

# **DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT TASK FORCE MEETING #3 - SUMMARY**

December 1, 2016

Thank you to DDP for providing lunch!

Task Force agendas, meeting summaries, and presentations are posted here:

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/transit.html> (under 'Task Force Meeting Archives')

## **ATTENDEES**

### **Task Force Members**

Kathleen Osher (Co-Chair), Councilman Kevin Flynn, Commissioner Cec Ortiz, Commissioner Jessica Skibo, Paul Aldretti, Stuart Anderson, Liz Babcock, Tangier Barnes Wright, Ellen Ittelson, Aylene McCallum, Angie Malpiede, Kirk Miller, Chris Nevitt, Joel Noble, Nicole Portee, Merritt Pullam, Ginger Schlote, Bill Sirois, Barbara Weiske

### **Guests**

David Sachs, Jesse Lopez, Doug Monroe, Jessica Vargas, Catherine Dockery

### **City Staff and Consultants**

City of Denver: Crissy Fanganello, Emily Snyder, Emily Gloeckner, Karen Good, Kristina Evanoff, Ryan Billings, David Gaspers, Stephen Rjio, Heather Burke-Bellile, Zareen Tasneem  
Consultant Team: Jennifer Wieland, Nelson\Nygaard; Holly Buck and Cady Dawson, FHU; Lisa Zoeller, Zoeller Consulting

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Kristina Evanoff, *Denver Moves: Transit* Project Manager, welcomed the Task Force members. Kathleen Osher *Denver Moves: Transit* Task Force co-chair, reviewed the meeting agenda and led a round of introductions.

## **TASK FORCE HOMEWORK #2: TAKE A TRANSIT TRIP**

Kathleen shared her experience taking transit to Boulder for a speaking engagement and provided an overview of feedback from other Task Force members' transit trips, focusing on what did and didn't work well.

Many of the positive experiences were related to rail trips and included the following comments:

- Rail is clean, on time, and fast
- Signage is clear
- Easy to buy tickets if you know what you need

The experiences of Task Force members traveling by bus were somewhat less positive and comments included the following:

- Buses were late, crowded, and unpredictable
- Connectivity is challenging
- Fares are high and confusing

Task Force members had a number of suggestions for making transit travel better:

- Better signage about how to buy day passes on buses
- Better connections outside of downtown
- Easier bike connections and places to put bikes on trains
- Wayfinding signage at final station on a rail line
- Smart passes

## **OUR CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY: WHY DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT**

City of Denver's Director of Transportation & Mobility (Public Works), Crissy Fanganello, provided the Task Force with an overview of historical facts about mobility and growth in Denver and more detailed information about the city's reasons for developing a transit plan:

- Up until the 1950s, cities across the U.S. were densely populated and Denver was no exception. In the 1950s, the movement of families to the suburbs led to a change in city street design to focus on one-way streets that supported moving commuters in and out of the city. As the regional population has begun to move back into cities, Denver's population is now growing at a rate of 2.0-2.5% per year. However, the street network remains the same, leading to congestion.
- Transit is the most efficient way to move more people safely. While it can be challenging for people to understand, a general purpose travel lane for bus rapid transit (for example) actually increases the street network's capacity rather than decreasing capacity.
- Because providing new options for people is critical, the City and County of Denver (CCD) cannot afford to say that public transit is someone else's job. CCD has not collaborated on transit to this degree, but the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan is a great opportunity for the city to figure out its role in helping to improve transit and transportation options in Denver.

## **SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: TRANSLATING DESIRED OUTCOMES TO GOALS AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

### **Framing Presentation: Denverright Values & Vision Elements**

Emily Snyder, Urban Mobility Manager for Public Works, introduced the community values and vision elements that have been identified for Denverright:

- These values and vision elements will be used by all four Denverright plans and set the framework for the goals and objectives that will be developed by each plan.
- The values and vision elements were developed based on extensive public input during outreach activities/pop-up events in the summer and fall, Community Visioning Workshops, online surveys, the Task Forces, and the Denverright Community Think Tank.

The draft Denverright community values include:



The Denverright community values informed six vision elements that tell the story of the city Denver is aspiring to become:

## THE *Vision* FOR DENVERRIGHT IS:



Emily also introduced the concepts of goals and objectives, which will be developed for *Denver Moves: Transit* with the support of the Task Force:

- Goals provide direction and set expectations for what each plan can do to help achieve the vision and establish a decision-making framework.
- Objectives are a bit like the “how” to achieve these goals but not the exact tactics associated with implementation. They are measurable and time-bound outcomes.

The draft Denverright community values and vision elements are available online to review & provide feedback: <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/share-your-voice/values-and-vision.html>

### **Exercise Introduction: Desired Outcomes & State of the System Findings**

Jennifer Wieland, consultant team deputy project manager, introduced the small group activity, explaining that the Task Force will help to shape the goals for the plan by focusing on desired outcomes and measures of success. The desired outcomes relate back to discussions at the first two Task Force meetings and to feedback from the public. Measures of success help to define objectives and will tell the city whether *Denver Moves: Transit* has accomplished what the plan set out to do.

The Task Force members shared the following questions and comments:

- Joel Noble encouraged “big thinking” for goals and objectives, as this is a 20-year plan. Emily encouraged everyone to think big but also noted that objectives can be both near-term and long-term in their time horizons.
- Paul Aldretti commented that he was happy to see the values and vision elements as part of all four projects. This will support a more holistic result and prevent the city and the Task Forces from operating in silos. Jennifer pointed out that this is a funneling process, and the Task Force’s role is to help hold the project team accountable to maintain the values even as we get to the details.
- Commissioner Cec Ortiz noted that breaking down silos is critical and asked how the city is going to work in partnership with the community as it moves forward to address the smaller, short-term issues as well as the long-term ones. Crissy responded that the Denverright approach is unprecedented in terms of breaking down silos. Working together on these four projects has led to holistic conversations about transportation mobility and other community needs.
- Kirk Miller asked specific questions about sidewalk conditions and access to paratransit during snow events. Emily responded that *Denver Moves: Pedestrians and Trails* as well as Denver’s sidewalk committee are addressing these issues more directly than the transit plan.

## Small Group Activity

Task Force members broke into four small groups to begin developing goals and measures of success for three topics.

Jennifer introduced each topic by sharing highlights of public input to date, findings from the team’s work on the State of the System Report, and examples of the ways that other cities are measuring success when it comes to transit service, ridership, and access (among other topics).



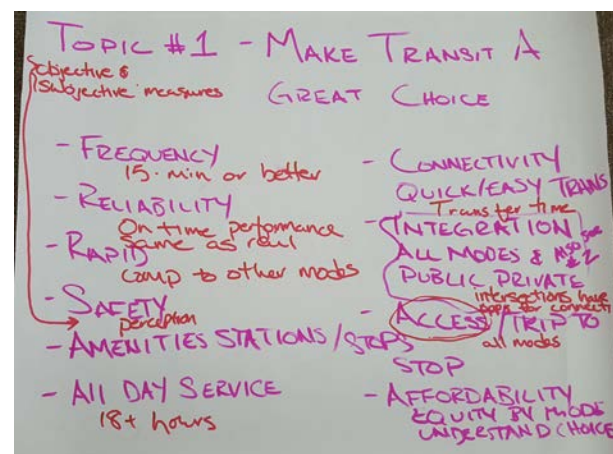
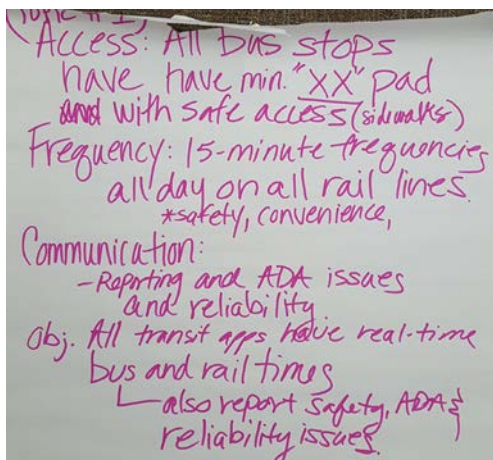
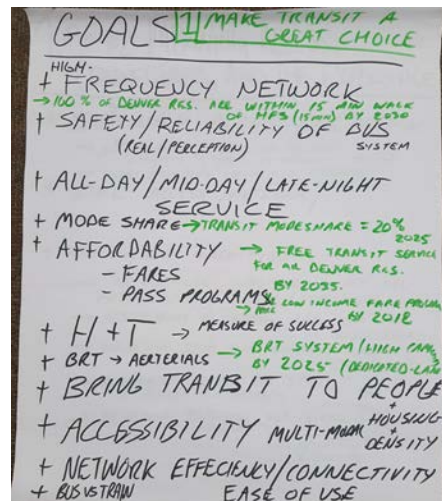
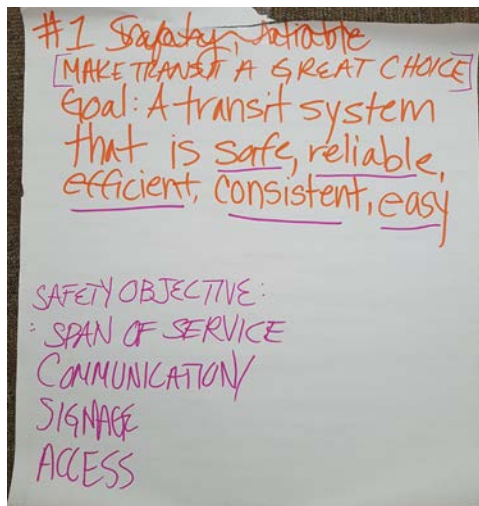
### Topic #1: Make Transit a Great Choice

**Introduction:** The desire to make transit a great choice for people living, working, and traveling in Denver has been an important theme since the beginning of the *Denver Moves: Transit* planning process. Jennifer noted that people want reliable, fast, frequent, and convenient transit.

Through the State of the System Report, the project team has explored service frequencies, on-time performance, and ridership. Finally, the types of measures other cities are using to determine whether they are making transit a great choice include increasing transit mode share and providing frequent service to a large percentage of residents.

**Small Group Activity:** The small groups had wide-ranging conversations about this topic, discussing frequency, access to transit, and fares. Examples of the draft goals and measures of success identified by the groups included the following:

- Everyone in Denver is within ¼-mile (10-minute walk) of a frequent, rapid, reliable transit source.
- By 2030, all Denverites are within a 15-minute walk of frequent, reliable transit.
- Provide an affordable or free transit pass for every Denver resident by 2035 and half-price passes for low-income individuals by 2018.
- Create a system that is safe, reliable, efficient, and easy to use. A safe system is one that has an ADA-accessible place to wait for the bus or train.
- Frequencies should be at least every 15 minutes for most of the day. Eventually they should be as high as every three to five minutes.
- Make transit accessible—within 10-minute walk for most people and a 5-minute walk for older adults and people with disabilities.

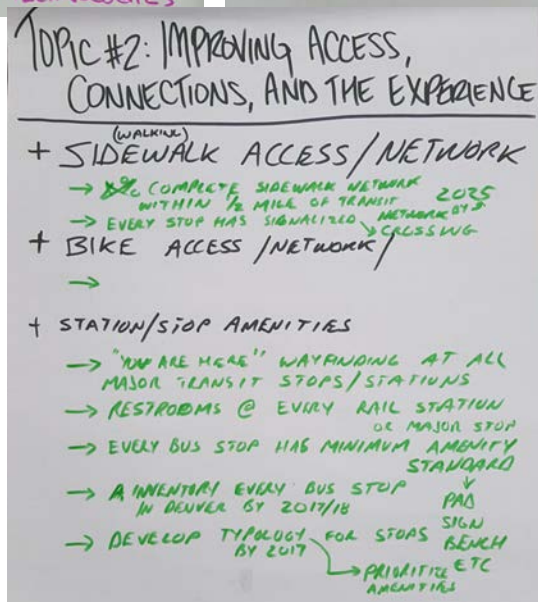
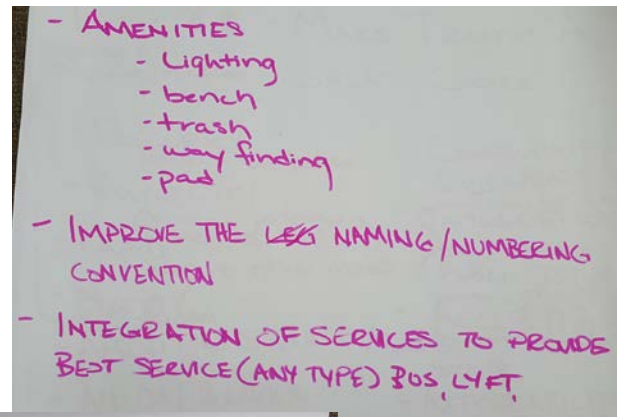
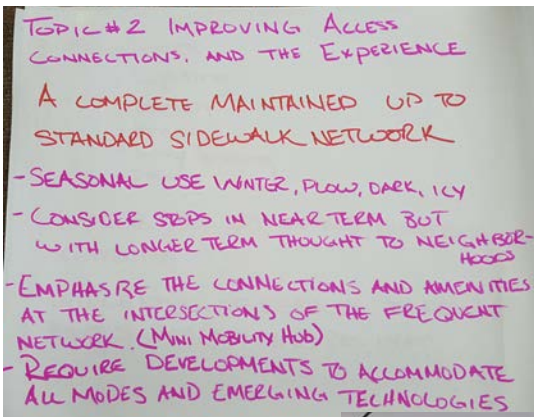


## Topic #2: Improving Access, Connections, and the Experience

Introduction: Another important theme that has emerged during the first months of the project is the need to improve the ways that people access transit and the experience they have while riding it. Jennifer noted that people want safe, comfortable, accessible, and easy to use transit. Through the State of the System Report, the project team has explored areas where access is challenging, the amenities available at stops and stations, and the information that is available to help people understand the transit system. Finally, the types of measures other cities are using to set targets for improvements to access and connections include a percentage of streets with sidewalks within 1/2-mile of transit stops and the availability of real-time bus and train arrival information.

**Small Group Activity:** Examples of the draft goals and measures of success identified by the groups included the following:

- Build a complete sidewalk network within 1/2-block of every transit route.
- Provide pedestrians with priority crossing at major transit lines so that people do not have to risk their safety to make a connection.
- Install restrooms at major rail stations.
- Take an inventory of transit stops by 2018 to determine the types of amenities that are needed at different kinds of stops.
- Work in public/private partnership to accommodate emerging technologies.

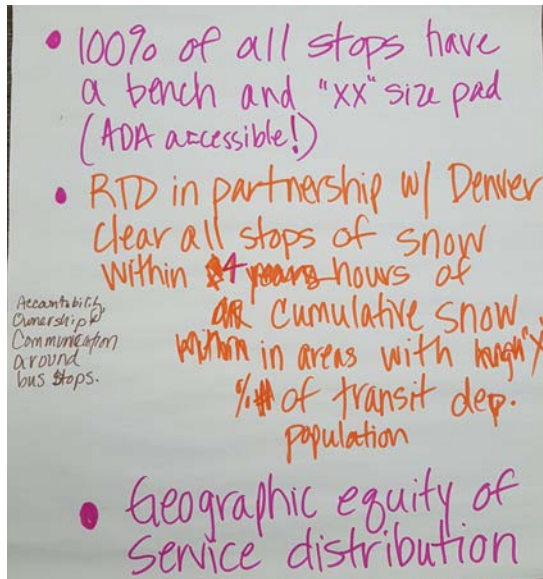
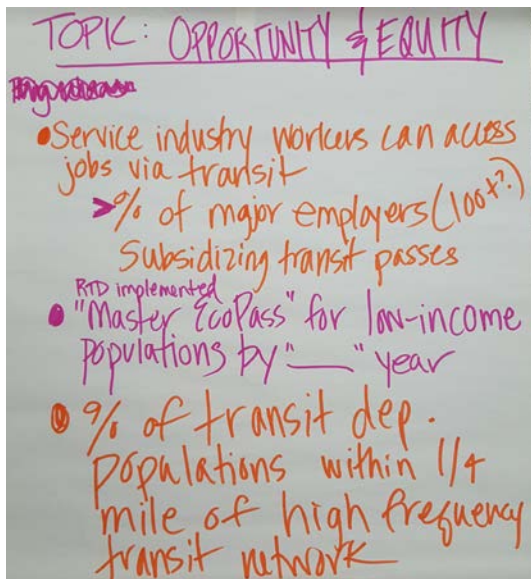


### Topic #3: Enhancing Opportunity and Equity

**Introduction:** Finally, the need for transit to serve all Denver residents and provide opportunities to access jobs, schools, and services has been a critical piece of early *Denver Moves: Transit* discussions. The project team has heard that people want affordable and connected transit that helps to improve economic mobility and supports healthy neighborhoods. Jennifer noted that the State of the System Report includes information about Denver transit riders today, including the fact that nearly 50% of bus riders in Denver do not have access to a car. Finally, the types of measures other cities are using to measure the ways transit supports opportunity and equity include a percentage of jobs accessible within a 45-minute transit trip and a percentage of transit-dependent populations within ¼-mile of a frequent transit line.

**Small Group Activity:** Examples of the draft goals and measures of success identified by the groups included the following:

- Design the transit system to address the needs of a broad group, especially the transit-dependent.
- Extend hours of services to consider shift workers and to realize that jobs are not 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. anymore.
- Encourage employers to be attentive to the percentage of their employees that are transit dependent and subsidize transit passes
- Launch a citywide EcoPass by 2018.
- Clear transit stops in storm events within a designated amount of time.
- Install a bench at all transit stops.
- Ensure geographic equity of services and amenities.





**\* OPPORTUNITY & EQUITY \***

- \* Connect people to employment opportunities
  - % of ~~ppl~~ w/in \_\_\_ min transit ride of work  
Transit-dependent workers (the precursors)
  - % of jobs w/in \_\_\_ distance of frequent route
- \* Use transit as a driver of opportunity
  - extend service to X-hrs per day
- \* Make the regional connection & service connections
  - child care at transit, e.g.
- \* Make transit affordable
  - Establish citywide MyDenver card
- \* Design a flexible system
  - no one works 9-5

- \* Make transit frequent enough that I don't need a schedule → 3-5 MIN
- % of ppl w/ x distance of frequent route
- increase in ridership
- \* Make transit accessible to everyone (no homework required!)
  - % of residents w/in 10-min walk of transit route
  - % of older residents or ppl with disabilities w/in 5-min walk

EVERYONE IN DENVER W/IN  
A 1/4 MILE (10 MIN) TO FAST RAPID  
FREQUENT RELIABLE ALL DAY SERVICE

## Exercise Conclusion: Next Steps for Developing Goals and Objectives

Jennifer concluded the small group activities by explaining what will happen with the information developed by the Task Force. The project team will shape it into draft goals and objectives for review by the Task Force in February. This will become the basis of the decision-making framework that will be used throughout *Denver Moves: Transit* to determine the recommended transit scenario, transit priority corridors, and the approach to implementation.



## NEXT STEPS

### Upcoming Engagement Activities & Opportunities

Kristina highlighted upcoming outreach and engagement opportunities for *Denver Moves: Transit* and Denverright:

- The Denverright team will be out in the community in January and February to get feedback on the community values and vision elements. Task Force members are encouraged to share the website with their communities and are invited to provide feedback online: <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/share-your-voice/values-and-vision.html>.
- Efforts are underway to establish a Youth Stakeholder Group for *Denver Moves: Transit* by working with the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission. The project team will be meeting with the commission on December 7 to introduce the transit plan and recruit members for the stakeholder group. The Youth Stakeholder Group will meet quarterly and will discuss topics similar to those covered by the Task Force. The participants will have the opportunity to complete a special video project in partnership with the project team and participate in other plan activities.
- In February or March, the project's next online survey will be released. This will be a "Design Your Own Transit System" survey, which allows people to test out their priorities for improvements to service, access, information, and other elements of a transit system.
- The next Think Tank meeting will be in early 2017, and Kristina will share the date with the Task Force members when it is announced.

### Next Task Force Participation Opportunity

Kathleen introduced the next assignment for the Task Force, which is to **read the State of the System Report** when it is released near the end of the year. **After reviewing the report, Task Force members should send a quick email to Kristina that highlights one big idea or something they found particularly interesting – DUE: January 23rd.**

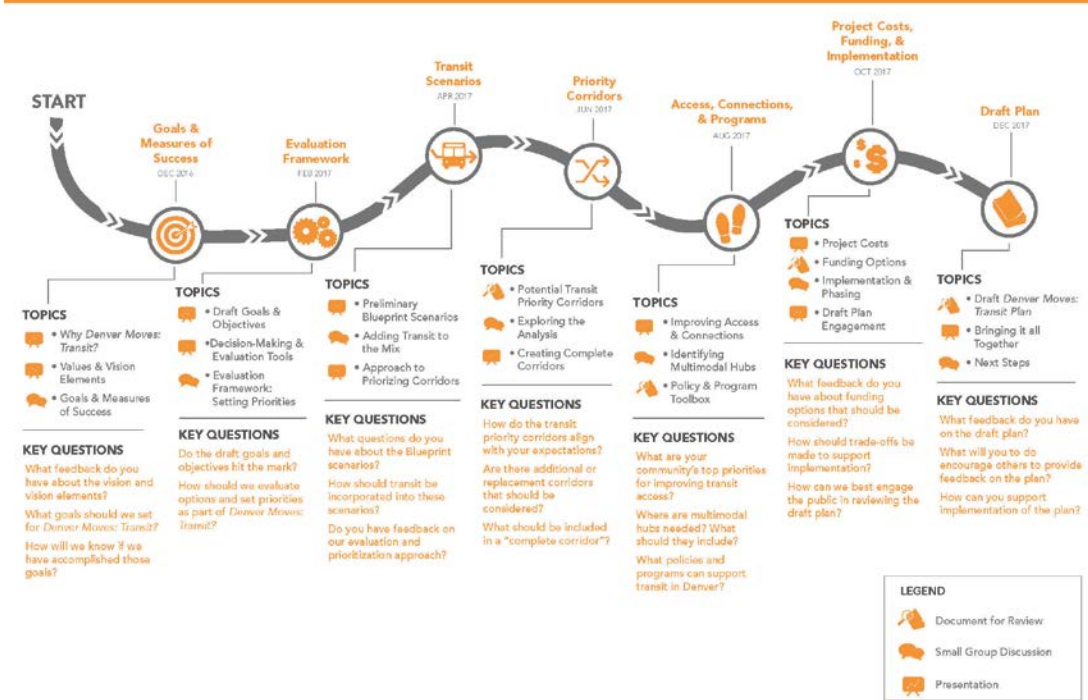
Task Force members should also share the report with their community, as it is an important first step in creating the transit plan.

### Task Force Road Map

Kristina distributed a roadmap for upcoming Task Force meetings. This document explains the topics to be covered at each meeting and the types of questions that Task Force members will help to answer. This Road Map graphic is also posted online:

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denverright/transit.html> (under Task Force Meeting Archives)

# TASK FORCE ROADMAP



## Task Force Meeting Schedule

The Task Force will be meeting on the first Thursday of every other month in 2017.

The next *Denver Moves: Transit* Task Force meeting is Thursday, February 2, 2017, from 1:00-3:30 p.m. at the Visit Denver Boardroom.