

**CITY OF BOULDER  
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD  
AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE:** March 14, 2016

**AGENDA TITLE:** Staff briefing and TAB input on the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Update

**PRESENTERS:** Michael Gardner-Sweeney, Interim Director of Public Works for Transportation  
Kathleen Bracke, GO Boulder Manager  
Jean Sanson, Senior Transportation Planner, GO Boulder

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a briefing to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) on the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan public outreach and request TAB nominate a member to participate on the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Community Working Group.

**TAB ACTION REQUESTED**

Key Questions for the TAB:

1. Does the TAB have any suggestions for enhancing and/or clarifying the public input summary prior to general distribution?
2. Does the TAB agree that it is appropriate to appoint a TAB member to the East Arapahoe Community Working Group? And if so, is there a TAB member nominee?

**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

Since the last update to TAB on the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan on November 9, 2015, staff has been conducting a series of broad community outreach activities. Over the past five months, opportunities for public input have included the following:

- An online questionnaire was launched on the project web site on November 19, 2015. The online questionnaire was publicized at the public workshop, through a series of email blasts, social media pushes, via postcards that were hand delivered to businesses along the East Arapahoe corridor and through stakeholder meetings and pop-up events held along the corridor. 126 people completed the questionnaire.

- A public workshop was held on November 19, 2015. Approximately 30 community members attended the interactive public workshop during which they had a chance to review the range of transportation improvement alternatives being considered and to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each. Participants also provided feedback on a set of evaluation criteria by which to evaluate potential improvements.
- Between November 2015 and March 2016, the project team held individual meetings with over 20 stakeholders along the corridor to present project information and receive input.
- In February 2016, the project team held a number of small group outreach activities, including two pop-up events at the Boulder Valley School District administrative office and bus drivers lounge, an open house for residents of the Peloton, a focus group for Boulder Community Health employees, and a presentation and workshop at a Connect Boulder luncheon.
- The project team has also been receiving public comments and feedback via direct email.

The following themes have been shared through the recent community outreach:

- **Conceptual Design Alternatives:** There is both concern and interest in the tradeoff between maintaining or expanding the number of vehicle travel lanes vs. dedicating more street space to exclusive transit lanes, on-street bicycle facilities and landscaping. For example, 46 questionnaire respondents indicated the need for more general purpose lanes and 36 respondents indicated the need for improved bicycle infrastructure. At the public workshop held in November 2015, there was strong support expressed for completing and/or adding bike infrastructure along East Arapahoe. Conceptual design alternatives that included exclusive BRT lanes and on-street bicycle infrastructure were seen as strong in the way that they enhance both bus service and the pedestrian and bicycle environment. However, there was concern that repurposing vehicle travel lanes for other uses could create more congestion and the investment may not be worth the bus ridership that would result.
- **Additional Concepts:** Community members have requested that additional transportation improvement options be considered. Examples include carpool lanes, additional automobile lanes, light rail or streetcar, reversible general purpose lanes, exclusive BRT lanes only during peak travel hours, traffic circles and streetscape beautification.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** Evaluation criteria repeatedly cited as important to compare future transportation improvements options include: safety, perceived ease or comfort for walking and bicycling along/across the corridor and transit travel time and reliability.
- **Regional Commuting:** In conversations with businesses along the corridor, it was apparent that the majority of employees do not live in Boulder, but drive in single-occupant vehicles from as far away as south Denver and Fort Collins. To attract and retain employees, it was relayed that commutes should be easy and inexpensive. Eliminating a general purpose lane would be extremely concerning to many businesses.
- **Transit Enhancements:** Much of the community input related to transit included the need for higher frequency transit, extended transit service hours, enhanced bus stops and more direct and efficient bus connections.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements:** A common theme heard about the existing multiuse path is that it works for families, but not for bicycle commuters. Many community members stated that it feels dangerous at driveways because drivers are not looking for pedestrians and cyclists and signage is lacking. Enhancement ideas suggested include an off-street bicycle path, improving bicycle and pedestrian travel along Arapahoe Avenue, as well as making direct connections to businesses and neighborhoods located off Arapahoe.

- **Land Use Planning:** Several community members stressed the need to plan future transportation improvements in coordination with land use planning.

See **Attachment A** for a summary of more detailed public input.

## **A COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP**

Many of the conversations staff had during these outreach activities pointed to the need and desire by community members for establishing an East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Community Working Group. The purpose of the working group will be to provide input and feedback, from different interests and perspectives, to the city staff during the East Arapahoe planning process. The working group's input will help staff explore future transportation improvement options that serve the diverse interests in the community the best way possible. City staff will use the working group's feedback when developing recommendations and materials for consideration at Transportation Advisory Board and City Council meetings.

Specific topics to be discussed by the community working group include: (1) the range of options for transportation improvements, (2) the development and analysis of potential concept plans – including street design, pedestrian and biking facilities, transit service, and parking (3) the criteria by which to evaluate concept plans, (4) the analysis of alternative concept plans and identification of a preferred concept plan, and (5) implementation and phasing options of a preferred concept plan for the East Arapahoe corridor.

An open solicitation for Community Working Group members was released on Friday, March 11, 2016 and letters of interest are due by Friday, March 25, 2015.

### ***Expectations & Commitment***

The city is seeking a group of 10-15 individuals with varying backgrounds and interests. Working group members will be expected to:

- Attend four to six working group meetings over the course of one year. Each meeting will be two hours, with dates and times to be determined.
- Review planning materials prior to working group meetings.
- Have experience and/or interests related to transportation planning from different perspectives.
- Provide feedback to the project team on information prepared by city staff to ensure it is understandable, accurate and complete and provide advice on community outreach.
- Identify areas and issues to consider, and provide feedback on how to communicate information.
- Engage in a constructive dialogue with other members of the group, the consultants, and city staff.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Convene the Community Working Group in April 2016.
- Staff is developing a Data Collection and Analysis Methodology Report and Existing Conditions Report. Staff will provide a follow-up briefing to TAB in May 2016 to share the draft reports and provide an update on the status of the Community Working Group.

- City Council Study Session Briefing (May 31, 2016).
- Continue on-going coordination with multi-departmental staff team, including collaboration with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan update process, as well as with Boulder County, Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, and other agency partners.

### **TAB ACTION REQUESTED**

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2. Does the TAB agree that it is appropriate to appoint a TAB member to the East Arapahoe Community Working Group? And if so, is there a TAB member nominee?

For more information, please see the East Arapahoe plan website:

[www.EastArapahoeTransportationPlan.net](http://www.EastArapahoeTransportationPlan.net)

Attachments:

- A. East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Public Input Summary November 2015 to February 2016 – DRAFT