COLORADO COLLEGE

Transportation Master Plan

Working Group Meeting Summary
Jan. 29, 2013
4-7 p.m.
Slocum Commons

Welcome/Reviews

- Lisa Bachman opened the meeting by welcoming participants; reviewing the results of previous meetings, and explaining that the process is a collaborative approach to make recommendations for the Transportation Master Plan.
- She also explained how this study will fit with Colorado College's (CC) Long Range Development Plan and master plans developed by the Downtown Partnership and the Old North End Neighborhood (ONEN).
- The review included a discussion of the project goals, and the project schedule.
- Lisa pointed out the list of alternatives and community values the working group developed during the Dec. 18 meeting.
- She explained that Kathleen Krager, city traffic engineer, is at the meeting to discuss the alternatives and acceptability to the city based on how the meet city standards, whether they are a potential liability, or if they won't achieve their intended purpose.
- Lisa reminded the working group that the approach to the plan is system-wide and should be synergistic with other organizations' master plans.
- She told the group to take a balanced approach that considers the needs and desires of the community and the college.

Review roles, responsibilities

- Lisa reminded the working group that they represent various groups and interests and to bring group input to the meetings and to actively participate.
- She reviewed the ground rules and the new items added since the last meeting. She mentioned that two public comment periods have been built into the schedule rather than one to assure that the Working Group had more opportunity to hear citizen's thoughts and comments.
- Dave Munger offered that streets and sidewalks should be comfortable places for pedestrians and that the three master plans (downtown, CC, ONEN) reflect a community value.

Consensus to date

Lisa reviewed where the Working Group has reached consensus so far in the process:

1. Goals/purpose of the study (to develop a plan for short-term and long-term safety for pedestrians/bicyclists and autos alike, and mobility in and around the campus)
2. Role of the Working Group: to inform the plan through a collaborative process, analyze current conditions for mobility and safety, identify and evaluate conflict areas to safety and mobility, recommend future improvements that balance needs/interests of the college, neighborhoods, the City/staff, downtown, and the community-at-large
3. List of community values
4. List of potential alternatives for further discussion/analysis
5. The ultimate plan needs both short-term and long-term alternatives identified
6. A system-wide approach to the plan

7. Traffic calming needs to be part of the solution
8. Lighting, crosswalks, signage, parking, bicycles need to be addressed
9. Limiting/reducing the number of crosswalks
10. Work towards informed consent (where not everyone gets everything they want, but will seek to develop a plan the group can generally support)

Colorado College profile (see separate PDF: Colorado_College_Profile)

- Tim Seibert reviewed the college profile to provide working group members a better understanding of the campus and its history.
- He explained how CC operates on a block system vs. semesters. Students focus on one class during each 3-week block.

Community Values/Criteria discussion (see separate PDF: Community_Values/Criteria_rev Jan 29, 2013))

- Lisa reviewed the measureable criteria list and explained the desire to move the community values toward measureable criteria**.**
- She explained that some of the criteria, while important, could be difficult to measure.
- Tim Seibert explained the importance of using the measureable criteria to evaluate the alternatives offered by the working group.
- Input offered by the Working Group:
    - **Rick Villa:** I think courtesy is a measureable criterion. Drivers should be more patient and pedestrians should be more cognizant of waiting traffic. I watched the video posted on the website and counted 185 pedestrians, several bicyclists, six skateboarders as well as how drivers and pedestrians interact. I think pedestrians should acknowledge drivers by making eye contact and offering a quick wave of thanks. I also noted that most pedestrians in the video are students.
    - **Ryan Tefertiller:** Can you be more specific about measureable criteria? How do you measure neighborliness? **Tim Seibert:** It is difficult to quantify some of these criteria, but it might be more appropriate to look at how does the alternative fit the criteria.
    - **David Watts:** Students should be more courteous to and acknowledge drivers. They rarely look up when they cross the streets.
    - **Kathleen Krager:** The more we design crosswalks to make pedestrians feel safe; the less interaction there will be between drivers and pedestrians. Signs and lights at crosswalks provide pedestrians the feeling of safety. It is possible to design in such a way that pedestrians feel too safe and don't look when crossing the street.
    - **Tim Roberts:** The measureable criteria could be positive or could be negative. We may have to use a weighted scale to accurately evaluate the alternatives.
    - **Tim Seibert:** Can courtesy be measured?
    - **Rick Villa:** The College should educate students about acknowledging drivers, and neighbors need to be more aware of their surroundings while on campus.
    - **Rachel Beck:** When I stop at a crosswalk, I don't expect a pedestrian to thank me for doing what is the law. I am in the 2000-pound vehicle and should defer to the pedestrian whether he/she acknowledges me or not. I think the values of safety and convenience are more important than courtesy.
    - **Robert Moore:** We should add two criteria. One, is it acceptable to the city. Two, is it cost effective and feasible.
    - **Garrett Benisch:** I think health and fitness should be used as a measureable criterion. Runners, walkers and bikers use the campus. There's an emphasis on healthy lifestyles in Colorado Springs and on campus.
    - **Mark Tremmel:** Sustainability also can be measured. Colorado College has a sustainability plan. We need to consider how many times cars stop for pedestrians and traffic lights. How does that contribute to pollution on campus?
    - **Kathleen Krager:** It's easier to measure increased traffic delays. Otherwise, you'd have to measure the carbon footprint of the entire city. There are some traffic analysis measures we

can use to measure delay. This also ties to neighborliness in terms of pushing traffic from one street to another.
    - **Dave Munger:** We have to look at this as an entire system. All the local streets are connected and are interdependent.
    - **Mark Tremmel:** We have to change our mindset that the streets on and around the campus are high-speed arterials.

Alternatives Review (see separate PDF: Alternatives_Jan. 29, 2013))
Kathleen Krager reviewed the alternatives list created during the Dec. 18 Working Group meeting. She identified those alternatives that, for several reasons, should be dropped from consideration because they don't meet city standards, they are a potential liability, or they won't achieve their intended purpose.

The alternatives removed from further consideration are:

- **Pedestrian tables** – These are used at elementary schools to make students taller and more visible. One challenge is that skateboarders don't have to slow down when crossing over the pedestrian table. This decreases safety. Tables also might give pedestrians a false sense of security.

- **Rumble strips** – They are a liability, a maintenance issue, and create noise issues.

- **Speed bumps** – Don't slow traffic. Drivers slow for the bump, speed up until they reach the next bump then slam on the brakes. Speed bumps are not appropriate at crosswalks on streets.

- **Closing Cascade Avenue** – Closing Cascade would move traffic from Cascade to other streets. This alternative creates a far bigger political problem. To carry this alternative forward requires discussions at a much higher level. This doesn't preclude reducing the number of lanes on Cascade and other streets in a system-wide approach.

  Many drivers already avoid the campus section of Cascade by finding alternative routes. Reducing the number of lanes doesn't mean drivers will find alternate routes, but it will increase pedestrian safety by removing the possibility of a driver in an adjacent lane not seeing a pedestrian. Kathleen Krager said she is in favor of reducing the number of lanes in spots system wide.

- **Lower speed limits** – Reducing posted speeds on Cascade won't slow traffic. Speeds are determined by how comfortable drivers are with their surroundings. However, speeds could be lowered through design elements.

- **Roundabouts** – spits cars out of roundabout at a constant rate. This isn't a good option for pedestrians since roundabouts spit cars out at a constant rate, which isn't effective if you're trying to create gaps in traffic.

- **Mid-block crosswalk controls** – If pedestrians won't press the button at an intersection's crosswalk and wait for the light, they won't be patient at a mid-block crosswalk.

- **Sid Shelton:** Would a mid-block crosswalk work at Tejon/Uintah? **Kathleen Krager:** We can look at another solution for that intersection.

- **Signalizing the Wood and Uintah intersection**– A signal is not warranted and the neighborhood wouldn't want one there.

- **Crossing guard** – This alternative isn't feasible.

- **Pace car** – While these have been used successfully in some areas, this isn't feasible in this instance.

- **Question:** Can't traffic lights be timed to make it easier for pedestrians to cross Cascade and not impede traffic? **Kathleen Krager:** Pedestrians aren't patient enough to wait and will find gaps in traffic to cross Cascade.

- **Closing Cache la Poudre west of Cascade and Wood Avenue at Uintah** – These are not feasible alternatives.

  Landscaped areas won't be removed to lengthen turn lanes. If a median must be impacted, it must be replaced.

  The city will not install pedestrian flashing lights at the Nevada Avenue crosswalk.

  Judith Rice-Jones: Curb visibility at night needs to be addressed at intersections.

Public Comment

- **James Beechwood:** He commended Kathleen Krager for her participation and input. He suggested prioritizing the criteria: It fits with the long-range plan; it's well-planned infrastructure; it improves safety; it contributed to neighborhood cohesion.

  He said the College switchboard didn't have the working group meeting information.

  He advocates a pedestrian overpass and installing a median barrier to prevent students from jaywalking.

  He believes the criteria for analyzing the alternative should include:
  --long range approach
  --well-planned multi-modal
  --safety
  --community cohesion

- **Mark Useman:** He would like the group to hear comments from the public during the group's discussion and not just during the public comment periods. He said it's the only way you're going to get public input during your discussions.

  He said citizen safety must be the first priority. You have to eliminate opportunities for jaywalking. You're gumming up the neighborhood if you reduce the number of lanes on Cascade. He also advocates building pedestrian bridges to remove crossing hazards.

  If the number of lanes were to be reduced on various streets surrounding the campus, are you also talking about reducing lanes east and west? How will that impact homeowners? When looking at reducing lanes, look system wide and take into consideration the ONEN and Downtown Partnership studies.

- **Judith Rice-Jones:** She said she's not convinced pedestrian tables won't work. They work quite well in Boulder, Golden and Portland. She said that AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) recommends considering adjacent land uses with transportation planning. The website can be accessed at: www.transportation.org

Other comments:

- The group was encouraged by one of the members to go online and read any studies that have been conducted on designing "walkable communities" for a health, vibrant city.

- Refer to the study done by Michael Wallwork, President of Alternative Street Design in Orange Park, Florida, is a renowned traffic engineer who advocates for roundabouts. His opinions can be read at: www.roundabouts.net

- Pay attention to (AASHTO) American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials arterial criteria for urban areas. It can be found at: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/flex/ch04.htm

- Geoffrey Stack, Stack Strategy, conducted a charrette in Colorado Springs several years ago. Did we learn anything from that process? The process basically indicated that we should not build our city around the automobile. We should be more pedestrian friendly. Review his concepts at: www.stackstrategy.com

- Our control points need to be cohesive and balance the interests of both autos and pedestrians.

- Books to read that are relevant to this study:
  - *Suburban Nation* and *Walkable City*, both by Jeff Speck.

- Website to visit: Dan Burden of Walkable Communities: www.walklive.org

- Look at other communities and how they have handled similar situations as case studies:
  - Baltimore
  - Boulder
  - Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio

- Look at bringing in an example of a horizontal illumination light.

- Regardless of which light is used, it should be consistent throughout the area.

- The city should not be built for cars. Let's learn something from the past. We need to harken back to a vibrant downtown and residential areas. It's time for city to act decisively.

- Establish control points for pedestrian crossings, and don't tear down historic buildings to create additional parking.

- We should not compare the Colorado College pedestrian situation and its crosswalks to those of an elementary school. The underpass for students at Steele Elementary School was a disaster. We don't want Berlin-style walls to stop pedestrians in America.

- You can't put a wall along the median on Cascade to prevent students from crossing. It would be aesthetically poor decision and they would jump it anyway.

- Was a study done before the flashing lights were added to the crosswalks at Colorado College?

- We need a design solution rather than trying to force pedestrians to do something they refuse to do.

- Add to the list of streets being considered for traffic calming for a more inclusive list: (Weber, Wahsatch, Cache la Poudre, Nevada, Tejon, Uintah, Corona and Wood)

Pros and Cons

The Working Group reviewed the remaining alternatives and discussed the pros and cons of each in an effort to identify those for further study and those to eliminate from consideration.

Pedestrian bridge over Cascade/tunnel over/under Cascade – Keep
To make these alternatives work, you have to close access to Cascade from sidewalks (drastic) to funnel pedestrians to overpass/tunnel.

Working Group comments:

- This will impact the "one campus" feeling desired by CC.
- This option is over the top for many reasons and should not be considered.
- Bridge design can be done to be aesthetically pleasing and functional.
- This alternative can be done. A good example is in Westminster, Colo.

Pros: Safety
Cons: Cost, height of overpass, and number of required crossings; speeds will increase on Cascade through the campus, the overpass will impact historic preservation (changes campus), and the structural impositions on medians and overall aesthetics.

Tunnel length of Cascade under campus – Remove

Elevated skywalks between buildings – Remove
Cons: Still need pedestrian crossings, most pedestrians won't use it, not a practical use of college facilities, cost
Pros: Right-of-way above road could be sold for office space

Bump outs at crossing points – Keep

Lane reductions – Keep

Striping – Keep

Combined crosswalks/gathering points – Keep

Medians – Keep

Landscaping – Keep

Parking – Keep

Consider traffic calming on the surrounding street system *– but add Tejon, Uintah, Corona, Wood Avenue – Keep*

Test traffic-calming measures for effectiveness – Keep *Kathleen Krager: We can test certain things, but you have to allow for computer modeling and trust professional opinion. Testing will be used when appropriate and possible.*

Add bicycle lanes along Cascade – Keep

Establish pedestrian connections between Fine Arts Center/CC – Keep

Reduce number of lanes on Cascade and Nevada – keep*, but expands to include the street system surrounding the campus. Add parking when possible.*

Speed reduction to 30 mph through design elements for pedestrians and vehicles – Keep

Modify Cascade/Uintah intersection – Keep

Modify Nevada/Uintah intersection – Keep

Remove/change flashing lights on Cascade – keep*, some neighborhoods outside of campus ask for crosswalk signage similar to CC*

Make street designs, signing, and crosswalks uniform – Keep

Reduce pedestrian crossings on Cascade – Keep

Reduce pedestrian crossings on Nevada – Keep

Modify crosswalk signage on Cascade; on Nevada – Keep

Modify crosswalk markings on Cascade; on Nevada – Keep

Improve pedestrian crosswalk lighting – Keep

Light crosswalks from below – Keep

Parking
Kathleen Krager*: Don't add parking near crosswalks; it impedes the ability to see vehicles and pedestrians*

Parking changes should be examined system wide. There should be a system-wide parking plan that examines impacts to neighborhoods.

Build underground parking – perhaps as part of a development, but not likely to happen on campus. Structure parking may be necessary to improve pedestrian safety.

New facility placement to optimize pedestrian safety – Keep

Changing class start times – Remove

Review case studies – Being done

Continue educating pedestrians/drivers – Keep

Pace car – Remove

Collaboration between FAC/Money Museum/CC – Keep

Kady Hommel: Is it feasible to capture studies done in the past and post them so everyone has access to them.

Public Comment
James Beechwood: Can anyone from the public become a member of the working group? I don't feel I'm being represented by anyone on the group.

Diagonal parking – pulling out of a parking space into traffic isn't safe.
Changing look to Colorado College – College doesn't care about the rest of the community.
Too much money for overpasses – they spent money for crosswalk lights, cost concerns shouldn't trump safety.
Median fence – can be attractive and effective
Why spend money on bike lanes when bicyclists don't currently use them?

Mark Useman: How far east/west and north/south do lane reductions reach? Past proposals haven't successfully passed city council.
Who's going to determine if lane reductions are feasible? (Studies will be done by FHU and reviewed by city traffic engineering.)

Lisa Bachman closed the meeting by reminding Working Group members that this is just one step of many to develop a plan that will address mobility and safety concerns of CC and surrounding areas.

She reminded group members to share this information with their constituents. Forward e-newsletters and ensure people are informed.

Next Meeting

The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 26, 4 to 6:30 p.m.
NOTE: The venue of the Feb. 26 Working Group meeting has subsequently been changed to the first floor, Great Hall of Armstrong Hall.