

Montbello Safer Streets Online Public Meeting Summary

DATE:	Wednesday, April 29, 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 Francisco Miraval, Project Vision 21	Erica Olsen, SHE Inc. Evan Brigham, RS&H Tara Bettale, HDR Cristina Beermann, HDR
LOCATION:	Virtual Meeting	

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) hosted the Montbello Safer Streets public meeting virtually via the WebEx online platform on April 29, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. The information presented was also made available to the public through a static online meeting with the dedicated URL: montbellosaferstreetsmeeting.com beginning April 29, 2020 through May 29, 2020.

The project team shared with attendees: the project overview and history; safety concerns related to vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists; potential solutions for addressing safety concerns; two different design options for [canal streets]; and the proposed design for Crown Boulevard. The meeting included 3 separate breaks in the presentation of materials for the ability to answer questions and respond to a live polling function to gather feedback. Additional information on questions and comments received and poll results is available in *Appendix B*.

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

The static online meeting was also offered in Spanish, and at the beginning of the live virtual meeting, participants who wanted to follow along with the Spanish translated meeting were encouraged to view the materials in Spanish and ask questions in the Q&A box so that they could be translated and answered effectively.

ATTENDEES

37 attendees participated in the live virtual meeting and of these, 24 people joined online and 13 called-in from their phones.

PUBLIC MEETING PROMOTION

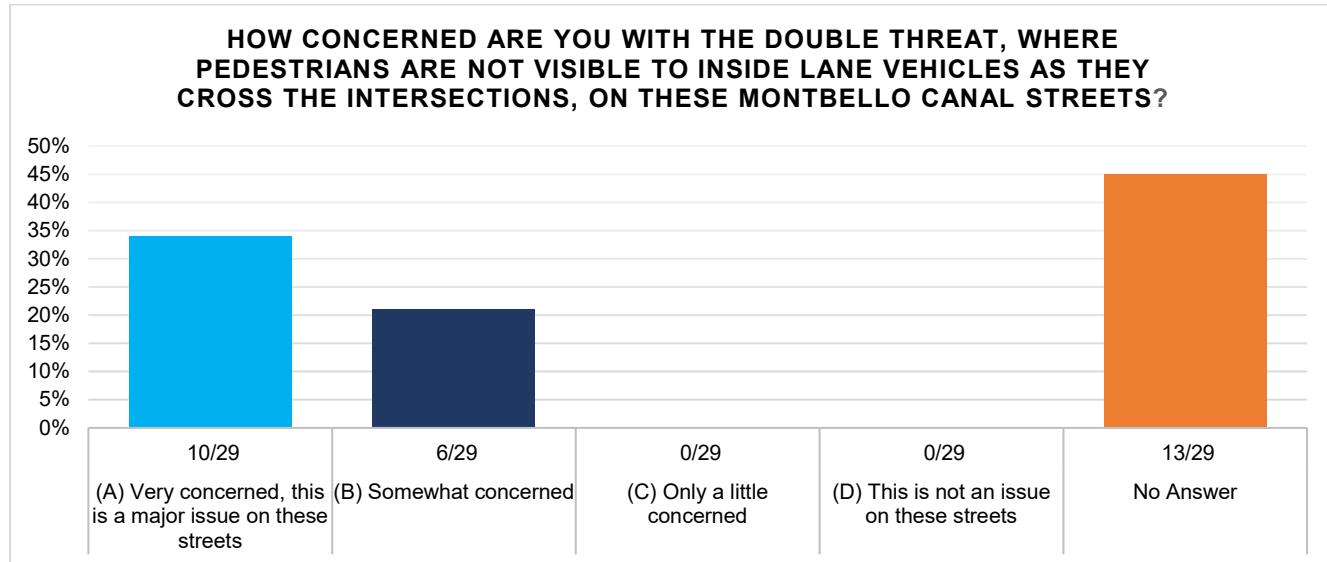
To inform community members of the meeting, the following methods were used:

- 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)

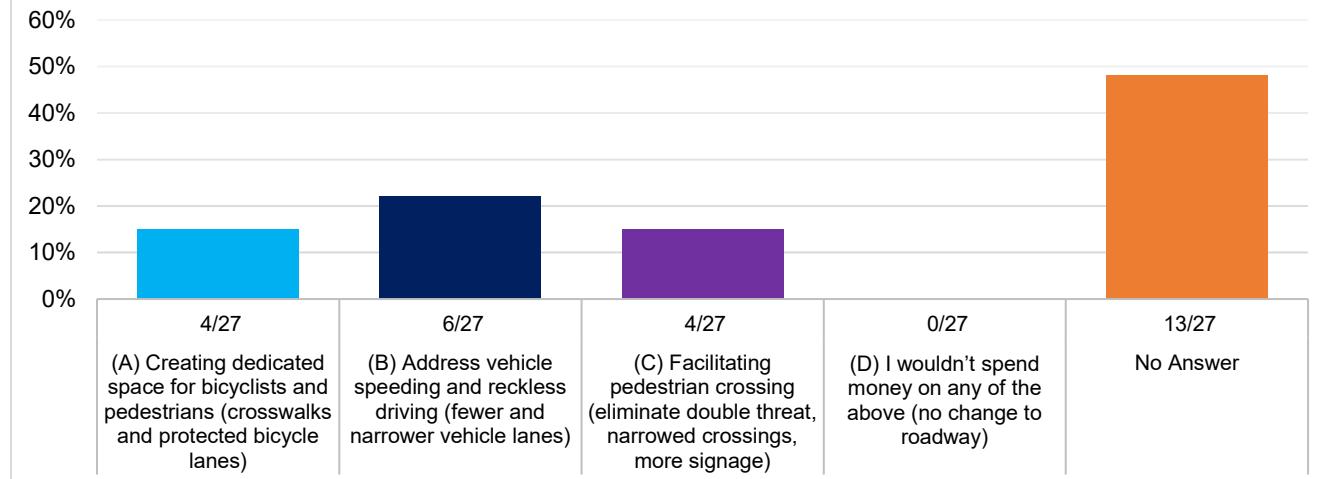
APPENDIX A: POLL RESULTS

During the live online meeting, a live polling function was utilized to gather attendee feedback. The following charts represent the feedback received to each question.

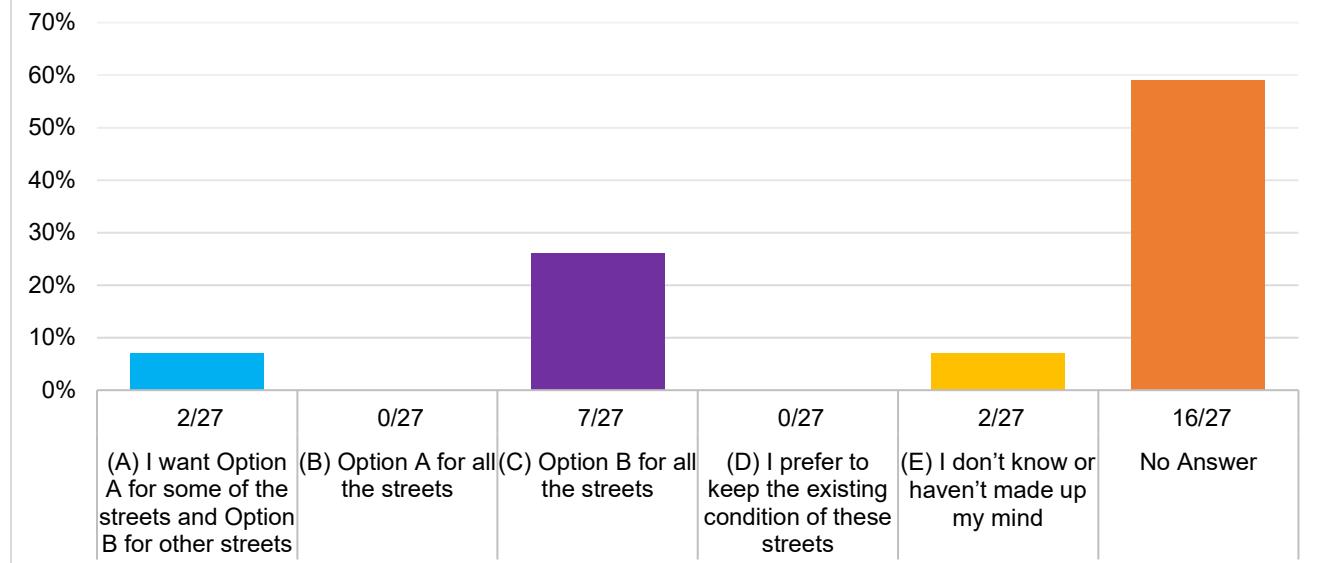
It is important to note that while 37 attendees joined the meeting at the peak, the number of total participants varied throughout the meeting. Since 13 people called into the meeting, they were not able to provide their responses to the polls. They were, however, encouraged to visit the online survey and/or call the project hotline to provide additional comments or ask additional questions.



IF YOU COMMUNITY HAD MONEY FOR JUST ONE OF THESE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS ON THE MONTBELLO CANAL STREETS, WHERE DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO SPEND THE MONEY?



LOOKING AT THE PROPOSED DESIGN OPTIONS, WHICH IS THE BEST OPTION FOR THESE MONTBELLO CANAL STREETS?



APPENDIX B: Q&A INFORMATION

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. Responses have been provided for questions that time did not allow for a live response and for comments which have been collected and documented by the Project Team.

Q: Is there a correlation between travel speeds for cars and the accident rate at these intersections?

A: Great question. In general, we know that travel speeds are very linked to how much injury is associated with an incident. So that's the biggest thing we are trying to prevent as it relates to speed. Speed causes specific kinds of accidents, and it also is the most likely to cause mortality and most likely to cause injury for those on the street.

Speed is definitely a factor in all sorts of crash types and as we reviewed the crash data, the prevalence of those rear end crashes, we can make the connection that it is likely related to speed. The ability for someone to stop in time as someone stops in front of them is directly related to stopping distance which is directly related to speed.

To emphasize, there is a very striking figure on our Vision Zero website that shows that if a vehicle strikes a pedestrian going about 20-25 mph the likelihood that pedestrian is killed is I believe under 15%, but as you move up to 40 mph, that number jumps over 80%. So that's part of why we're talking about lowering speeds so much.

Just to make sure we are fully answering the question related to the number of crashes, I'd like to reference the map of crashes. Our data did show that Peoria & Andrews and Chambers & 51st had the highest number of crashes across this network and again, those are our high-speed roadways that flank Montbello. And 51st & Andrews, as we're exiting is kind of pulling the traffic out of the community and I think to answer the question, it also is related to the frequency as Chambers and Peoria are also the highest speed roadway within the network.

Q: "During the pop up event at Silverman Park the average speed was compiled at around 35mph. Can you explain how you get an average speed of 23 mph on Andrews (average 21mph -28mph in the community)? The 23mph average DOTI is providing does not support that there is an issue with speeding on Andrews or basically anywhere in the community."

A: There are probably two answers to this question. One is that there are different techniques for collecting this data so at the Silverman Park pop-up that you mentioned, a radar gun was being used and the collection of those speeds took place over a couple-hour period, it was probably about 3-4 hours. While the counts that DOTI has are collected over a 24 hour period. So there are probably some slight differences in the speeds that people are going throughout the day and then that average is collected over that entire period of time. As you mentioned, the average is the middle, essentially, so there are going to be a lot of outliers and some of the higher speeds we see, so, our consultants were very helpful here and one of the things that was mentioned was that 20% of people were going over 35 mph on the eastbound direction on 51st

and the 85% percentile, so that's looking at the larger groups so not just the average but bringing into attention the outliers. So the 85th percentile was 34 mph over that 24 hour period on 51st. So while at least half of vehicles are at or below the speed limit, there is a significant amount of vehicles going above that, especially on east 51st specifically.

Q: Great illustration for double threat! Do you think a pedestrian light at those crosswalks would help decrease vehicle-pedestrian crashes?

A: *Good question. There are a couple different lights that we might use for pedestrians but one of them is the rapid flashing beacon, and you've likely seen a number of those around the city. That would probably be the most appropriate solution on a local collector like these streets that we see here. With this, a button is pressed and then you see an intermittent flashing light and it reminds cars that a pedestrian is actually in a crosswalk at that time and helps them remember to stop.*

One thing that I point out for the rapid flashing beacons is that our engineers really want to show where it is safe to put these pedestrian flashing lights. It is in the City's policy manual that they put those on streets that have only one lane in that direction and that is because of the double threat condition. So they don't want to utilize these in a position where it would make the pedestrian feel safe but then the inner car may still not recognize that the pedestrian is actually there and could ignore those lights.

Q: Where all the pedestrian accidents are happening are on Crown which is not a double threat. What is the reasoning for all the pedestrian accidents along Crown (children going to school?)?

A: *You are correct, there are a lot of pedestrian accidents on Crown. There are a significant amount of accidents where minors are hit and a lot take place mid-block. Focusing on Crown, making sure we have a good number of crosswalks and implementing other signage in relation to those cross walks. In street pedestrian signs, as an example. In the middle of the street that is visible and remind them they need to stop for pedestrians.*

Several of the crashes along Crown Blvd were related at Andrews and 51st at that double threat condition. A significant amount of those were minors so likely children walking to school.

Q: Signage on 51st from the high school going east to Chambers is very inconsistent speed limit signage. Going east bound the only speed limit signs are the 20 mph school zone signs. No other speed limit signage. 30 mph speed limit signs on west bound.

A: *The installation of clearer signage would be part of this project, to ensure that everyone knows what speed they should be going.*

Q: What are some changes to the built environment that can help reduce the number of accidents?

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

Q: Not all people will go the speed limit, thoughts on speed bumps or dips to reduce speeding?

A: *Some communities do a speed hump or bump to help reduce speed. CCD doesn't currently use speed humps as part of our toolbox due to some significant down sides of this treatment. We get a lot of concerns from our emergency responders about speed humps because they have to be very carefully designed, and it can also hinder snow and plow clearance and can leave to ice buildup on the roadway. Those are some of the disadvantages that have caused CCD to make the decision not to include them.*

Another reason is that typically, to be effective, you have to have quite a few of them in a row because studies show that folks will slow down for the speed hump itself but will speed back up after passing to make up for lost time, so you must implement them in large series. So we are looking at some other very feasible options we discussed, such as the bulb-outs, bollards, narrowing of roadway with paint, etc. so that we can use these as cues for drivers to slow their speeds.

Q: As the bike lanes are installed on 51st can the signage get fixed to make sure people have the correct speed limit signs? Is the speed limit on 51st 25mph or 30mph? Per the lack of signage eastbound would be 25mph and westbound per sign would be 30mph?

A: *Great point, it does shift and the signage could definitely be improved. So thank you for that comment. The signage actually shows that there are 3 shifts in speed because there is also a school zone, and as you approach the neighborhood the speed shifts again, and approaching Chambers the speed limit changes 30 mph. So that can definitely be confusing and we can do a better job as part of this project to install more signage and more mph signs so that people are paying attention and know what speed they are going.*

Q: We are not able to see all the questions being presented. Is there a way to turn on that function?

A: *Councilwoman Gilmore - I'm not seeing a way to turn on that function at this point. I think it might have to be done prior to the beginning of the meeting. I'm not sure. But will ask others.*

***Q:** Question from Pam Jiner: "Considering the amount of traffic on 51st - and the amount of congestion at 51st and 51st Crown: also noting that it's a 6 way stop sign - - what is the criteria for acquiring a stop light with pedestrian signals?"

A: *Generally speaking we need to meet very strict criteria to determine whether or not we can implement a traffic signal at a specific location, and that is related to the traffic volumes, speeds, and the number of crossings.*

From an engineering standpoint: there are about seven different traffic signal warrants and those range from volume data to speed data, and safety is one of the considerations as well, so if there is a higher instance of safety issues at an intersection then you're more likely to add a

signal in. Basically you go through a seven step process to determine if one is needed and political input is considered as well. It is not always the best solution, sometimes there are cheaper and just as effective solutions you can add in the meantime, even before adding a signal. So it's a tool in the toolbox, just as these other solutions we've been discussing are.

Q: How much money?

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

Q: Has the issue of equity been addressed when considering these potential changes? Socio-economic conditions of the neighborhood... will the residents benefit from these changes?

A: *It's very clear that historically there are have been equity issues in this community. Part of the reason we see these very wide streets in Montbello is because they were built out in the 1950s which was a very car-focused time. When we went looking to identify the highest priority locations to put projects, we were also comparing that to what we call "communities of concern," which looks at a bunch of equity criteria such as income and race. This helps us identify what communities are most in need in Denver, and Montbello is one of those communities.*

I was really excited about this project because these protected lanes are the cutting edge of the work we are doing in Denver to facilitate the focus on safety to find those safety solutions. We did pilots downtown. Montbello is one of just a few communities where we are looking at putting in a network, multiple streets getting these safety improvements. The goal is to bring the community the kinds of treatments that lead to safety.

Q: From Pam Jiner: "The problem is - reduced lanes and slower traffic speeds will cause an enormous traffic jam with the 6 way stop sign. take out the six way stop - put in a traffic light and allow all traffic/ peds to move smoothly."

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

Q: On another note, is there any plans to create these type of bike lanes to lead to the light rail stations?

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

Q: From Pam Jiner: "gh ped accidents/ high speeds and high traffic volume. Why won't you consider the traffic light to control traffic along with lower/consistent speed limit both ways? Keep existing conditions with addition of bike lanes and traffic lights.

A: *Answer provided above**

Q: Will you have provide this presentation in Spanish to share with other residents?

A: Yes, if you visit the webpage, *montbellosaferstreetsmeeting.com* gives you the option to click the *Español* button to view in Spanish. We are also able to translate all of these questions and comments if you would like to see what the other residents are saying.

Q: Can you drop that link? [In reference to Councilwoman Gilmore's Facebook page sharing the meeting.]

A: <https://www.facebook.com/CouncilwomanStacieGilmore/videos/675056726651053/>

APPENDIX C: COMMENTS

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

Comment: I can't tell how disappointed I am with the traffic on Gateway Ave. My house backs up to Gateway and it is noisy with tires screeching, large trucks causing the windows and my back door to shake because the streets have gotten so bad. Racing cars, screeching tires, loud engines are the norm on this 30 mph street. I don't think people know people there are people who actually live here. This is not Bandemere speedway although you wouldn't know it. It's horrible over here.

Response: *This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.*

Comment: Thanks

Comment: Please share all the comments and questions with all participants after this meeting for transparency, along with polling results. Thanks!

Response: *Will do, thank you Councilwoman Gilmore.*

Comment: We are also streaming this meeting on Facebook live. Please go to Stacie Gilmore Councilperson to share it with your networks, ask questions, and/or give feedback.

Response: *Thank you for sharing this meeting.*

Comment: The presentation was very hard to see. I could not see any of the proposed bike lanes on 51st. On the discussion of the two lanes along the canals you used a picture of 51st but a schematic of Andrews. Makes it difficult to discuss multiple solutions

Response: *Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate the many comments and questions received from the community during this virtual meeting. DOTI is continuing to refine our outreach efforts during these extraordinary times. The project team will work to provide additional opportunities for community members to provide input during future virtual meetings. In the meantime, community members are encouraged to reach out to us through the provided static online meeting and comment boxes, through the hotline, or directly via email to Dana Hoffman at Dana.hoffman@denvergov.org*

Comment: From CW Gilmore "I'm very concerned that Community members are not able to chat and or see a chat. You can meet us, but it would be nice to have a dialogue and ask questions versus only questions you choose to answer"

Response: *Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate the many comments and questions received from the community during this virtual meeting. DOTI is continuing to refine our outreach efforts during these extraordinary times. The project team will work to provide additional opportunities for community members to provide input during future virtual meetings. In the meantime, community members are encouraged to reach out to us through the provided static online meeting and comment boxes, through the hotline, or directly via email to Dana Hoffman at Dana.hoffman@denvergov.org*

Comment: From Pam Jiner: "Also, this platform for communicating is not fair to our community. Public Works is doing all the talking and not allowing community to chime in!"

Response: *Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate the many comments and questions received from the community during this virtual meeting. DOTI is continuing to refine our outreach efforts during these extraordinary times. The project team will work to provide additional opportunities for community members to provide input during future virtual meetings. In the meantime, community members are encouraged to reach out to us through the provided static online meeting and comment boxes, through the hotline, or directly via email to Dana Hoffman at Dana.hoffman@denvergov.org*

Comment: I'm very concerned that community members are not able to chat and/or see a chat. You can mute us, but it would be nice to have a dialogue and ask questions versus only during Q & A.

Response: *Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate the many comments and questions received from the community during this virtual meeting. DOTI is continuing to refine our outreach efforts during these extraordinary times. The project team will work to provide additional opportunities for community members to provide input during future virtual meetings. In the meantime, community members are encouraged to reach out to us through the provided static online meeting and comment boxes, through the hotline, or directly via email to Dana Hoffman at Dana.hoffman@denvergov.org*

Comment: All we have to do is sit outside or open the windows at night and you can hear the speeding on these streets

Response: *This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.*

Comment: From Pam Jiner "No bike lanes are needed nor would it be safe for our children on Crown Blvd. Protected lane would not keep our kids safe - limited visibility of bicycles due to congested parking; driveways and traffic speeds are too high on Crown as well."

Response: *This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.*

Comment: From Pam: 3 sec delay on top of the already 18-24 sec delays due to 6 way Stops
Total 26 sec delays which eds take the street even when it's not safe.

Response: *This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.*

Comment The analysis is wrong. This intersection is a mess in the morning when school is starting. Removing a travel lane will cause huge traffic issues. The 3 second analysis is not accurate.

Response: *The 3 second delay was calculated using a Synchro model at 4 intersections along the corridor. The model reflects the peak traffic period collected during a weekday morning during rush hour and school drop off.*

However, the Project Team recognizes that models reflect a best forecasted estimate and we appreciate your feedback. This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.

Comment: From Pam Jiner: "51st is not a good Street for narrow (single lane) traffic - because of the amount of traffic - narrowing our street will only cause more friction on 51st at Crown w/6 way"

Response: *This and all other comments will be compiled, reviewed, and be used by the project team to select a preferred alternative that reflects community values and desires.*

Comment: I know that the Denver Climate Action Task Force have mentioned increasing and supporting biking to reduce emissions, bike lanes will align with that work.

Response: *You are right, Veronica. Thank you for that comment.*