

News Release

For more information:

Barry Grossman

Westside Avenue Action Plan Team

719.629.7566

info@WestsideAvenuePlan.com

Westside Avenue Action Plan Stakeholders Prefer Three Lane Option Design Details Will Be Next Phase for West Colorado and Manitou Avenues

Colorado Springs, Colo. (Jan. 31, 2013) – On January 17, 2013, a group of more than 50 business and property owners, residents, elected officials and other interested people participated in an informative and interactive stakeholder workshop for the Westside Avenue Action Plan, a study to improve economic vitality, mobility and safety on a 1.5 mile stretch of W. Colorado and Manitou avenues.

After they studied possible options, stakeholders at that workshop overwhelmingly endorsed a 3-lane to move forward for more detailed design and analysis. Their preferred option provides one “through lane” each for east and west-bound traffic with a center left-turn lane. Stakeholders indicated preference for the 3-lane option because it slows traffic, improves vehicle and pedestrian safety, and provides room for amenities the business owners and residents identified as important considerations for the future economic vitality of the corridor.

The workshop, held at the Westside Community Center, included computer simulations of traffic flow, which helped stakeholders visualize how the number of through traffic lanes impact access and traffic speeds. Stakeholders evaluated 3-, 4- and 5-lane alternatives during the three-hour workshop.

“The agencies involved in the study are pleased that the stakeholders have been thorough and thoughtful throughout the study process when analyzing the options and in making their recommendation based on the long-term needs of the corridor and the community values they developed early in the study,” said André Brackin, El Paso County engineer and the County’s project manager. “The stakeholder’s recommendation of the 3-lane option allows the project team to move to the next phase of more detailed design and begin looking at other aspects of the corridor, such as the Midland Trail and undergrounding utilities.”

El Paso County Commissioner Sallie Clark, whose District 3 encompasses Westside Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and Ute Pass voiced her appreciation for the commitment and participation of residents and business stakeholders in developing a good plan for the Colorado Avenue corridor, “Residents and businesses in the area have long recognized the need for traffic and safety improvements through this area; not only will it be a better place to live and do business but it also helps us attract more tourism dollars to the entire region,” Clark noted.

A public open house will be scheduled within the next two months to share the progress and obtain feedback from the broader community. “This is just one in many next steps for the project team,” said Brackin. “Now that the team has a preferred alternative, they can work with the stakeholders to take design to the next level of detail. Over the course of the next several months, they will look at intersection designs, drainage issues and alignments, as well as aesthetic elements of the corridor such as street lighting, sidewalks and signage.”

The Westside Avenue Action Plan is a collaborative effort among El Paso County, the cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, the Colorado Department of Transportation, residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders.

Goals of the Westside Avenue Action Plan recommendations are to:

- Provide for safe and efficient transportation along the corridor
- Create a compatible link between the two vibrant historic districts of Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs
- Serve as a catalyst for economic development and other future corridor improvements

To receive periodic progress e-newsletters and learn how to get involved, visit the project website www.WestsideAvenuePlan.com and click the Weigh In link to be added to the contact list or, call the project message box at 719.629.7566 and leave your contact information.

###