



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT:	CDOT Subaccount 22922, Vasquez Boulevard, I-270 to 64 th Avenue
PURPOSE:	Spanish Language Multimodal Focus Group Meeting #1
DATE HELD:	February 27, 2020
LOCATION:	Cultivando
ATTENDING:	Project Team: Matt Fink (CDOT); Leah Langerman, Mia Schrilla (DEA) Focus Group Members: Karla Estrada, Laura Martinez, Alfredo Sabas, Veronica Sabas, Maria Parras (Commerce City Residents); Guadalupe Villalobos, Maria Zubiata, Reyna Soria (Cultivando)
COPIES:	Project Management Team

Summary of Discussion:

1. Cultivando partnered with members of the project team to host a focus group for Spanish speaking members of the community. An interpreter was used for simultaneous interpretation to facilitate the discussion between project team and focus group members. Members of the project team first reviewed the project history, project purpose and goals, study area, schedule and involvement opportunities.
2. Q&A after the presentation:
 - ◆ Q: You said that the investigation or study was done already?
 - ◇ A: There was an earlier PEL study that went farther north and south and was estimated at \$70-200M. We are using that as a starting point, but are not limited to the options that it provided.
 - ◆ Q: How many years out do you look for planning? Does it take into account growth in the area?
 - ◇ A: We look at projected data for 2040. We look at area’s traffic model, Greyhound Park, Central 70, and I-270 improvements.
 - ◆ Q: Will any homes be taken or impacted?
 - ◇ A: No, these improvements affect only these intersections and will not impact homes.
 - ◆ Q: What exactly are you planning here? Bridges, etc. to address accidents at the intersection?
 - ◇ A: There were options for a grade separated intersection that would be more high impact. Those types of improvements would be at least 15-20 years out. Right now we’re focusing more on adding turn lanes, shifting frontage roads, more “tweak” level improvements for both cars and pedestrians/cyclists. We’re also looking at the interaction between freight/semis and pedestrians crossing the streets.
 - ◆ Q: Are you talking to the businesses in the surrounding area?
 - ◇ A: Yes, we have a separate business focus group. All the businesses in the area are on our mailing list and 10 individuals attended the meeting. We also have a freight focus group and a multimodal focus group.

- ◆ Q: What is being done in regards to talking to the Spanish speaking businesses? Sometimes they don't pay attention to these things and don't care about traffic notices since employees get there at 6am. Is this info getting to Spanish speakers?
 - ◇ A: Yes, we gave businesses the fact sheet in English and Spanish and included information in the Peach Jar newsletter to the Adams14 Schools in English and Spanish.

3. Group comments/discussion:

- ◆ Safe pedestrian crossings, sidewalks and bikes
 - ◇ I don't see any other way than to build a bridge for pedestrians. It takes too long to cross Vasquez. There are five intersections that come together. It is very dangerous.
 - ◇ I'm too afraid to cross Vasquez on foot.
 - ◇ People on transit and crossing at intersections should be considered. Keep in mind MHGP.
 - ◇ When planning sidewalks, consider that mothers with a stroller and four other little kids with her need to be safe. It helps if sidewalks are wide. Sidewalks now are narrow and it is scary. You can't pass another person without moving off the sidewalk.
 - ◇ There are a lot of homeless people with shopping carts in the area.
 - ◇ Usually people walk on the north side of 60th/Vasquez intersection instead of the south side.
 - ◇ People don't walk across Vasquez. They run.
 - ◇ I see men on bikes in the area. It is dangerous to bike in the winter.
 - ◇ If faced with decisions about fitting sidewalk improvements in a narrow cross section, it would be okay to have sidewalk on one side of the street narrower as long as the other side is wide and there is a safe way for people to cross from the narrow to wide side.
- ◆ Backups cause cut-through traffic
 - ◇ All of the traffic signals are short cycles coming from 60th to turn north on Vasquez. You have to wait there a long time. People cut through McDonald's and the Rec Center to avoid the delays, which is risky for pedestrians. Traffic in a hurry doesn't look for pedestrians before making quick movements.
 - ◇ Traffic backs up on 60th from the east side to head south on Vasquez.
 - ◇ Many people drive over the median and cause accidents and injuries.
 - ◇ For the amount of traffic, the signals don't last that long. People find ways around waiting. I cut through Grease Monkey.
 - ◇ Many seniors drive in the area. They don't hear or see well. One occasion someone backed up into me as they were trying to avoid a backup and didn't hear my horn.
 - ◇ It is common to get nails and broken glass in your tires when you have to go through the industrial areas. They aren't made for regular traffic.
 - ◇ It would be helpful to have other routes through the industrial area for times when people need to cut through.
- ◆ Mile High Greyhound Park (MHGP) development
 - ◇ Mile High Greyhound Park (MHGP) development will have houses that need to be planned for.

- ◇ New development to the north will also increase traffic.
 - ◇ First, fix the problem at 60th before you allow any new housing construction. This should be the city's priority.
 - ◇ Many people will want to walk from MHGP.
 - ◆ Overall project input
 - ◇ This has to be a project planned for peds, bikes, and mothers who take kids to schools.
 - ◇ This area has a lot of people. They come out of King Soopers, restaurants and rec centers. Hundreds of people work in the warehouses.
 - ◇ Thornton people prefer Vasquez to get to Aurora. This area carries more than just Commerce City traffic.
 - ◇ I'm not sure what our tax money is used for. The lack of funding is causing problems. This is a very important area.
 - ◇ Another dangerous place is at 64th at Conoco. There have been bad accidents there.
 - ◇ Nobody respects speed limits.
 - ◇ There are lots of people. If you don't have enough money to make the street wider, maybe save it for a future project. Use it at 60th and Vasquez.
 - ◇ There is bad flooding on Vasquez at the railroad crossing. It also floods on 60th at Walmart. This area can't handle much water.
 - ◇ There are potholes at the frontage road intersection.
 - ◇ At the southeast corner of 60th and Vasquez, a sign is needed to tell people there is no Vasquez access on Dahlia heading south.
 - ◇ Traffic backs up because of trucks with three trailers.
 - ◇ Need better signage at the CO 2 ramp, people often miss the stop sign. Maybe it's unclear that it's a 3 way.
 - ◆ Community involvement
 - ◇ Make sure to distribute bilingual materials.
 - ◇ We appreciate you talking to our community. We are the ones living here and struggling. About 80% of people in Commerce City are Spanish speakers. Thanks for including us.
 - ◇ Some of us could be travel guides. We could drive with you and help show you problem areas.
 - ◇ Thank you for focusing on this area.
 - ◆ Emergency access
 - ◇ Emergency providers need to get through heavy traffic if there is an emergency.
 - ◇ Once there was an accident at 60th and traffic backed up to 70th on Vasquez. Many people cut through other places. Emergency providers had no access, so they had to bring in helicopters. I was stuck in traffic for an hour. Need to make sure emergency service providers can get through – there are some narrow streets.
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◆ Red Light Cameras

- ◇ The red light cameras are dangerous. There is one by the transit stop on 60th by Walmart.
- ◇ It seems like the red light cameras are sometimes on, sometimes off. The fear of getting a ticket makes people gun it and go dangerously through the intersections. I know many teenagers think if they cover their face while they drive through that it is impossible for them to be ticketed, so people are actually driving very fast while not being able to see. Very dangerous for pedestrians and not worth it to have the cameras.

◆ Outside of this project area

- ◇ Need to plan the area well. I work at 56th and Havana. That construction made it worse. They had to come back and put in another light. Remember the future and growth that will happen to not repeat this mistake.
- ◇ I avoid trains. The little bridge is scary, especially when trains are over it. I won't drive under it then.
- ◇ At Dahlia and 58th there are bad potholes and traffic doesn't know to stop. Potholes get fixed but it only lasts a few days.
- ◇ It could be helpful to consider a connection to Sand Creek Greenway. Some people do ride bikes to work using the greenway.
- ◇ Trucks can park and sleep around 56th and I-270. Trucks need to come into Commerce City to come home to their families. They park in private properties that charge monthly rent for trucks to park. These facilities are near I-70, at 52nd & Quebec, and another on Colorado. They park in back of properties in unsigned areas. There are many places like this that hold about 20 trucks each.
- ◇ There are lots of factories by 58th. People park RVs there too. Many of them leave at the same time in the morning from these areas, which causes lots of truck traffic. Something needs to be done to direct the flow.