

DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT TASK FORCE

MEETING #1 - SUMMARY

July 26, 2016

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Kristina Evanoff, *Denver Moves: Transit* Project Manager (Public Works), welcomed the Task Force and showed a video introducing *Denverright*. A link to the [video](#) is available on the *Denverright* [website](#).
- Crissy Fanganello (Transportation and Mobility Director – Public Works), Emily Gloeckner (Policy, Planning and Sustainability Director – Public Works), and Tykus Holloway (Deputy Chief Projects Officer – Mayor’s Office) provided an overview of *Denver Moves: Transit* and explained why the city is developing the plan. The plan grew out of the *Strategic Transportation Plan* completed in 2008, and is motivated by the need to move more people through the city and to meet growing demand for travel by all modes. While this is a city-led plan, it has an important regional component, and will build on the strong relationship between the City and County of Denver (CCD) and RTD.
- The Task Force co-chairs, Ellen Winkler and Kathleen Osher, introduced themselves.
- All Task Force members then introduced themselves and provided a brief, one sentence statement of what transit means to them. (A list of attendees is available at the end of this summary.) Their comments included the following sentiments:
 - Harness a vibrant, modern city and allow it to continue to grow.
 - One of our last opportunities to connect with each other’s lives.
 - Live in a densifying community—transit helps with growing congestion.
 - The whole network is important, from Point A to Point B, and transit helps set Denver apart as an international city.
 - Steve Martin movies—*Trains, Planes, and Automobiles*—and the ability to add bicycles to the list.
 - Transit is about the entire experience of getting from here to there.
 - Transit means freedom to go when you want to go and where you want to go; the better it works, the more freedom you have.
 - Creating livable communities, looking at how the region has transformed in the past 20 years, and how it can continue to transform over the next 20 years.
 - Connections at the regional and district level. Options for how you can connect the places in your life.
 - Equity for those who struggle financially to access opportunity; a connected city and region.
 - Small “t” for transit, not just RTD but the entire network of options that give people better access to work and play, if they are deployed effectively.
 - Getting from Point A to Point B as efficiently and cheaply as possible, including to the taxpayer.
 - Access to services, fun, family, and community.

- Alternatives being able to get to work dry when it's raining or snowing outside.
- Access to opportunity.
- Vision: make it more seamless, convenient, and inclusive.
- Lifeline to all entities—not just a way to get places but the difference between being able to succeed and not succeed.
- Economic mobility—increasing income and decreasing expenditures. Outside of housing, transportation is one of families' highest cost areas.
- Helps address polluted air.
- Lifeline.
- Escaping my car to get a better view of my city and neighborhood.
- Healthy communities—better air quality, being active as part of commuting or getting around town, connecting and being part of your neighborhood.
- Opportunity to be connected with goods and services, housing options, and housing at large.
- Providing people with a mix of multimodal options—interconnectedness.
- Most efficient method to move me to services, or services to me.
- Lifeline—the means that provides access for me to move around Denver.
- Bones of sustainable transportation system, whether TOD [Transit Oriented Development], first-last-mile access, etc.
- Connectivity, not just Point A to Point B; meet a different part of my community when I walk to the train station and sit next to them on the train.
- Greatest opportunity—effective and inclusive perspective to managing growth.
- Access—connecting students, schools, and communities.

OVERVIEW OF *DENVER MOVES* AND *DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT*

- Emily Snyder (Urban Mobility Manager – Public Works) provided an overview of what *Denver Moves* has been (bicycle plan) and what the city wants to make it about going forward, which is a series of modal plans that capture the community's vision for multimodal mobility. She explained that the multimodal plans—of which *Denver Moves: Transit* is one—are being coordinated with three other plans (*Blueprint Denver*, *Game Plan*, and *Denver Moves: Pedestrians and Trails*) that are part of *Denverright*.

OVERVIEW OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Tom Brennan (Consultant Team Project Manager, Nelson\Nygaard) provided context about transit history in the United States and the Denver region to further explain the reasons for the City of Denver to develop its own plan for transit. Transit has been about regional access to cities, and that has been the historical focus for regional transit agencies like RTD, but people are moving back into cities. Cities are now looking to use transit to help accomplish a variety of community goals.
- One element of the plan will be to develop a transit vision and goals for the city. The goals will be the foundation for evaluating and prioritizing investments in a later stage of the plan.

- Tom noted that a city-led plan can help transit by focusing on the elements of a “complete” system that the city can control (e.g., streets). The plan will help the city prioritize transit corridor investments, and work through tradeoffs in how street right-of-way is used. By documenting the community’s priorities, it will help CCD and RTD partner more effectively.
- Tom briefly introduced the consultant team members, most of whom are local to Denver, and summarized the scope of work (which will be provided to the Task Force).
- The team is currently starting work on a “State of the System” report describing the existing system. This report will help provide a shared understanding of transit in Denver today and provide the foundation for the plan.
- The evaluation framework for the plan will build on the vision and goals, and tie the evaluation criteria to a variety of community outcomes.
- Jennifer Wieland (Consultant Team Deputy Project Manager, Nelson\Nygaard) described the community engagement process, which will be designed to reach people of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities, using a variety of different methods. She also noted the need for coordinated outreach (through *Denverright*) and for outreach to be clear and simple, reach people where they are, and avoid overburdening people with meetings. The Community Think Tank is a new group comprised of a cross-section of the community that is currently being formed. A Youth Stakeholder group will also be formed.

ROLE OF DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT TASK FORCE

- Kristina discussed the roles and responsibilities of the Transit Task Force. The hope is that the task force members will be liaisons to the community, and champion the plan and process. The Task Force co-chairs are resources for the Task Force members.
- The Task Force was informed to refer all media requests to speak *on behalf of* the Task Force to the co-chairs. Members are welcome to speak on behalf of their organization. Nancy Kuhn (City of Denver Public Works Communication Manager) is available to answer media questions from the Task Force.

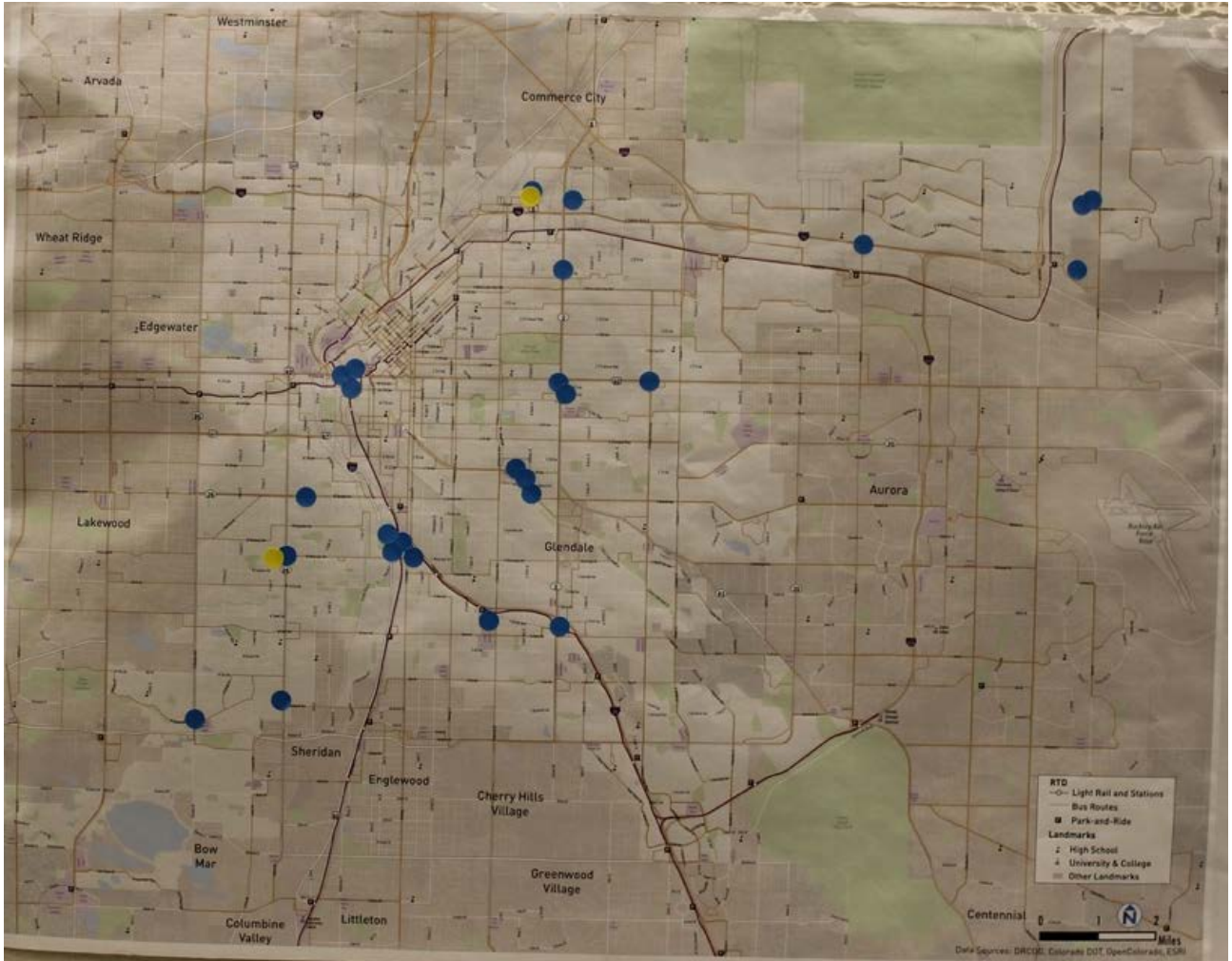
FACILITATED DISCUSSION

Map Exercises

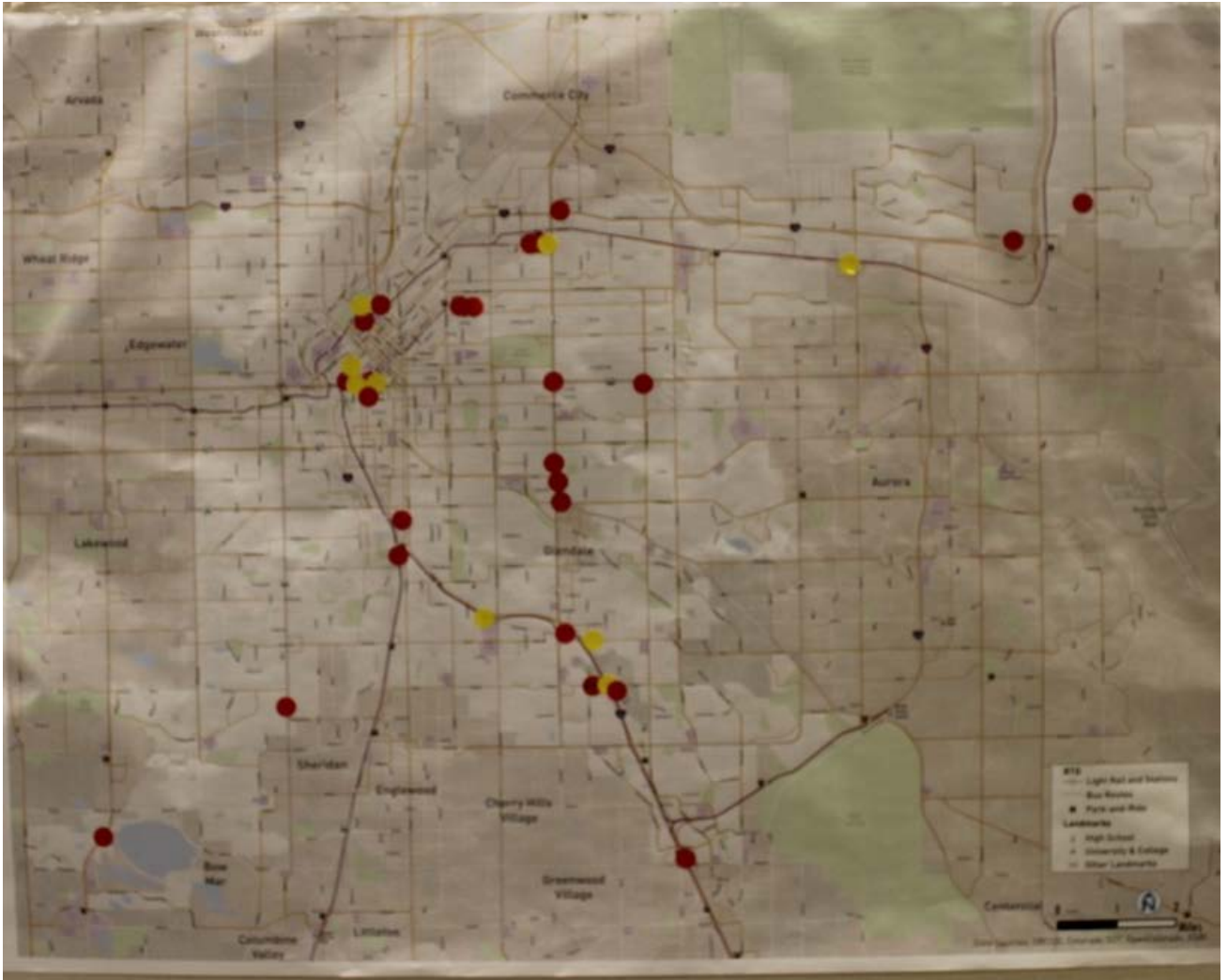
- Task Force members received four dots and were asked to place dots on three maps placed on the meeting room walls identifying:
 - Potential Stop Improvements (blue dot)
 - Difficult to Access Stops (red dot)
 - New or Improved Service Areas (green dot)
 - A “bonus” yellow dot could be used on any of the maps.
- This mapping exercise duplicates the transit-specific questions of the next survey that will be posted on the *Denverright* website within the next few days. The results of this exercise are shown in the photos on the following pages.

- Following the map exercise, the Co-Chairs selected some Task Force members to speak about their selections, identifying areas in need of attention:
 - Montbello. Immigrants in the community have a huge struggle to get to work. People are willing to walk on streets without sidewalks to get to transit.
 - There is no dot by Union Station, although people (from some Denver communities) don't get to go there.
 - Center City is very well served, but it is difficult and time consuming to get around outlying areas and to access the spine of the system. Challenging for working families to access the spine on Federal Blvd. If you are more than 15 minutes away in the winter, it is not practical; would like to look at other types of services that are affordable to working families. First/last mile connections are needed.
 - Alameda Station by Albertson's on east side of I-25 is difficult to access. Challenging to go from east to west, especially further south in the city. There are many barriers—light rail tracks, I-25—with limited crossing opportunities.
 - Swansea needs improved service. Buses are frequently late, and people have stopped using the bus as a result.
 - Alameda also needs stop improvements. Experience waiting for the bus, between I-25 and Federal, is not pleasant.
 - From a student perspective, access, safety, and connectivity are critical. Globeville and Elyria Swansea in terms of new and improved service. For stop improvements, Montbello/Green Valley Ranch area—about connectivity. Traveling to a school across the city, how long would students need to ride and how early would they need to get up. Safety also a major concern.
 - NE Denver has poor infrastructure—a lack of sidewalks, unsafe walking conditions.

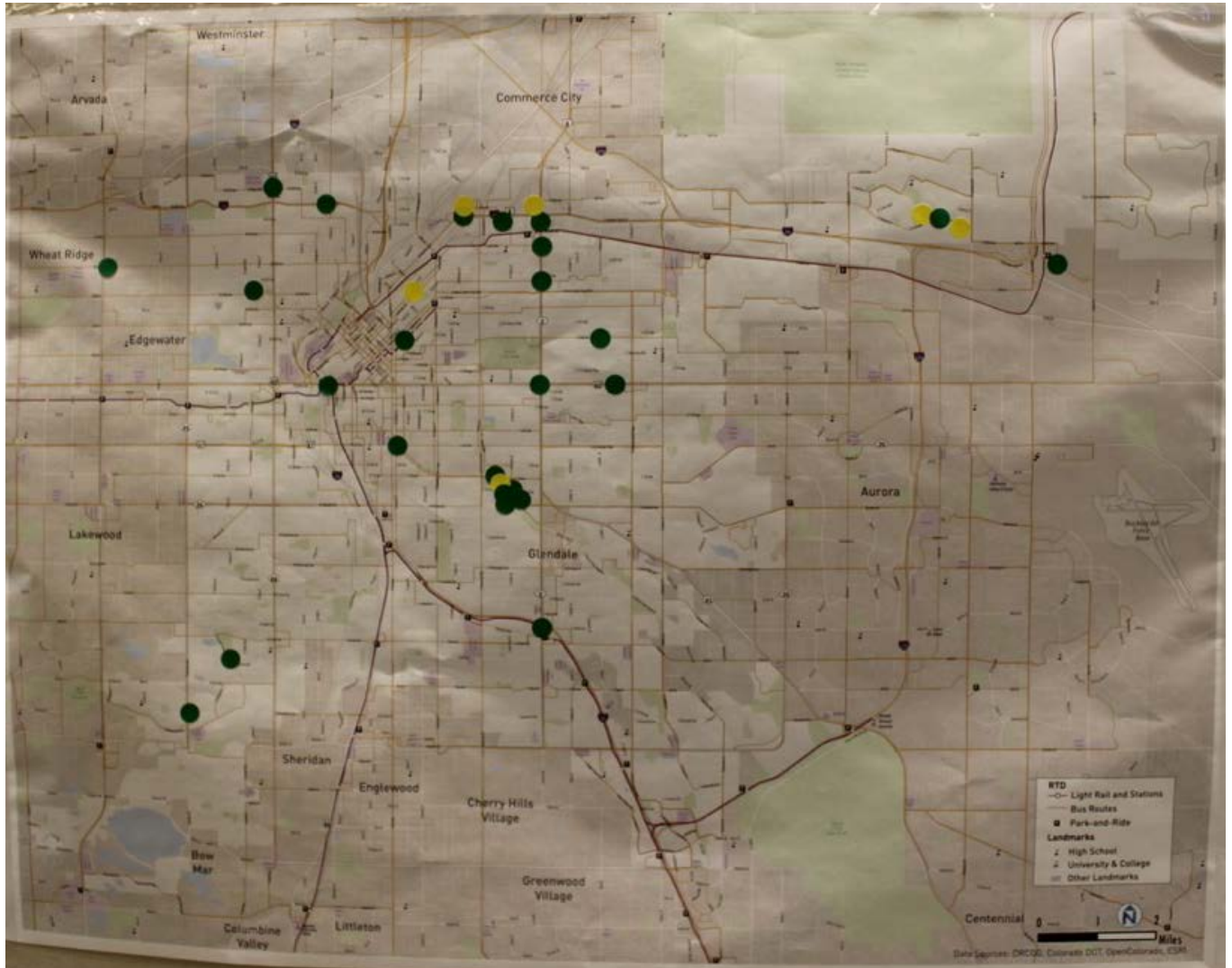
Potential Stop Improvements



Difficult to Access Stops



New or Improved Service Areas



Desired Outcomes

- The Task Force members then described their desired outcomes from the plan; they were recorded on flip charts. The desired outcomes stated by individual Task Force members are summarized below.
 - Commitment to translate outreach and engagement materials into multiple languages.
 - Staff response: The next survey will be translated into Spanish. Staff has identified outreach activities and materials for translation/interpretation in other languages.
 - Advertise transit in comparison to cars sitting in traffic—convince people that moving into Denver is the best choice.
 - Make public transportation public.
 - Explore carrot and stick approach and encourage people to choose transit.
 - Think outside the box—regional hubs.
 - Equity and access: For example, Cherry Creek has over 10,000 service/retail employees living in Cherry Creek, with new hotel opening. Immediate issues to be addressed.
 - How does the car fit in? Over 90% of trips.
 - Focus on creating a plan for Denver residents based on the input from Denver residents; be a little proprietary.
 - Quantifying all the different benefits of recommended investments—economic, equity, environmental—and communicate at a high-level.
 - Denver is currently the #4 city in the country in terms of access for people with disabilities. The plan can improve on that rating and bring people from all parts of disability community to the table.
 - Build partnerships.
 - Provide multiple options.
 - Make connections and improve access.
 - Envision a transit network so good that people will decide to use it even if they have other options (and use it for more than just commuting).
 - Don't forget about implementation and funding for projects that are planned but not yet underway and need resources.
 - Education about growth and what it means.
 - Affordability for low and moderate income families.
 - Elevate community discussion about parking and relationship to transit.
 - Be mindful of interaction with land use, where growth will occur, and where transportation exists in this ecosystem.

NEXT STEPS

- **Meeting Schedule:** Consensus was that meeting time is OK, but day of week conflicts with some City Council committee meetings (Tuesdays and Wednesdays). The co-chairs will do a Doodle poll. Next Task Force meeting is likely to be in late September or early October.
- **Communication:** Consensus was that e-mail communication works well.
- **Meeting Materials:** A copy of today's presentation and a meeting summary will be posted on the [Transit page](#) of the [Denverright website](#) (under the meeting archives section). Documents and links referenced in today's meeting will be sent to the Task Force.
- **Assignments:**
 - Talk to 10 people about *Denver Moves: Transit* and get feedback that will be shared at the next meeting. Refer to the follow-up email from Kristina for additional assignment details.
 - Complete and share the next *Denverright* survey (which includes plan/topic-specific questions): <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/share-your-voice.html>
 - (Optional): Look at the *Seattle Transit Master Plan*: www.seattle.gov/transportation/transitmasterplan.htm
 - (Optional): Look at the *Who's On Board* Survey results (Transit Center – NY): <http://transitcenter.org/ourwork/mobility-attitudes-survey/>

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM TASK FORCE OR AUDIENCE

- Is DRCOG included on the committee?
 - DRCOG is not part of this committee, but is participating through another transit plan committee comprised of regional- and state-level agency representatives.
- How can Task Force members understand what is going on in different groups, e.g., Think Tank?
 - A summary from the other meetings (e.g., Think Tank) and activities will be shared with the Task Force.
- What will be covered in the State of the System report?
 - It will look at existing conditions for transit, such as where transit runs, where stops are located, how well transit is working, challenges in using transit, where people are traveling, etc.
- Will it talk about ridership and transit in terms of things other than commuting?
 - Yes, the analysis will include both work and non-work trips.
- Will cost be included?
 - Yes, report will address the cost of service to the customer (e.g., fares).
- Is there a mission to grow ridership?
 - This is seen as more of a goal, and would be something discussed further when the Task Force considers the vision and goals for transit as part of this process.

- Is there a way to sign up for e-mail updates?
 - Currently, the team is sending information through the *Denverright* e-mail lists, but there will eventually be a transit-specific list. Additionally, the *Denverright* and *Denver Moves: Transit* websites will be the best source of information.
- Will the Task Force have input into the evaluation approach?
 - Yes, Task Force will be instrumental in helping define both categories and individual measures.
- How detailed will the implementation portion of the plan be?
 - It will address near- and long-term improvements and priorities.

ATTENDEES

Task Force: Kathleen Osher (Co-Chair), Ellen Winkler (Co-Chair), Councilwoman Robin Kniech, Councilman Kevin Flynn, Commissioner Cec Ortiz, Aisha Rousseau (proxy for Commissioner Cherish Marquez), Commissioner Jessica Skibo, Paul Aldretti, Stuart Anderson, Liz Babcock, Tangier Barnes Wright, Jordan Block, Laura Brudzynski, Andy Farr, Tiffany Eck, Ellen Ittelson, Tasha Jones, Aylene McCallum, Angie Malpiede, Lauren Masias, Joel Noble, Nicole Portee, Merritt Pullam, Ginger Schlote, Bill Sirois, Barbara Weiske

Other: Marcia Johnson, Kim Desmond, Jill Locantore, Gosia Kung, Roger Sherman, David Sachs

Staff/Consultants: Crissy Fanganello, Tykus Holloway, Emily Gloeckner, Emily Snyder, Karen Good, Ryan Billings, Nancy Kuhn, Conrad Gerber, David Gaspers, Pamla Sajani, Zareen Tasneem, Aracely Hernandez, Kristina Evanoff, Jennifer Wieland, Tom Brennan, Oren Eshel, Lisa Zoeller