

## **Blueprint Task Force Meeting #9**

**4.27.17**

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

On April 27, 2017, the ninth meeting of the Blueprint Denver Task Force was convened at the Wellington Webb building. The purpose of the ninth Task Force meeting was to continue the Task Force Discussion Series and engage the Task Force members in a meaningful discussion pertaining to Denver's Transportation Future: Beyond Peak Auto Ownership.

To begin the meeting, Denver's Director of Transportation and Mobility, Crissy Fanganello, addressed the Task Force to speak about the importance of transportation and mobility solutions as Denver continues to grow at a rapid pace. She challenged the Task Force to think about capacity differently and how transportation projects can serve to both move more people and create a better sense of place. Following this introduction to the topic, Joel Noble outlined the meeting agenda and introduced each panelist to present. This was followed by a facilitated discussion.

The full agenda for the meeting is included on page 8 of this summary and the meeting presentations are posted online at:

<http://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/land-use-transportation.html>



*Joel Noble introduces the panelists to the Blueprint Denver Task Force*

### Panelist #1:

Troy Russ is a professional planner with experience in community planning, public facilitation, and the intergration of urban design and transportation. Troy presented to the Task Force a summary of how mobility shapes cities.

He stressed that **understanding the history of the past has a great deal to do with the future and that the most important component of city planning is how public and private spaces are divided.** Additionally, the purpose of cities can be thought of as maximizing exchange while minimizing travel. When speaking about the shared economy and autonomous vehicles, Troy shared potential realities, fears, and unknowns. Likely realities include a safer environment, more efficient roads, lower car ownership, and lower parking demand. Fears associated with shared and autonomous vehicle could be increases in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), an increase in freight trips, and lower use of alternative modes of transportation. Continued increases in online retail and park-once retail districts are potential unknowns. Recognizing that the amount of public right-of-way does not change as a city develops, Troy urged the Task Force to think about how to improve efficiency using the right of way to move more people instead of cars. This would result in improving the quality of travel through traffic calming and by moving less people fewer miles if land use and subdivision support a mix of uses. In conclusion, Troy relayed that transportation choices provide capacity, improve livability, create resiliency, and ensure flexibility.

### Panelist #2:

Edward (E.J.) Klock-McCook works at the Rocky Mountain Institute where he leads the personal mobility initiative with Front Range communities. This initiative aims to significantly reduce the number of single-occupant, gas-powered trips that take place along the Front Range and will be achieved through providing better, less expensive alternatives making use of innovative technology and business models.

E.J.'s presentation focused on **how Denver can keep its current momentum while also preserving the quality of life and access to amenities.** Additionally, jobs and employers competing for talent make Denver a desirable place to live. As all of these revolve around mobility, autonomous electric vehicles will have sizeable cost advantages over gasoline

powered vehicles in delivering mobility services. E.J. insists that mobility services provided by autonomous vehicles will begin to cost less than owning a personal vehicle in coming years. Compared to gasoline powered vehicles, owners of electric vehicles can save more than \$1,000 a year. With decreased costs and increased service, autonomous vehicles may not be personally owned. A single-occupant autonomous mobility service could cost \$.33 per mile compared to \$.60 per mile for a gasoline vehicle. Public transit also stands to benefit from autonomous technologies as vehicle sizes can be customized to replace traditional buses. A big opportunity for Denver lies in designing the city to accommodate new mobility services. Furthering this idea, E.J. mentioned the importance of identifying a transformational goal. Do we want, for instance, 20% of single-occupant drivers to utilize new mobility services by 2020?

### Panelist #3

Aylene McCallum works at the Downtown Denver Partnership and currently holds the role of Director of Downtown Environment. In this capacity, Aylene manages the Partnership's transportation work and organizes a highly successful Urban Exploration program – an annual downtown-focused best practices trip that includes over 100 downtown Denver public and private sector leaders.

Aylene strongly agreed with previous panelists and emphasized that **autonomous vehicles will bring much needed safety to our cities and streets. However, they will not reduce congestion unless Denver plans accordingly.** She questioned how to make autonomous vehicle technologies more compatible with cities integrate them into the existing fabric of transportation options. Aylene believes improved, subsidized transit through the use of efficient autonomous vehicles is a key opportunity to build a more livable Denver.

### Panelist #4

Ken Schroepfel is an Assistant Professor in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program at the University of Colorado Denver where he lectures on the historical growth and development of cities. He is possibly best known as the founder of the DenverInfill and DenverUrbanism blogs which offer news, ideas, and commentary on infill development and other aspects of sustainable urbanism in Denver.

Ken began the conversation by detailing how cities change over time and where Denver is in its development stage. Comparing Denver to a young adult, he mirrored previous presenters by stating that it is important to understand the history of a place in order to plan for its future. Ken mentioned the period between roughly 1940 and 1990 when cities became automobile oriented as a general blip in the history of urban transportation. As streets were once the primary public space, they became less of a place for people and were converted almost exclusively for vehicles. He concluded by advocating for better utilization of the public right-of-way which equals nearly 25% of Denver's land area. **The end result should be a more equitable distribution of right-of-way, giving every Denver resident a right to use the street, even if they do not own a vehicle.**

## Panelist #5

Jill Locantore is Associate Director of WalkDenver, a non-profit organization dedicated to making Denver the most walkable city in the country. Jill develops and implements programming consistent with WalkDenver's mission, including community engagement, research, and advocacy for policies and practices that lead to a more walkable Denver.

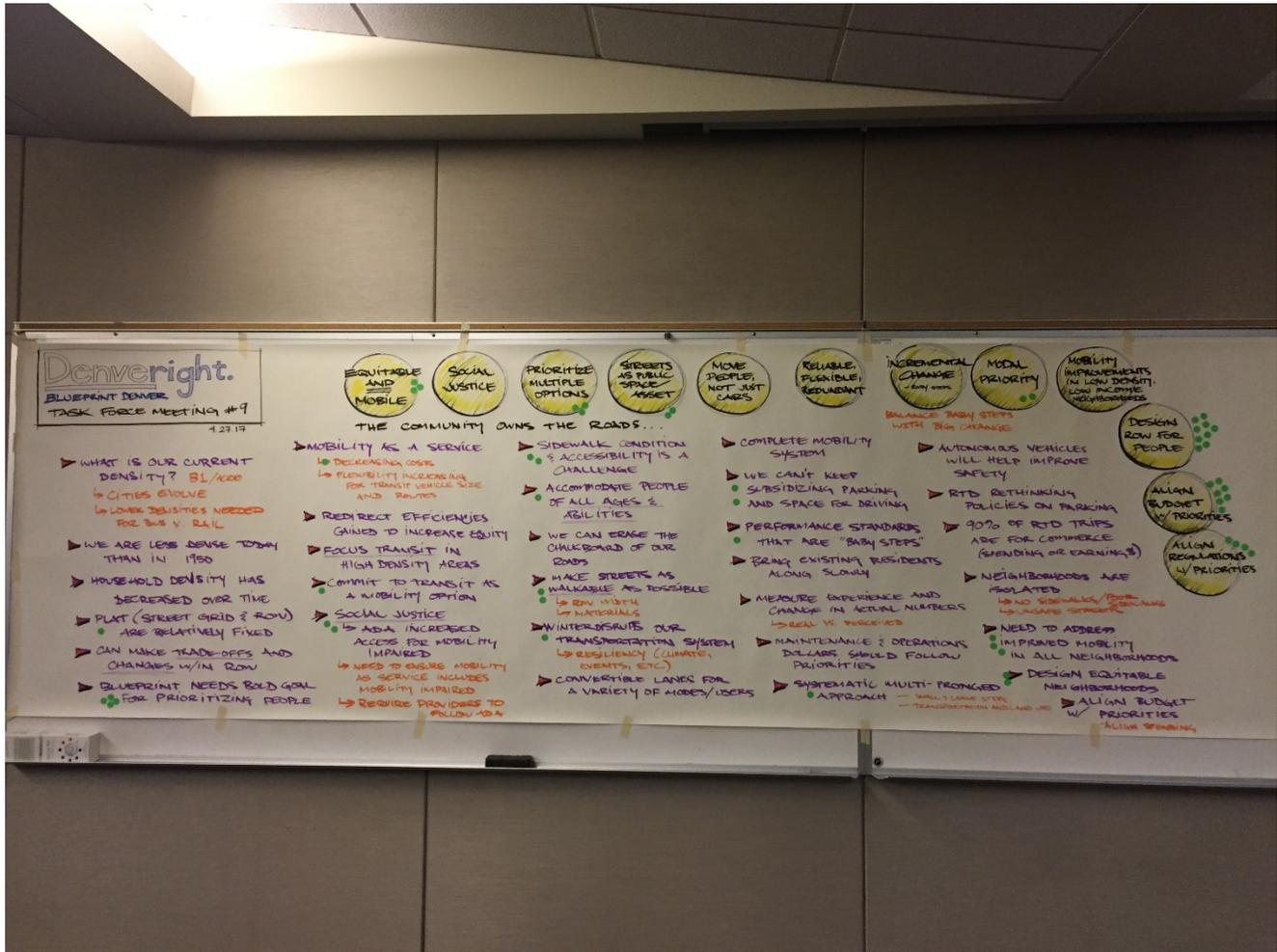
Jill focused her presentation on Denver's arterial streets as the most important public spaces in the city. As they are places that lead to key destinations, jobs, and neighborhoods, they do not have to be designed exclusively for cars. She pushed the idea that citizens need to be clear about priorities along these streets and go from being automobile centric to people centric. Jill believes **it is necessary to embrace congestion instead of trying to solve it. Congestion can lead to slower traffic speeds, increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and strengthened economic vibrancy.** Lastly, Jill eluded to the need for increased density along corridors to support transit and the elimination of parking requirement in transit rich areas.



## Facilitated Discussion

- What is the ideal density to support transit in the most dense parts of the city?
- Currently, transit is so expensive because it serves low density areas.
- 15 minute headways that are reliable could dramatically increase ridership.
- What about people with disabilities? Cabs are not required to be accessible and RTD is sued regularly by people with disabilities.
- Key transportation decisions can amend the right-of-way while the overall width remains the same.
- How might these paradigm shifts affect social equity?
  - Lowered costs can make mobility services equitable across all incomes. Additionally, variable vehicle sizes can make mobility services equally distributed across the city.
- If a city's streets are owned by its citizens, how do we allocate the space differently? What kind of prioritization would be ideal for each of the modes?
  - Streets should be designed to be as walkable as possible. Landscaping details are also important.

- How to think about other types of mobility when different weather and circumstances occur. Choices are needed in those events as well.
- Equitable sharing of the right-of-way is a great idea. We cannot keep subsidizing for cars, but others don't feel similarly. How do we convert them?
  - Small, incremental changes are needed to move cities in the right direction. You do not want to lose constituents along the way. Come up with measurable performance goals to help push the city in the right direction.
  - Measure the change in actual numbers. Not by the number of complaints. Use this information to demonstrate the actual impact, not the perceived impact.
  - Sometimes it is helpful to simply rip the Bandaid off. Balance the baby steps with being bold.
  - Political leadership and courage is needed. Measure the existing conditions and be realistic about the current reality.
- If Denver's "bones" are set, how do you transition to what is envisioned? Even if it is painful and unpopular.
- We cannot continue to subsidize parking for some at the expense of all.
- Some neighborhoods are isolated and not afforded the same access because of incomplete or missing sidewalks. Kids do not have access to parks because of unsafe conditions. We need to focus on equity for everyone, with and without disabilities.
- We have the opportunity and obligation to say in Blueprint Denver that we will build equitable neighborhoods. Public spaces should be designed, first and foremost, for people.
- We must align our budgets to prioritize people. Stating the priority is great but unless we budget for it we will be at the same place in the future.
- Create a regulatory frameworks for the right-of-way. Development regulations are crucial.
- Denver, yes you can! Portland can! If they want it, they can do it. You just have to decide you want to do it.



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BLUEPRINT DENVER  
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EQUITABLE AND MOBILE

SOCIAL JUSTICE

PRIORITIZE MULTIPLE OPTIONS

STREETS AS PUBLIC SPACE ASSET

MOVE PEOPLE, NOT JUST CARS

RELIABLE, FLEXIBLE, REDUNDANT

INCREMENTAL CHANGE

MODAL PRIORITY

MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS IN LOW DENSITY, LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS

- ▶ WHAT IS OUR CURRENT DENSITY? BI/KOB
  - ↳ CITIES EVOLVE
  - ↳ LOWER DENSITIES NEEDED FOR BUS & RAIL
- ▶ WE ARE LESS DENSE TODAY THAN IN 1950
- ▶ HOUSEHOLD DENSITY HAS DECREASED OVER TIME
- ▶ PLAT (STREET GRID & ROW) ARE RELATIVELY FIXED
- ▶ CAN MAKE TRADE-OFFS AND CHANGES W/IN ROW
- ▶ BLUEPRINT NEEDS BOLD GOAL FOR PRIORITIZING PEOPLE

- THE COMMUNITY OWNS THE ROADS...
- ▶ MOBILITY AS A SERVICE
    - ↳ DECREASING COSTS
    - ↳ FLEXIBILITY INCREASING FOR TRANSIT VEHICLE SIZE AND ROUTES
  - ▶ REDIRECT EFFICIENCIES GAINED TO INCREASE EQUITY
  - ▶ FOCUS TRANSIT IN HIGH DENSITY AREAS
  - ▶ COMMIT TO TRANSIT AS A MOBILITY OPTION
  - ▶ SOCIAL JUSTICE
    - ↳ ADA INCREASED ACCESS FOR MOBILITY IMPAIRED
    - ↳ NEEDS TO ENSURE MOBILITY AS SERVICE INCLUDES MOBILITY IMPAIRED
    - ↳ REQUIRE PROVIDERS TO FOLLOW ADA

- THE COMMUNITY OWNS THE ROADS...
- ▶ SIDEWALK CONDITION & ACCESSIBILITY IS A CHALLENGE
  - ▶ ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE OF ALL AGES & ABILITIES
  - ▶ WE CAN ERASE THE CHALKBOARD OF OUR ROADS
  - ▶ MAKE STREETS AS WALKABLE AS POSSIBLE
    - ↳ ENVIRONMENTAL
    - ↳ MATERIALS
  - ▶ WINTER-SUITS OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
    - ↳ RESILIENCY (CLIMATE, EVENTS, ETC.)
  - ▶ CONVERTIBLE LANES FOR A VARIETY OF MODES/USERS

- THE COMMUNITY OWNS THE ROADS...
- ▶ COMPLETE MOBILITY SYSTEM
    - ↳ WE CAN'T KEEP SUBSIDIZING PARKING AND SPACE FOR DRIVING
    - ↳ PERFORMANCE STANDARDS THAT ARE "BABY STEPS"
    - ↳ BRING EXISTING RESIDENTS ALONG SLOWLY
    - ↳ MEASURE EXPERIENCE AND CHANGE IN ACTUAL NUMBERS
      - ↳ LOCAL VS. PERCEIVED
    - ↳ MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS DOLLARS SHOULD FOLLOW PRIORITIES
    - ↳ SYSTEMATIC MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH
      - ↳ WALKABLE STREETS
      - ↳ TRANSIT FROM BICYCLE AND BUS

- THE COMMUNITY OWNS THE ROADS...
- ▶ AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES WILL HELP IMPROVE SAFETY
  - ▶ RTD RETHINKING POLICIES ON PARKING
  - ▶ 90% OF RTD TRIPS ARE FOR COMMERCE (SPENDING OR EARNING)
  - ▶ NEIGHBORHOODS ARE ISOLATED
    - ↳ NEED SIGNALLING/POSSIBLE WALKABLE STREETS
  - ▶ NEED TO ADDRESS IMPAIRED MOBILITY IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS
  - ▶ DESIGN EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOODS
  - ▶ ALIGN BUDGET W/ PRIORITIES
  - ▶ ALIGN SPENDING

DESIGN ROW FOR PEOPLE

ALIGN BUDGET W/ PRIORITIES

ALIGN REGULATIONS W/ PRIORITIES

**TASK FORCE MEETING #9 ATTENDEES:**

Task Force: Joel Noble, Co-Chair, Kimball Crangle, Co-Chair, Angelle Foucher, Andrew Abrams, Andrew Sense, Annie Levinsky, Brianna Borin, Caitlin Quander, Chris Hinds, Councilman Christopher Herndon, Councilwoman Mary Beth Susman, Gabriel Guillaume, Geneva Hooten, Heather Noyes, Jeff Walker, Jerry Tinianow, Jeff Walker, Jesse Adkins, John Desmond, John Hayden, Julie Underdahl, Leo Carosella, Patty Burnap, Paul Aldretti, Tim Baldwin, Trini Rodriguez

Staff/Consultants: David Gaspers, Sarah Showalter, Brandon Shaver, Mallory Bettag, Steven Chester, Courtney Levingston, Jay Renkens, Caryn Champine, Brad Buchanan, Evelyn Baker, Gretchen Armijo, Afor Chavez,

<b>Date:</b> 04/27/2017	<b>Time:</b> 1:00pm – 3:00pm	<b>Location:</b> 201 W Colfax Ave – Wellington Webb Building, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 4F6 and 4G2
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Item	Topic	Presenter	Duration
1.	<b>Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address from Crissy Fanganello</li> <li>Purpose of Focused Topic Meeting: Denver’s Transportation Future: Beyond Peak Auto Ownership</li> </ul>	Joel Noble	10 min 1:00pm – 1:10pm
2.	<b>Panel Introductions (8 minutes each)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Troy Russ – Kimley-Horn and Associates</li> <li>Edward Klock-McCook – Rocky Mountain Institute</li> <li>Aylene McCallum – Downtown Denver Partnership</li> <li>Ken Schroepel – University of Colorado Denver</li> <li>Jill Locantore – Walk Denver</li> </ul>		40 min 1:10pm-1:50pm
3.	<b>Facilitated Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>How do we use this information about future transportation technologies to influence Blueprint Denver?</i></li> </ul>	Joel Noble	65 min 1:50pm-2:55pm
4.	<b>Public Comment</b>		5 min 2:55pm-3:00pm