

# Sustainable Communities Initiative

## Northwest Corridor Blueprint

### Background

In November 2011, as part of a coordinated effort with 86 partner organizations, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) was successful in securing a \$4.5 million Regional Planning Grant for the benefit of the region from the Sustainable Communities Partnership, a federal collaboration of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With this grant a consortium of municipalities, counties, state agencies, economic groups, housing authorities, and corporate interests joined with nonprofit, philanthropic and academic organizations to address one of the region's most pressing and exciting challenges: leveraging the planned multi-billion dollar expansion of the FasTracks transit system to meet other regional needs and opportunities.

The overarching goal of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) is to align investments, programs and policies to maximize the benefits that result from the region's investment in transit. SCI anticipates a region with greater access to job opportunities across the entire income spectrum, lower combined transportation and housing costs, reduced consumption of fossil fuels, reduced strain on our air and water resources, and ultimately the development of concentrated, mixed-use, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly "urban centers" along transit lines that allow residents to easily access their daily needs without having to get into a car. The introduction of transit provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to achieve this vision.

The work plan is divided into five main activities. The first three represent distinct but interrelated planning levels – regional, corridor and site-specific (Catalytic Projects). The remaining two – Stakeholder Engagement and Outcomes Assessment and Knowledge Sharing (OAKS) – cut across and support planning efforts at all three levels.

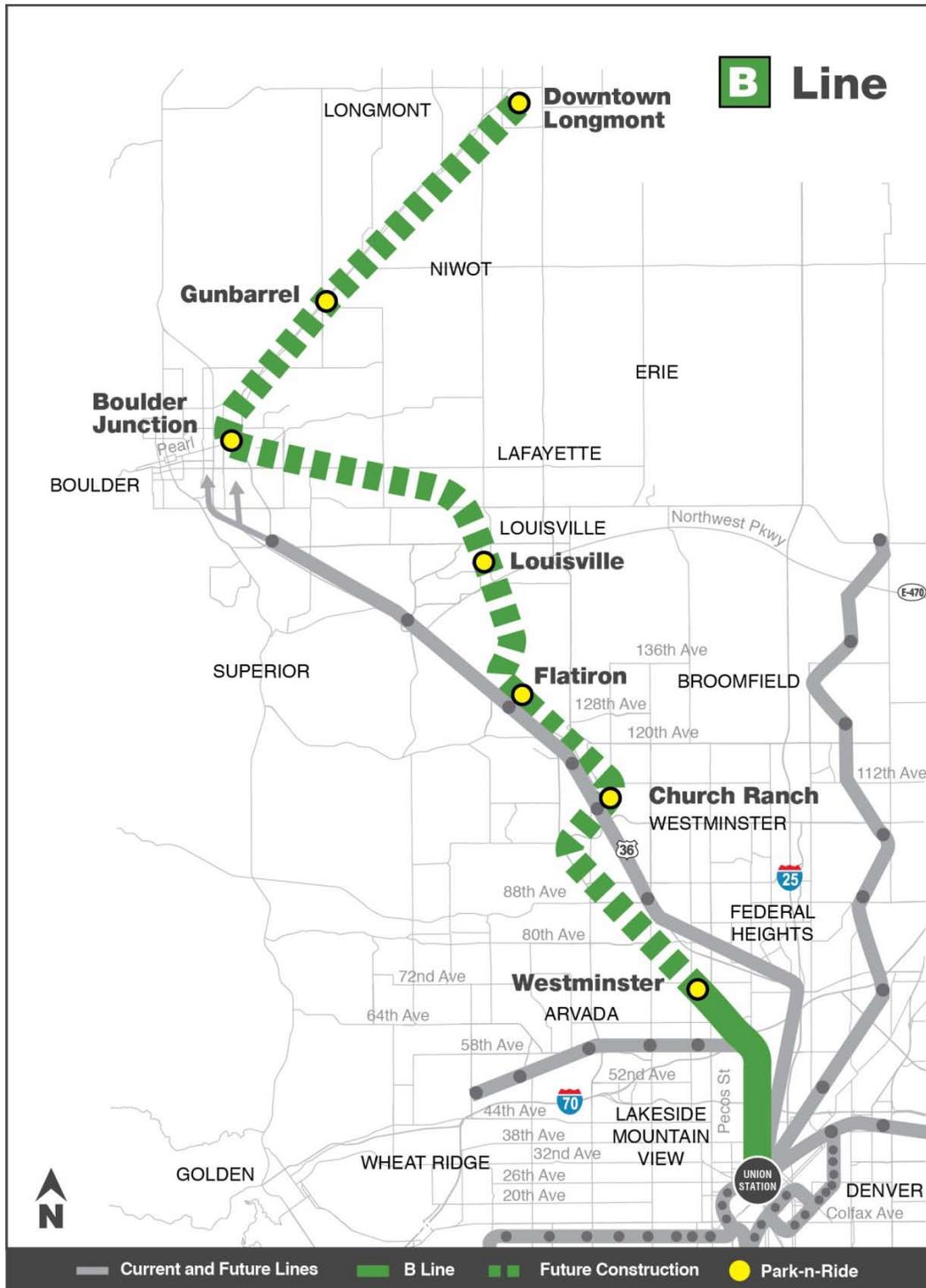
### Corridor Planning

This Blueprint serves as the final report of the Corridor Planning efforts. It is designed to support on-going collaborative cross-jurisdictional and inter-agency planning and development along the three transit lines currently under construction as part of the Eagle P3 public-private partnership (Northwest Rail Line, East Rail Line, and the Gold Line), as well as US 36 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The corridors are defined as the area within one mile of these lines. Long-term desired outcomes include thoughtful planning for development along the new transit corridors that maximizes the benefits of the region's investment in FasTracks. Specifically, these efforts are intended to help increase access to employment and educational opportunities (particularly for low-income households), decrease combined housing and transportation costs, support active living and healthy aging, reinvigorate existing neighborhoods,



enhance economic competitiveness, reduce pollution, and improve the efficient use of natural resources including energy and water.

The NW Corridor follows RTD's Northwest Rail Line (B Line) from Denver Union Station to Westminster Station, which opens in 2016 (with subsequent future completion of the line).



It also includes the US 36 BRT Line (Flatiron Flyer) between Denver Union Station and Boulder with six stations.



Each corridor established a Corridor Working Group (CWG) comprised of staff from jurisdictions along the corridor including those representing planning, public works, economic development, and public health departments. The CWG also included housing authorities, transportation management associations, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), and other key stakeholder to conduct corridor planning activities. The CWG activities included:

1. Developing a corridor vision and identifying a set of goals to achieve that vision
2. Identifying a corridor-wide issue that would benefit from technical assistance funding available through the SCI grant to study potential opportunities, issues and strategies
3. Selecting a site-specific Catalytic Project in the corridor for pre-development planning funded by the grant to stimulate transformational changes and serve as a model for similar projects
4. Recommending specific actions based on all the activities conducted by the CWG to serve as guidance for future collaborative development efforts in the corridor

## Stakeholder Engagement

To ensure all constituents with a stake in the outcome were engaged in the corridor planning process, each CWG received input from a broader Corridor Stakeholder Committee (CSC). Each CSC was comprised of 10-20 community leaders representing residential and business interests from communities in the corridor. Representation and areas of interest included:

- All ages, incomes and abilities
- Low-income communities or those at-risk of displacement
- Person(s) with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Communities of color
- Small business ownership
- Housing (mixed-income/affordable/workforce)
- Transportation access or alternatives (multimodal--trails, cycling, walk-ability)
- Public health and/or safety
- Education and training
- Job creation/retention or economic development
- Arts/cultural resources

While the CWG was comprised of the decision makers and implementers, the CSC served in an advisory capacity to this group. The CSC provided feedback from the resident perspective at key decision points in the planning process including the vision, goals and recommendations. This relationship provided a direct link to the implementers.

The CSC was critical to achieving broader stakeholder engagement goals for the corridor planning process. Committee members helped design activities for a large public workshop, identified additional opportunities for public education and participation, and recruited participants. The CSC also had a heavy focus in education and allowed members to gain a broader understanding of the larger opportunities and benefits of being connected to the regional rapid transit network. The intent was to



provide the background and tools necessary to foster development of leadership in corridor implementation.

## Northwest Corridor Blueprint – Contents

This blueprint consists of the following:

- Corridor Vision and Goals
- Corridor Profile Overview – baseline data and mapping
- Catalytic Project and Technical Assistance Outcomes Summaries
- Stakeholder Profile
- Recommendations

In addition, several full reports are included as appendices. These include:

- Corridor Profile
- Catalytic Project Report
- Technical Assistance Report– full report



## Acknowledgments

It is important to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations whose contributions directly resulted in the success of this work and the quality of its outcomes.

### Northwest Corridor Planning Participants

- Audrey DeBarros – 36 Commuting Solutions \*
- Jeanne Shreve – Adams County, Transportation Projects Section \*
- Joelle Greenland – Adams County, Community Development
- Don May – Adams County Housing Authority \*
- Peter Lifari – Adams County Housing Authority
- Steve Kushner – Adams County Housing Authority
- Judi Patrick – Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation
- Julie McKay – Boulder County Transportation
- Jared Hall – Boulder County Transportation \*
- Bob Hays – Colorado Department of Transportation
- Karen Schneiders – Colorado Department of Transportation
- Lizzie Kemp – Colorado Department of Transportation
- Ken Brubaker – Colorado Department of Transportation
- Debra Baskett – City and County of Broomfield, Transportation \*
- Cheryl St. Clair – City and County of Broomfield, Housing Program Manager
- Lesli Ellis – City of Boulder, Comprehensive Planning \*
- Kathleen Bracke – City of Boulder, GO Boulder Manager \*
- Natalie Stiffler – City of Boulder, Transportation Department
- Heather Balser – City of Louisville, Deputy City Manager \*
- Troy Russ – City of Louisville, Planning \*
- Mac Cummins – City of Westminster, Planning
- Grant Penland – City of Westminster, Planning \*
- Aric Otzelberger – City of Westminster, City Manager’s Office \*
- Genevieve Hutchison – Regional Transportation District \*
- Alex Ariniello – Town of Superior, Public Works \*
- Lisa Ritchie – Town of Superior, Planning

\* Northwest Corridor Working Group (CWG) Members



## Northwest Corridor Stakeholder Committee (CSC) Members

- Joe Anzures
- Jane Banzin
- Karla Chavez
- Dan Cohen
- David Gabel
- Jason Kopecky
- Bill Leck
- Shelley McMullen
- Jennifer Pinsonneault
- Mickey Ridge
- Kim Tadych
- Joe Zepeda

## Stakeholder Engagement Team

FRESC: Good Jobs/Strong Communities – Desiree Westlund, Samaria Crews

Transit Alliance – Kathleen Osher, Abby Musfeldt

PlaceMatters – Ken Snyder, Peter Kenney, Jocelyn Hittle, Brad Barnett, Critter Thompson, Kayla Gilbert, Marine Siohan

## Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) staff

Paul Aldretti – Sustainable Communities Coordinator

Ashley Kaade – Outreach Specialist

Michele Anderson – Regional Planner

Anna Garcia – Regional Planner

In addition, SCI recognizes the work of CDR Associates in providing support and facilitation to the Corridor, particularly Andrea Meneghel and Laura Sneeringer. SCI also recognizes Catherine Cox Blair and Bill Sadler from Reconnecting America for developing the Corridor Profiles and their indispensable technical assistance. Finally, SCI recognizes the Denver Foundation for providing funding in support of the CSC and other stakeholder engagement efforts.



# Northwest Corridor Visions and Goals

## Northwest Corridor Vision

*The Northwest Corridor is an example of how multiple modes of transportation can connect a region and support the development of transit-oriented communities. The multimodal corridor not only links Denver and Boulder, but more so connects all communities in between to major employment, education recreation and housing choices by a variety of transportation options. The corridor strives to be a model of innovation and creativity while promoting sustainable practices focused on economic development, environmental conservation, and social equity. With stunning views of the Flatirons, a strong local economy and a diverse mix of housing choices for a broad demographic, the Northwest Corridor is truly unique.*

## Northwest Corridor Goals

- Maintain a unique identity for the corridor that highlights the long term commitment to Northwest Rail while featuring US 36 BRT.
- Provide and enhance access to employment centers, schools, educational institutions, retail, parks, open space, recreation and community resources for all populations along the corridor and throughout the region by improving mobility options and infrastructure.
- Support strong first- and final-mile connections to and from the stations and transportation systems; with an additional focus on connectivity between systems and transportation facilities.
- Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) near the stations that incorporates high-density/mixed use development to improve walkability and bicycle accessibility with the goal to conserve resources, accommodate affordable housing choices and reduce the combined costs of transportation and housing.
- Preserve and enhance a range of quality housing choices for residents throughout the corridor that are responsive to the corridor's existing and anticipated demographics and needs.
- Encourage economic development and attract private investment around the stations.
- Continue to foster a strong sense of collaboration and equity among the Northwest Corridor communities. Collaboration is especially important to seek funding as a region for the implementation of corridor improvements.
- Sustainably develop the corridor in a manner that protects or improves the economic, social and natural environments.
- Support the development of integrated transportation, land use and parking demand strategies.
- Preserve the stunning views of the Flatirons and the Front Range.



# Northwest Corridor Profile Overview

The Corridor Profile report provides a comprehensive summary of relevant information and strategies for implementing successful TOD along the Northwest Corridor. At the beginning of the corridor planning process in 2013, Reconnecting America examined all station area plans and other relevant studies along the corridor, as well as demographic, economic and real estate conditions at each station and throughout the Northwest Corridor, to create a summary report of existing conditions and opportunities and challenges and to implementing TOD. The report was updated in June 2014. This document also provided initial recommendations to the Northwest CWG for moving from vision in the station area plans to reality in the corridor, including additional technical assistance needs that could be funded through the SCI.

The Corridor Profile provided recommendations to the Northwest CWG as it moved forward with implementation activities for TOD along the Northwest Corridor. The primary audience was working group members and their respective agencies. The goal was for the CWG to use the information, analysis and recommendations contained in the report to strategically prioritize investments, funding sources, and development to benefit the corridor as a whole. The report also serves as evidence of the tremendous amount of work already done by the various agencies along the corridor to make TOD a reality.

The Corridor Profile also is intended to be a resource to:

- Internal staff and elected officials in jurisdictions along the corridor
- 36 Commuting Solutions and its members organizations
- The development and investment community, both private and nonprofit, looking to invest in station areas along the Northwest Corridor
- RTD and its Board of Directors
- DRCOG
- Local and regional economic development agencies
- Potential government and foundation grantors
- Other cities, housing authorities, transit agencies, economic development, and regional governing bodies around the U.S.
- Residents of the Northwest Corridor communities

The report charts an initial course for the Northwest CWG and the other “partners” who will ultimately be responsible for implementing station area plans and additional goals identified by the CWG itself. The report provides a “snapshot in time” or baseline. As conditions change, this strategy must be updated.

The full Corridor Profile can be found in the appendix to this document.



## Organization of the Corridor Profile

The report is organized into the following sections:

- **Northwest Corridor Overview:** A brief overview of the Northwest Corridor and the draft Vision and Goals created by the Northwest CWG
- **Importance of Corridor Planning:** A summary of the benefits of corridor planning and how this report can help inform decisions made on the Northwest Corridor
- **Reconnaissance Summary:** An overview of demographics and economic characteristics of the Northwest Corridor and a review of station area and other relevant plans along the corridor, with accompanying maps (revised June 2104)
- **Opportunities and Challenges Assessment:** A review of the opportunities and challenges to implementing TOD along the Northwest Corridor, with information on each station area and corridor-wide opportunities and challenges.
- **Corridor-wide Recommendations for Implementation:** A matrix of recommendations for implementing TOD along the Northwest Corridor, including an initial priority list created by the Northwest CWG to select activities to fund with SCI Technical Assistance funds.



# Northwest Corridor Catalytic Project & Technical Assistance Overview

## Catalytic Project

The Catalytic Project study involved detailed pre-development planning intended to encourage new development and/or redevelopment at a specific site that offers the potential for transformational change. The long-term desired outcome of Catalytic Projects is the creation of tangible, proven models for effectively and efficiently achieving economic, housing, transportation, and environmental objectives at the site-level. Based on the existing conditions, market potential, needs assessment, station area typology and associated implementation strategies, the CWG identified several sites as potential catalytic projects. The CWG then set up a process for selecting one specific catalytic project to receive grant funding, with input from the stakeholder committee. The CWG considered the following criteria when selecting catalytic projects:

- Furtherance of *Metro Vision* goals
- Addresses multiple Federal Livability Principles
- Replicability
- Potential for additional regional benefits
- Viability – technical and financial
- Inclusive grassroots resident leadership (existing or potential)
- Likelihood of spurring additional private-sector development
- Other criteria to be determined by the CWG

Upon selecting a site, the CWG developed a detailed scope of work (SOW) for specific activities at that site and determined the need for consultant support. DRCOG integrated the statement of work into a request for proposals, which was reviewed by the CWG prior to being issued publicly. A representative sub-group of the CWG reviewed all proposals and selected a final set of consultants among those who responded to the Request for Proposals. The sub-group interviewed the finalists and selected a consultant to conduct the work described in the SOW. DRCOG issued and managed the contract. A Project Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the CWG provided oversight of the work. The entire CWG was briefed periodically during the project and reviewed the draft study.

## Northwest Corridor Catalytic Project – Westminster Station/Adams County Housing Authority Properties

The Westminster Station area provides an excellent opportunity for development based on Adams County Housing Authority (ACHA) properties that can serve as an anchor for the site and bring needed density. This project meets a primary community goal by linking residential neighborhoods to multiple activity centers including employment, medical services, commercial centers and academic campuses. A primary objective is the need to accommodate affordable housing choices.



### **Key Outcomes:**

- Under the City of Westminster’s draft Station Area Plan, the sites at Westminster Station provide a significant opportunity for developing affordable and market-rate housing in an urban neighborhood context.
- The market analysis found uncertainty regarding the potential for a turn-around of the Westminster Station Area based solely on providing transit.
- ACHA’s site nearest the proposed City-owned garage, developed as affordable or affordable senior housing with a modest amount of ground floor retail space, provides an opportunity to catalyze new development around the station
- The technical review found no major obstacles for site development.
- As city plans (in this case the Station Area Plan) transition from the planning stage to implementation they need the flexibility to adapt to economic and physical realities that may not have been anticipated in the process. Regular communication between all parties allows for these adjustments while the intent of the plan remains intact.
- The shared vision for the properties’ full buildout may not be feasible for immediate implementation due to current market conditions, but can still progress in a reasonable manner by phasing the projects.
- To meet the vision the local jurisdictions need to help drive the market by adopting proactive policies and programs that support TOD and associated development including zoning flexibility.

### **Technical Assistance**

In addition to the Catalytic Project, the CWG received funds to conduct a study of a corridor-wide need, opportunity, challenge, or development strategy. This study could incorporate several topics including housing opportunity, economic development and resilience, public health and active living, and transit accessibility. The selection and contract management processes for a consultant to conduct work related to the identified technical assistance topic was identical to that described above for the Catalytic Project.

### **Northwest Corridor Technical Assistance – Implementation of Bicycle/Pedestrian Accessibility Recommendations in US 36 First-/Final-Mile Study**

The CWG established a goal to become a national model for multi-modal transportation that connects a region. Prior to the initiation of SCI, 36 Commuting Solutions commissioned a study to examine the opportunities and challenges related to first- and final-mile connections to transit (specifically bus rapid transit) in the corridor. This technical assistance study investigated options for implementing the bicycle and pedestrian aspects of that study including signage to improve way-finding to the stations from origin points throughout the corridor (and conversely to destinations from the stations), bicycle shelters at stations to support alternative commuting, improvement of connections to transit stations on priority routes, and potential strategies for bicycle sharing programs. An important aspect of this was to



promote consistency in design throughout the corridor to enhance and improve the experience of people using alternative forms of transportation.

**Key Outcomes:**

- First- and final-mile strategies are intended to create connected, safe, and easy to navigate communities around each station.
- CWG members supported a single option as the preferred design for corridor branding and way-finding because:
  - It is simple and legible
  - The single color tones help minimize varying design elements throughout the corridor
  - The mountain silhouette and blue color link to the Flatiron Flyer RTD bus rapid transit branding
  - The landscape element provides a sense of place
- The placement and design of signage outside the station area will be determined by the individual jurisdictions.
- The bike and pedestrian station connections identified through this report are intended to be “easy wins,” projects that can be implemented quickly due to their relatively low cost and low level of controversy or complexity.
- As facilities transition to BRT Stations, it is important to provide high-quality and secure bicycle parking to complement, and potentially replace, some share of existing bicycle parking. The Boulder County Bus then Bike shelters were the basis for the designs.
- For the Northwest Corridor, bicycle share would be primarily intended to complement and extend the reach of transit, support commuting trips, grow bicycling in the corridor, and support economic development. Recommendations for bicycle share are made on a station-by-station basis, not on a corridor-wide basis. Initially there is an emphasis on employer bicycle share strategies.
- Effective involvement of the CWG was particularly critical due to the less than six-month project schedule. The stakeholder process was designed to:
  - Build upon previous work;
  - Gain buy-in early throughout the process;
  - Discuss coordination and implementation considerations amongst the group; and
  - End with useful products that can be advanced to the next design phase.
- 36 Commuting Solutions is a resource agency/organization that can effectively support carrying out next steps or further coordinating amongst local governments to advance the study outcomes towards implementation.

The full reports from the Catalytic Project and Technical Assistance can be found in the appendix to this document.



# Northwest Corridor Stakeholder Profile

Stakeholder engagement is a critical component of the SCI and corridor planning process. Overarching stakeholder engagement goals include:

- Engage all of the relevant constituencies – people who have a stake in the process and who may be impacted by the outcome
- Equip all of these constituencies with the tools and knowledge they need to effectively participate in the planning process
- Integrate stakeholder engagement with all of the proposed planning and implementation activities, to ensure that stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to influence the outcomes of these activities
- Create long-term capacity for continued engagement at the regional, corridor and catalytic project-level scales
- Effectively and meaningfully engage communities typically underrepresented in planning processes, including low-income individuals and families, people with limited English proficiency, and communities of color

## Stakeholder Engagement Team

A multi-disciplinary stakeholder engagement team was utilized to support DRCOG staff in achieving the goals for the corridor planning process. These organizations have significant experience in leadership development, capacity building, outreach to traditionally underrepresented communities, working with advocacy organizations, and meeting facilitation (including the effective use of innovative tools and technologies), and were indispensable to the process. Team participants included the following organizations.

### **FRESC: Good Jobs Strong Communities**

FRESC is a nonprofit organization with expertise in grassroots community organizing. FRESC community organizers played a pivotal role in recruiting, building capacity, and effectively and meaningfully engaging traditionally underrepresented populations. Staff organizers continually communicated with and fostered relationships with newly developed community organizers and leaders throughout the three-year process. They also assisted with the following tasks:

- Providing food, childcare, translated materials and interpretation services at stakeholder meetings and other engagement events
- Conducting door-knocking in station areas along the corridor
- Recruiting and mobilized diverse constituents to actively participate in planning and decision-making process



- Training grassroots leaders to advocate in advisory community meetings for relevant community and regional outcomes such as affordable housing, job standards, healthy living, and access to transit
- Conducting one-on-one education and quarterly training to help people understand the links between local and regional issues impacting these populations, including housing, public health, transit, jobs, training and economic development.

### **The Denver Foundation**

Colorado's oldest and largest community foundation, the Denver Foundation inspires people and mobilizes resources to strengthen the community. Complementing the efforts of FRESC, the Denver Foundation committed funding for small grants to emerging resident leaders and technical assistance to resident leaders in low-income areas involved in station-area or corridor-level decision-making. This funding supported the provision of food, childcare, translated materials and interpretation services at stakeholder meetings and other engagement events.

### **Transit Alliance**

Transit Alliance is a public-advocacy organization that works to enhance communities and people's lives by supporting transit, active transportation and increased mobility to cultivate a healthy, resilient and more sustainable lifestyle. Transit Alliance modified and conducted its successful Citizens' Academy for each of corridors. The Corridor Academy provided community leaders with a fundamental working knowledge of how to engage in the process of regional transit and better communicate its benefits. The academy also sought to ignite a passion for public transit, community building around transit and fuel community interest in the overall benefits. Academy participants were encouraged to take their new knowledge and put it in action by designing a personal action plan to implement upon completing the Academy.

### **PlaceMatters**

PlaceMatters is a Denver-based non-profit think tank for civic engagement and process in planning whose work creates opportunities for informed, inclusive decision making in the planning of vibrant cities and communities. PlaceMatters conducted stakeholder interviews with municipal staff and community leaders who had been involved in previous planning efforts in the corridor like station area planning. They provided recommendations which were instrumental in designing the process, activities and tools for the stakeholder committees. PlaceMatters also helped design a large-scale interactive public forum for each corridor and synthesized feedback received. Further, they provided training to stakeholders on engagement tools like WALKscope and the Denver Regional Equity Atlas, building long-term capacity among community leaders in the corridor.

### **Stakeholder Feedback**

While stakeholder engagement in each SCI corridor (East, Gold and Northwest) provided unique input to the planning process, some concerns were universal. First- and final-mile connectivity, in particular bicycle, pedestrian and bus modes and access to opportunities like transit, employment and housing rose as top challenges throughout the region.



In the Northwest Corridor, the most frequently identified themes and opportunities included:

- First- and final-mile challenges/connectivity
  - Bicycle, pedestrian
  - Access to/from BRT stations
- Public education
- Placemaking
- Access to opportunity
  - Employment
  - Housing
  - Affordable fares and incentives to increase ridership
  - TOD/economic opportunity

Issues, needs and topics raised in specific stakeholder engagement contexts in the corridor include the following:

### **Northwest Corridor Stakeholder Committee (CSC)**

The Northwest CSC met eight times between November 2013 and January 2015 primarily at the College Hill Library in Westminster. An activity to identify important issues to consider as the corridor working group and stakeholder committee explore the vision for the Northwest Corridor provided the following feedback.

- Employment
  - Employment opportunities
- Housing
  - Provide more housing opportunities, particularly affordable housing
- Affordable Fares and Incentives
  - Incentives for the public to use public transportation, including from local businesses
  - More affordable bus fare, more liberal bus transfer rules
- Placemaking
  - Highlight the uniqueness of each station/new and improved placemaking
  - Create inviting opportunities for people to visit, shop, and recreate
  - Increase diversity and density
- Multimodal Transportation
  - Multi-modal connections, particularly walking and biking
- Access
  - Easy access to transportation
  - Better coordinated access at and to the stations for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians
  - First- and last-mile connections (potential feeder routes, car and bike sharing)
- Connecting Communities
  - Connection to entire region
- Development
  - Quality mixed-use TOD and redevelopment
  - Strong retail/more local businesses



## **FRESC Outreach**

FRESC staff conducted outreach from summer 2012 through spring 2015 primarily in Westminster and unincorporated Adams County. FRESC organizers worked extensively with residents living in mobile home parks, particularly along Sheridan and Federal Boulevards between 50<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Access to jobs and affordable transit fares were echoed throughout each of the corridors. FRESC also heard these common issues in the Northwest Corridor.

- Access to city planning processes for Spanish-speaking residents (Westminster station area)
- Physical access to the station area (Westminster station)
- Rising rents and displacement fears (Westminster station, particularly in mobile home parks along Sheridan and Federal between 50th and 70th Avenues)
- Concern about NW rail's impact on current bus routes and potential loss or changes to service
- Access to police services, parks and recreation opportunities, and health facilities
- Cultural tension, maintaining Mexican culture
- Pedestrian safety – both being able to walk around station areas and cross heavily traveled corridors near station areas

### Active organizations in the Northwest Corridor

- Tri-County Health Department
- Faith Bible Chapel
- Impacto de Fe Ministry
- The Action Center
- 36 Commuting Solutions
- Colorado Refugee Services Program
- Lao-Hmong American Coalition
- United Communities of Adams County
- Westminster United Methodist Church
- Iglesia de Nazareno
- ATU 1001
- Community Enterprise
- The MAC
- Progressive Homeowners' Association
- Westminster Arts Group
- Goat Hill Neighborhood Association

### **Transit Alliance Northwest Area Corridor Academy**

Twenty-two participants completed the Northwest Area Corridor Academy at an intensive one-day workshop Saturday, October 25, 2014 at Regis University. Attendees were all recruited by FRESC from traditionally underrepresented populations, including low-income, communities of color and limited English proficiency. FRESC staff also attended the workshop to assist with translation and mentor participants as they developed Individual Action Plans (IAP).

The following is a brief description of the participants' IAPs:

- Change personal habits of driving by starting to rideshare and bikeshare
- Understand alternative commuting methods from home to downtown
- Introduce my son to transit options so he can help me to be less intimidated by the process
- Bring the neighborhood EcoPass program to my neighborhood
- Understand connections between affordable housing and transit along light rail lines in Metro Denver
- Decrease monthly rate for transit pass



- Bike more
- Provide affordable fares for residents of affordable housing developments
- Implement a community outreach plan to encourage more communities of color and low-income communities to engage in public transit
- Visit Denver and surrounding communities by only using public transit, biking, and walking
- Raise awareness about fare equity
- Encourage my teenage classmates to use public transit to get around Denver

### **Northwest Corridor Public Forum**

The US 36 Bus Rapid Transit Station Area and Connectivity Open House was held November 1, 2014 at the Arista Broomfield development and attracted nearly 30 participants. The open house, co hosted by DRCOG and 36 Commuting Solutions, provided a mix of high- and low-tech activities encouraging both education and engagement. The open house offered a chance for residents to learn about the US 36 BRT corridor and provide feedback on first- and final-mile connections and bicycle and pedestrian access to station areas. Common themes among feedback received included the need for new and improved connections to existing trails, safe trail crossings, shuttle services, bicycle and pedestrian access to station areas, and better bus connections to the BRT system.

### **OUR Shared Vision**

DRCOG launched a civic engagement website to garner additional feedback from the community using the MindMixer platform. The site encourages idea generation and social interaction among participants. OUR Shared Vision published three topics related to the Northwest Corridor covering corridor vision and goals. Common themes in feedback included connectivity along the corridor and region and promoting the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system to increase ridership.



# Northwest Corridor Recommendations

The Northwest Corridor Recommendations reflect the suggested priorities of the CWG based on the outcome of all activities undertaken as part of the corridor planning process including the Corridor Profile, stakeholder engagement efforts, and the outcomes of the Catalytic Project and technical assistance studies, as well as the expertise and experience of all the CWG members. The recommendations propose next steps for collaboration by the jurisdictions and other key partners in the corridor to continue work begun under the SCI grant and achieve the opportunities opened up by the build-out of the transit system.

## **Implement the recommendations from the First- and Final-Mile Study and Northwest Corridor Bicycle/Pedestrian Accessibility Study (Near-term)**

Develop an action/implementation plan to address the following near-term priorities and recommendations identified in the study:

- Wayfinding System – final design, locations, funding, maintenance and integration strategies
- Bicycle Parking/Shelters – roles, responsibilities, funding, maintenance and operations
- Proposed Connectivity Improvements – next steps for implementing improvements including potential funding resources
- Employer Provided Bike Share – 36 Commuting Solutions will pursue engaging businesses in providing bike share for their workplace.

## **Create US 36 Metro Districts to catalyze development and necessary improvements in the corridor (Near-term)**

36 Commuting Solutions is exploring political and private sector interest in creating metro districts surrounding the six US 36 BRT stations. Funding would be used to finance the implementation of US 36 First and Final Mile Study Recommendations. Funding is also sought to further Transportation Demand Management programs (including a corridor-wide EcoPass) as well as other transportation related projects of interest to the local governments and land owners.

## **Conduct planning for the implementation of a bicycle sharing system (Near- to Mid-term)**

Work with companies in the corridor to identify and implement bicycle sharing programs while continuing to investigate potential corridor-wide bike sharing strategies. Additional planning work, siting locations, system-comparisons and corridor-wide coordination can occur in the near-term, while implementation of a program is a mid-term goal.

## **Develop a funding program for non-transportation infrastructure needs (Mid-term)**

Develop a regional funding program for necessary non-transportation needs related to public infrastructure necessary for implementing transit oriented development in the corridor. Needs would include water, sewer, storm water, parks, recreational facilities, parks and open space infrastructure. This would also create an inventory of (1) gaps in amenities, (2) access and connectivity improvements, and (3) other improvements that can increase the use of public facilities and transportation.



**Conduct a Corridor-wide Market Study (Mid- to Long-term)**

Conduct an in-depth study of the market strength and development readiness of the corridor including an analysis of opportunities and challenges around station areas (including infrastructure needs, accessibility and existing and potential land uses). The study would look at different land uses and product types such as affordable housing, commercial development, services, and other uses that make the most sense for all communities in the Northwest Corridor.

**Understand lessons learned and outcomes from corridor housing studies/projects for applicability in other areas throughout the corridor to meet affordable housing needs (Mid- to Long-term)**

Understand the lessons learned, outcomes and applicability of findings and recommendations from the Westminster Station Catalytic Site project as well as the City of Boulder’s housing study to determine the affordable housing needs in the corridor and how housing can be phased and implemented near stations.

**Continue to collaborate in implementing identified recommendations to achieve the corridor vision and goals.**

Continue collaborative efforts within the context of 36 Commuting Solutions and other existing cross-jurisdictional and inter-agency efforts with supplemental activities as necessary.

