

A banner for the Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative. It features a background image of a modern residential or commercial building with a paved walkway and trees. The text 'Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative' is written in a white, cursive font over a dark blue horizontal band. Below the band, there are logos for SCI (Sustainable Communities Initiative) and DRCOG (Denver Regional Council of Governments) with the slogan 'We make life better!'.

# Denver Region Sustainable Communities Initiative



## SCI East Corridor Working Group

### Operating Protocol

*As of 5/9/13 - Approved*

#### Purpose

The purpose of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) East Corridor Working Group (CWG) is to maximize the benefits from the region's investment in the East FasTracks rail line. These benefits can be realized by developing a holistic vision for the corridor and identifying opportunities to align investments, programs and policies across jurisdictions and partners. The group will focus on how to encourage improvements such as:

- Enhanced economic development
- Increased access to job opportunities and housing across the entire income spectrum
- Lower combined transportation and housing costs
- Reduced consumption of fossil fuels
- The development of mixed-use communities that allow residents to easily access their daily needs using alternative modes of transportation.

The East CWG is comprised of local government planning, economic development and public works departments, housing authorities, anchor institutions (i.e., the Denver International Airport) and other key stakeholders with the resources and capacity to lead and contribute to transit-oriented development (TOD) implementation strategies. The CWG will build on prior local planning initiatives along the East Corridor, identify shared challenges and opportunities related to TOD, and identify potential strategies and tools to address them.

The expected outcomes of the East CWG include:

- Develop a TOD vision for the East Corridor
- Identify challenges and opportunities related to implementing the vision
- Develop a detailed implementation strategy to implement the vision, focusing primarily on cross-jurisdictional TOD challenges and opportunities
- Select a 'catalytic' site' with redevelopment potential at one station area and conduct more in-depth planning work for this site

Funding is available for technical consultant support.



## **Roles and Responsibilities of Parties**

### **Corridor Working Group Members**

1. Have an active role in TOD land use planning along the East Corridor.
2. Represent and communicate with a larger constituent group. Share information from the CWG with your constituent group and obtain their input.
3. Constructively engage in problem-solving with people holding different viewpoints, in order to meet the expected outcomes described above.
4. Fully consider input from the parallel Stakeholder Committee that is comprised of business and residential interests.
5. Commit time and energy to the effort as developing agreements requires consistent attendance and responsiveness. This will likely involve twelve meetings (approximately monthly) and reviewing and responding to e-mail communication between meetings.
6. If a CWG member cannot attend all meetings, they may designate an alternate. Alternates should attend all meetings so that they are up to speed on issues that have been discussed.
7. Come to meetings prepared for discussion by reading meeting materials in advance. Every effort will be made to provide materials one-week prior to meetings.

### **Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)**

1. Ensure East CWG efforts are aligned with the goals and outcomes expected in the SCI Regional Planning Grant and coordinate efforts with other components of the grant.
2. Share relevant expertise and help identify resources, as necessary.
3. Provide logistical support (e.g., secure meeting space and schedule meetings).

**Reconnecting America** is a national non-profit focused on the link between transportation and community development.

1. Work with CDR Associates and DRCOG to develop meeting agendas.
2. Provide technical assistance by compiling and sharing background information on the Corridor. This will include a corridor reconnaissance of existing plans, baseline data and maps and an initial assessment of corridor-wide issues, barriers and opportunities for transit oriented development.
3. Update the East Corridor vision and goals, recommendations for implementation and catalytic site plan, based on CWG input. Compile all information into a final deliverable, the corridor profile.
4. Develop meeting summaries that document agreements, action items and decisions.
5. Help the CWG identify appropriate additional technical assistance as necessary.

**CDR Associates** will provide facilitation services.

1. Be an advocate for all parties' interests and remain impartial to the substance of the issues under discussion.
2. Assist parties in reaching and recording agreements that meet all parties' interests.
3. Design efficient, outcome-oriented agendas.
4. Review meeting summaries and updated agreements.

**East Corridor Stakeholder Committee** – This parallel Committee comprised of community leaders representing residential and business interests will provide input to the East CWG throughout the process.

**Technical Resources** – The SCI Grant provides funding for the East CWG that can be used for technical resources. These may include utilizing services from:

- SCI Regional Resource Group – This group is comprised of several organizations with demonstrated subject-matter expertise in housing, transportation, community and economic development, real estate, creative businesses and the arts, public health, environmental issues, urban agriculture, issues relevant to older adults and stakeholder engagement. These organizations are available to provide input, often through in-kind support or discounted rates.
- SCI Outcome Assessment and Knowledge Sharing (OAKS) Group – The University of Colorado-Denver (CU Denver) is compiling lessons learned and best practices that can inform the East CWG planning and implementation efforts.
- Consultant services as appropriate.

### **How Decisions Will Be Made**

CWG members will make decisions using a consensus process.

Consensus decision making is a procedure by which a group makes a collective decision or agreement that all members can accept without voting. A consensus decision or agreement does not require or mean unanimity; participants in a consensus do not have to feel equally strong about or have the same degree of enthusiasm for a specific outcome or its component parts. A consensus decision at its best is the strongest form of agreement a group can reach as it is an outcome that all group members can support. However, at a minimum, a consensus agreement may be a compromise that all group members can accept, “live with” or not oppose.

Reaching a consensus requires all group members to educate each other about their needs, interests and concerns, and develop an integrative solution or agreement that addresses and satisfies both individual and group interests to the greatest extent possible.

A consensus agreement will be considered to have been reached when either the facilitator or a group member has articulated a proposed agreement, all CWG Members either verbally or non-verbally affirm their support for it, or at a minimum agree not to actively oppose it.

### **Options if Consensus is Not Reached**

In the event that a consensus, as described above, is not reached on a given issue or a package of recommendations, CWG Members have several options:

- 1) CWG members who are not in agreement with the general opinion in the group may voluntarily "stand aside" and not block a consensus decision by other CWG members. They may request that their view(s) be added to the meeting summary.
- 2) A CWG member may block consensus. Members can request that a detailed explanation of the issue, and the basis for disagreement, be described in the meeting summary.
- 3) If the CWG is not able to come to consensus on key elements, they may choose to document any of the following for future related discussions, which may occur outside of this group: a list of the interests that all members want considered; suggested standards and criteria for making decisions; and descriptions of a range of possible alternative recommendations that were explored by the group, but which were not agreed upon.

## **Meeting Guidelines**

- Be open and frank with your interests
- Be brief and speak to the point
- Avoid side conversations
- Refrain from interrupting
- Try to remain open minded; avoid judging ideas prematurely
- Address one another in a respectful manner
- Be future focused – the CWG will not revisit previous decisions unless the information and circumstances that supported that decision have substantially changed
- Be present during the meeting – e.g., turn off cell phones