

A banner for the Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative. It features a background image of a modern residential building and a paved walkway with people. 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 #6

Arvada City Hall, 8101 Ralston Avenue, Anne Campbell Room
November 5, 2013, 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Meeting Summary (As of 11/15/13)

Attendees

CWG Members

- Adams County Housing Authority – Don May
- Adams County – Deputy County Administrator Unit: Jeanne Shreve
- Arvada Urban Renewal Authority – Clark Walker
- City of Arvada – Jessica Prosser, Kevin Nichols
- City and County of Denver (Public Works) – Jenn Hillhouse
- Jefferson County Housing Authority – Alan Feinstein
- City of Wheat Ridge – Steve Art, Ken Johnstone
- Regional Transportation District – Patrick McLaughlin

Others

- CDR Associates (Facilitator) – Laura Sneeringer
- Reconnecting America – Catherine Cox Blair, Mike Madrid
- Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) – Paul Aldretti
- Place Matters – Jocelyn Hittle
- Jefferson County Public Health – Molly Hanson

Action Items

- CWG Members will review the corridor-wide recommendations and provide feedback on how to refine them. They will also share initial priorities for corridor-wide technical assistance.

Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Overview
- Share and Discuss Public Forum Feedback
- Discuss Evaluation Criteria for the Catalytic Site and Technical Assistance Funding
- Discuss Catalytic Site Proposals
- Discuss Corridor-Wide Implementation Strategies and Technical Assistance



Meeting Materials (available on the Website or FTP Site)

- Agenda (Website)
- Matrix of Corridor-wide Implementation Strategies (FTP site)
- Wheat Ridge Catalytic Site Proposal (FTP site)
- Arvada Catalytic Site Proposal (FTP site)

Share and Discuss Public Forum Feedback

Jocelyn Hittle, PlaceMatters, provided a recap of the Gold Corridor Public Forum. The agenda for the public meeting was crafted based on input from the Gold Corridor Stakeholder Committee, the Gold Corridor Working Group and others who have worked in the corridor and are aware of past public outreach and issues facing the corridor. The full detailed results are still being processed, but some initial takeaways from the meeting were:

- 78 participants total
- Participants rated the meeting “exceeded expectations” on the feedback surveys
- There were high marks all around in feedback from participants

The basic overview of results found in the PlaceMatters Powerpoint will be posted on the SCI/DRCOG website.

Discussion of Evaluation Criteria for the Catalytic Site and Technical Assistance Funding

Paul Aldretti reviewed the basic criteria for catalytic site and technical assistance funding. The money can be split as follows: \$150,000 for technical assistance, \$150,000 for the catalytic site, and \$150,000 that can be split between technical assistance and the catalytic site based on the Corridor Working Group’s decisions. Once the group determines the projects to put the funds toward, the plan will go before the Sustainable Communities Initiative Coordinating Committee and Executive Committee to review and provide comments.

Discussion of Catalytic Site Proposals

Before discussing the plans put forth by Arvada and Wheat Ridge, the Corridor Working Group heard from jurisdictions that did not submit a catalytic site proposal. A question did arise as to whether the Sheridan Station should be considered for catalytic site funding. The group discussed that it would likely makes sense to be incorporated into a corridor-wide project, possibly focused on industrial uses and associated jobs or drainage issues.

Denver: A lot of work has already been done at the 41st & Fox Station and there’s a set vision for what the station area will be. There is a need for corridor-wide technical assistance funds and Denver wants to be a part of that conversation. This may not be the appropriate site for setting the state for the entire Gold Line.

Adams County: A lot of work has already gone into planning at the Adams County stations. The TOD Station Area Plan already includes market analysis and circulation plan components. There will be a Federal Corridor Study and additional DRCOG funds in 2014. Existing plans already are being completed. The jurisdictions that did submit a proposal each presented their proposals to the Corridor Working Group.

Wheat Ridge – Bike and Pedestrian Access Improvements:

Ken Johnstone, City of Wheat Ridge, presented the Wheat Ridge proposal. The proposal is for a Bicycle-Pedestrian project along Ridge Road that connects the Ward Road Station to the neighboring Arvada Ridge station. The proposal includes street improvements and bike access improvements from Tabor Street to Miller Street. The reason for this particular geographic scope is that this is a needed connection between Wheat Ridge and Arvada. The scope is scalable so other areas could potentially be included.



Bicycle and pedestrian access is a challenge to the community and the connection will be helpful not only to Wheat Ridge, but Arvada and possibly the entire corridor. Wheat Ridge has been getting significant feedback from residents that they'd like to see more bicycle/pedestrian improvements. There is a citizen's-based bike advocacy group that meets regularly. City Council has adopted a Citywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and has approved efforts in other areas, such as a 2014 project on Pierce Street that connects to Lakewood and Edgewater. Funding is not currently available for Ridge Road improvements.

Other Details:

- This project opens up more TOD opportunities to the east of the Gold Line as well as to Arvada.
- This promotes equitable housing to the station area, adding to the TOD livability.
- The project benefits existing neighborhoods.
- This project bridges the gap between the two other improvement projects.

Comments:

- Multimodal access improvements from Tabor Street to Ward Road are covered by RTD and improvements from Miller Street and west are covered by Arvada CMAC grant.
- This could serve Red Rocks Community College as it expands deeper into Arvada.
- Affordable housing near Red Rocks Community College can also be incorporated.
- There could be possible corridor-wide elements to this project, such as B-Cycle, bike lockers, and bike shops.

Arvada – Market Study for Grocery Use:

Kevin Nichols and Jessica Prosser, City of Arvada, presented the Arvada proposal. The proposal is for a market study and incentive marketing strategy for a grocery store within half mile of the Olde Town Arvada Station. With more residents moving into Olde Town, a grocery store will be needed. Arvada citizens are interested in having a grocery store at Olde Town Arvada. This proposal includes incentives for non-traditional grocery store opportunities as well. A market study could also be replicated at other stations since there is no grocery around other stations along the Gold Line.

Other Details:

- The marketing strategy aims to help inform existing plans, identify strengths and weaknesses, risks and constraints.
- There have been different models related to how much land would be needed. There is a grocery store in the plan, and Arvada has spoken with King Soopers and Safeway. The plan has a grocery store listed as a preferred use, but hasn't been moved forward.
- The goal is to get fresh food into the area.

Comments:

- Corridor-wide technical assistance could be used to identify locations for two or three grocery stores along the Gold Line. Appropriate strategies for Ward Road, 41st & Fox, and Olde Town stations are all different. If Technical Assistance funds are used, the study must identify what strategies make sense at specific stations.
- The Urban Land Institute could be useful to attract the attention of a national developer.
- There could be a food access study in addition to the market study.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) could be added in the grocery store for lower income populations.
- A Developers Forum could be used as a marketing strategy and used to inform planning.



Discuss Priorities for Corridor-Wide Implementation Strategies and Technical Assistance

Catherine Cox Blair, Reconnecting America, reviewed potential recommendations for corridor-wide technical assistance. The list included topics on economic development, new development, neighborhood revitalization, local transportation infrastructure, funding and finance, and partnerships. The group helped refine ideas, within the following topics.

Economic Development

1. Economic Development and Market Study at the Corridor Scale
 - This could be helpful to set the stage for future development along the corridor.
 - Takes a corridor scale look at development, rather than individual station area market studies.
 - A lot of things can be included in market studies making them more valuable to the corridor (grocery store studies, bike-ped studies, jobs and industrial activity, etc.)
2. Industrial Lands Preservation and Cultivation Study
 - Questions to address that are continually raised include - How do you keep industrial areas when running rail lines in proximity, and can industrial uses and TOD coexist.
 - All stations are trying to transform, but this may not possible in all cases (e.g., at the Sheridan Station).
 - Ward Road would be open to light industrial, but not heavy industrial.

New Development

1. Community Amenities Feasibility Study
 - Health Care Access
 - More of a GAP analysis and windshield surveys - not very specific
 - There currently is a lot of opportunity for development along the Gold Line (blank canvas).
 - Can you look past rooftops in terms of ridership and retail? Will there be demand from other things?
2. Developers Forum
 - More of an event for marketing and promoting your site and could be used for feedback.
 - ULI-TAP is an activity to address challenges and problems at specific sites.
 - Real estate is not attractive and the Developers Forum may be down the road.
3. Joint Development Study and Policy
 - Surface parking along the corridor

Neighborhood Revitalization

1. Corridor-wide Health Impact Analysis
 - The Wheat Ridge bike-ped proposal could be used as a template for technical assistance for the entire corridor.
 - Brownfield Assessment
 - Covers what needs to happen in advance.
 - Denver, Aurora, and Lakewood have a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency along Colfax Avenue.
 - Wheat Ridge also has a grant for Phase II for Clear Creek.

Initial Priorities Identified for the Gold Line for Technical Assistance

The group discussed initial priorities for corridor-wide efforts, knowing that they will have an opportunity for more detailed input after the meeting. Input included:

- Corridor-wide mobility plan
- Employment workforce/industrial lands



- Affordable housing – Does not require a lot of money; this is more along the lines of connecting the affordable housing to transportation.
- Bike share
- Bus/circulation providing connections from outside of the corridor
- Needs assessment for bus ridership to reduce potential loss of bus lines
- Connectivity to bus stops/mobility
- Last mile connections

Comments:

- A lot of these studies can be taken from East and West Lines, since West and Gold geography is similar.
- Kaiser grants and other outside funding sources can also be used.
- It may be possible to identify areas with need for more affordable units, but it's up to each jurisdiction to have their own affordable housing policies and zoning. There is no corridor-wide policy or zone.
- The corridor will change over time. The development in the corridor will steer what housing needs are in the future. The plan should be responsive to changing needs.

