

Montbello Safer Streets Online Public Meeting #2 Summary

DATE: Tuesday, July 14, 2020

PROJECT: Montbello Safer Streets

STAFF: Dana Hoffman, City and County of Denver
Paige Colton, City and County of Denver
Sam Piper, City and County of Denver
Afor Chavez, City and County of Denver
Erica Olsen, SHE Inc.
Evan Brigham, RS&H
Tara Bettale, HDR

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting – hosted by Councilwoman Stacie Gilmore

Project information available here:

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/transportation-infrastructure/programs-services/bicycles/montbello-safe-streets.html>

SUMMARY

Due to COVID-19 in-person restrictions, the City and County of Denver’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI) conducted the second Montbello Safer Streets public meeting virtually via Zoom, hosted by Councilwoman Stacie Gilmore. The meeting took place on Tuesday, July 14th from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. The information presented was also made available to the public through a static online meeting with the dedicated URL: montbellosaferstreetsmeeting.com

The project team shared with attendees: the project overview and history; work done on the project to date; previous feedback provided and how the project team addressed it; and the preferred designs for 51st and Gateway Ave, Andrews Dr. and Ulvalda St., and Crown Boulevard. The meeting included the opportunity for meeting attendees to ask questions and provide comments. Additional information on questions and comments received is available in *Appendix A*.

Participants were encouraged to call the project hotline to leave additional comments after the meeting.

The static online meeting was also offered in Spanish. Additionally, at the beginning of the live virtual meeting, the following Spanish translation service message was offered in the chat box: “*Si tienen preguntas, pueden enviarlas en español en cualquier momento. Se responderán (si queda tiempo) al final de la reunión.*” This message intended to notify meeting attendees that they may ask questions in Spanish at any time using the chat function, and the project team would answer at the end of the meeting.

ATTENDEES

37 attendees participated in the live virtual meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING PROMOTION

To inform community members of the meeting, the following methods were used:

- Postcards mailed to residents within ¼ mile of all project corridors associated with Montbello Safer Streets
- Digital flyer in the City Council newsletter
- Social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor)

APPENDIX A: Q&A INFORMATION AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

The following are the questions received during the meeting. The answers denoted with a green box indicate that the response was not provided during the meeting.

Q: Do you think after 56th turns to 2+ lanes that Andrews traffic might go down? Where we might get away with 1 lane?

A: *56th will be widened to accommodate more lanes and additional studies are currently underway. With 56th being widened, a little bit of traffic will be diverted to other adjacent streets. However, overall many of the streets don't carry a lot of traffic generally so there is still 'extra space' on those adjacent streets to accommodate that diversion (Andrews and Uvalda being two examples). The project team did look at the traffic on those streets (and also Crown and 51st) and found that those existing two-lanes in each direction can move down to 1-lane each way to accommodate the project and not have significant traffic congestion issues.*

Q: What will the impact to emergency vehicles be?

A: *51st will have two through lanes for traffic, so we are not expecting any impacts to emergency vehicles along 51st. The project team is working with the Denver Fire Department and Emergency Services to make sure the project efforts and improvements won't impact their rapid response.*

Q: Can we be reminded of timeline for installation?

A: *Installation of the improvements on Andrews and Uvalda will take place in 2021-2022; more specific details will be announced closer to construction.*

Q: Will there a bike lane for Crown Boulevard be from Albrook to 56th?

A: *Yes, that is correct.*

Q: Cars traveling from Andrews to 51st go down the street at alarming speeds. This is very close to the Montbello school campus. Can there be a stop sign put in along 50th?

A: *A lot of the traffic calming tools the project is considering include narrowing of the roadway. The City and County of Denver actually doesn't use traffic signs to calm traffic speeding. Stop signs help intersection navigation and pedestrian crossing. But, studies show it doesn't help with speeding concerns. So, the project team looks at the speeding issues and uses 'vertical narrowing options' to reduce speed. If it looks/feels like a residential neighborhood, which it is, there is typically a reduction in speeding, too. Regarding 50th, however, that is not part of this project area or scope of work. So, for those concerns, please call 311 and submit that specific location.*

Q: There is a lot of current foot and bike traffic through the arsenal – are we prepared for that?

A: *This project team is aware of the projects associated with this topic, which is part of grant CCD has received. This team is working closely with that team and the design is close to completion for those connection/entries at Peoria and Uvalda. This team has made sure there are connections to those other projects on Uvalda, in particular bike and foot traffic improvements.*

Q: Where can we find info about the funding?

A: *Time did not allow for a response to this question.*

Q: We live on Gateway and see the speeding daily. We have two little kids and are supportive of all these changes. Have we thought about speed bumps or speed limit signs? It seems that we need physical ways to stop them. It also seems that the distances between two stop signs is too long so the drivers are able to get up to speeding rates easily.

A: *This project doesn't include stop signs on Gateway. But, it does include other features along Gateway – one is to physically narrow the roadway to realize it's a local street and also provide a physical barrier. The project will also be installing new speed limit signs of 25 MPH as opposed to 35 MPH.*

Q: Will there be flashing LED crosswalks since state law requires drivers have to stop? Will there be flashing lights around all Montbello schools?

A: *There are two different 'flashing light' sign options, in particular as it relates to school zones. There are flashing 'school zone' signs that highlight lowered speeds and those are in near proximity to the school. These flashers are typically used on large collectors and arterials and usually only used within areas of elementary and middle schools. In this project's case, we want to show good signage since the school in the area is a high school, but the signs won't be the flashing 'school zone' signs just described. Regarding the second 'flashing light' sign option, those would be the flashing crosswalk sign and beacon. Those are not included in this project. The project team and industry best practice analysis shows these don't work well with double threat condition which is prevalent in this project area. However, moving forward, there can be consideration for these on Andrews and Ulvada as those needs come up and as they are requested by the community at-large.*

Q: There is community excited that from the library to Silverman Park, the road will be moved to one lane. Can the library to the park have the flashing crosswalk? The narrowing is great, but a light indicator makes people focus.

A: *When the roadway goes from two lanes to one, cars won't/can't legally pass another vehicle at any rate of speed. So, rather than make all the changes at once, the project team will evaluate how the speeds look after it goes to one lane. The changes should be measured and strategic based on the behavior changes seen after initial improvements, rather than making too many changes at once and overwhelming the new 'requirements' of the travelers along the roadway.*

Q: On Crown Boulevard, people park in front of the homes and if the bike lane is on the inside of the cars, that seems very dangerous. Can you address that?

A: *People that park in front of their house now will still have that same option. As the project team analyzed Crown, in particular, and did design iterations based on previous community input, the team designed for the bike lanes and buffered bike lanes to be outside of the parking area to make it clear to the traveling vehicles that there are cyclists in the bike lane.*

Q: I hope these speed sticks are not made out of plastic or concrete?

A: *Time did not allow for a response to this question.*

Q: Any proposal to introduce designated, off-street parking for Silverman Park?

A: *This project will only look at on-street parking adjacent to the park and there will be almost as much parking as today after these improvements.*

FOLLOW-UP COMMENT: Crossing is a nightmare for seniors. Walking from the current allowed parking to the park's covered area is somewhat of a hazard. If the parks and recreation department can cut in to the park from the street to allow diagonal parking, that would help.

A: *A stop sign will go at the intersection at Tulsa and Andrews, which should help pedestrian crossing since vehicles will now be required to stop and yield to the pedestrians.*

Q: How close to the intersection is the first car allowed to park? We would want to make sure we do not create a blind spot for cars coming in the other direction.

A: *During the project team's analysis of parking near intersections, there weren't too many issues related to cars parking too close to the corners/intersections. If that is happening somewhere consistently during specific times, please submit that feedback to 311. Also, wherever there is a crosswalk, the project team will set parking back 20 feet to give good sight lines at the intersection.*

Q: What are the plans for any additional lighting with crosswalks?

A: *Lighting at crosswalks is not included in this project, but the project team can focus on lighting at intersections where there will be new crosswalks to see if there are opportunities for 'one-off' improvements once this project work is done. The team will be addressing funding for that effort, too.*

Q: Are there plans to repurpose and enhance the open-air storm water irrigation ditch? I've heard that the 'Next Steps Study' will talk about that further, but there won't be any landscape changes for about two years?

A: *Councilwoman Gilmore and CCD staff has not heard about that timeline. Denver Parks & Recreation have to selectively look at different parks and the needs of each park and open space. This project team hasn't heard they won't work on this one. There are improvements at the Irondale Gulf Drainage through partnership with the Mile High Flood District. For this ditch, it was a cost saving measure to keep it open-air. This neighborhood has one of the only open-air*

storm water drainage canals through a residential neighborhood. If we put the pipe underground, there might not be the same, so there could be consideration for a retention pond to help maintain capacity and mitigate flooding issues.

COMMENT: I don't think our drainage system is that unattractive. I would hate to see it covered – we can do something better and unique if we have more thought put in to design.

Q: Can you give us an update on bike and walking paths from Montbello to the RTD University of Colorado A Line Station at Peoria?

A: *Any improvements along 56th Avenue will happen as part of the build-out efforts that is connecting to DEN at First Creek and following the trail to the train station. It's definitely not a complete network yet. The connection to the Peoria Station is a separate project under different design schedules. There are shared-use connections on 56th down to the bridge that crosses to the Peoria Station. CDOT is working on areas under the bridge and they should be done in next month or so. Sidewalk gaps adjacent to under the bridge will be filled in by CCD this fall.*

Q: Between the Village Apartments and Dominos (near the Crazy Asian Express), are there any improvements to avoid jay walking? It's near Peoria and Albrook.

A: *This is part of the Peoria Street Project. CCD is aware of mid-block crossings along Peoria. North of 47th at the mid-block here, CCD has been awarded funding to put a traffic signal with crossing there. That grant funding may not get to CCD until 2021 but from there, the signal can be added. CCD is also working with RTD to relocate a couple bus stops to be on the far side of intersections along Peoria to avoid mid-block crossing, but that could be a couple years out.*

COMMENT: Thank you for having this very important meeting!

COMMENT: THANK YOU EVERYONE!!! Dana, Sam, Afor, Stacie and Melissa well done! Thank you so much for your hard work. I know it's hard to change things in an old neighborhood, so, keep up the good work!!!
