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# M E M O R A N D U M

 **TO:** Community Members and City Council

 **FROM:** Roger Wadnal, Comprehensive Planning and Research Manager

 **DATE:** March 1, 2021

**SUBJECT:** West Colfax Safety Project Update

Following is an update with some current information on the West Colfax Safety Project. The project is entering the plan development stage and there will multiple opportunities for public involvement. This plan development stage will continue throughout this year.

The West Colfax Safety Project is a significant transportation investment for the city because it provides an opportunity to create a safer and more comfortable experience for pedestrians, transit users and motorists. The project covers 1.5 miles of West Colfax Avenue between Sheridan and Wadsworth boulevards. Reviewing the safety data demonstrates why addressing safety in this segment is so important:

* This *segment has the highest concentration of traffic injuries and deaths in the city.*
* *Lakewood Tra*nsportation Engineering identified 820 total crashes in this 1.5 mile segment from January 2015 to December 2019. These crashes have caused 283 serious injuries and six fatalities. This far outpaces crashes on segments of West Colfax that are west of the project area.
* Ninety-eight of the crashes involved a pedestrian or cyclist. Of the 98 crashes, 74 resulted in serious injuries and five resulted in death.
* These statistics indicate that a crash occurred every other day in the project area during the five-year period.

This safety data prompted the Denver Regional Council of Governments and the Colorado Department of Transportation to award Lakewood a $10 million grant to make safety improvements on this section of West Colfax. This grant was the largest of the 30 projects included in the [Safe Main Street Initiative](https://www.codot.gov/programs/safermainstreets). The only other project to receive a $10 million grant through the initiative is a [segment of Colfax in Denver](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cYByoSz0rGbzglZWVOHLWWLBX0kdkNnu/view).

This project will create consistent sidewalks through repurposing the outside lanes of traffic; add designated pedestrian crossings in specific locations; establish pullouts for buses and provide bus stop amenities; improve streetlighting for safety; and enhance driver safety by increasing sight-distances, reducing conflicts with turning vehicles, updating intersection traffic signals and lengthening turn lanes – all of which will improve safety for everyone while reducing driving stress.

City Council action is required before this project can be launched:

* February 22 – Lakewood City Council set the public hearing date for amending the 2021 Annual Budget to authorize spending the $10 million grant and approving the source and size of the city’s matching funds for the project.
* March 15 – Public hearing will occur for City Council to consider amending the budget and spending the funds.

With City Council setting the public hearing date on the funding for this project, the city can begin its engagement with community organizations, businesses, schools and residents. The following outlines the opportunities the community will have to participate in this project.

* [LakewoodTogether.org/WestColfax](http://www.LakewoodTogether.org/WestColfax) is the project’s website that allows community members to learn in detail about the project, ask questions, participate in a survey, subscribe to receive updates and review other items as the project progresses.
* This website will serve as a one-stop online hub for the public’s engagement with the project, and future additions could include items such as visual examples, concept sketches or before-and-after renderings for the public to review.
* The community will be able to participate by providing input on the look, feel and location of items such as landscaping, fencing, benches, wayfinding, design elements, amenities and art.
* Flyers, banners, yard signs and chalk stencils will be used to inform businesses, apartment residents, neighborhood organizations, visitors and others about the project, directing them to visit the project’s website.
* The city’s newsletters, social media and other communication channels will be used to inform and update the public about the project and opportunities to participate.
* City staff and Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District representatives will regularly attend community and association meetings to provide information about the project.
* Information will be provided regularly to the BID, the West Colfax Community Association and the 40 West Arts District to include in their newsletters and communication channels.
* A text message campaign in partnership with the Denver Streets Partnership will be launched.
* Project team members including from Lakewood’s Economic Development Office will conduct one-on-one visits with businesses in the corridor.
* Public meetings will be virtual or in-person as public health orders allow.