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County seeks your thoughts on pros, cons of local transit

By Wendy Holmes
YourHub Contributor

If you knew your ideas would be included in the county's transportation master plan update, would you want to contribute? There are easy, convenient and impactful ways to contribute your ideas.

Speak out online: Give your input at douglas.co.us/2040-transportation-master-plan. Use our public survey and select your top three priorities for improving transportation in Douglas County. Tell us which location(s) are in the greatest need of improvements. Share comments regarding the existing transportation system. You can subscribe to receive updates on the planning process.

Speak out in person: Join your neighbors and hear directly from county transportation planners. The first two community meetings are scheduled May 8 in Highlands Ranch and May 9 in Roxborough. A meeting in Parker will be announced soon.

The 2040 Transportation Master Plan will define a long-term vision for the county's transportation system that offers more choices for how you travel within Douglas County.

"Your life is full, and your discretionary time is limited, which is why we're offering three different ways to engage in this process, including two from the convenience of your home or office," said Douglas County Commissioner and board vice chair Roger Partridge.

"We hope we have a record number of voices on what is a key element of our long-range planning," he added.

Wendy Holmes is the director of public affairs for Douglas County.



Ian Bernstein, founder of Sphero in Boulder, visits kindergartners at STEM School Highlands Ranch. *Provided by Kaitlyn Gipple*

Sphero founder visits STEM School students

By Kaitlyn Gipple
YourHub Contributor

Ian Bernstein, the founder of several robotics companies including Sphero in Boulder, isn't too busy to inspire students.

He recently visited STEM School Highlands Ranch to prepare kindergartners for their upcoming invention presentations to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Bernstein began his visit by sharing the prototype for his newest invention, the Misty robot, scheduled to hit the market this year.

"I started inventing at 11 years old," he said. "Along the way, you go through many prototypes and face a lot of problems. That's why they're just prototypes!"

One of the robots that Bernstein invented, called the BB-8, is used daily by STEM School kindergartners learning coding.

While signing his name on the students' class robots, Bernstein explained the invention process for the BB-8.

"Even for this robot, I went through many prototypes. Don't be discouraged. This one here is probably prototype 100."

Students showed Bernstein

their inventions, including an umbrella with heaters to help keep kids from getting sick, an elephant called "Peanut" who picks up a child's toys, and a sound-proof helmet to keep a student's cat calm during thunderstorms.

Teacher Kelly Thatcher was impressed with the students' fearless determination, so she invited Bernstein to visit the school as a way to encourage students to never give up on their inventions.

Student Greyson Graff was glad to hear that even professional inventors hit bumps in the road.

"It was good to have an inventor in class because now I know how to make a robot," Greyson said. "You have to work really hard."

Not only did Bernstein inspire the students with their projects, but he also asked for their input on his invention. "What would you want the robot to be able to do for you?" he asked. It's sure to be a lesson the students remember.

Kaitlyn Gipple is a communications and engagement manager at STEM School Highlands Ranch.

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