

## Westside Avenue Action Alert

NOVEMBER 2015

### Welcome

Welcome to the Westside Avenue Action Alert e-newsletter. Future e-newsletters will be sent periodically with project updates, upcoming meeting schedules and other useful information about the plan.

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### Westside Avenue Action Plan Public Meetings

View summaries and materials from prior stakeholder and public meetings, here. [Documents](#)

### West Colorado Avenue Paving Project Smooths the Ride

Local residents, businesses and visitors are benefiting from a recent pavement overlay project to improve the road surface on West Colorado Avenue between the U.S. 24 interchange and 31st Street. With the start date of the Westside Avenue Action Plan capital improvements project still months away, the County performed critically needed maintenance to improve driving conditions on the road surface in preparation for the winter driving season.



This critical El Paso County transportation maintenance and improvement work on one of the most heavily travelled major thoroughfares in the region was made possible through funding from the voter approved one-cent sales tax to support the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA).

Maintenance and ownership of this 1.3 mile segment of Colorado Avenue was recently turned over from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to El Paso County. This was the first phase of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between El Paso County, Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and CDOT for a capital improvements project resulting from the Westside Avenue Action Plan, currently in the final design phase.

The Westside Avenue Action Plan will lead to non-motorized multi-modal improvements along this stretch of roadway, upgraded corridor infrastructure to accommodate business growth, and consistent with the community values, creation of a "slow and social" corridor resulting in safer conditions and fewer accidents.

"This stretch of West Colorado and Manitou avenues is of significant importance to the community of Manitou Springs," said Marc Snyder, Mayor, City of Manitou Springs. "This area is a gateway to the historic tourism corridor of downtown Manitou Springs and the east end urban renewal district, as well as to the Garden of the Gods Park and the Pikes Peak Highway. Collaborating with the other involved jurisdictions has been crucial to assuring that the much needed transportation improvements will be completed."

**Collaboration of Partners  
Keeps Project Moving Forward**

## Goals and Objectives of Westside Avenue Action Plan

### Agency Sponsors

El Paso County  
City of Colorado Springs  
City of Manitou Springs  
Colorado Department of Transportation

Agency representatives have made a high level, regional commitment to work together and with area residents, businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders to develop a citizen-driven plan based on community values for the much-needed improvements along this vital corridor.

### Current Status and Schedule

- Completed in 2014: Preliminary Design and community decision to name new bridge as Adams Crossing
  - First quarter 2015: Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between El Paso County and CDOT\* signed and devolution completed of W. Colorado/Manitou Avenues transfer of 1.3 mile road right-of-way from east of the U.S. 24 interchange to the 31st Street intersection
  - Feb. 2016: 90% design complete, begin property acquisition process
  - 2016: Begin utility relocation, where possible, ahead of construction start
- (\*Colorado Department of Transportation)

### WAAP 90% Design Plans to Include:

The benefits of government entities partnering on projects that intersect various jurisdictions has been more than evident with the Westside Avenue Action Plan (WAAP). "While there have been design challenges to work through, the fact that each of the project partners is willing to collaborate on solutions that best benefit the public, has kept the project moving forward," said Sallie Clark, El Paso County Commissioner, District 3.

In early 2015, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) signed an Intergovernmental Agreement transferring to El Paso County responsibility for the road right-of-way of 1/3 mile of West Colorado/Manitou Avenues from east of the U.S. 24 interchange to the 31st Street intersection. The benefit to the community from this roadway devolution is that it gave El Paso County jurisdiction over the road, enabling it to complete the recent pavement overlay project and improve the road surface in preparation for the winter driving season.

Also, El Paso County and the Cities of Manitou Springs and Colorado Springs have been working with CDOT to assure continuity and coordination with the state's planned 2016 spring milling and overlay of the U.S. 24 interchange. CDOT is adjusting its spring maintenance project schedule to coincide with WAAP project phasing. CDOT's maintenance work will include drainage improvements, American's with Disabilities compliant pedestrian access, milling of the road and new paving. This maintenance work will tie into the WAAP project improvements starting at the devolution boundary.

"Having worked through [design challenges](#), the WAAP project team anticipates achieving 90 percent design completion by Feb. 2016," said Clark. "The ability to determine precise funding requirements for construction was important for the design phase to move forward."

According to Colorado Springs City Councilman Merv Bennett, "This has been a great example of regional collaboration between four jurisdictions, enabling us do the project right. The WAAP construction project will address numerous critical needs such as adding bike lanes, street lighting, curb/gutter and sidewalks where there aren't any; removing power poles in the center of the sidewalks; storm water improvements; and a new bridge over fountain creek," he said. "Once completed, it will spur economic redevelopment and encourage innovative land use while also improving the experience of the more than two million visitors who travel through from the City of Colorado Springs through Old Colorado City to Pikes Peak every year."

### Roadway Preferred Alternative Based on Community Values and Input

Development of the Westside Avenue Action Plan is driven by [Community Values](#) to ensure it meets the goals and objectives identified by residents, business and property owners and others impacted by the study. A thorough understanding of the transportation, economic and environmental **Corridor Context** ensures the plan fits within that context. A **Collaborative Analysis** process involved stakeholders in identifying and evaluating reasonable alternatives. That process resulted in the identification of the preferred three-lane cross-section (one through lane in each direction with a center left-turn lane).

- New road configuration and realignment: detailed designs of the 3-lane alternative (one lane in each direction and a dedicated center left turn lane), the new alignment of W. Colorado Avenue between Columbia and Ridge roads, and property access

- Intersection improvements: new stoplights at Columbia and Ridge roads, and interchange improvements

- Multi-modal facilities: new dedicated bike lane on both sides of the road, pedestrian sidewalks, new pedestrian bridge over Fountain Creek, bus stops, and a new transit/bike hub

- Midland Trail: undercrossing at Fountain Creek under the Adams Crossing Bridge, connecting the Midland Trail where there is currently a missing segment, and new trail alignments



Tim Roberts, City of Colorado Springs City Engineering, leads a public meeting discussion of the recommended alternative for a three-lane "slow and social" roadway configuration designed to help reduce rear-end accidents and improve traffic safety through the corridor.

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