

Colorado Springs Intermodal Mobility Plan: Connect COS

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #2, December 3, 2020

Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

- Review community input received to date
- Review technical analysis (State of the System)
- Provide a look ahead

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting facilitator, Angela Jo Woolcott, welcomed attendees. City of Colorado Springs Principal Transportation Planner, Tim Roberts, provided opening remarks and introductions for ConnectCOS. Angela then introduced the project team, outlined the meeting agenda, and conducted roll call. A full list of participants is at the end of this summary.

Public Process Update

Angela provided an overview of public engagement activities-to-date. This included the August 19, 2020, launch and communications outreach, stakeholder interviews, and the survey and online map tool feedback received.

Angela then outlined the stakeholder interview process. There were approximately 40 interviews with a variety of industry and regional participants represented. The four main themes drawn from these interviews were:

- Safety
- Maintenance and operation
- Regional mobility
- Connectivity

Additionally, data from the August 19 – September 21, 2020, survey was shown. There were approximately 1,700 individual responses and more than 800 comments, with heavy input related to bicycle issues.

CAC members were given the opportunity to ask a few questions. One participant inquired about efforts to reach the disabled community. The project team responded and shared more about the push to engage underrepresented communities through targeted outreach in hard-to-reach communities.

Goal Framework

Ted Ritschard, Project Manager, then provided an overview of the ConnectCOS Goal Framework, developed from goals presented during the last CAC meeting on June 24. This included advancing goals such as increasing safety, equity, sustainability, efficiency and reliability, accessibility, and connection. He reminded everyone to keep this framework in mind moving forward. Ted then shared how analysis and public input has, and will continue to, influence this plan, finding strengths and weaknesses along the way.

Technical Analysis and State of the System Update

The project team then shared more information regarding sub-area and regional ConnectCOS feedback. A common strength among all sub-areas in the plan was the access to and presence of recreational trails. A common challenge among most sub-areas was congested corridors and intersections. Beyond these two common themes, strengths and weaknesses varied among sub-areas.

Transportation investment priorities identified included serving the people and community, resource stewardship, and following other aspects of the larger goal framework. The main three items of focus addressed were personal mobility, community benefits, and resource efficiency.

Personal Mobility

While the majority of survey participants indicated they were car-dependent, they also indicated that having multimodal transportation choices was important to them. Amy Garinger, Transportation Planner, went on to share crash density, traffic and intersection performance, sidewalk access, and other personal mobility data. Specifically related to accessibility, 15 of the 20 sub-areas were rated four or higher, which indicates accessibility for all travelers. It was noted that there is limited transit accessibility in the northern part of Colorado Springs, scoring a bit lower than other regions. Also noted, many low-income community members experience more limited accessibility to transit than others.

Community Benefits

Community benefit survey results identified economic development, equity, and regional connectivity as important considerations. Positive responses from survey participants included praise of public art and recreation facilities, while some flagged specific streets that were overrun with too many parking lots and lacked a welcoming environment. Lack of sidewalks and mobility was also tied to areas with lower income and higher poverty. A significant percentage of respondents also traveled between regions on I-25 and CO-83, including to-and-from Denver (non-DIA), Douglas, and Arapahoe counties. Amy Garinger noted that the number of inter-regional travelers may actually be higher than datapoints show, due to answers reflecting decreased travel during COVID. It was noted that this prevalence of inter-regional travel lends itself to support a Front Range Passenger Rail in the future.

Resource Efficiency

Resource efficiency information addressed balance of investments and utilizing technology within the planning process. The majority of survey results among sub-areas indicated maintenance of existing roads as a main concern, emphasizing that it is equally as important as capital investments in the transportation system. Amy Garinger continued to explain that there is no uniform approach to investments, each project needs to consider context and strike a balance between expansion, enhancement, and preservation, along with local and regional strategy.

Breakout Group Activity

The CAC split into three groups to discuss priorities related to personal mobility, community benefit, and resource efficiency. The project team asked CAC members to consider if the right conclusions were being drawn from feedback and whether the goal framework was consistent, as well as to brainstorm additional strengths and weaknesses. The following themes emerged from each discussion topic:

Personal Mobility

Safety was a common concern. One group advised that, in addition to crash location, planners also need to analyze situational data and reasoning for crashes. While infrastructure improvements can address safety, education and awareness are just as important. Missing sidewalks and access to transit were common accessibility issues discussed. CAC members discussed how older neighborhoods tend to have less sidewalk infrastructure than newer neighborhoods due to updated building requirements. In addition, proper landscaping is needed for accessible transit stops. Another discussion point was that transportation improvements should focus on the most disadvantaged community members and advance modes with the most users.

Community Benefit

Groups agreed that quality of life is tied to transportation and mobility. Traffic in downtown Colorado Springs is encouraging more people to use alternate modes like biking, walking, and taking transit. Right now, transit needs are evolving due to COVID and more individuals are working from home. Mixed-use development and closely located services and goods are important for economic development and community benefit as well. The ease of developing and building in a specific area is not as important as equity. It was also emphasized that access to healthcare, food, and services is an important consideration when planning multimodal projects.

Resource Efficiency

Investment balance was a key concern addressed by CAC members, including mode types and communities served. It was noted that currently roads and vehicles are receiving more resources than other modes. CAC members stressed the importance of both reaching the majority and ensuring equity in investment decisions. It is also important to remember that bikeway and transit infrastructure is perceived subjectively, some community members view this as an efficient use of resources while others do not.

Next Steps

Angela and Ted then provided an overview of next steps following the CAC meeting, which include updating the ConnectCOS website with survey results and State of the System analysis, facilitating another Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting, and planning a broader virtual public meeting for early 2021. The next CAC meeting will take place in early 2021.

Project Team Attendees

Karen	Aspelin	MaxGreen Engineers
Todd	Frisbie	City of Colorado Springs
Amy	Garinger	Kimley Horn
Kyle	McLaughlin	Kimley Horn
Kim	Melchor	City of Colorado Springs
Ted	Ritschard	FHU
Tim	Roberts	City of Colorado Springs
Carol	Sammons	FHU
Angela	Woolcott	GBSM, Inc.

Committee Attendees

Cindy	Aubrey	Pikes Peak United Way
Rachel	Beck	Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC
Kate	Brady	COS Planning/Bicycle
Victoria	Chavez	El Paso County Public Works
Susan	Davies	Trails and Open Space Coalition
Jill	Gaebler	City Council District 5
Jim	Godfrey	Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)
Randy	Grauberger	Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
Rodney	Gullatte	Black Business Network
William	Harrell	Citizen Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB)
Mark	Hopewell	Active Transportation Advisory Committee
Len	Kendall	Downtown Partnership
Brett	Lacey	City of Colorado Springs (COS) Fire Department
Nicole	Odell	Bike Colorado Springs
Brian	Potts	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) Department of Defense (DoD) Liaison
Aidan	Ryan	Colorado Springs Airport
John	Lauer	Colorado College (retired)
John	Liosatos	PPACG
Pat	Rigdon	COS Police Department
Liz	Robertson	Transit Passenger Advisory Committee
Joyce	Salazar	RISE Coalition
Tim	Seibert	Nor'wood
Paul	Spotts	The Independence Center
Stephanie	Surch	Council of Neighborhood Organizations