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Gold Line EIS Contact Report

Date of contact: 10/26/06
Contact initiated by: Representative Jerry Frangas
Contact method: Presentation/Q&A at Berkeley Community Church with members of the Berkely/Regis community.
Attendees: 90
Purpose: To share information on the alternate alignments and to allow the public a forum to voice concerns and give their feedback to RTD.

Meeting Summary/Key Issues

Liz Telford began by explaining an overview of the EIS process and why RTD is required to look at alternate alignments. Don Ulrich then went over how the alternate alignments were selected. The public then voiced their concerns about the alternate alignments. The vast majority voiced opposition to the Lowell routes and support of the BNSF/UP route. There was minimal support for a Harlan or Sheridan route.

Specific Comments:

- If the light rail goes down 38th Ave., how much of the street is taken? (A: No properties would be taken. Parking and one lane each way may be acquired.)
- What happens to bus on 38th? Would service be reduced? (A: Adjusted to meet new needs.)
- Go with street car. It can make a 90-degree turn and has less impacts.
- Has there ever been a study on whether there is a real need for transit from Wheat Ridge to Downtown? Denver is not a big city. We don't need mass transit.
- We support transit. But we see all pain and no gain with arterial routes.
- The proposed arterial routes provide service to suburbs, but little to North Denver. This is just to benefit the suburbs and businesses downtown. I don't see this as an advantage to Northwest Denver.
- Why was FasTracks approved without a contract with railroads? This is a bait and switch. RTD should have known the railroad's position before hand. Put you energy in getting a deal with the railroad instead of looking at these alternate alignments.
- Parking on 38th is a concern. With not enough parking at stations, won't people begin to park on our neighborhood streets?
- How did we get to this point (from the FasTracks railroad route to looking at street routes)? We voted for the railroad route. Why can't RTD use eminent domain over railroads?

Please forward all completed forms to:

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- Business owner on Lowell Blvd owns a Day Spa: How loud will this be?
- You will ruin me as a business owner if you put the Gold Line on Lowell.
- You should publish comments for the public to see. The contact information for the decision makers should also be posted online. (*NOTE: RTD Board Members contact information is posted on the RTD website at www.rtd-denver.com*)
- RTD made a commitment to the neighborhoods through FasTracks. The city should respect that. I never would have voted to have my front yard cut up by a train. You have to demonstrate respect for promise you made during FasTracks.
- How important is serving Regis? (A: Regis doesn't drive a decision)
- What role does Regis play? Regis representative: We're seeking more information and have no position.
- Harlan seems far more logical than Lowell and has less impacts. Harlan also has activity centers. Why was Harlan eliminated previously? You told us you would look at Harlan and give us more specifics.
- Why was Federal dismissed? It seems much wider than Lowell. (A: Huge property impacts with needed purchases, plus complications of state highway)
- How do you know how it will impact neighborhood and property values? If the Gold Line goes down Lowell, how are property owners compensated for depreciation in property values?
- All of the Lowell Blvd. alternatives should be taken off the table. This is about more than losing landscape and few trees. Crime will increase with transit. Don't waste tax dollars on something like this.
- We don't want this on 38th Ave (or 52nd Ave) either.
- I support the Gold Line route down Sheridan to 52nd. There are a large number of households who need access to transit. Many elderly people can't drive. Buses are a lousy way to travel. Denver will grow and we need this. Poor, disabled and homeless need service.
- I've always been happy with the bus service, but maintenance around bus stops is unacceptable, (trash, graffiti, broken bottles, shelters). There is a lot of loitering (drugs, alcohol). If RTD can't maintain existing stops, how will they maintain new light rail stations?
- Concerned about bus changes impacting bus riders. Changes in service could make for longer travel time.
- We want RTD to listen. But northwest Denver must also hold elected officials accountable. We need to organize and fight this and let our government representatives know that we mean business. We need to put pressure on elected officials.
- Concerned that FasTracks did not properly communicate risks of railroad right of way. If RTD didn't have the foresight to know about the railroads position, they should have told us this wasn't a done deal.
- If you acquire property, when/how does it happen? How do you determine "Fair Market Value"?

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- We want to see studies of Portland/Atlanta and other cities on the affect of transit on property values.
- I have safety concerns about children crossing the streets. What happens to children at schools? Concern about kids crossing 38th and Rail crossings.
- Safety concerns for traffic if Gold Line is in the middle of the street.
- There were a lot of accidents in downtown Denver when they first installed the light rail (ex. Wolf Camera).
- What about noise impacts of bells and horns? Help us understand how loud the bells/horns can be. How often are they required to blow horns? Will you put sound walls on Lowell?
- Focus on the EMU and DMU. Drop the street alignments.
- Impact is much greater than removing trees and lawns. Lowell means a big impact to people and families. Don't just think about the trees.
- Why don't we see a no build alternative? We may want it!
- What happens if both Harlan and Lowell communities don't want it, but RTD does? How is final decision made?
- Outreach to North Denver is inadequate. We want door-to-door, advertising, and a more aggressive effort to educate, inform, and engage the community in North Denver.
- The General Assembly of Colorado has the power to facilitate usage of railroad right of way. They ought to get involved in the negotiations with railroad.
- Any streets that go further west impacts our "Hub of Commerce" and connection to surrounding areas.
- Commerce (trucking + other) on 38th will be negatively impacted by any street alignment.
- Service to disabled/elderly is not a viable excuse to put Gold Line on arterial routes.
- Noise concerns. People a few blocks away wouldn't support this if they knew/ heard the real noise level.
- Just considering alternate alignments is already impacting property values. Get them off the table now.
- North Denver is a "little town in the city" don't sacrifice us for increased travel time from Ward Rd. Arterial routes will ruin the neighborhood character.
- EMU on BN/UP opens up possibility of connection to Boulder, which has significant benefits. Pursue the railroad route.
- I support expansion of access to the neighborhood, but we need real world examples to visualize impacts. RTD should organize walking tour of alignments.
- Impact is crazy and absurd. No on Lowell and in North Denver.

Action Items:

- Add attendees to database
- Update website with property value studies (completed).
- Add additional outreach opportunities to alternate alignment communities

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