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# Denver Union Station Transit Environment

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# Outline

- I. **Issues and Partnership Overview** – *Evan Dreyer*
- II. **Restoring a Welcoming Transit Environment**  
– *Debra A. Johnson*
- III. **Improving Safety** – *Armando Saldate*
- IV. **Public Health Approaches to Community Wellbeing**  
– *Bob McDonald*

# Overview:

## Addressing Challenges Collaboratively

Our priority is to restore a welcoming environment and support the safety and security of travelers, employees, and everyone who visits, lives or works near Denver Union Station (DUS).

It takes a collaborative and comprehensive approach from everyone, including the community, to prevent crime and protect people.

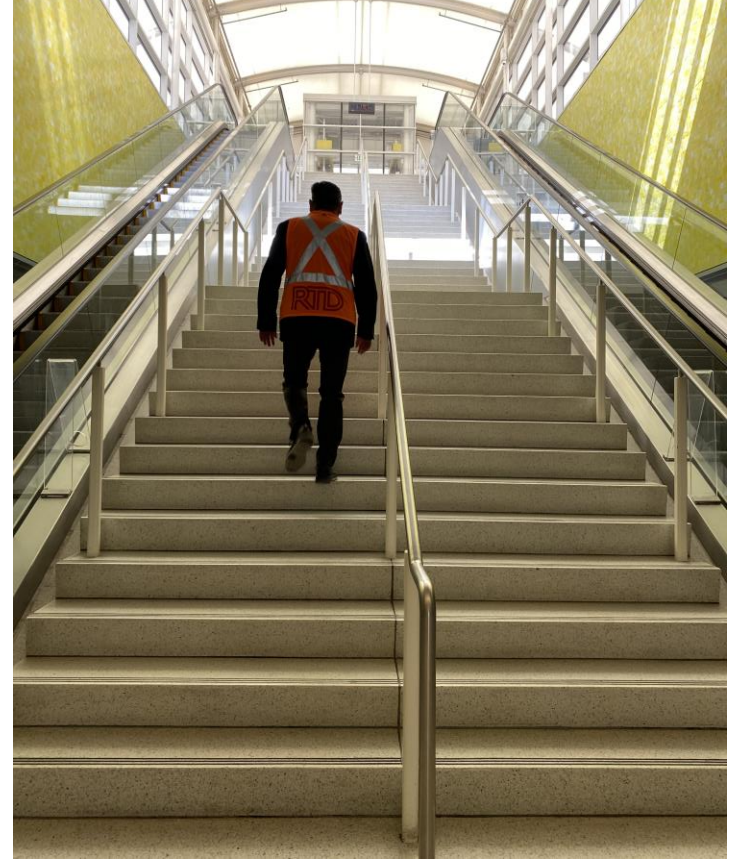
The City and RTD have and will continue to partner to address the challenges in and around DUS. This includes:

- Weekly meetings
- Adding resources at all levels
- Employing new crime prevention strategies
- Strengthening enforcement

# Overview: Our Approach

## Firm Compassion

- Support people in need of housing or health services
- Divert those who are willing to accept help
- Offer services and treatment to those who enter the criminal justice system



# Overview: Our Strategies

## Outreach

- Deploy police community outreach teams and partner organizations to enhance intervention efforts
- Deploy mental health clinicians, RTD Homeless Outreach Coordinator, and additional homelessness and addiction resources

## Education

- Actively listen to community concerns & provide regular updates on changes
- Add RTD signage and floor decals to encourage movement, discourage loitering, and identify prohibited activities in terminal areas

## Enforcement

- Have increased police presence at DUS campus, including sworn RTD transit police officers, Denver Police Officers, Denver Sheriff Deputies, and contracted security officers



# Restoring a Welcoming Transit Environment

*Enhancements based on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) analysis*

## Completed or Ongoing

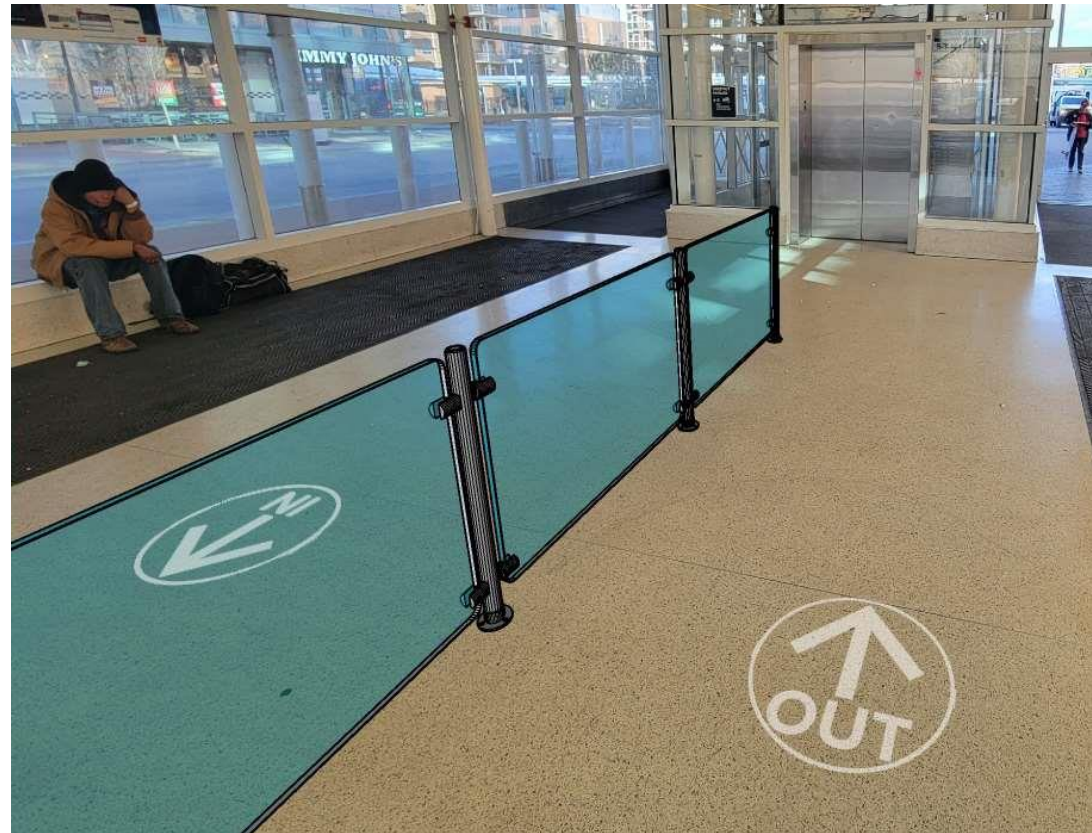
- Cleaning frequency increased
- Pre-recorded audio announcements to discourage unwanted activities
- “ENTER” and “EXIT” labels on doors to facilitate customer flow installed
- Monitors displaying security camera feeds at main entrances to concourse installed
- Inoperative lighting replaced



# Welcoming Transit Environment (cont'd)

## Upcoming Enhancements – Mid-term

- Upgrade interior and exterior lighting
- Restrict access to the area between elevators and glass walls at Wewatta and Chestnut pavilions
- Install signage to encourage pedestrian flow and discourage loitering



# Welcoming Transit Environment (cont'd)

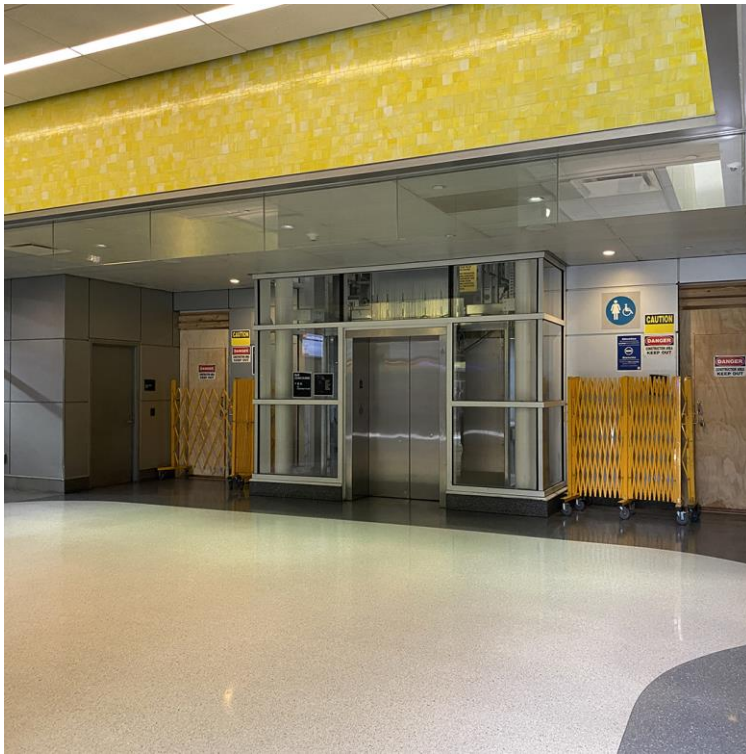
## Upcoming Enhancements – Longer Term

- Convert commuter rail platform stairs to emergency exit only
- Establish paid fare area – only individuals with appropriate fare to access bus concourse:
  - Update fare media
  - Install concourse entry/exit gates
- Install rollup doors at concourse bus ramps to prevent pedestrian access





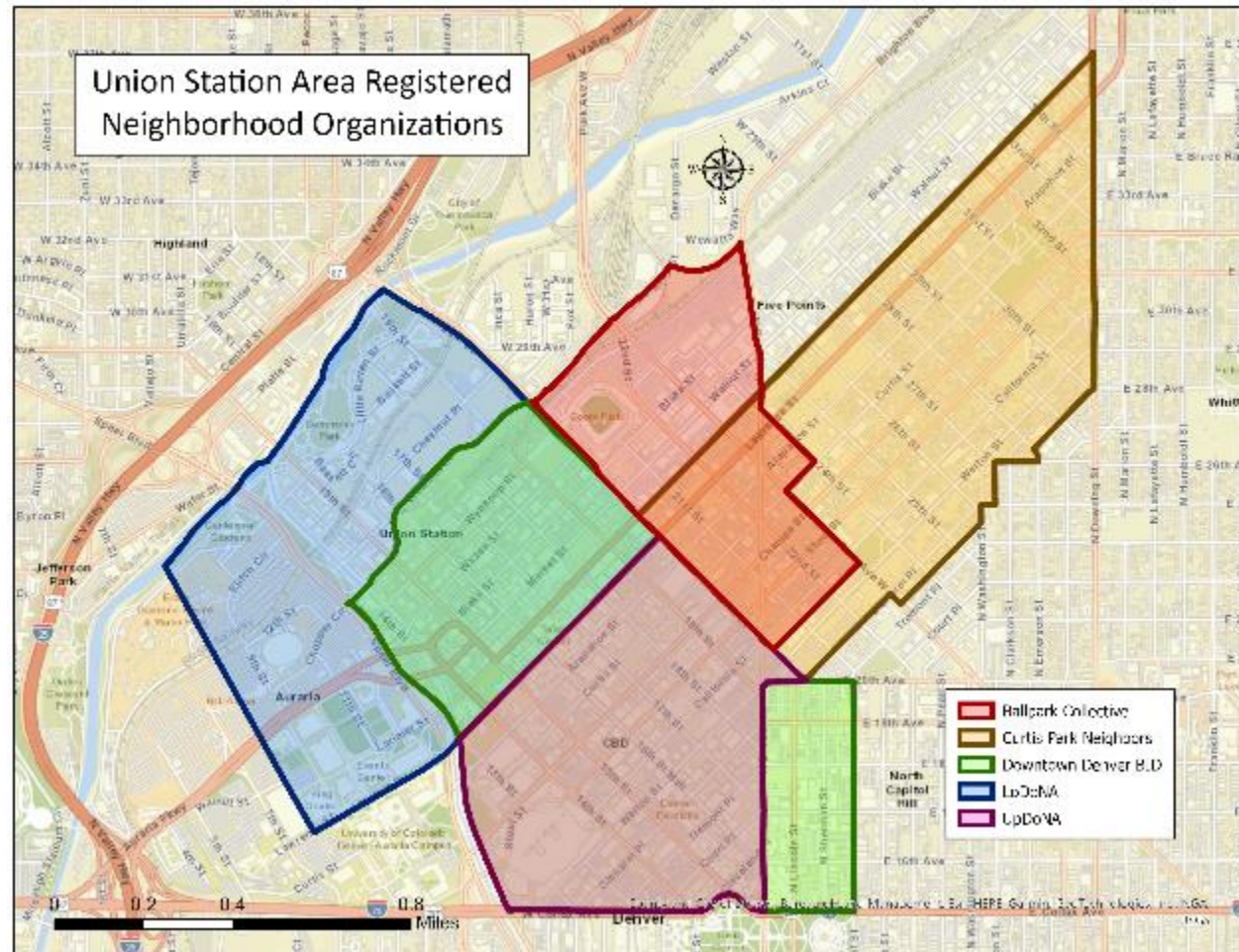
# Bus Concourse Restroom Status



- Area closed due to construction
  - Access closed to Chestnut Pavilion elevator, water fountains, bus bays 11 and 12 and reopened week of Aug. 15
- Concourse access for customers with disabilities via Wewatta Pavilion elevator
- New doors and amenities, including smoke detectors to enhance safety, deter inappropriate behavior

# DUS Outreach and Engagement

- Registered neighborhood organizations
- Downtown Denver businesses
- Special interest councils and committees
- Townhalls
- DUS walking tours
- Impact teams
- Support services (Wellness Winnie; mental health clinicians)



# Looking Ahead: Moving Forward, Together

## Inform

- RTD and City updates on social media and websites
- Media advisories

## Engage

- Meet with stakeholders
- Community events (tours, open houses)

## Empower

- Offer services, neighborhood appreciation events, art displays, other events



# Improving Safety: Personnel & Partnership

## Personnel

- DPD is utilizing proactive units assigned to District 6 and other resources to address safety at DUS
- 2 off-duty officers for a total of 20 hours/day for DUS- and RTD-related calls along the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall

## Partnership

- DPD completed a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) on Denver Union Station for RTD in early 2022
  - A CPTED reviews proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in fear and incidence of crime and improve quality of life/experience.
- The Department of Safety has allocated \$350k in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to RTD to assist with CPTED-related facility updates

# Improving Safety: Operations

## Operations

- DPD has conducted high-visibility patrols and numerous planned operations in 2022 that have resulted in 1,186 arrests
  - From November 2021 – July 2022, there have been a total of 1,470 arrests
- DPD placed area restrictions on repeat offenders, resulting in 229 arrests to-date in 2022
- Illegal Firearm Seizures:
  - Jan-July 2021: 5
  - Jan-July 2022: 17 (240% increase over 2021)

# Improving Safety: Operations

## 2022 Enforcement Operations – Arrests by Month

Date	# Arrests/Citations
January 2022	247
February 2022	341
March 2022	230
April 2022	114
May 2022	115
June 2022	68
July 2022	71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,186* (192% increase over 2021)</b>

*\*Of the 1,186 arrests, 279 were for Possession of Drug Paraphernalia & 136 were for Drug Offenses*

# Improving Safety: Looking Ahead

## Ongoing Safety-Led Outreach

- DPD's Outreach Case Coordinators
- District 6 Community Resource Officers
- Co-Responders\*
- Partnerships with the Solutions Center and other local service providers

\* 34 Clinicians from Mental Health Centers of Denver (MHCD) are assigned to DPD

## Next Steps

- Continue a uniform presence, both on-duty and off-duty
- Continue proactive outreach
- Support CPTED updates through allocated ARPA funds
- Continue to engage and work with community partnerships, including the Downtown Denver Partnership, local businesses, and hotel leadership
- Monitor the data and environment as colder weather approaches



# Public Health Approaches to Community Wellbeing

## Wellness Winnie

Denver's behavioral health mobile unit offering support, assistance, resources to those in need, where they are

## Substance Use Navigators (SUN)

Partners substance use navigators with first responders to engage people with substance misuse needs with the goal of them accepting services and treatment

## Support Team Assisted Response (STAR)

Deploys an Emergency Medical Technician and Behavioral Health Clinician to engage individuals experiencing crises related to mental health issues, poverty, homelessness, and substance misuse

## Early Intervention Team (EIT; HOST)

Front-line team and first point of contact with encampments to deliver a wide variety of referrals to services





# Wellness Winnie: Denver Union Station

- April through August
- Every Wednesday 9 a.m. – noon
- Many meetings with RTD and other city partners to identify best location to be safe and accessible
- Closed small stretch of street between two terminal entrances and bagged meters
- Joint effort between DDPHE, RTD, HOST to engage neighbors



# Wellness Winnie: Denver Union Station

Site service visits (# of individuals engaged; unique + repeats)	726
Peer support & navigation - <b>unique and repeat</b> # of individuals who accepted care management and connections to resources to meet their needs; <i>accepting resources intended to improve care and reduce barriers is the first step toward accepting clinical care.</i>	165
Peer support & navigation - <b>unique</b> # of individuals who accepted care management and connections to resources to meet their needs	139
Narcan kits provided with training	13
Transportation vouchers (taxi and bus) provided to connect individuals with services and resources	13

Represents 16 consecutive Wednesdays, April 13-July 27

# Substance Use Navigators: Denver Union Station Area June 2022

Engagement at Denver Union Station involves canvassing and responding with DPD officers with the Community Outreach Team (COT) and Focus Area Outreach (FAO).

- 98 contacts made (unique + repeat)
- Wide range of contact experiences:
  - Sleeping in the terminal to keep warm, sleeping on a bench in public to feel safe
  - Wanted info on food/housing, needed clothes and hydration packages
  - Requested info on behavioral health treatment, substance use treatment
- Direct connections:
  - Denver Health for MAT
  - Stout Street for medical needs

# Support Team Assisted Response (STAR)

- Person-centric mobile crisis response
- Serves those experiencing problems related to mental health, depression, poverty, homelessness, and/or substance misuse issues
- **Not a substitute for a public safety response**
- 4 units available for dispatch: 1 paramedic & 1 behavioral health clinician
  - Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
  - Dispatched via 9-1-1
  - 5th unit planned to deploy fall of 2022
  - Dispatched to Denver Union Station area 26 times in 2022



# Early Intervention Team (EIT)

EIT Outcomes at Denver Union Station during Wellness Winnie Wednesdays	5/11/2022-8/3/2022
Benefits discussed	94
Benefits obtained	13
Medical referrals	12
Harm reduction services provided	18
Referral/reconnection to previous case managers	20
Legal services connection/outreach court	11
Shelter discussed	51
EIT program enrollment	13
Enrollment into housing waitlists	18
Reunification completed	4
Total # of unique adults contacted at DUS	146

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# Q & A