

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This priority area is focused on ensuring that the development near our regional transit system provides enhanced access to opportunity for individuals and families. This means promoting policies and leveraging resources to that ensure high quality affordable housing, employment centers, educational facilities, fresh food access, healthcare, and other needed services are created and sustained where there are easily accessible by bus and rail.

Key Accomplishments:



- Originated \$7.8 million in financing out of the Denver Regional TOD Fund for five projects in three counties. These investments will result in over 400 affordable rental homes near transit.
- Passed an updated Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance with the City of Denver, providing more ways to preserve housing properties at risk of losing their affordability.
- Hosted 7 in-depth conversations with stakeholders, including private impact investors, about creating scalable financial tools to support affordable housing and community servicing facilities near transit.
- Established a comprehensive regional pipeline of over 110 transit-oriented real estate and infrastructure development projects.

AFFORDABLE FARES AND MEANINGFUL SERVICE ROUTES

While transit can be a more affordable option than car ownership, for many the cost of fares and passes are out of reach. This can cause people to make difficult choices between transportation and other basic necessities, including food and medical care. This year, leading an Affordable Fares Task Force comprised of over 100 partner organizations, Mile High Connects focused on highlighting issues of fare affordability as part of RTD's fare study and continued to advocate for critical bus service for low-income communities.

Key Accomplishments:



- Released First and Last Mile: Funding Needs and Priorities for Connecting People to Transit, analyzing the current state of financing and implementation for FLMC across the region.
- Conducted 7 Focus groups with regional stakeholders from 22 agencies for an in-depth exploration of regional FLMC challenges and ways they were being addressed at a local and regional level.
- Produced 3 Case Studies: Atlanta, Salt Lake City, and New Shared Mobility, identifying best practices and solutions to FLMC issues from around the nation.
- Supported successful neighborhood organizing efforts in Globeville Elyria Swansea, resulting in bus stop improvements and enhanced sidewalk connections.

BUSINESS, LOCAL WORKFORCE AND MIDDLE SKILL JOBS

This priority area addresses a key factor for low-income residents and the overall economic resilience of the region – growing the household income of low-income residents through improved access to jobs and training in areas accessible by transit. MHC focuses its work on businesses and institutions who offer middle skill jobs, which provide a bridge out of poverty through higher wages and achievable career paths. This year, MHC prioritized middle skill jobs in construction, health care and at businesses located in developing transit areas.

Key Accomplishments:



- Worked with Colorado Construction Institute to train, employ and support 63 Denver residents in construction jobs.
- Published Construction Community Workforce Programs in Three Denver Transit-Oriented Development, capturing the learning experiences of three place-based TOD projects that generated employment and training opportunities for local residents and expanded the pipeline of qualified workers to meet industry workforce demands.
- Co-hosted event launching the new Denver Construction Labor Partnership, resulting in 18 firms committing to hiring trainees of the partnership at starting wages of \$13-16.50/hour.
- Surveyed 643 residents and 33 businesses in targeted West Denver neighborhoods about their employment status and needs, interests, training credentials and barriers to employment and training to inform programming to better connect local residents to jobs.

FIRST AND LAST MILE CONNECTIONS

This priority area recognizes that the ability to physically get to transit stops is an important part of transit access. In many low-income neighborhoods, lack of sidewalks, inadequate bus stops, safety issues and other infrastructure gaps make accessing bus and rail a challenge. This year, MHC focused on understanding and highlighting funding and financing mechanisms to address these issues, as well as supporting neighborhood-led efforts for direct improvements in communities.

Key Accomplishments:



- Put forward policy recommendation around a 50% income-based discount fare and pass for riders at 150% of the federal poverty level or less, currently under consideration by RTD.
- Adopt recommendations for improvements to RTD Nonprofit Program for fare affordability for launch in January 2016.
- Support successful neighborhood-driven efforts to reinstate a major bus service route in the Westwood neighborhood and hold back harmful service route cuts in Montbello when rail lines open in 2016.
- Published Lifelines: Understanding Travel Patterns and Gaps for Lifeline Routes on Public Transit, which explores new methods to understand which routes are most critical to communities in accessing health, education and other needed services.

2015 STEERING COMMITTEE AND STAFF

Matt Barry, *Gary Community Investments*
Erin Bennett, *9to5 Colorado*
Jennifer Billig, *Mile High Connects*
Debra Bustos, *Urban Land Conservancy*
Lucy Cantwell, *New Belgium Family Foundation*
Rob Chaney, *First Bank*
Beth Conover, *Gates Family Foundation*
Catherine Cox Blair, *Natural Resources Defense Council*
P.J. D'Amico, *The Buck Foundation*
Lisa Davis, *Ford Foundation*
Eric France, *Kaiser Permanente*
Davian Gagne, *Mile High Connects*
Anne Garcia, *Rose Community Foundation*
Tom Gougeon, *Gates Family Foundation*
Felicia Griffin, *FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities*
Patrick Horvath, *The Denver Foundation*

Monica Lyle, *The Colorado Health Foundation*
Shelley Marquez, *Wells Fargo*
Aaron Miripol, *Urban Land Conservancy*
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Desiree Westlund, *FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities*
Zoë Williams, *9to5 Colorado*

2015 GRANTEES

Colorado Cross Disability Coalition
Colorado Jobs With Justice
Community Enterprise
GES LiveWell
Growing Home
PlaceMatters
Montbello Organizing Committee
Rights for All People
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Westwood Unidos



Mile High Connects

Opportunity for all through transit

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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A collaborative ensuring our region's transit system helps people access opportunity by connecting to affordable housing, healthy environments, quality education, and good-paying jobs.