

# COLORADO COLLEGE

## Transportation Master Plan

Working Group Meeting Summary

May 1, 2013

4 - 5:30 p.m.

Gates Common Room, Palmer Hall

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### **Welcome/Reviews**

- Lisa Bachman opened the meeting by welcoming participants and reviewing the format for the meeting.
- Lisa and Tim Seibert reviewed the Transportation Master Plan process, the Working Group's role in the study, the open and collaborative public process that has taken place and the Working Group's recommendations for system-wide improvements following the February 26 workshop.
- Following the review, Steve Marsh and David Swint, PhD, disagreeing with the Working Group's recommendation, presented their opinion supporting construction of a pedestrian tunnel under Cascade Avenue.
- Following the review, Working Group participants and members of the public were provided an opportunity to offer comments and questions.
- Steve Marsh and David Swint gave a presentation in support of constructing a tunnel to promote pedestrian safety. They believe a cost-effective and safe tunnel can be built well below the price discussed during the Feb. 26 workshop. Dick Sullivan took photos of the Boulder tunnel used in Dr. Swint's presentation and he believes the Boulder tunnel structure concept, because design standards today are different than in the past, will not create a safety issue.

### **Working Group Comments**

- An objection was made by a Working Group member to "the last minute presentation" in opposition to the Working Group's recommendation. Opposes tunnel for, among other reasons, security issues and concern about safety at night.
- Appreciates the hard work done by Steve Marsh and his group; however, the group's approach needs to be system-wide, not just address pedestrian safety on Cascade Avenue. Safety outside of the Colorado College campus needs to be considered, also. I am pleased with the system-wide approach the working group asked Colorado College and NES to further develop and propose. The Working Group's recommendations deserve a full hearing.

I have reviewed crash rates reported during an earlier Working Group meeting, including vehicle-to-vehicle, pedestrian vs. vehicle. Wider lanes will promote faster vehicle speeds which goes against the community values. A fence in the media of Cascade Avenue will detract from aesthetics and also doesn't meet the community values. Crosswalks can be redesigned to promote safety.

- I drive, jog, walk, bike through campus and support the system-wide approach of the Working Group. Lighting throughout the area needs attention; it is currently too dark to promote safe pedestrian passage. I support the open neighborhood approach proposed to make it easier to reach the campus. I appreciate other thoughts, but let's focus on the recommended system-wide approach. While I don't agree with absolutely everything in the system-wide solution, I do like what I hear overall.

- Who is going to pay for these improvements? What will they cost? Will system-wide improvements decrease traffic in the area?  
Tim Seibert: The cost estimate is for the system-wide solution is approximately \$6-10 million to make all recommended improvements. The 2040 traffic projections increase traffic 5% on surrounding roads given their current configuration. With improvements, traffic is expected to increase approximately 2%. The improvements would have a slight calming affect on the road system.

Where will current north-south traffic divert? / Response: To Interstate-25.

How will it get there? / Response: The travel pattern could be via Uintah, or via Bijou.

How does traffic get from Fontanero to I-25? / Response: Traffic counts indicate that 35% of traffic on Fontanero turns onto Wahsatch. Traffic diminishes as it heads west on Fontanero.

- The Working Group, which it seemed morphed into something larger than was first intended with it's system-wide approach, did have good recommendations, but the initial focus seemed to expand to a system-wide approach. In my opinion, it appears the college wants to reduce lanes on Cascade, and that the study was never intended to address safety, but rather to further isolate the campus.
- I'd like to thank the project team for allowing this public comment period. A pedestrian tunnel would be a good way to reduce vehicle accidents. The Working Group recommendation seems to be a Colorado College, Old North End Neighborhood, downtown solution – not a system-wide solution. Public outreach wasn't quite wide enough because many people in my neighborhood were unaware of this meeting. I believe that narrowing streets will push traffic to Wood Avenue and Corona Street, so I am against the system-wide approach.
- What's the cost of just doing the traffic calming options?  
Tim Seibert – I will get those figures.
- All the planning work done to date gives me respect for the process. Our wide roads were designed to handle the traffic before the interstate was built. Planners/designers are now taking different approaches to calm traffic. Instead of grade-separated structures, we need to accept the “messy” things that are part of a good city. We need to connect neighborhoods, not segregate them.
- Mike Edmonds, Colorado College – Thanks to everyone for participating in this public dialogue. Colorado College has responsibility to be a good neighbor and we will never be a closed campus. We need to use the campus to connect Colorado Springs with the Old North End and other neighborhoods, and a system-wide approach addresses the many traffic issues that have developed over the years. Major thoroughfares go through this campus and that won't change. The system-wide approach serves our citizens, the college, and the city well. Safety is paramount for the college.
- I'm a longtime supporter of the college and of downtown Colorado Springs. Former Colorado College engineer Jim Crossey was very concerned about student safety. He studied similar campuses and found that students didn't use the grade-separated structures. I don't support grade-separated tunnel or bridge structures.
- I-25 traffic widening was supposed to take traffic away from the Old North End neighborhood. That hasn't happened. Roundabouts on Cascade Avenue were recommended following a previous traffic study. That never happened. I want to remind you that medians are on the national historic register. Trees are an integral part of our environment and shouldn't be sacrificed. There are many ways to implement traffic calming and they should be considered. I appreciate the community concern for the campus and surrounding neighborhoods. The UCCS tunnel is effective, but isn't feasible on Colorado College campus. I support traffic calming on Fontanero Street. We need to protect pedestrians.

- I live close to campus and have two children at Steele Elementary School. As a Girl Scout leader, I approached city council about a crosswalk near the school. Through that process, I learned that making any change would have traffic impacts well beyond that intersection. A system-wide approach is the best way to fairly deal with neighborhood concerns. Identifying an acceptable grade-separated solution will be challenging. I appreciate Colorado College looking at a variety of solutions.
- I have concerns for the neighborhood. Colorado College sits between downtown and the Penrose Hospital complex. I'm concerned about emergency responder access to hospital since Cascade and Nevada are the two major routes to the hospital. We need to study this more. We shouldn't go to city council yet. I support grade-separated options to improve pedestrian safety.
- I support making the neighborhood more walkable and adding bike lanes. I initially supported the pedestrian tunnel concept, but I don't think it will be good for pedestrians and will further separate the college from neighborhoods.
- I continue to support a streetcar system from downtown past Colorado College to UCCS. If Nevada Avenue is narrowed in spots, how will that impact the future of a potential streetcar system?
- I have a long history at Colorado College. I lived in the north end for more than 60 years. I support a fence in the Cascade Avenue median to prevent pedestrians from crossing. Don't restrict lanes on Cascade or Nevada. Revert to the original crosswalks at Cache La Poudre and Uintah. Who's going to pay for the recommended improvements? I thought I heard Colorado College's representative say the college isn't going to pay for grade-separated structures. Why are there so many representatives from the Old North End neighborhood? Are they representing the Old North End Neighborhood or Colorado College?
- The recommended approach ignores how traffic will be forced to other streets if Cascade and Nevada are reduced to one lane in each direction in spots. The proposed changes will endanger young children who are more prevalent in the neighborhoods. Traffic at Cascade and Uintah is heavy during rush hour; it would be worse if lanes were reduced on Cascade and Nevada. The heavier traffic will make it difficult to leave or enter downtown. Downtown development will be impeded if lanes are reduced on Cascade and Nevada. Don't force emergency responders to drive I-25 to reach Penrose Hospital. Neighborhood development around campuses in other cities enhances both the cities and colleges. Colorado College pedestrians need to act like they live in a city. There should be no special accommodations for pedestrians. They should stop, look, listen like they're crossing a railroad track.
- I'm Colorado Springs native. I've been told Cascade was the city's first paved street. I thought this issue (Cascade Avenue) was put to bed a few years ago. Pedestrians and vehicles should be able to find a way to coexist. Traffic calming is not the best approach to accommodate pedestrians. They need to be responsible for their safety by looking both ways. Vehicles stopped for pedestrians pose environmental issues. We need to keep vehicles moving.
- Wasn't this subject fought many times in the past? I propose a time out. This is an internal Colorado College problem and shouldn't be open to the community. Colorado College can solve this.
- It would behoove Colorado College to thoroughly investigate the pedestrian tunnel option. If there's a security issue, the college should be able to hire additional security personnel to protect students. The traffic calming proposals are moving much too fast. The traffic calming recommendations will inhibit growth and impede traffic flow to downtown Colorado Springs. The technical team hasn't identified where lane reductions on Cascade and other streets will begin and end. You're going to cause problems if you follow through with the lane recommendations. What is Colorado College willing to pay for? I understand the college won't pay for grade-separated structures. The recommendations need further thought. The college is looking for outside funding for campus improvements. I think it's too early to

present to the Citizens Transportation Advisory Board. Re-evaluate the cost estimates. What's the plan for Nevada Avenue? The college hasn't done enough to protect pedestrians on campus. Flashing lights and poor lighting at crosswalks isn't enough.

- I've lived near Steele Elementary for 13 years. What's the implementation order for the safety improvements? I'm not aware of anyone from the city who is concerned with safety near the school. I believe the college's desire is to close Cascade. This is an opportunity to examine what road dieting will do to neighborhoods. What have the traffic impacts been to Cascade since the bridge closure on Nevada? I oppose road dieting until further information is available on traffic impacts.  
Tim Seibert: the traffic impacts to Cascade since the bridge closure on Nevada have not been significant.
- I support the Working Group's system-wide solution. Once I heard the presentation from the traffic engineer during the February 26 workshop, I was convinced the system-wide solution is the best option because it addresses many issues throughout all the streets, not just on one street. The system-wide approach, among many other improvements, addresses concerns at Steele Elementary School.
- I live on the corner of Wood and Uintah. We can't implement pedestrian safety improvements that will impede traffic. Students at Steele Elementary School need more attention than Colorado College pedestrians. The college has done a wonderful job of improvements over the years and they don't need to do anything to Cascade in the future.
- The immediate concern seems to be determining how lane reductions on Cascade will impact Nevada, Weber and Wahsatch. What will the impacts be to small side streets as lanes reductions are implemented? How does diagonal parking impact safety?
- Implement crosswalks with traffic control signals.
- On-street parking is traffic calming. Every time Colorado College does something on campus, it reduces parking. That needs to be addressed.