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Title: ConnectCOS-Colorado Springs Transportation Master Plan Update

Presenter:

Travis Easton, Public Works Director

Tim Roberts, Transportation Planning Program Manager, Public Works Department

Ted Ritschard, Olsson

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ConnectCOS-Colorado Springs Transportation Master Plan Update

Presenter:

Tim Roberts, Transportation Planning Program Manager, Public Works Department

Todd Frisbie, City Traffic Engineer, Public Works Department

Ted Ritschard, Olsson

Summary:

The ConnectCOS Transportation Plan for a Mobile Community is a city-wide and multi-modal transportation master plan, which is intended to replace the 2001 Intermodal Transportation Plan in its entirety except for certain identified topical elements.

The attached draft ordinance that was presented to both the Citizens Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB) and the City Planning Commission includes language that addresses certain prior related approval actions related to the documents that will be superseded with the adoption of this Plan, along with the other related documents that will be remain in effect.

Background:

The City of Colorado Springs has grown, and transportation planning practices have changed since the last citywide transportation plan occurred in 2001. Emerging technologies, changing demographics and travel choices have occurred, along with different perceptions and expectations of an effective mobility system. PlanCOS established a vision and goals for the community through an extensive public process that gave voice to citizens' dreams and desires. ConnectCOS is designed to help realize the community vision and the transportation system that supports it.

The city has completed a technical and data-driven process to integrate transportation best practices, the input of advisors, stakeholders, and the public to develop a forward-looking transportation master plan. The technical analysis was guided by a goal framework developed through early input from citizens and stakeholders to focus results on improving the transportation system to be more safe, equitable, sustainable, efficiently reliable, accessible, and connected.

A data-driven analysis of the existing system and forecast conditions of 2045 were conducted to identify challenges and quantify system needs, i.e., where performance relative to each goal was not acceptable. The analysis also incorporated conclusions and recommendations of PlanCOS to ensure outcomes serve to advance those efforts. As examples: the transportation analysis included evaluation of multimodal connectivity to PlanCOS activity centers; and potential projects were tailored to the vibrant neighborhoods and unique places recognized by PlanCOS as essential to the community.

ConnectCOS documents updates to specific codified guidance including the Major Thoroughfare Plan and Truck Route map. In addition, it adds maps describing a preferred vision network for enhanced transit and for active transportation modes. These maps are not specifically codified but communicate a vision that guides project implementation and future decisions to support these modes.

Adoption of ConnectCOS will supersede the prior 2001 Intermodal Transportation Plan and related elements including the current MTP (Ordinance No. 01-58 Ordinance No. 02-120 Ordinance No. 04-172 Ordinance No. 11-73) and the East-West Mobility Study (2002). It does not supersede more recent and relevant plans including COSBikes!, 2045 Regional Transit Plan, and small area or corridor plans approved since 2015 such as the Renew North Nevada Plan. Future planning efforts or updates to these plans should consider and reflect the goals of PlanCOS and ConnectCOS until they are superseded as well.

ConnectCOS Goals:

Safe - This goal reflects the community's desire to have a safe transportation system, a system of or minimal fatalities and injuries and a system that provides personal safety for those accessing or using roadways, transit stops, bike lanes, sidewalks, and trails.

Equitable - This goal captures the concept that transportation investments should enhance mobility for everyone. It recognizes that people, neighborhoods, and communities have different levels and types of needs and as a result, different areas of the city will necessitate different transportation investments.

Sustainable - The Sustainable goal reinforces the need to ensure the transportation system supports the economy, protects and enhances the environment, and provides a social benefit in the form of improving the quality of life, health, and overall well-being of our citizens.

Efficiently Reliable - This goal recognizes the balance needed between having a perfectly reliable transportation system and being efficient with limited community resources. It acknowledges that costs associated with providing a roadway with no delay or crashes needs to be balanced with community impacts for public right-of-way, implementation costs, and comparable alternatives.

Accessible - The Accessible Goal reflects the desire for the Colorado Springs citizenry to have transportation choices by which to travel and that these options have intuitive interconnectivity. It

recognizes that transportation options should be comfortable, safe, and efficient.

Connected - This goal recognizes a connected transportation system enables all users to move between our homes, work, services, shopping, and recreation areas. It acknowledges that Colorado Springs needs to be connected to the larger economy beyond the Pikes Peak Region and that connectivity with our military installations is essential.

Community engagement has been an important element in the development of the transportation plan. The project has a comprehensive web page on the City's website with links to working documents and past survey results from community outreach efforts. The project web page clearly informs the community of the details of the plan, providing links to important materials and survey results that help lay the groundwork used in developing it. The site also provides a method for people to access live surveys and share input to seek feedback from the larger community.

The project team has conducted numerous public outreach and engagement opportunities to receive feedback on needs and priorities for the community. Although COVID changed the approach of citizen engagement, there has still been significant interest in the plan. During a one-month period between August and September of 2020, over 1,700 citizens responded to our initial transportation survey requesting feedback from respondents on the transportation system. A more recent survey in the fall of 2021 requesting feedback on draft recommendations from the plan received over 800 responses. The project also has a large Community Advisory Committee (CAC) with 30 stakeholders representing many interests across the community. The project team has held meetings with neighborhood representatives, conducted virtual Community Office Hour meetings, virtual Open House meetings, and CAC meetings for every milestone in the development of the plan.

Previous Council Action:

On April 10, 2001, City Council adopted the current Intermodal Transportation Plan via Ordinance 01-58 and subsequent amendments including Ordinance No. 02-118, Ordinance No. 02-120, Ordinance No. 02-132, Ordinance No. 04-28, Ordinance No. 04-172, Ordinance No. 04-176, Ordinance No. 05-196, Ordinance No. 09-118, and Ordinance No. 11-73.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications for the ConnectCOS update presentation.

City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:

The CTAB acted on the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan at their January 3, 2023 and February 7, 2023 meetings recommending City Council approve the Ordinance with the inclusion of two amendments. The first amendment is the addition of Vision Zero principles within the document and the second revising the Project #105: Central East-West Mobility Study description in Appendix A to consider all multimodal options (transit, bike, pedestrians, micro-mobility) with specific direction to exclude cars and trucks.

Planning Commission acted on the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan at their February 8, 2023 meeting recommending approval of the Ordinance and the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan with the updated description for Project #105 as recommended by staff. The CTAB action was discussed but was not included in the Planning Commission motion recommending approval to City Council.

Stakeholder Process:

The development of the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan includes a major community outreach effort and stakeholder engagement process. A large Community Advisory Committee with 30 stakeholders was established for the study. Open ended community office hours were made available for citizens to attend, along with survey opportunities to provide direct input into the study. Two virtual public meetings have also been held along with a video presentation followed up with an opportunity to provide feedback. In person public open houses were also held in each council district.

Additional town hall meetings were held on January 21, 2023 and February 4, 2023 to receive feedback related to a study to see if an extension of Constitution is feasible.

Alternatives:

N/A

Proposed Motion:

Approve an ordinance adopting the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan, the City of Colorado Springs 2023 Intermodal Transportation Plan.

For Ordinances, enter the substantive elements in 40 words or less for publication purposes. Enter N/A if not applicable.