



# Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative



**SCI Gold Corridor Working Group – Meeting #2**  
*Anne Campbell Room, Arvada City Hall, 8101 Ralston Rd., Arvada*  
*1:30 pm – 4:00 pm, July 2, 2013*

## *Meeting Summary (As of 7/11/13)*

### Attendees

#### *CWG Members*

- Adams County - Deputy County Administrator Unit: Jeanne Shreve
- Adams County – Planning: Jay Garcia and Joelle Greenland
- Adams County Housing Authority: Don May and Chris Auxier
- Arvada - Community Development: Kevin Nichols
- Arvada Urban Renewal Authority: Clark Walker
- Denver – Community Planning and Development: Michelle Pyle
- Denver – Public Works: Jenn Hillhouse
- Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation (Jeffco EDC): Michelle Claymore
- RTD: Patrick McLaughlin
- Wheat Ridge - Community Development: Ken Johnstone
- Wheat Ridge - Economic Development/ Urban Renewal Authority: Steve Art

#### *Others*

- CDR Associates: Laura Sneeringer
- Denver Housing Authority: Ismael Guerrero
- DRCOG: Paul Aldretti and Ashley Kaade
- PlaceMatters: Jocelyn Hittle
- Reconnecting America: Bill Sadler and Mike Madrid

### Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Overview
- Discuss Benefits and Considerations for Corridor Planning
- Review and Discuss East Corridor Baseline Data and Mapping



## Meeting Materials (available on the Website or FTP site)

- Agenda (Website)
- Presentations on Benefits and Considerations for Corridor Planning from Reconnecting America and Ismael Guerrero, Denver Housing Authority (Website)
- Corridor Reconnaissance and Baseline Mapping (FTP site)

## Action Items

Action item responses should be sent to Laura Sneeringer (lsneeringer@mediate.org; 303.442.7367 ext. 214). Technical data responses and questions should also be sent to Reconnecting America (ccooblair@reconnectingamerica.org; bsadler@reconnectingamerica.org; mmadrid@reconnectingamerica.org, 303.861.1420).

- Denver, Adams County, Arvada and Wheat Ridge will identify a Committee Member to provide a brief (e.g., 5 min) overview of planning efforts at each station at the August 6 meeting. CDR Associates will coordinate with these POCs in advance of the meeting with more details. Information to share includes the following. Maps will be projected and printed to help the group visualize planning efforts.
  - General vision for the station - general land uses and any specific amenities
  - Strengths and opportunities (e.g., infrastructure in place, development interest, financing)
  - Challenges and considerations (e.g., flood plain, connectivity and market realities)
  - Current status of planning activities
- CWG members will review the Draft Corridor Reconnaissance and Baseline Data and Mapping and provide feedback to Reconnecting America.
- Reconnecting America will:
  - Refine the vacant and underutilized map by incorporating information on current ownership/uses
  - Obtain information from DRCOG on employment/population projections by TAZ zones and incorporate as appropriate
  - Incorporate information from the Subarea Plan at 40th/Fox – Michelle Pyle will send the web link.

## Recap and Updates

### **Approval of Meeting 1 Summary**

The group approved the Meeting 1 Summary.

### **Coordination Between Corridor Working Groups and Regional Planning Efforts**

Continual conversations about the corridor will yield themes and context ideas, and will be incorporated into Metro Vision 2040. The Metro Vision Planning Advisory Committee (MVPAC) will be considering themes from all three corridors. DRCOG staff and some CWG members are involved in both the Corridor Working Groups and Metro Vision planning so they can share information informally. The Coordinating Committee meets every two weeks to discuss overall SCI grant activities, including themes, and will share them with MVPAC as appropriate. The Coordinating Committee is currently in the process of designing a matrix to outline key deliverables and where knowledge sharing opportunities overlap.



## Stakeholder Committee Update

The Stakeholder Committee had its first meeting and raised a number of issues, many that were previously discussed among the Working Group in the interviews and the first Working Group meeting. Some of the issues raised included:

- Transit, bike, pedestrian, and automobile connections to and from the station area and their residences/jobs
- The need for affordable housing
- Giving residents a voice, and providing education to help them be informed advocates
- Though many don't take public transit, they were excited about the opportunities transit would bring to their areas

The Committee members were given a brief Corridor Reconnaissance summary to review, and will provide feedback at the next meeting.

## Discussion on Benefits and Considerations for Corridor Planning

Bill Sadler, Reconnecting America, presented an overview of their experience supporting corridor planning efforts across the county. Corridor planning helps set places in a regional context, and helps to prioritize limited resources to fund certain projects for the corridor as a whole. This presentation is available on the Website.

Ismael Guerrero, Denver Housing Authority, presented information on the West Corridor Working Group's (WCWG) efforts, including development of a corridor profile, including baseline demographic data, the corridor vision, goals and recommendations for implementation. He also described development of the West Line Corridor Collaborative, a 501(c)3 organization that will continue coordination efforts among the key parties of the original WCWG. Its purpose is to promote and advocate for TOD along the corridor. The 501(c)3 status enables it to apply for federal grants and technical assistance. This presentation is available on the Website and further information is available at <http://www.westlinecorridor.org>.

*The Committee discussed the following:*

### **What were additional lessons learned along the West Line?**

Station area plans had already been completed, making implementation strategies the focus, rather than coming up with new plans for the corridor. The West Line tried to create an identity for the line. Early public investment was pursued to spur development along the corridor. This approach attracted private investment and encouraged discussion regarding the corridor among private developers, which will spur development in the future.

### **What were the obstacles of working with more than one jurisdiction on a project? Did you have to respond to questions about the benefits to individual jurisdictions?**

Each station had an area plan and we were clear at the beginning that we were building from them and not trying to reinvent the wheel. The purpose was to coordinate planning to meet all of the station area visions by leveraging resources.

### **How was the Catalytic Site selected?**

The Catalytic Site was chosen because it was ready to be developed. We considered whether land was acquired, whether there was a development plan and whether financing was ready. The site was used to



promote activity along the corridor. The economic climate during the West corridor's creation was challenging, and public investment such as infrastructure and site-readiness was used to attract private development.

### **How was the 20 minute neighborhood site funded?**

The site was funded through mixed income tax credits. The 20 minute neighborhood in the Sheridan station was used to identify uses that are not available in a specific area.

### **Was there a parallel Stakeholder Committee on the West Line?**

No, there was no coordinated stakeholder effort. They were very involved during the station area planning, which were the plans that were followed.

### **Did Jefferson County get involved with this effort?**

No. Setting up the CWG on the West was not as organized since it was the first effort and we were not sure what we were inviting partners to. We are expanding partners now.

### **Review and Discuss Gold Corridor Reconnaissance and Baseline Data and Mapping**

Bill Sadler, Reconnecting America, presented the Gold Corridor Reconnaissance and Baseline Data and Mapping. He also shared an additional showing vacant and underutilized land that was generated using the ratio of total land compared to total improvement value. The group was given this information a week in advance and asked for feedback and comments on Reconnecting America's findings. They were asked to provide feedback on the following questions:

- Did we miss any relevant planning efforts or other activities in the corridor reconnaissance?
- Does any of the information require further clarification?
- Is there any additional baseline data and mapping that would be helpful to include?
- Was any of the baseline information surprising to you? If so, why?
- What do you see as key themes from this information?
- After considering this information, what makes the Gold Corridor unique? Where are specific opportunities? What are specific challenges to address?

### **General Insights and Conclusions**

- There is more balance in terms of employment and population than expected. It was expected that some areas would have fewer jobs.
- There are a lot of industrial uses on this corridor – a challenge will be preserving them while encouraging other uses.
- There is a wide diversity in demographics.
- There are not a lot of resources at many of the stations (e.g., grocery stores).
- It seems to be a somewhat affordable corridor when considering housing and transportation factors.

### **Additional Information Requested:**

- Current and potential future uses along the entirety of the corridor. This would help determine the role that each station will play in the corridor and inform bordering stations development.
- Development potential and/or build-out expectations at each station (e.g., square foot of commercial or housing) and the status of each station plan is, when zoning will happen, etc. If any



of the jurisdictions have this level of detail in their plans, they should share it with Reconnecting America.

- More clarity on the employers in the area and their size.
- Michelle Claymore can provide information on earnings per jobs for Jefferson County.
- The vacant and underutilized land map needs to take current ownership into account. For example, the railroad ROW could not be developed so it should not be included as vacant or underutilized land.
- Employment, housing, and population projections, which may be available through DRCOG's TAZ zone projections for 2025-2035.
- Add the Northwest Subarea Drainage Plan for the 41<sup>st</sup> & Fox Station

### **Information Sharing Across Jurisdictions**

One person shared the idea of scheduling a bus tour of the corridor with a discussion of opportunities and challenges at each station, which would need to be organized with resources outside of the SCI grant. Another member suggested that a joint meeting with CWG and Stakeholder Committee to review each station's plans in more depth. Others expressed concerns that it would be challenging to have a joint meeting, due to confusion over each group's expectations.

The group agreed to have each jurisdiction present a brief overview of their station area at the August meeting. A large, aerial corridor map will be printed and station area maps will be projected to help the group visualize planning efforts. Each jurisdiction will be asked to provide an overview of the following:

- General vision for the station - general land uses and any specific amenities
- Strengths and opportunities (e.g., infrastructure in place, development interest, financing)
- Challenges and considerations (e.g., flood plain, connectivity and market realities)
- Current status of planning activities

