



Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative



SCI Northwest Corridor Working Group - Meeting #1

Louisville Public Library, Library Meeting Room

9:00 am - 11:00 pm, October 2, 2013

Meeting Summary (As of 10/10/13)

Attendees

- Audrey DeBarros, 36 Commuting Solutions
- Don May, Adams County Housing Authority
- Julie McKay, Boulder County
- Karen Schneiders, CDOT Region 4
- Lizzie Kemp, CDOT/RTD FasTracks
- Steve Hegge, Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation
- Dave Shinneman, City & County of Broomfield
- Debra Baskett, City & County of Broomfield
- Lesli Ellis, City of Boulder
- Paul Rayl, City of Lafayette
- Gavin McMillan, City of Louisville
- Aric Otzelberger, City of Westminster
- Genevieve Hutchison, RTD FasTracks
- David Cook, University of Colorado Boulder

Project Team

- Paul Aldretti, Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Flo Raitano, Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Andrea Meneghel, CDR Associates
- Laura Sneeringer, CDR Associates

Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Overview
- Overview of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) and Purpose of Corridor Working Groups (CWG)
- Review CWG Expectations
- Review Themes from the Pre-Meeting Interviews and Discuss Desired Outcomes and Goals for the CWG Process
- Questions, Comments and Next Steps

Meeting Materials

- Agenda
- SCI Northwest Corridor map
- CWG Meeting #1 presentation
- Work plan and process timeline
- Northwest Stakeholder Committee overview and application process

Action Items

Action item responses should be sent to Andrea Meneghel (ameneghel@mediate.org; 303.442.7367 ext. 221). Technical data responses and questions should also be sent to Reconnecting America (ccoxblair@reconnectingamerica.org; bsadler@reconnectingamerica.org; (303) 861-1420).

- CWG members were asked to submit referrals for the Stakeholder Committee to Ashley Kaade (akaade@drcog.org; 303-480-6781).
- Lesli Ellis will coordinate with Reconnecting America to determine how the City of Boulder can provide supplemental information to incorporate Boulder Junction into the Corridor Reconnaissance and Baseline Mapping for the SCI.
- CWG members will provide information to Reconnecting America on station-specific opportunities and challenges, and any other baseline data required. Specific directions will be sent by Reconnecting America to the CWG members.
- CWG members will review the Work Plan and Operating Protocol and send any comments or questions to Andrea Meneghel.
- CDR Associates will compile and distribute the following resources to the CWG:
 - RTD North Area Mobility Study (NAMS) - overview presentation
 - 36 Commuting Solutions First and Final Mile Study
 - Impact 64 overview and summary handout
 - TRB Study: Millennial Trends in Transportation Decisions

Updates

- The group agreed to meet from 9:00 -11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. CDR Associates will send out meeting notices with location information.
- The following SCI events are scheduled. Please contact Paul Aldretti, DRCOG, for additional information (paldretti@drcog.org; 303-480-6752).
 - The SCI Consortium Meeting is being held on October 10, 2013. It will include a presentation on how changing demographics impact planning.
 - A Regional Resource Fair will be held on October 29th at the REI Flagship Store in Denver.
 - The Gold Corridor Public Forum is being held on October 30, 2013 from 5:30-8 p.m. at the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center. It is an open house format.

Overview of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI), Purpose of the CWG and Expectations

Paul Aldretti, DRCOG, provided an overview of the Sustainable Communities Initiative and highlighted the mandate of the CWG. His presentation is available on the Website at:
<http://www.drcog.org/index.cfm?page=NorthwestCorridor>

The primary purpose of the Corridor Working Groups (CWG) is to expand the transit-oriented development conversation to include housing, employment and economic development considerations. This

effort is meant to add capacity for planning in the future and support the ongoing efforts of groups such as 36 Commuting Solutions and the U. S. 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition.

The CWG's primary tasks are bulleted below and were described in the Work Plan that was discussed with the group. All activities need to be completed by December 31, 2014. Technical assistance funding is available to refine corridor-wide recommendations for implementation and conduct planning at a catalytic site.

- Review and refine corridor reconnaissance and baseline mapping developed by Reconnecting America.
- Develop a corridor vision and a set of goals.
- Identify challenges and opportunities related to realizing the corridor vision.
- Develop detailed corridor-wide recommendations for implementation focused primarily on cross-jurisdictional TOD opportunities.
- Identify a catalytic site project and conduct planning work for this site.

The CWG will utilize input from a parallel Stakeholder Committee made up of community and business representatives in the corridor. This is an advisory, non-decision-making group that will provide input to the CWG.

The following initiatives will support the Corridor Working Group's efforts:

- FRESC is a non-profit group that is reaching out to communities along the corridor to educate them about the SCI Initiative and obtain feedback. They are talking with community members about issues such as employment and housing.
- A Northwest Corridor Citizens Academy, facilitated by the Transit Alliance, is expected to begin in May 2014. The purpose is to educate participants on corridor specific transit initiatives and to encourage involvement.
- Additional technical resources are available through the SCI Regional Resource Group and SCI Outcome Assessment and Knowledge Sharing (OAKS) activities.

Comments and Discussion

Catalytic Site Selection

- CWG members asked if it was possible to distribute the Catalytic Site funding across multiple locations rather than dedicating it to a single site. It was stated that if a recommendation came from this group to strongly consider doing so because of unique conditions within this corridor, the suggestion could be proposed to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- The HUD grant currently has specific line items identified for the Catalytic Site (\$300,000) and Corridor-Wide Technical Assistance (\$150,000), but DRCOG will explore whether these resources can be combined or whether more flexibility can be provided for using these funds within specific corridors.

RTD North Area Mobility Study (NAMS)

The Northwest Corridor communities are currently participating in the RTD North Area Mobility Study. Recommendations from this study addressing transportation infrastructure and transit service in the Northwest Denver region will be released in February 2014. SCI recommendations related to economic development, land use and housing initiatives may support alternatives that are being considered in NAMS.

It was communicated that NAMS goals and objectives are focused on ensuring equitable transportation solutions throughout the region and that principle would be good to be carried into the SCI process. Several CWG members are participating in both efforts and can share information, as needed.

West End Terminus for the Northwest Corridor

The U.S. 36 and Table Mesa interchange was considered the end of the line for BRT during the U.S. 36 Environmental Impact Statement. During the preliminary interviews for the SCI, some CWG members recommended that Boulder Junction be included in the SCI scope because Boulder is planning for this station to be a significant transportation hub served by U.S. 36 BRT and is key to regional commuters and employers. No CWG members voiced concern about considering Boulder Junction as part of the Northwest Corridor for the SCI. The City of Boulder will coordinate with Reconnecting America to determine if and how Boulder can provide supplemental information to incorporate the Boulder Junction Station into the study.

Review Themes from the Pre-Meeting Interviews and Discuss Desired Outcomes and Goals for the CWG Process

Andrea Meneghel, CDR Associates, provided an overview of themes from his pre-meeting interviews with CWG Members. Key points were listed in the meeting presentation which is available on the Website. The group shared their perspectives on tangible opportunities for the Northwest Corridor and existing challenges.

Tangible Opportunities:

- Discuss how stations can effectively serve the corridor's workforce by enhancing connections to employment centers.
- Develop specific strategies for implementing the recommendations made in the 36 Commuting Solutions First and Final Mile Study.
- Explore strategies for promoting programs such as bike sharing or carpooling which would make use of U.S. 36's managed lanes.
- Define what specific employment centers people are travelling to and from what destinations. Some of this analysis has been conducted by Boulder County or is being currently done through NAMS.
- Conduct a detailed analysis of what the corridor demographics are in order to better serve those populations. It was mentioned that the Transportation Research Board recently released a study on how millennials make transportation choices. This study will be distributed to the group.
- Increase understanding of employment opportunities around station areas in order to determine what housing opportunities are appropriate to support the employment.
- Identify ways to preserve work force housing as prices around stations rise.
- Identify opportunities related to Impact 64, the proposed statewide sale tax for transportation funding. CDOT and RTD are developing a list of potential projects, based on input from jurisdictions.

Existing Challenges/Considerations

- It was mentioned that funding cycles can drive activities which don't always lead to the best results. The group was encouraged by one of its members to brainstorm sustainable solutions for the corridor and then determine if the SCI funding could support achieving them rather than to identify actions that could qualify for the available funding.