

Colorado Springs Platte Avenue Corridor Study

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #5, Thursday, July 28th, 2022
Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

- Report on themes from the Spring 2022 public engagement
- Provide an overview of the community workshop details
- Provide an overview of the next steps

Welcome

Gayle Sturdivant (City of Colorado Springs) opened the meeting and thanked CAC members for their continued engagement, feedback, and support throughout the Platte Avenue Corridor Study. The project team then reviewed the meeting agenda. The meeting discussed the Spring 2022 public engagement milestone and the upcoming community workshop in greater detail. Meeting attendees introduced themselves in the chat. given the shorter 60-minute meeting.

Spring 2022 Public Engagement

Angela Jo Woolcott (Kearns & West) and Lyle DeVries (Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU)) provided an overview of the Spring 2022 engagement. Throughout May and June, the project team held five public meetings combined with the ConnectCOS project on May 16, 17, 25, 31, and June 7. The Platte Avenue Corridor Study initially planned to hold three public meetings but was included at two additional open houses due to increased community interest. All open house materials were posted on the project website to allow those unable to attend an open house an opportunity to review the materials and provide feedback. The combined open houses saw over 200 community members and collected 121 unique comment cards related to Platte Avenue and 55 project emails during this time.

To promote the open houses, the project team led two waves of promotional activity:

- First Wave: May 12 and 13
- Second Wave: May 19 and 20

Promotional activities included the distribution of a joint bilingual meeting flyer. The flyer was distributed on all Mountain Metro Transit (MMT) buses and dropped at recreation centers, libraries, and community gathering spots in each City Council district (approximately 4-5 locations within each district). Additionally, flyers were distributed online to a Platte Avenue Corridor Study distribution list. Members who lived along the corridor also received a direct mailing newsletter providing an overview of the project and announcing the upcoming open houses. In partnership with the City of Colorado Springs communication department, the open houses were also promoted on social media and through media advisories. News coverage of the open houses included the Colorado Springs Independent, The Gazette, KOAA News, KRDO, and Colorado Public Radio (CPR).

Angela then reviewed what was heard throughout the public open houses. Primary feedback themes heard at the open houses are included below. More information on the background, context, and feedback from the open houses can be found in the Platte Avenue Corridor Study Open Houses Summary.

Support

- Improving safety, efficiency in mitigating traffic, and increased access to multimodal transportation

- Beautification efforts in Eastern Reaches (e.g., the inclusion of medians and expanded tree coverage)
- Increasing local access to Downtown
- Downtown traffic calming and lane reduction

Concerns

Middle Shooks Run

- Neighborhood character concerns: neighborhood aesthetic impacts, maintain historic medians, increased traffic congestion and noise, and impact on daily lives
- Safety concerns: access to schools and hospitals in the area, increased traffic in neighborhood alleyways, and lack of protected bicycle lanes
- Hospital access concerns: delayed emergency response times
- Parking impacts: increase in residential parking if hospital parking is removed
- Efficacy concerns: feasibility of one-way couplet, downtown connectivity is not an issue, and do not see a need for additional bike lanes
- Cost concerns: perceived cost of project for taxpayers and stressed a desire to fix existing roads first

Downtown

- Changes to the Platte Avenue and Nevada Avenue intersection, including the lowering or moving of the General Palmer statue

Eastern Reaches

- Proposed multimodal improvements at the Academy Boulevard intersection have the potential to cause confusion
- Consider the potential for increased speeds and less accessibility with widening

The project team then paused to receive questions and comments from the CAC. CAC members raised questions about what feedback was received regarding the shared use path in the Eastern Reaches to the mid-corridor and the Shooks Run Trail crossing. The project team will look to review the open house feedback on this topic specifically, and how it relates to larger concerns about the City's trail system.

In addition to the open houses, a meeting held on June 9th at Switchback Coffee Roasters provided a forum for community members who live in the Middle Shooks Run neighborhood. Over 100 attendees participated in a discussion facilitated by the Middle Shooks Run Neighborhood Association (MSRNA)'s President Cheryl Downey, with additional attendance from the project team and Councilwoman Nancy Henjum. The topics included clarification regarding alternatives and the study process, traffic conditions/data, local and regional access, circulation of the one-way couplet, and multimodal needs.

The open houses advanced draft recommended alternatives to meet the multiple functional objectives and character area ambitions for the Platte Avenue corridor. From public feedback gathered at the open houses and the MSRNA meeting, the project team concluded that attendees supported the study's objectives and ambitions; however, numerous neighbors in the central corridor, especially along Boulder Street, expressed opposition to the one-way couplet. After receiving this feedback, the project team broadened their efforts to identify additional options that would meet the corridor's functional objectives.

The project team then paused to receive questions and comments from the CAC. Questions were asked about consensus building and the format of the open house. Since the project initially started during Covid which required virtual engagement, it was decided to create a more open format to accommodate the public's range in comfort level for in-person public gatherings. Additionally, the open house format

allows flexibility for attendees to visit specific stations that meet their interests. In addition to the spacious format and the self-directed nature of the open houses, the format also allowed all materials to be digitalized for review and comment by those who were unable to attend the open houses. CAC members raised an additional comment that while the open house format was great for answering individuals' questions to the project team, it prevented more extensive interactions among community members. The City expressed that the open house format allowed them to receive more tailored feedback from the community, in addition to the larger public feedback themes.

Community Workshop Details

Lyle transitioned the group to then discuss the upcoming Central Platte Community Workshop. The community workshops will focus on upholding the needs, functional objectives, and character area ambitions identified through the study process to date. The project team plans to collaborate with stakeholders and the public to develop additional alternatives that do not involve a Platte Avenue/Boulder Street one-way couplet between Wahsatch Avenue and the Boulder Street/Platte Avenue intersection. The goals of the Central Platte Community Workshop include:

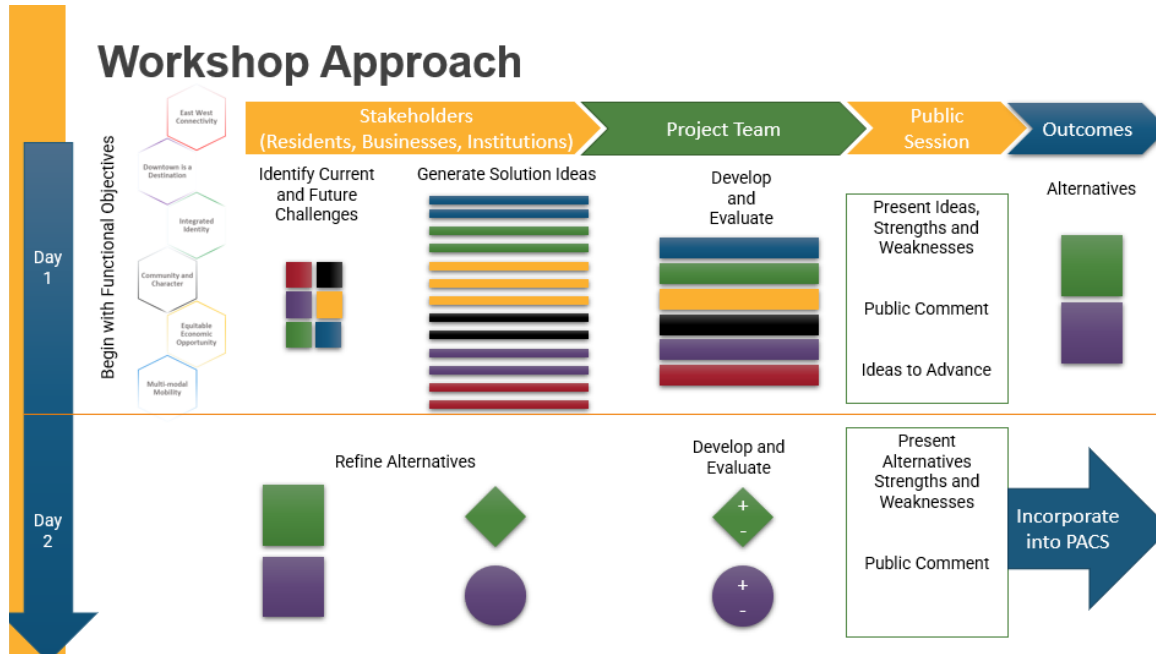
- Increase the trust and collaborative momentum with the central corridor community
- Find a promising idea or ideas that can be incorporated into the draft Platte Avenue Corridor Plan

The workshops will take place over two days, August 1 and 2. The first day will start with small-group stakeholder focus group sessions to identify current and future challenges and generate solutions and ideas. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- El Paso area, including the Shooks Run Trail at Boulder Street
- Major intersections: traffic volume, growth, and traffic operations
- Knob Hill area: land use development, speed management, parking and street section (public realm design), Platte Avenue and Boulder Street intersection
- Middle Shooks Run area: speed management, parking, and street section
- Overall roadway design for Platte: traffic volume growth, speed management, parking, and street sections
- Businesses, schools, and institutions access and circulation
- Creating multimodal connections (transit, bicycle, and pedestrian)

Following the focus groups, the project team will meet to develop and evaluate the feedback from the first stakeholder session. The day will conclude with a public session to present what the project team heard and developed while allowing the public to provide feedback. The second day will focus on refining and evaluating alternatives inviting stakeholders to join in the afternoon to provide additional feedback. A second public session will occur on Day 2.

Figure 1: Central Platte Community Workshop Approach



Lyle invited CAC members to join and participate in the Central Platte Corridor Workshops. Sessions that CAC members are encouraged to join are highlighted in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Day 1 Agenda and CAC Involvement

Day 1	Session	Details
9:30 to 10 AM	Internal Kickoff	Review of Agenda Set up Space
10 AM to Noon	Focus Group Meetings	Introduction to the project and meeting goals Breakout group discussion Group debriefing and sharing of ideas Select a list of possible solutions and options to consider
Noon to 1 PM	Technical Team Recap	Project team debrief
1 to 4 PM	Technical Team Work Session #1	Develop potential alternatives based on Focus Group meetings direction
4 to 5:30 PM	Public Session Dry Run & Preparations	Review public session materials with the focus group meeting participants, CAC, and EOC members
5:30 to 7:00 PM	Public Session #1 City Administration Building Room 102	Evaluate and narrow the range of alternatives Receive general direction from the public to develop preferred alternatives on Day 2

Table 2. Day 2 Agenda and CAC Involvement

Day 2	Session	Details
8:30 to 9:30 AM	Day 1 Debrief	What did we learn from the Focus Group meetings and Public Sessions #1? Develop a strategy to review alternatives
9:30 to 10:30 AM	Stakeholder Session to Refine Alternatives	Stakeholders from Focus Group meetings, CAC, and EOC are invited to join to discuss and confirm direction for alternatives refinement
10:30 AM to 4 PM	Technical Team Work Session #2	Refine two preferred alternatives Public drop-in hours Prepare presentation for Public Session #2
4 to 5 PM	Public Session Dry Run and Preparations	Review public session materials with the focus group meeting participants, CAC, and EOC members
5:30 to 6:30 PM	Public Session #2 City Administration Building Room 102	Evaluate refined alternatives Define next steps and actions to advance design solutions

In addition to CAC members, the project team invited 27 stakeholders to participate in focus group sessions representing the MSRNA, Save our Streets (SOS) Group, the Knob Hill Urban Arts District, businesses and institutions along the corridor, and residents. Promotional activities for the workshops included an announcement on the project website, NextDoor, an e-blast, and a digital flyer.

The project team received multiple questions and comments from the CAC regarding the upcoming workshops. CAC members sought clarity on how incremental alternatives would be incorporated into the workshops' alternative development. At this time, the project team will not be explicitly including the incremental alternatives in the workshops, but elements of the incremental alternative could emerge in the discussions.

CAC members also asked a few logistical questions regarding the upcoming workshop regarding who was leading the workshops, where to find the detailed agenda, who was invited to the workshops as stakeholders, and what participation requirements were for those participating. In response, the project team elaborated on the lead technical partner and the details of the first public meeting and focus group sessions on day 1. Design Workshop will be the lead during the Central Platte Corridor Workshop sessions. The schedule and the workshop process will be introduced to the public during the first public session, and it will invite feedback through different engagement mechanisms like polling. Regarding the workshop stakeholders, they will each participate in one of the focus group sessions. The project team is willing to be flexible and adapt their approach as they feel necessary throughout the workshops.

Next Steps

Lyle then closed the meeting by asking that any outstanding questions or comments be sent to the project team for further clarification. The meeting concluded by thanking the CAC members for their continuous engagement throughout the project, hoping to see them at the upcoming Central Platte Corridor Workshops.

Participants

Project Team Attendees

Name	Organization
Ted Ritschard	Olsson
Kelly Leadbetter	FHU
Lyle DeVries	FHU
Ana Laybourn	Design Workshop
Eric Gunderson	Kimley-Horn
Angela Jo Woolcott	Kearns & West
Zach Barr	Kearns & West
Gayle Sturdivant	City of Colorado Springs
Todd Frisbee	City of Colorado Springs

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Attendees

Name	Organization
Steve Noblitt	City of Colorado Springs Police Department
Danelle Miller	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
Allen Beauchamp	Trails and Open Space Coalition
Chelsea Gondeck	Downtown Partnership
Mike Chaves	City of Colorado Springs
Laura Crews	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
Terry Johns	School District 11 Facilities
Nancy Henjum	City of Colorado Springs City Council District 5
Tim Seibert	Norwood
Jerry White	Bike Colorado Springs
Kate Brady	City of Colorado Springs Planning/Bicycle