

Colorado Springs Intermodal Mobility Plan: Connect COS

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting # 6

November 17, 2021

Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

- Review Project Development
- Discussion of Critical Corridors Examples
- Provide Next Steps

Welcome and Introductions

Angela Woolcott (Kearns & West) welcomed attendees to the meeting. She then provided opening remarks to include an introduction of the project team, an overview of the meeting agenda, and a review of meeting guidelines. A full list of project team members, ConnectCOS Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members, and guests who were in attendance are included at the end of this meeting summary.

While outlining the meeting guidelines and roles and responsibilities of the CAC, Angela reiterated the CAC's role to act as representatives of the community and their constituents, and to share perspectives of their organization rather than individual interests. Those in attendance were encouraged 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.

The agenda for the meeting was organized into three parts: (1) a project review and check-in, (2) a discussion of the critical corridor project list to accompany the ConnectCOS Plan, and (3) an overview of the next steps through the end of the year (2021). Angela encouraged attendees to ask questions throughout the entirety of the meeting, as the project team worked their way through the agenda. Additionally, scheduled breaks throughout the agenda allowed for open conversation and questions.

Review of Project Development

Ted Ritschard (Olsson) provided attendees a brief review of project development and public input. Much of the information shared was a review of information included in previous meetings. Ted provided a recap of the six-goal framework (Figure 1) that was established with input from the CAC and continues to guide the technical process and project analysis.



Figure 1: The ConnectCOS Six Goal Framework

Ted gave an overview of critical corridors and provided a high-level overview of the evaluation process undertaken for each corridor. Ted stressed that critical corridors are defined as places where investments can make the biggest difference and where improvements can have the largest impact on system wide performance. Additionally, he emphasized that corridors should be thought of as “travel sheds” that connect destinations, and not solely roadways. Additionally, Ted reviewed the ConnectCOS critical corridor needs assessment to remind CAC attendees about the relative comparison of these corridors, and their relationship to the six ConnectCOS framework goals.

Ted also reviewed the public survey strategy preferences and the project’s goal of incorporating public feedback on draft project scenarios and public priorities to improve the City’s transportation plan as part of ConnectCOS. He explained how the public survey helped the team understand project tradeoffs¹ and analysis. Regarding trade-offs, the public was primarily split; however, most of the public is more interested in improvements for city-wide travel versus regional travel. The results from this survey can be found on the project’s website: <https://coloradosprings.gov/project/connectcos>.

Ted then summarized the potential projects list which includes more than 200 potential projects. A variety of inputs and sources contributed to the working list of projects, with an emphasis on identifying projects and plans considered by other city offices that may still be relevant to today’s transportation needs (Figure 2).

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

Figure 2: This table shows the multiple sources utilized in the process of developing the list of potential projects.

Additionally, Ted emphasized that all projects were scored in terms of their relevancy to the ConnectCOS goals and their sphere of influence on the larger transportation systems. Depending on how the projects score, projects were categorized into three relevancy tiers (Figure 3):

1. “Good”: the project addressed goal driven needs
2. “Better”: the project addressed a range of goals and has a larger impact
3. “Best”: the project had the most impact for the broadest range of goals

¹ An example of an incremental versus transformational improvement tradeoff is the following: 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 more impactful over the long-term but may also require significantly more resources and sacrificing investment in other areas.

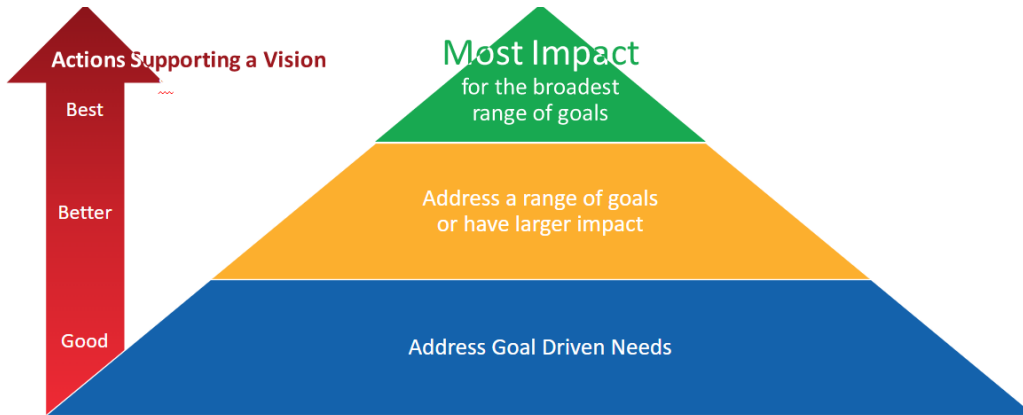


Figure 3: This chart depicts the relevancy tiers used to gauge and organize projects based on impact.

Amy Garinger (Kimley-Horn) then continued to review top proposed projects by primary investment category. There are four investment categories:

- 1) roadway
- 2) active
- 3) transit
- 4) significant studies.

Amy highlighted a sampling of projects under each category to help orient attendees to the top proposed project within each category.

The sampling of recommended roadway projects included the following:

1. North Nevada Avenue Reconstruction Phase III - Templeton Gap Floodway to Lee Street
2. Platte Avenue/Boulder Street Improvements - Wasatch to Circle
3. Cascade Avenue - Mark Dabling Connection

The sampling of recommended active projects included the following:

1. Arvada Trail Crossing - South Nevada Avenue
2. Platte Avenue Shared Use Path - Chelton to Sand Creek
3. Implement South Academy Great Streets Plan Multi-Modal Recommendations - Platte Avenue to Proby Parkway

The sampling of recommended transit projects included the following:

1. Academy Boulevard Revitalization Feasibility Study/Transit Improvements
2. Garden of the Gods Transit Service and Station Enhancements
3. Citadel Transfer Station Replacement
4. North Nevada Enhanced Transit Implementation

The sampling of recommended studies included the following:

1. Martin Luther King Bypass Corridor Study/US-24 Routing Study
2. Constitution Avenue and 1-25 Connection Feasibility Study
3. Nevada Avenue/Garden of the Gods Road/ Austin Bluffs Interchange Study

Discuss Example Critical Corridors

Chris Joannes (Kimley-Horn) built upon the review of project development to review the proposed project list as it relates to the 33 Critical Corridor segments. The project team structured the discussion to highlight four specific corridors, projects unassociated with a specific corridor, and, with time permitting, corridors that the CAC members would like to discuss.

The discussion began with highlighting the following three corridors:

- 1) Garden of the Gods Road
- 2) Academy Boulevard
- 3) Colorado Avenue

Garden of the Gods Road

Garden of the Gods Road is a West/Northwest subarea with medium traffic volume and low transit ridership. When compared to the ConnectCOS Goal Framework, the corridor has a critical need for sustainable, reliable, accessible, and connected transportation. Based on the project team's evaluation, Chris shared that there are five proposed projects, and one proposed study. Many of the proposed projects fall into the active investment category, with one transit proposed project and one roadway project.

During the discussion of the Garden of the Gods Road, attendees asked about how the inclusion of safety evacuation routes were factored into the proposed project list. Amy Garinger (Kimley-Horn) explained how, as part of the "safe" goal within the ConnectCOS Goal Framework, each project was scored and evaluated based on its relationship to the safety, which incorporates emergency response, crashes, work zones, and personal safety.

Additional discussion took place around the definition of an active project when one attendee asked the question of the difference between the active investment category and a current active project. Ted Ritschard (Olsson) explained that ongoing projects have been included in the ConnectCOS project recommendations because during evaluation they were deemed an important project to be completed. Additionally, Amy added that while attempting to categorize different projects, those categorized as roadway projects have more specific roadway operational needs; however, most roadway projects will also have active transportation component needs, as well.

Academy Boulevard

Academy Boulevard is an East/Near Southeast subarea, with high traffic volume and on somewhat high transit ridership. When compared to the ConnectCOS Goal Framework, the corridor has critical needs in safe, equitable, sustainable, and connected transportation. With that in mind, the project team recommended six projects: three active, one transit, and two roadway investment projects.

Colorado Avenue

Colorado Avenue is a West/Downtown subarea with low traffic volume, but high transit ridership. While the corridor does not have any needs deemed critical, it does still have needs in safe, equitable, reliable, accessible, and connected transportation. With that in mind, the project team recommended eight projects, and one feasibility study. Out of the eight projects, five

of them are categorized as roadway investment projects and three are considered active investment projects.

Projects unassociated with a Critical Corridor

Chris Joannes (Kimley-Horn) highlighted projects that were not associated with one of the thirty-one Critical Corridors. These projects are located primarily on the peripherals of the city. There are eleven recommended projects with seven projects considered to be roadway investment projects, and four projects to be considered active investment projects.

Chris Joannes (Kimley-Horn) then encouraged CAC attendees to raise additional Critical Corridors that would be beneficial to discuss as it relates to corridor needs and recommended projects. CAC meeting attendees prioritized the discussion of two additional corridors:

- 1) Marksheffel Road
- 2) a portion of the Nevada Avenue Corridor, in particular the downtown portion.

Marksheffel Road

There are two segments of Marksheffel road included in the study, but the CAC meeting discussion focused on the South End of the road from US 24 to Drennan Road. Projects proposed include some roadway and small improvement projects. One CAC attendee raised concern around the safety needs of the corridor. They voiced that the corridor should have a critical safety need as many roads do not have sidewalks, and the character of the lanes make it dangerous. Amy Garinger (Kimley-Horn) responded that the critical corridor needs evaluation was a standardized process to look at all corridors, and within that comparison some corridors were considered to have a higher need than other corridors. Safety was not considered to be a critical need for Marksheffel Road in comparison to the other thirty corridors.

Another CAC attendee mentioned that this critical corridor is of significant interest to their organization, and they would like to see improvements to visibility, drainage, and traffic. Amy responded to reiterate that ConnectCOS' project recommendations are a great aggregator of all city projects that have been done, are currently underway, and should be planned for the future.

Nevada Avenue

The Nevada Avenue Corridor also has many segments, so for the purpose of the meeting's discussion, the recommended projects were discussed as they related to the downtown Colorado Springs area. Nevada Avenue is a prime example of the project team's corridor travel shed approach, where the recommended projects do not fall directly on Nevada Avenue. Additionally, the corridor includes a trail update, which includes both specific and general locations across multiple corridors.

CAC attendees raised questions around the inclusion of a road diet project, and how would that be supplemented with enhanced transit options. Additional CAC concerns were raised about how a recommended road diet project on another north to south corridor could increase traffic on 1-25, which could create additional problems. Amy Garinger (Kimley-Horn) responded that the proposed road diet would include a conceptual design phase to understand how it would impact the city's larger transportation network.

Next Steps and Project Schedule

Ted Ritschard (Olsson) reminded attendees about the larger ConnectCOS Master Plan’s purpose. While this meeting focused on the list of recommended ConnectCOS projects, the plan itself will include additional components. Once complete the ConnectCOS Master Plan will propose infrastructure projects and studies from the recommended project list; additional actions, strategies, and other investments; and additional guidance documents that will inform the major throughfare plan, transit vision network, and truck routes.

Ted also explained the relationship between the ConnectCOS project list and the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA) funding source, PPRTA-3. Due to a potential PPRTA ballot initiative in 2022, approval of the project list is on a strict timeline. Ted further emphasized while ConnectCOS and PPRTA are related, they are not the same. ConnectCOS is a 20-year vision plan with the goal of advancing PlanCOS, which will require that some projects end up in PPRTA, while other projects will be funded through additional opportunities, have different timelines, or be incorporated into a component of the city’s other programmatic projects.

Lastly, Ted reviewed both the PPRTA and ConnectCOS schedules. For ConnectCOS, the project team has developed a project list, which will inform the plan’s draft. The goal is to share a draft with the CAC and the broader public for comments in early 2022. Additionally, Ted explained that all CAC members will be receiving information on the proposed projects for feedback and review before presenting the project options to the public. CAC members will return their feedback on the recommended projects to the ConnectCOS project team by Friday, December 3, 2021.

In closing, Angela Woolcott (Kearns & West) explained that the project team anticipates holding a public meeting in mid-December. CAC feedback and input will be incorporated into the meeting to share the ConnectCOS potential projects list with the broader public.

Participants

Project Team Attendees

Ted Ritschard	Olsson
Karen Aspelin	Olsson
Amy Garinger	Kimley Horn
Chris Joannes	Kimley Horn
Angela Woolcott	Kearns & West
Caitlin Sheridan	Kearns & West
Todd Frisbee	City of Colorado Springs
Tim Roberts	City of Colorado Springs
Julie Smith	City of Colorado Springs
Gayle Sturdivant	City of Colorado Springs
Craig Blewitt	City of Colorado Springs
Brian Vitulli	City of Colorado Springs

Committee Attendees

Brett Lacey	COS Fire Department
Chelsea Gondeck	Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs
Cindy Aubrey	Pikes Peak United Way
Emily Duncan	City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services
Jen Furda	University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Jim Godfrey	Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)
John Liosatos	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
Kristine Andrews	COS Airport
Nancy Henjum	City Council District 5
Nicole Odell	Bike Colorado Springs
Pat Rigdon	COS Police Department
Sara Voss	Council of Neighborhood Organizations
Tim Seibert	Nor'wood
Victoria Chavez	El Paso County Public Works
Paul Spotts	The Independence Center & Community Transit Coalition
Rodney Gullatte	Firma IT Solutions