects based on short-term, mid-term, and long-term improvements as well as cost.

There are multiple sources of funding to consider:

- 1) Funds that will come directly from the City for specific projects;
- 2) Grant funding from multiple grant sources; and
- 3) Funding from Pikes Peak Regional Transity Authority (PPRTA).

In closing, Ted stressed the importance of flexibility and adaptability. With any long-range plan, the City should have the ability to adapt and respond to potential challenges and changes. As part of this, the project team is tasked with developing a full list of projects that address existing needs as well as a full menu of ways or funding mechanisms the City can tap into to address these projects.

## Next Steps and Project Schedule

In closing the meeting, Angela Woolcott reviewed the schedule and major project milestone through the end of 2021 and into the first quarter of 2022. The immediate next step is to finalize the ConnectCOS project list and scoring, then conduct outreach to elected Leaders and stakeholder groups. The project team anticipates holding a public meeting before Thanksgiving. By late 2021, the project team will have a draft plan to share, a final plan will be shared early next year (2022), and plan adoption will take place in late April or Early May of that year.

Additionally, during this meeting, the CAC posed several questions related to the project process and technical milestones that resulted in a meaningful conversation for consideration as the city continues to develop a draft project list. Those questions will be incorporated into the existing [ConnectCOS FAQs](#) that will be updated later this winter.

## Participants

### Project Team Attendees

Ted Ritschard	Olsson
Eliot Shulsky	FHU
Matthew Downey	FHU
Amy Garinger	Kimley Horn
Chris Jones	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
Julie Smith	City of Colorado Springs

### CAC and Guest Attendees

Cindy Aubrey	Pikes Peak United Way
Kate Brady	COS Planning/Bicycle
Patrick Bowman	COS Airport
Victoria Chavez	El Paso County Public Works
Spencer Dodge	Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
Peter Frantz	Guest
Jen Furda	University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Jim Godfrey	Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)
Chelsea Gondeck	Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs
Rodney Gullatte	Firma IT Solutions
Nancy Henjum	City Council District 5
Brett Lacey	COS Fire Department
John Liosatos	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
Nicole Odell	Bike Colorado Springs
Liz Robertson	Transit Passenger Advisory Committee
Paul Spotts	The Independence Center & Community Transit Coalition