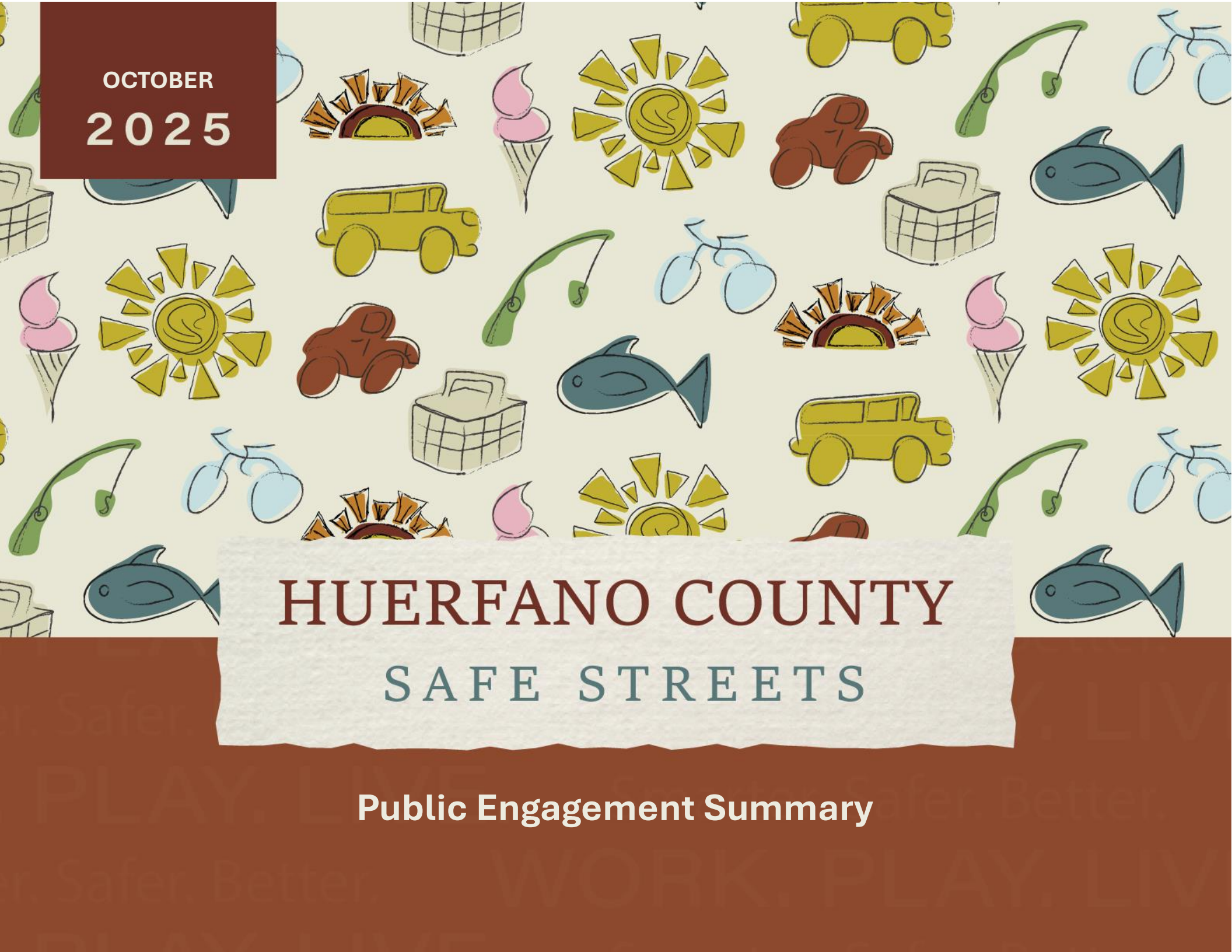




OCTOBER
2025

HUERFANO COUNTY

SAFE STREETS

Public Engagement Summary

Overview of Round 1

The project team coordinated with Huerfano County to conduct public engagement on the Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan. Public engagement launched late April 2025 with the first steering committee meeting. The team also gathered community feedback through online and in-person methods.

Steering Committee Meetings

Held **three steering committee meetings** (April, June, & August)

Heard from **37 committee members**, representing 23 stakeholder groups

Project Website Online

Feedback:
June 16 – August 11

Received
60 contributions from 46 different people

Community Events: July 24-26

Touchpoints in **four communities**, spoke with **53 people**

La Veta Farmers Market

Walsenburg Mercantile

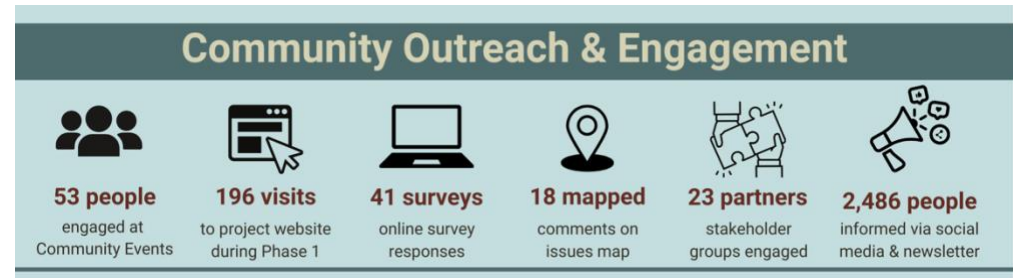
Cuchara Farmers Market

Gardner Farmers Market

Total Community Members Engaged: 136

Public Outreach

KLJ coordinated outreach materials between two other projects, combining the Safe Streets project with the trail feasibility studies for the Cuchara Mountain Park Trail and the Gardner State Highway 69 Trail. Information about the two other projects was shared throughout Huerfano County including the communities of La Veta, Cuchara, Gardner, Walsenburg, and unincorporated areas. County staff helped to distribute bilingual posters around the four communities, and they spread the word through social media and the County newsletter. In addition, the project team coordinated the production of branded coffee sleeves that were distributed to three popular coffee shops within the county. Taking the total number of people who viewed the Huerfano County social media postings and the number of times the July newsletter was opened; 2,486 people were informed about the projects through online outreach methods.



Social Media Post



Coffee Sleeve

Community Events

During the fourth week of July, KLJ conducted four different touchpoints spread throughout the four communities of Huerfano County. KLJ participated in the community Farmers Markets in La Veta, Cuchara, and Gardner and held an additional pop-up at the Walsenburg Mercantile. Over the course of the three-day visit, the project team spoke with 53 people.

Community members were invited to provide feedback through multiple hands-on activities that facilitated conversations about roadway safety priorities, safety concerns, transportation needs, and future Huerfano County trails projects.

Mason Jar Activity: Roadway Safety Priorities

Participants were asked to prioritize roadway safety improvements within Huerfano County by placing colored poker chips into mason jars. The jars were labeled with nine different safety improvements: ADA ramps/accessibility, better lighting, bike lanes, improved crosswalks, safer intersections, more signage, more sidewalks, paved multiuse pathways, and reducing driver speed.



Respondents were asked to select their top three priorities by placing colored chips for their first, second, and third choices. Blue indicated the 1st choice, red the 2nd choice, and white the 3rd choice. After the four touchpoints were complete, each jar was tallied by the color of chips, and then the priorities were given a weighted score based on the number of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place votes that were placed in each jar.

Slowing drivers down was by far the biggest safety priority in Huerfano County, with a score of 38. The addition of paved multi-use pathways ranked second, followed by safer intersections, both scoring 25. Better Lighting was the fourth safety priority, scoring 18. More sidewalks, bike lanes, and improved crosswalks ranked similar with close scores, followed by more signage. ADA Ramps and accessibility were not of concern to the community members who were engaged, receiving zero poker chips.

Roadway Safety Priorities	1st Choice (Blue/Black)	2nd Choice (Red/Green)	3rd Choice (White)	Total Chips	Weighted Score
Slow Drivers Down	7	8	1	16	38
Paved Multi-Use Pathways	5	3	4	12	25
Safer Intersections	7	1	2	10	25
Better Lighting	4	2	2	8	18
More Sidewalks	2	2	3	7	13
Bike Lanes	1	4	2	7	13
Improved Crosswalks	2	1	4	7	12
More Signage	2	1	1	4	9
ADA Ramps/Accessibility	0	0	0	0	0

Map Activity: Safety Concerns

The project team had a large-scale map of Huerfano County on-site during each of the community events and participants were encouraged to place colored dots on the map noting places where amenities such as lighting or signage is needed, places people felt unsafe walking or biking, intersections that are unsafe or need improvements, and road segments that posed safety concerns. Dots were color coded for four different categories, including:

Green = Amenities:

Areas where amenities such as signage, lighting, shelters/ shade structures, benches, or secure bike parking are needed.

Blue = Bike/Pedestrian:

areas where participants feel unsafe walking or biking.

Yellow = Intersections:

intersections that feel are unsafe or need improvements.

Red = Roadway:

roads that feel unsafe in Huerfano County



Although only 10 dots were placed on the map, this visual in tandem with the transportation needs activity board prompted great conversations with community members about various transportation safety concerns. The intersection category had the largest response, with five yellow dots. Unsafe roads received three dots, and there were two blue dots placed for areas that feel unsafe walking and biking. The amenities category did not receive any dots on the map. The table below shows the roadways and dot colors placed on the map.

Map Location/Dot Placement	Green	Yellow	Blue	Red	Total Dots
Junction of US-160 & CO-12 (between La Veta & Walsenburg)	0	3	0	0	3
CO- 12 near Cuchara	0	0	0	2	2
W 7th Street & Ysidro Ave (Walsenburg)	0	1	0	0	1
Main Street & 2nd St and Stadium (La Veta)	0	0	1	0	1
US-160 & Valley Rd (between La Veta & Walsenburg)	0	1	0	0	1
CO -12 (the wall) - north of Cuchara	0	0	0	1	1
Cuchara - CO-12 & Aspen Ave, in town	0	0	1	0	1

The areas of greatest concern include the junction of US-160 and CO-12, between La Veta and Walsenburg, and Highway 12 near Cuchara. The intersection of US-160 and CO-12 pose concerns because of high-speed traffic, heavy truck/trailer traffic, high winds and overturned vehicles, and icy conditions in the winter months. Respondents expressed multiple concerns about Highway 12 near Cuchara. First, there was mention of a scenic area called “The Wall”: a prominent rock formation along the highway. Visitors often stop to take photos; however, the rock formation is located along a blind curve with little or no shoulder, which poses concern for potential crashes. Cuchara residents were also worried about bicycle and pedestrian safety with the speed of vehicles coming into town on Highway 12.



Transportation Needs

To further understand transportation needs and roadway safety concerns, participants were asked to write comments on sticky notes and place them under three different categories on the transportation needs board. Categories included concerns or needs around schools, concerns about walking and biking, and other ideas to improve the roads in Huerfano County.

Concerns/Needs Around Schools

All comments were specific to La Veta schools, noting the need for sidewalks near the school, especially along the drop-off/pick-up area at the school. Participants also noted the need for sidewalk from the apartments on Pinkerton Rd, connecting to the school.

**Sidewalks needed
near school in La Veta**



La Veta Elementary School

Concerns About Walking & Biking

Comments about walking and biking referred to La Veta and Walsenburg. In La Veta, respondents wanted to see more crosswalks and they mentioned that the existing sidewalks are bumpy or uneven surfaces. One area of concern in Walsenburg was West 7th Street and Ysidro Avenue, where pedestrians often travel to or from the city park. Although there is an RRFB to cross 7th Street, drivers do not always yield to pedestrians. The second mention in Walsenburg was along Walsen Ave near First Choice Market, in which respondents noted that people traveling to and from the mobile home park must walk along the side of the road.

Other Ideas to Improve Roads

This category received the most comments, many referenced highways and major roads. One common theme was the need for more law enforcement officers on the roads. The project team received ten comments noting that the greatest safety concern was speeding vehicles, and community members did not feel there was enough law enforcement to address the issue. Speed limit enforcement was of particular concern in Gardner, with five comments specific to this area. Another common concern was speeding and blind curves near the landmark “The Wall” on Highway 12. The table below provides a list of comments within this category.



County Road 69 at County Road 610, Looking South

Comments	Occurrence
Not enough deputies to enforce speed	10
Enforcement/special fine for passing and speeding in Gardner	5
Towards “The Wall” at Cuchara, blind turn and people speed	2
Very bad icy conditions on US-160 by CO-12, 2 for about 4 miles by the pass. Overturn vehicle crashes and high winds.	1
Passing lane at Highway 69 and CR 540	1
CR 120 north of Maria Reservoir: driveway on top of the hill at the curve, no visibility to turn out.	1
There should be a traffic signal at Lathrop State Park	1
Crossing at the Garnder curve is dangerous	1
Hwy 12 has potholes and washouts	1
Need to make sure EMS has access to trails	1
CR 330 needs more regular re-grading; ruts get deeper without attention, consider oiling after grading to extend the time the road base is in good condition.	1
Suggestion to use Baker Creek Trailhead to connect to Mountain Park	1
Do cattle guard cleanouts - doesn't appear to have been done ever around Silver Spurs Ranch POA (CR 330 and CR 310)	1

Huerfano County Trails

Public engagement for the Huerfano County Trails Feasibility Study was combined with the Safety Action Plan, and community members were asked to share feedback on preferred trail alignments for the Cuchara Mountain Park Trail and the Gardner State Highway 69 Trail.



Cuchara

Cuchara Mountain Park Trail

The Cuchara Mountain Park Trail is a 3.4-mile multi-use path that will begin in the Village of Cuchara at the intersection of Cuchara Avenue and State Highway 12 heading south, into Cuchara Mountain Park. The public was asked to weigh in on three different shared use path alignments to determine a preferred alternative. In general, the community was supportive of this trail and expressed that there is a need for a paved trail to Cuchara Mountain Park. Alternative C was the preferred trail alignment, which would offer a shared use path along a widened shoulder with variations from having the trail travel along the west and east sides of CO-12. Along Panadero Ave the path would utilize the south side of the roadway to Cuchara Mountain Park.

Gardner State Highway 69 Trail

There are four different alignment options for the Gardner SH-69 Trail. Most community members were opposed to the Gardner trail, or the proposed length of the trail. Those who said they would support the trail wanted a buffer between the highway and the trail, without the requiring additional right of way. Supporters also wanted to see the trail shortened, traveling between the Gardner Community Center and the School. Those who opposed the trail mentioned that the trail would not get used because of the traffic along Highway 69, and if the trail alignment required land from private landowners, no one would be willing to provide trail easements.

Online Engagement

The project website was launched for public feedback on June 16, and it was available for public input for eight weeks. Throughout the first phase of engagement, there were 196 website visits from 137 unique visitors. Online respondents could provide feedback through an interactive mapping tool and a short survey; overall, there were 60 contributions made through the website.

Survey Responses

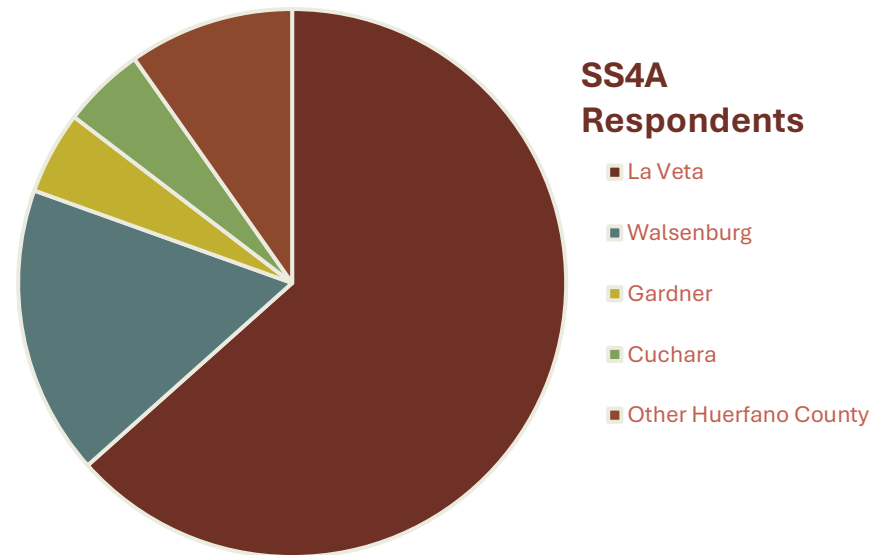
Participants responded to a five-question survey, which received 41 responses. Overall, 63.4% of respondents were from La Veta.

Respondents were asked to rank seven different roadway safety concerns. The top three concerns were speeding vehicles, behavior of oversized vehicles, and inadequate or missing pedestrian facilities. The table on page 13 includes a complete list of roadway safety concerns and the average ranking.

197 Website Visits

60 Contributions

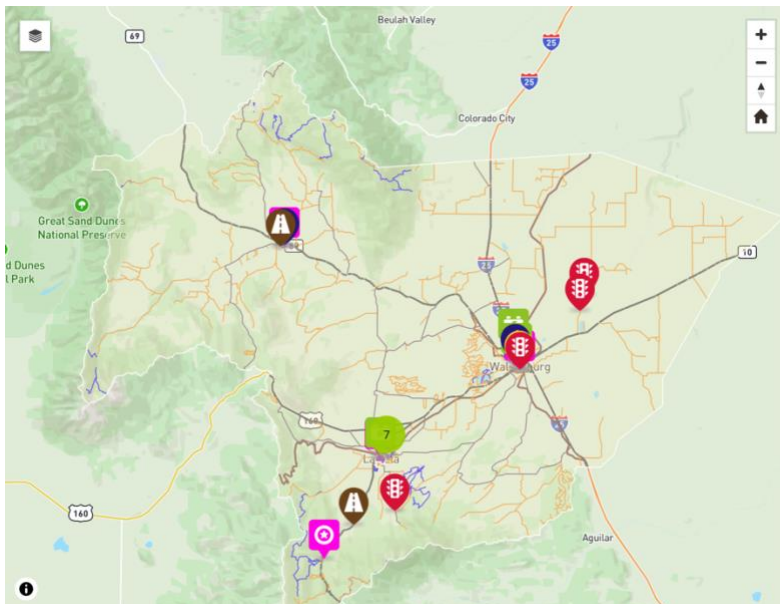
41 Survey Responses



In addition to understanding roadway safety concerns, Huerfano County wanted to know what improvements would encourage walking and biking, by making it safer and more convenient. Participants were asked to select their top three choices from a list of ten options including ADA ramps/accessibility, better lighting, bike lanes, improved crosswalks, safer intersections, more signage, more sidewalks, paved multi-use paths, lower speed limit, and other improvements. Over half of the respondents (56.1%) indicated that improved crosswalks would make walking and biking feel safer. More sidewalks and safer intersections tied for second, both receiving votes from 36.59% of respondents. While in-person participants did not prioritize ADA ramps and accessibility, 31.71% of online participants felt it would improve the walking and biking experience. Bike lanes ranked as the fourth most popular improvement, at 29.27%, followed by the need for a lower speed limit. Paved multi-use paths were the second highest priority during in-person engagement, however online only 21.95% of respondents indicated they would prioritize paved pathways. More signage and better lighting were ranked the lowest online, although better lighting scored higher when speaking with people during community events.

Roadway Safety Concerns in Huerfano County	Average Score
Speed limit: areas where the speed limit is too low/high, drivers traveling too fast.	4.8
Oversized vehicle behavior (including trucks and trailers or RV units).	4.3
Inadequate or missing pedestrian facilities: sidewalks, ADA accessibility and ramps, shared use paths, and safe crossings.	4.0
Passenger vehicle behavior: distracted driving, impaired driving, and drivers not yielding to bikes and pedestrians.	3.6
Intersections: poor visibility of intersections, traffic congestion, difficulty seeing bicycles and pedestrians when turning, areas where turn lanes are needed.	2.8
Bicycle and pedestrian safety, especially around schools, parks, and downtown areas.	2.7
Inadequate or missing bicycle facilities: bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, shared use paths, and safe crossings.	2.2

When asked if children in the home currently walk or bike to school and local parks, 75% of the respondents said their children did not use active modes to get around town. The respondents who noted that their children did not walk or bike, were also asked about the types of barriers that prevented them from allowing their children to walk and bike to school or area parks. Over 60% indicated the route was not safe for walking and biking. Distance was also a barrier, with 25% of respondents stating it was too far for their children to walk and bike places. Nearly 32% of respondents selected other barriers, however there were not any write in responses. One person noted that their child was not physically or cognitively ready to walk or bike to school.



**The Intersection Category
had the most comments.**

Interactive Map

Website visitors were encouraged to leave comments about roadway safety concerns on an interactive map; the online mapping activity received 18 pin placements. Among the pins placed, 50% of the placements addressed concerns in Walsenburg, La Veta received 39% of the map pins, and 11% were placed in Gardner. Map pins were divided into six categories including bike/pedestrian, roadway, intersection, speeding vehicles, amenities, and other. The intersection category had the most comments, with seven map pins, followed by roadway with five pins, speeding vehicles received three pins, the bike/ped category had two pins, however, there were comments addressing bike and pedestrian safety in other categories. The other category only had one pin, and there were no pins placed in the amenities category.

Common Themes

The most common concerns were related to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and driver behavior, followed by line of sight, and the need for police enforcement. There were also comments related to the amount of time that the train holds up traffic and the need for traffic control on busier roadways. The table below shows the common themes identified within the map comments and the occurrence of similar comments.

Common Themes	Occurrence
Bike/Ped infrastructure	7
Driver Behavior: speeding vehicles, drivers don't stop at stop signs	6
Line of Sight: driveway access, blind curves	4
Police Enforcement	2
Traffic Control	1
RR holding up traffic	1

Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Crosswalks and safer street crossings were most common among the bike and pedestrian comments. Most pins were placed in La Veta; respondents mentioned the greatest need was for safer street crossings in downtown La Veta with need for additional crosswalks or improved crosswalks, such as the addition of an RRFB. There were also concerns about the railroad crossing in La Veta, noting that it was not safe for bikes and difficult for pedestrians. Both La Veta and Gardner received comments related to the need for paved multi-use pathways; in La Veta there was concern around the school and in Gardner, the respondents wanted a pathway along Highway 69 to make it safer for bikes and pedestrians to travel along the corridor. Walsenburg also received one pedestrian concern, and that was for a safer, more visible street crossing near the grocery store.



Navajo Ranch Entrance

Driver Behavior

Most comments addressing driver behavior were related to speeding vehicles, but there were also concerns about drivers failing to stop at stop signs. Two of the comments related to driver behavior also noted that they had witnessed multiple near crashes. Speeding with near crashes was mentioned in La Veta along Highway 12 at the intersection of West Grand, the comment also noted people frequently run the stop sign at this location. Highway 69 in Gardner, between County Roads 638 and 550, near Gardner Valley Charter School, was another area where speeding was of concern. There were also concerns about vehicle speed in Walsenburg, specifically CR 510 and Navajo Road. Comments also noted near crashes, due to speeding within and exiting the Navajo Ranch subdivision.

Line of Sight

Respondents who mentioned line of sight were most concerned about blind curves or visibility with driveway access onto major roads. County Road 120 in Walsenburg received the most line-of-sight comments, but there were also concerns along Highway 12.

Police Enforcement

Comments related to the need for more police enforcements were specific to speeding vehicles, although some community members expressed concern for other driving behaviors that police enforcement might help deter.

Roadway Mentions

Some comments mentioned specific roadways within the comment, overall, there were six roadway mentions. Most mentioned roadways include Highway 12 through downtown La Veta, CR 120 in Walsenburg, and Highway 69 in Gardner. In La Veta, comments addressing Highway 12 were most concerned about pedestrian safety and the railroad crossing. On CR 120, the respondents expressed concern about the visibility or line of sight in relation to driveway access along 120, and there should be some signage alerting drivers to traffic pulling out or slowing traffic down along CR 120. In Gardner, along Highway 69, respondents were concerned about vehicle speed. There was also mention of CR 363 from 360 to 340 to be maintained as an evacuation route, and CR 510 was mentioned as a racetrack.

Common Themes & Key Takeaways

Huerfano County is a rural community with multiple high speed state highways and county roads, and vehicle speed was one of the greatest safety concerns identified by community members and stakeholders. Visitors and people traveling through Huerfano County to other destinations are possibly the largest contributors to this problem. Signage could help to educate travelers of problematic areas along roadways, such as alerting drivers to a blind curve ahead, it could also help to slow traffic down prior to approaching areas with safety concerns. Addressing speeding issues with police enforcement is most desired by the community but realizing there are limited resources for more law enforcement, lowering the speed limit could help to slow traffic down through town and around schools.

Although there was a difference in the prioritization of safety improvements between in-person engagement and online responses, it was still clear that there is a need for pedestrian safety improvements. Safe street crossings are a top priority, especially in the downtown areas and around schools. Multimodal pathways were desired by some, others thought they would be nice to have if these pathways didn't require additional ROW. Based on the feedback received about the Gardner SH 69 Trail, it seems as though the public was not clear that CDOT provided funding for the study and that CDOT already owns the ROW needed for the project. If this information was clearer to the public, feedback about the Gardner Trail would have likely been different.

Stakeholder Identification

Attended

Stakeholder/Community Partner	Agency Representative	SCM 1 4.28.2025	SCM 2 6.09.2025	SCM 3 8.20.2025	SCM 4 Nov 2025
American Red Cross of Southern Colorado	Kimber Weddle				
Area Agency on Aging/Walsenburg City Council	Veronica Maes				
CDOT Region 2	Matt Jagow				
CDOT Region 2	Geoff Guthrie				
City of Walsenburg	Chief Bill Vinelli				
City of Walsenburg	Trevon Perry				
Colorado Parks & Wildlife (Lathrop State Park)	Stacey Koury				
Colorado State Patrol District 2	Brian Lyons				
Colorado State Patrol District 2	Anthony Glanton				
Colorado State Patrol District 2	Erik Powell				
Freemont County Emergency Management	Mykell Kroll				
Huerfano County	Robert Gilbert				
Huerfano County	Kim Trujillo				
Huerfano County - Administration	Carl Young				
Huerfano County - Economic Development	Raquel Lopez-Rodriguez				
Huerfano County - Emergency Management	Ross Hallihan				
Huerfano County - Emergency Management	Anthony Luginbill				
Huerfano County - Land Use/Planning	Ryan Sablich				
Huerfano County - Land Use/Planning	Cheri Chamberlain				
Huerfano County - Road & Bridge	Dustin Hribar				
Huerfano County Commissioner	Karl Sporleder				
Huerfano County Commissioner	Jim Chamberlain				
Huerfano County Fire Protection District	Roy Britt				
Huerfano County Human Services	Deah Weller				
Huerfano County/SCCOG	Mitchell Wardell				
Huerfano School District Re-1	Yvonne Wiening				
La Veta Fire Protection District	Ron Jameson				
La Veta Trails	Marilyn Russell				
Las Animas County Dept of Human Services	Michael Aragon				
Las Animas/Huerfano Counties District Health Department	Kim Gonzales				
South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG)	Brian Blasi				
Spanish Peaks Cycling Association	Kerrie Meyler				
Spanish Peaks EMS	Matt Whitley				
Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center	Dave McGraw				
Town of La Veta	Heather Hills				
USFS - San Carlo Ranger Dist.	Destiny Chapman				

Steering Committee Meetings

The project team facilitated three steering committee meetings during the first round of public engagement. Throughout the course of the project, Huerfano County engaged with 37 committee members, representing 23 different stakeholder groups.

Steering Committee Meeting 1

The first meeting with stakeholders kicked off with a project overview, explaining the Safety Action Plan process and the benefit of engaging with area stakeholders. To facilitate conversations about safety concerns in Huerfano County, steering committee members were asked to identify a safety issue, the location, and what they would fix. Conversations included concerns about traffic and speeding vehicles, shared road experiences with bicycles, pedestrian and bicycle safety, walkability within each of the downtown areas, tourist traffic, blind corners and poor visibility, speed limits around school zones, state roadways, wildlife crashes, and issues with the railroad. See the section **Stakeholder Safety Concerns** on page 24 for a complete list of roadways and concerns identified by the steering committee.

Committee members also addressed concerns about a popular bike tour, Ride Across America, that comes through Huerfano County each June. There are many cyclists on Highway 12, which is not designed as a bicycle corridor. Riders are mixed in with regular traffic on Highway 12, tourists traveling to the area or traveling through to other destinations, and the support vehicles that follow the cyclists. There are many issues with the support vehicles who tend to be focused solely on their riders, rather than the general safety of all roadway users. These vehicles stop along Highway 12 to provide aid to cyclists; often they stop in areas where there is already a natural blind spot, and the large support vehicles create more problems and pose significant safety concerns. It was recommended that the support vehicles should meet riders at the top of the pass to help mitigate these issues, however this has never been implemented. Huerfano County, CDOT, and local emergency responders could potentially draft language stating the requirements for traffic control and regulations of support vehicles and coordinate with the race organizers to help improve the safety along the corridor during the bike tour.

Goal Setting

The second half of the first meeting focused on goal setting. Committee members were asked to participate in a goal setting exercise, including optional goals and federally mandated goals for the SS4A Safety Action Plan.

- **Discourage unsafe driving behavior**
- **Integrate and expand multimodal choices for all ages,** make sure to include accessibility as an element of the goal.
- **Use data-informed analysis** and community needs to identify areas of safety concern. There was a focus on partnerships when implementing projects.
- **Use partnerships across the county** to promote safety and include follow-up to see if measures are helping to reduce fatal/serious injury crashes.
- **Execute and leverage partnerships** to acquire funding to implement projects that improve safety.
- **Actionable results should be data based;** however, this should not create a lengthy process to see visible improvements within the community. Stakeholders also wanted to partner with Colorado State Patrol for enforcement and education to address issues.
- **Develop timelines and show incremental progress.** Committee members want to emphasize the importance of shovel ready projects. They also want to incorporate temporary improvements as a step towards a larger project.
- **Proposed projects should be sorted into short, medium, and long-term lists,** further allowing the County to expand on shovel-ready projects. Education is a good short-term method to help turn around negative behaviors or promote bike and ped safety around schools.

Steering Committee Meeting 2

During the second meeting, the project team gave an overview of the project goals and what committee members had discussed in the first meeting related to goal setting. Committee members were briefed on the first round of engagement, and they were encouraged to visit the project website and share their feedback. The project team reviewed the crash analysis with meeting attendees, sharing information about the top five crash corridors, serious and fatal injury crashes, and wildlife involved crashes.

Committee members had a discussion related to the policy document overview and the cultural asset inventory. There are areas in town where education is needed, specifically at 7th and Main in Walsenburg; many people do not realize that there is a turn lane at this intersection and passenger vehicles often try to pass slow trucks as they approach the intersection. Reducing on-street parking distance from the intersections would also help to improve visibility. Committee members were also concerned about the truck routes through town, and they expressed the possibility of creating designated truck routes.

The group had lengthy conversations about the railroad and trains coming through town. The biggest challenge is that law enforcement and EMS often must wait on the train when responding to calls, which increases the response time for emergencies. There is a need for an alternative route for emergency responders to avoid being held up by the train. Blockages happen at least three times each day, for up to 20 minutes each time. The committee wanted to identify projects through the Safety Action Plan that could help with post-crash care, by reducing train blocking times. Some EMS personnel noted that when drivers get held up by traffic they tend to speed to make up for lost time, which could cause more crashes. When law enforcement and emergency responders get stuck in the queue behind the train, they are also stuck in slow moving traffic once the intersection is clear.

Project Prioritization

The project team facilitated conversations around future project prioritization with committee members. Stakeholders thought projects should be categorized by corridors and to look at ways to develop cohesive projects. They also wanted to separate tactical type projects that could be done in-house, by Huerfano County or local municipalities. Safe routes to schools and parks were also important, and projects that offer improved safety for bikes and pedestrians around these amenities should be ranked as a higher need. The group also felt meeting ADA compliance was important; thinking about mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities was also important, members noted that there are disabled Veterans in the community who have mobility restrictions. They also wanted to prioritize projects that helped to improve the line of sight. Another important component was ongoing maintenance for projects, and the ability for local agencies to properly maintain future improvements.



US 160



Walsenburg



La Veta

Steering Committee Meeting 3

The third committee meeting was held jointly with the monthly Huerfano County Multi-Agency Collaborative (HMAC) which allowed the project team to hear from several regional stakeholders such as emergency management personal, EMS dispatch and first responders, federal and state land managers, Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center, American Red Cross, Colorado, and Department of Human Services.

HMAC members kicked off the meeting with partner updates; one item of interest was that South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG) will have a full-time public transit bus available in Huerfano County beginning September of 2025, which will help to expand multimodal opportunities throughout the county.

The project team reported on the first round of public engagement, sharing common safety concerns and community needs. There was some discussion about the Gardner SH 69 Trail, after sharing that most people were not in support of the trail, the project team learned that most people are not aware that CDOT already has most of the ROW needed for the trail. Committee members mentioned that there is a need for a trail along Highway 12 because it is difficult for vehicles to pass bicycles, especially during peak tourist season. The project team also mentioned that they hoped to do more targeted outreach with Walsenburg and the school district.

Most of the meeting was spent reviewing road safety hot spots from the analysis, including crash locations. The project team shared a heatmap of the concentrated areas of fatal and serious injury crashes across the county. Meeting participants were asked to share additional feedback about areas with safety concerns that may not appear on the heatmap, for example unreported crashes. The group had some insightful information ranging from winter weather, animal involved crashes, road maintenance needs that result in safety issues, and specific roadway segments. They also discussed hazards, noting more traffic than designed, lack of shoulders, lack of signage.



Spanish Peaks Hospital Entrance

Stakeholder Safety Concerns

During each of the steering committee meetings, stakeholders helped to identify roadways and areas within Huerfano County that posed safety concerns. Many of these areas were not included in the crash data. The list below is a compilation of safety concerns brought up by local, county, regional, and state level stakeholder groups.

Highways & Major Corridors

Highway 160

- Highway 160, near the hospital. Due to the road geometry, snow and ice melt and create standing water, which freezes in the winter creating large icy spots. Similar concern with hydroplaning any time it rains.
- Highway 160 is getting busier and poses potential concerns.
 - Valley Road onto 160 – approach is problematic.
 - Spanish Peaks Subdivision entrance.
 - Lathrop State Park / hospital entrances (directly across from each other), this may require traffic control in the future.
- 3-lane issues
 - Middle lane is an alternating turn lane, but some drivers use the turn lane as a thru lane
 - High winds in some areas, large trucks and trailers have tipped over
- US 160 to CO 69 – heavy traffic and curves
- Truck traffic poses a concern for the risk of vehicle fires, which is also hazardous to the whole community and other roadway users.

Highway 69

- The curve just east of Gardner poses significant safety concerns due to speeding vehicles and the sharp curve.
- Highway 69 has the highest concentration of crashes within Huerfano County other than I-25, per State Patrol.
- CO-69 through Gardner, and extending north and south from town
 - Speeding concerns
 - Intersection CR 590 & CO 69 has an awkward angle, and it is hard to turn left on to 69 and see oncoming traffic.

Highway 12

- There is often delayed response due to poor road maintenance.
- Issues with large vehicle traffic in downtown La Veta.
- Issues with visibility, need to mow the grass along the road.
- Concern about bicycle safety.
 - Bicycles and cars mixed along the corridor.
 - Issues in June with Bike Across America tour.
 - Several cyclists and their support vehicles.
- Intersection of Highway 12 & US 160

Highway 10 has drainage issues, resulting in standing water on highway, which spreads out to the fields.

- Vehicles traveling at high speeds hit the standing water without warning, which has resulted in crashes or vehicles sliding off the road.

Concerns about GPS routing travelers on roads that are not best suited for their vehicles.

- People try to take remote county roads when state highways/I-25 are closed in the winter with extreme weather or accidents.
- RVs traveling down 1st Street in La Veta, which has a narrow bridge over the river; the bridge is not suited for large vehicles.

The Exit 49 interchange has newer issues due to the configuration of Love's Truck Stop. During inclement weather when their lot fills, trucks that pull off I-25 but can't get into Love's can only park on the side of the road or along the bridge into town, this creates an artificial bottleneck.

Exit 52 interchange just north of Walsenburg has an unusual configuration.

To reach the new Chaé warehouse or the St. Mary Cemetery (or just access CR 101.1), drivers must approach the northbound on-ramp and then abruptly turn. The northbound off-ramp also requires a sharp turn to head toward Walsenburg, several potential places for crashes especially for visitors.

County Roads

Some County Roads are not reflected in the heat map

Red Rock Rd. at CR 610 is a blind intersection at CR-610.

CR 520 & CR 279

- Pass Creek Rd. approaching La Veta Pass: The road washes out in storm conditions.
- Pass Creek Road & Highway 69 near La Veta Pass
- Huerfano Campgrounds – 580
- Pass Creek Road & Highway 69 near La Veta Pass
 - Poor visibility due to blind approach heading north, with the crest of the hill. It is difficult to see traffic turning off Red Rock.
 - Many tourists don't move over for turning traffic.

CR 342 & 342.1: Left hand turns are difficult due to limited sightline.

Dirt road just past Gardner / CR 631

- Dispatch receives many calls from people stuck here, those are not serious but could be if other traffic doesn't see/doesn't stop in time.
- 4X4 and vehicle crashes, have had to Medevac people out.

Approaches from CRs and driveways can be a concern, with difficult sightlines.

Local Roads

7th & Main in Walsenburg

- Speeding and illegal right turns are pedestrian hazards
- Heavy truck traffic: consider a method to encourage trucks to bypass downtown if they are not servicing the downtown area.
- Traffic backups behind railroad crossing

School zones and pedestrian areas

- Reduce the speed limit around school zones
- Improved signage, flashing lights, and enforced reductions to protect vulnerable populations.
 - Schools and senior centers
- Walkable downtown areas

La Veta Streets

- Oak Street
 - Speeding vehicles and drivers run through the stop signs.
- Alleys in La Veta need to be ADA accessible
 - Most curbs at the alleys do not have proper curb cuts.

Looking Ahead

In the next round of public engagement, the project team will meet with the steering committee for one additional meeting. It is important to hear from all communities within Huerfano County, so the project team will facilitate workshops with the La Veta Board of Trustees and Walsenburg City Council sometime early winter. The project team will also be on site in late winter or early spring for the second round of public engagement, in which community members will be asked to provide feedback on the list of potential projects.

Fourth Steering
Committee Meeting

February

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will meet for the fourth time in February, at which time they will provide feedback on the list of prioritized projects. Committee members will also have the opportunity to review the draft of the final report and submit comments online through Adobe Cloud.

Public Engagement Phase 2

In the second phase of public engagement, the project team aims to conduct more targeted outreach in the Walsenburg Community. It is also critical to gain a better understanding of issues that teachers, parents, and children face when traveling to and from school. The project team will also conduct targeted outreach with the school district.

The project team will engage with community members in February/March, focusing in-person outreach in Gardner and with the Huerfano County School District Re-1. In addition, Gardner and La Veta schools will receive a short survey about safety concerns around schools, which will be distributed via email.

Community members will have the opportunity to weigh in on potential future projects, sharing feedback to further help with project prioritization. The public will be able to provide feedback both online and in-person. The project team will also develop a short summary of what was heard, including common themes and community needs, which will be available on the project website. Information will also be distributed through handouts that will be available during community outreach events.

Engagement Schedule

Completed

Upcoming

Community Engagement	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Steering Committee Meetings	Completed		Completed		Completed						Upcoming			
In-Person Community Events				Completed							Upcoming	Upcoming		
Online Feedback			Completed	Completed	Completed						Upcoming	Upcoming		
School District Engagement											Upcoming			
Trustee Workshops											Upcoming			
Public Engagement Summary						Completed							Upcoming	
Presentation to BOCC													Upcoming	