

COLORADO COLLEGE

Transportation Master Plan

Working Group Meeting -- Summary (FINAL)

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2012

4 – 6:30 p.m.

Slocum Hall

- Approximately 35 people attended the Kick-off Working Group Meeting.
- President Jill Tiefenthaler opened the meeting with an introduction and overview of the purpose and goals for the study.
- The group took a walking tour around the campus along Nevada Avenue, Cascade Avenue and Cache la Poudre Street as well as visited the Cascade/Uintah St. intersection.
- Tim Seibert informed the group of the relationship of this study with the College's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and highlighted some of the transportation improvements made during the past two years in and around the College. The campus footprint and buildings have expanded over the past 20 years while the student population has not. Participants asked about the college's building plans over the next 20 years. A link to the LRDP is currently located on the College website. A link will also be included on the Working Group website page, anticipated to be posted in December.
- Lisa Bachman briefed the group on their roles as members of the Working Group representing constituents and citizen groups and discussed the timeline for the Working Group process.

Next meetings:

Public Open House, Tuesday, Dec. 4 from 4 to 6 pm

Working Group, Tuesday, Dec. 18, from 4 to 6 pm

Walking tour observations:

Pedestrian Safety

- Traffic was respectful to pedestrians. When pedestrians are crossing at the crosswalks, the traffic generally stopped to allow them to cross, but not always.
- There appears to be more pedestrian activity on Cascade Avenue than on Nevada Avenue. There are more student activities west of Cascade Avenue. The Student Union, housing, food service activities and athletic facilities all are west of Cascade.
- There appears to be a lot of pedestrian foot traffic on Cascade at Dale Street.
- Pedestrians cross Cascade Avenue where no crosswalk exists. Explore the pros/cons of building a barrier in median to force pedestrians to cross at crosswalks.
- Explore pros/cons of a pedestrian bridge across Cascade Avenue in the middle on the block.
- Does the parked cars and traffic on Cascade compound the safety aspect of pedestrian/bike/skateboard traffic on Cascade?
- Consider a Wood Avenue crosswalk across Uintah.

- There seems to be more incidents and close calls on Cascade. Pedestrians need to be more attentive to their surroundings. Pay more attention to traffic. Pedestrians are much more careful when crossing mid-block because they know they don't have the right-of-way. Pedestrians in crosswalks know they have the right-of-way and so there is more of a false sense of security. Must consider if particular improvements make pedestrians feel "too safe"
- The College does have an on-campus safety education program, but student turnover from year to year makes it a constant need. It's also a balance between autos yielding to pedestrians and pedestrians being aware of their surroundings.

Visibility

- A two-lane pedestrian crossing, such as on Cascade, is inherently high risk.
- When two cars approach a crosswalk, the car slightly in front may block the view of a pedestrian about to cross; the car further back may not stop if they can't see the pedestrian.
- There are line of sight issues on Cascade Avenue at crosswalks.
- Parked cars and pedestrians complicate the Cascade/Uintah intersection. Consider limiting parking on Cascade to improve safety and visibility.
- Can something be done to make medians more visible? The low profiles of the curbs are difficult to see when watching for traffic, pedestrians, etc.
- Should tree canopy be trimmed to improve visibility?

Signs and crosswalks

- Bump outs on Cascade might help with the safe crossing situation.
- Consider painting the pedestrian crosswalks with the words, "Stop and Look".
- Consider if signs in the street on Nevada Avenue would help. Example, in Manitou Springs, there are signs that read, "State Law -- Yield to Pedestrians."
- Consider painting diagonal pedestrian crossing stripes on the road.
- Can signs be painted on street surfaces, such as, "*Heavy pedestrian traffic?*" Yes, depending on the wording. The City abides by the manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which is the standard for signs, signals and pavement markings.
- Can crosswalks be stripped to be more visible? (That's an option.)
- Are crosswalks painted with reflective material? (Depends on the location, but generally, yes.)

Flashing lights at crosswalks

- The flashing pedestrian signs on Cascade Avenue seem to be effective. However, can the motion sensors be moved further from the street so they can be tripped earlier?
- Lights flash long after pedestrians have cleared the crosswalk. When that happens, drivers tend to ignore them. This creates an unsafe situation when drivers, feeling the lights might be malfunctioning, start to ignore the lights all together.
- The flashing lights may be giving pedestrians a false sense of security... pedestrians step out into the street without looking thinking that the lights force the cars to stop.
- Is there a reason why flashing lights aren't used at crosswalks on Nevada? (City would have to approve that installation. Pedestrians are more careful when crossing Nevada Avenue because there are no lights. The lights have created a false sense of security for some pedestrians.)
- The pedestrian lights on Cascade are a poor bulb choice because they are blinding for drivers.

Lighting in general

- The Cobra Head streetlights along Cascade and other streets don't illuminate the crosswalks/intersections well enough. Consider changing them out for the historic lights such as those in other areas of the neighborhood as they seem to shine the light downward better.

- Stanchion lights at the crosswalks on Nevada Avenue are not effective and can be distracting. They often make it difficult to see pedestrians. They are too low and block sightlines.
- Pedestrians are difficult to see at dusk and dark. Improve the overall lighting at crosswalks.
- The crosswalk at Nevada is dark.

Parking

- Parking options and lane configurations on Nevada Avenue have more flexibility now that it's a city arterial.
- It feels safer on Cascade. It's easier to see pedestrians and cars because cars are not parked along the street. The same isn't true along Nevada Avenue.
- On-street parking often serves as traffic calming and buffer for pedestrians. Restricting parking often encourages faster speeds. With 360 events each year on campus, restricting on-street parking would impact guests and visitors.
- Parking is important, but request that the College consider parking structures and/or underground parking to preserve remaining historical buildings. Address parking in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

Lessons Learned

- Look at other areas of the country where there is a college campus in an urban setting to see how they've handle traffic, pedestrian safety

Traffic

- The cultures of Nevada and Cascade avenues are different. Nevada Avenue is the historic "I-25;" meaning it was a state highway before the City took over ownership of it. It's now a major arterial. Nevada still has a "highway" feel. Cascade has a very different atmosphere. Cascade Avenue carries more local traffic, while Nevada Avenue carries more through traffic, which causes traffic to move faster.
- Frustrated drivers can create unsafe situations. Driver impatience often contributes to crashes.
- Cascade/Uintah is also a popular intersection for placard wavers, which contributes to distractions and visibility issues.
- It would be reasonable to expect to adapt the street grid but it's important to maintain connectivity. Completing cutting off the grid to traffic would eliminate the key value of a grid.
- Nevada connects I-25 to I-25 and will always be a main route. Moreover, North and South Nevada plus downtown are redevelopment infill property areas. Therefore, all modes of traffic on Nevada should be expected to increase.

Bicycles

- There is a problem of bicycle speed thru crosswalks making it hard for motorists to judge/react. Bikes are a big part of the CC student transportation picture and bike lanes and how bicyclists cross at the crosswalk should therefore get some attention.

Amenities

- Consider bump-outs at Yampa and Nevada.
- Consider the pros/cons of raised sidewalks (sidewalk tables at side street crossings).
- Don't forget that medians are a historic amenity.