

A banner for the Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative. It features a background image of a modern multi-story apartment building and a paved walkway with a fence. The text "Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative" is written in a white, cursive font over a dark blue background.

# Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative



**SCI Gold Corridor Working Group – Meeting #4**  
*Anne Campbell Room, Arvada City Hall, 8101 Ralston Rd., Arvada*  
*1:30 pm – 4:00 pm, September 3, 2013*

## *Meeting Summary (As of 9/10/13)*

### Attendees

#### *CWG Members*

- Adams County - Department of the County Administrator: Jeanne Shreve
- Adams County Housing Authority: Don May
- Arvada - Community Development: Mike Elms and Kevin Nichols
- Arvada - Sustainability: Jessica Prosser
- Arvada Urban Renewal: Clark Walker
- Jefferson County Housing Authority: Alan Feinstein
- RTD: Patrick McLaughlin
- Wheat Ridge - Economic Development/ Urban Renewal Authority: Steve Art
- Wheat Ridge – Community Development: Ken Johnstone

#### *Others*

- CDR Associates (Facilitator): Laura Sneeringer
- Reconnecting America: Catherine Cox Blair, Bill Sadler, Mike Madrid
- Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG): Paul Aldretti, Ashley Kaade, Anna Garcia, Flo Raitano

### Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Overview
- Review Corridor-wide Opportunities and Challenges
- Refine Corridor Vision and Goals
- Discuss the Process for Identifying and Selecting a Catalytic Site and Corridor-Wide Technical Assistance

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

- Agenda (Website)
- Corridor-wide Opportunities and Challenges (FTP site)
- Stakeholder Feedback on Opportunities and Challenges (FTP site)



- Draft Corridor Vision and Goals (FTP site)
- Stakeholder Feedback on Vision (FTP site)

### **Action Items**

- Ashley Kaade will forward information on the Citizens Academy to CWG Members, including the current list of applicants.
- CWG Members will review the station-specific input from the Stakeholder Committee and provide input on any information that should be incorporated into the Gold Line Corridor-Wide Opportunities and Challenges document. They will also send any remaining changes to the document.
- CWG Members will review the components of the Vision and Goals (below) to ensure they are comfortable sharing them with the Stakeholder Committee at their September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- CWG Members will review and provide feedback on the draft Vision and Goals.

### **Recap and Updates**

Ashley Kaade, DRCOG, provided the following updates:

- Applications for the Gold Corridor Citizens' Academy, conducted by Transit Alliance, are due Friday, September 13. There is a maximum of 35 students.
- The Full Consortium Meeting regarding the changes in the regional scale planning efforts will be held at the Englewood Civic Center on Thursday, October 10, from 8 am to 12 pm.
- The Gold Line Public Forum will be held on Wednesday, October 30.

### **Review Corridor-wide Opportunities and Challenges**

CWG Members were asked for feedback regarding the Gold Line Corridor-Wide Opportunities and Challenges document provided by Reconnecting America. The changes can be found in the updated document.

CWG Members will review the station-specific input from the Stakeholder Committee and provide input on any information that should be incorporated into the Gold Line Corridor-Wide Opportunities and Challenges document. Both documents will also remain as stand-alone documents.

### **Refine Corridor Vision and Goals**

CWG members discussed the draft Vision and Goals. In order to have this discussion, they reviewed components of the Vision and Goals discussed at the previous meeting, Stakeholder Committee feedback on the Vision, and a draft Vision statement developed by CDR Associates and Reconnecting America. They discussed the following:

#### ***Healthcare***

Healthcare is an interesting topic for the Stakeholder Committee to discuss in this corridor. The CWG is not sure if they will be able to influence new health services, but may be able to influence connections for citizens to existing health options

#### ***Housing***

The lack of comments on housing from the Stakeholder Committee was surprising, especially since affordable housing is included in all jurisdictions' plans. It was also noted that there may be opposing perspectives from homeowners and renters. Some homeowners may not be supportive of rental



development due to height and density concerns. While many residents may be supportive of denser housing, they may not be the people speaking out at public meetings and other forums.

### ***Understanding of Transit-Oriented Development***

Some clarity on what Transit-Oriented Development is may be needed. Many people believe TOD means denser housing, more parking, and more residents, when it could mean economic development and new, higher paying job opportunities.

### ***Anticipating Change***

Characteristics of communities will be changing with the new commuting habits and higher daily visits on the corridor. The vision and goals should be upfront about the change that will occur in and around neighborhoods to make them compatible with the new growth.

### ***Distinguishing the Gold Line from Other Lines***

The group discussed what is happening along the other existing lines to gauge what will happen along the Gold Line. On the Southwest and Southeast RTD light rail lines, as well as early planning on the West Line, a majority of space has been either commercial retail or multifamily developments. These two options are conducive to shorter commutes, ease of access to amenities, and connecting all modes of transit to destinations. The West Line and Gold Line are very similar, in terms of geography and destinations. Housing stock is very different from one line to the other, and neighborhood characteristics are different.

### ***Miscellaneous Notes***

- The vision and goals should have more active verbs, such as create or build, as opposed to “promoting” or “encouraging”.
- It is important to consider how realistic the vision and goals are.
- The vision needs to be age/ability related, not just based on income.
- The vision should not include “gateway to the mountains” language. The Gold Line doesn’t exactly get riders to the mountains; it only gets them to Ward Road. Similarly, it should not include historical references to gold discovery.
- The vision statement should create an identity for the line, differentiating the Gold Line from other commuter rail corridors.

### **Components of the Vision and Goals**

The Corridor Working Group created a list themes and ideas for the vision statement and goals. These themes can be grouped into four distinct categories. These will be shared with the Stakeholder Committee at its next meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### +Housing

- Provide an array of housing options for all income levels, age groups and abilities.
- Provide workforce housing

#### +Economic Development

- Leverage/attract private investment
- Attract jobs: retail, industrial, office
- Develop jobs at existing employment bases
- Foster/sustain a diverse and unique economic base



- Build on existing strengths to create new opportunities
- New development/growth is compatible with existing conditions

#### +Connectivity

- Two way corridor (not just downtown)
- Regional connectivity – in many directions (not just through Union Station)
- First/Last Mile – multi-modal connections with bike, pedestrian and automobile
- Connectivity between transit service lines (bus/rail)
- Parking structures
- Access to education and services (e.g., healthcare, grocery)

#### +Recreation and Open Space

- Parks, and connections to recreation and community building

#### **Process for Identifying a Catalytic Site and Corridor-Wide Technical Assistance**

Paul Aldretti, DRCOG, provided an overview of technical assistance and possible implementation strategies available to the Working Group, as well as introducing the Catalytic Site project, giving examples of the West Line Corridor’s Catalytic Site and the possible strategies in choosing a site.

**What is the difference between Technical Assistance and the Catalytic Site? Both seem to provide funding for the same types of assistance for planning in the corridor.**

The Technical Assistance is meant for a corridor-wide study. The Catalytic Site funds are for a specific site along the corridor. It’s less about what kind of technical assistance is needed and more about the scale of the assistance.

**Have there been other opportunities to secure funding to do these kinds of projects?**

There are continuing efforts in other cities, but it really is based on what specific needs need to be met. Expectations on grant applications and Request for Proposals need to be clear.

