



Sustainable Communities Regional Principles

Transit Accessibility

The Denver region's investment in building out its transit service presents an opportunity to provide enhanced access to opportunity such as jobs, education and health for all residents. However, these benefits can only be realized if the transit service is both physically and financially accessible to residents. Increased access to transit and multimodal options is especially critical for communities throughout the region, including low-income communities, people with a disability, communities of color and older adults.

Each community, agency and organization operates within different realities: fiscal, political, economic, legal, etc. As such, the application and implementation of these principles, as well as the strategies provided herein, must be voluntary and sensitive to those contexts.

Strategies

Facilitate public/private partnerships and prioritize resources to improve accessibility to transit stations including first and final mile connections.

One of the greatest impediments to the use of transit, and therefore to increasing ridership, is the inability of making easy, safe and timely connections to stations. This is especially true for communities that use or depend most on transit use. Enhancing the ability of people to access stations using all modes of transportation requires improving infrastructure (including sidewalks and bikeways), connections to local bus routes, car sharing services, and public and private shuttle systems. Solutions must factor in potential barriers including accessibility, cost, etc., that are especially critical to low-income communities, people with a disability, communities of color and older adults.

Develop, implement and provide resources to programs to ensure that transit cost has the lowest possible impact on low-income communities, older adults and other vulnerable populations that may be most dependent on transit.

Fare levels are a major determinant to the use of transit. Low-income households, older adults and other populations are particularly vulnerable because of the impact on their already strained budgets. To offset this impact, it is imperative to develop programs and target resources to provide low-cost access to transit for these households. This requires partnerships involving local jurisdictions, RTD, social service agencies and community organizations in developing options that reduce barriers and costs including qualification, distribution, payment methods, etc.

Meet the service demand of low-income communities, people with a disability, communities of color and older adults to improve their access to critical resources and services including good jobs, healthy food, affordable housing, education, child care, and health care.

Because low-income populations, communities of color and other groups often do not participate in planning processes, transit service availability may not sufficiently factor in the needs of these communities including potential benefits and impacts. In particular, changes to routes and land use may cause severe disruptions including loss of access to critical services, increased time, higher costs, etc. Greater collaboration between regional and local governmental entities can improve the ability to identify opportunities and issues to proactively develop more effective service plans.

