

GOLD LINE
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

REPORTER' S TRANSCRIPT

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TEAM MEETING

Pursuant to notice to all parties of interest, the above-entitled matter came on for hearing before the Interested Public, commencing at 6:20 p.m. on August 6, 2008, at the Highlands Masonic Center, 3350 Federal Boulevard, Denver, Colorado, said proceedings having been reported in shorthand by Harriet S. Weisenthal.

Whereupon, the following proceedings were had:

PRESENT:

ANDY MOUNTAIN, GBSM, INC.
DON ULRI CH, CH2M HILL

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1 MR. MOUNTAIN: We're live.

2 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

3 We're about to begin the general presentation tonight.

4 We do have a translation service available. I would

5 like Anna to share a few words with folks. . .

6 (Discussion off the record.)

7 MR. MOUNTAIN: Before we get started, let
8 me just go ahead and quickly recognize the elected
9 officials that we have got in the room, joining us here
10 at the public hearing tonight.

11 We have two here right now, and one is
12 State Representative Jerry Frangas, in the back there.
13 And also the RTD board member representing this
14 district, Juani ta Chacon.

15 And I did hear from Councilman Judy
16 Montero's office. She's planning on being here
17 tonight. I think, according to her aides, she has two,
18 three -- four meetings tonight. She will be here at
19 some point, and we'll recognize her, in absence, right
20 now.

21 Before we get into a little bit of
22 detail, let me just quickly introduce the team. We'll
23 talk a little bit about how this hearing is a little
24 different from some of the public workshops you have
25 done with us, who are familiar faces to many of us, Liz

1 Telford, who is our project manager from RTD, and
2 Donald Ulrich, who is the consultant manager from CH2M
3 Hill.

4 I would represent to you that tonight's
5 hearing is a little bit different than the meetings we
6 have done in the past. Obviously, we don't have the
7 boards surrounding this room. They're all upstairs.
8 Hopefully, you had a chance to get up upstairs and take
9 a look at some of those, and get a look at the
10 documents.

11 Tonight, the other difference for us, is
12 tonight is about gathering comments. Typically, we do
13 get a lot of back and forth, and that sort of thing.
14 But when we publish the Draft Environmental Impact
15 Statement, we're in almost -- I think of it as a quiet
16 period, where we put the document out and our job is to
17 gather as much public input as we can on the document
18 itself.

19 You probably heard some of the folks
20 saying to you, that's a great comment. Make sure you
21 submit it. The conversations you had with them are not
22 comments on the documents. Comments will be able to be
23 submitted multiple ways, which we want to go through at
24 the beginning. Again, we got the computer comment
25 station. Loretta will be over there, if you want to

1 speak to her, comment to her as well. I think -- we do
2 have Megan and Miles upstairs for verbal comments. If
3 you would like to give a verbal comment, preregister,
4 and it's a three-minute limit on verbal comments, that
5 we'll ask everybody to respect, so -- because we've got
6 to have time to help everybody get through that.

7 Flowwise, as far as the evening's
8 structure, Don Ulrich has about a two-minute
9 presentation that's going to summarize the Draft
10 Environmental Impact Statement and the findings and
11 recommendations that we got in it. At this point, we
12 will transition into the public comment portion of the
13 evening, where we'll walk through, again, kind of,
14 everyone who registers for verbal comments has the
15 opportunity. We're here as long as we need for
16 everybody to get their chance, to get their
17 three-minute comments in, verbal comments.

18 You, again, you got until September 1st
19 to submit comments in writing, by mail, the Website
20 that we have got, the computer comment station here, by
21 e-mail, multitude of ways, but tonight is the only
22 verbal option. All of those options are in the handout
23 that you got and on the board at the back.

24 With that, let's get things started.
25 Donald Ulrich is going to walk through kind of a brief

1 summary of the DEIS.

2 MR. ULRICH: Thank you, Andy. And thank
3 you all for being here tonight. This is a great
4 evening for us. This is a very important milestone in
5 the Gold Line project, and we're all glad to be here,
6 and we hope that you will give us comments that we will
7 respond to, as part of the Final Environmental Impact
8 Statement. So, if I can find my clicker. . .

9 What I would like to do is give you a
10 summary of the -- executive summary of -- many of you
11 have seen the documents upstairs. Hopefully some of
12 you have gotten to take a look at it in the library or
13 on the Website. And it's of no surprise, which I
14 said -- or the information I give you, there will be no
15 surprises.

16 What we will discuss tonight, we want to
17 follow the same format that we have in the executive
18 summary of the EIS, where we topically cover the
19 information by questions -- what's the matter? I'm
20 sorry. I can stand over here. I am going to have to
21 read from that one, rather than that one.

22 What we will discuss here tonight is, why
23 is the DEIS written? How would I read the Gold Line
24 DEIS? What is the purpose of the project and what was
25 the study area? What alternatives were considered?

1 What were the results? What kinds of environmental
2 impacts that the project will have? What kinds of
3 transportation impacts the project will have? And how
4 has the public been involved?

5 Okay. Why is the DEIS written? As many
6 of you have heard throughout this workshop process, we
7 are going to have what's called a, "Full Funding Draft
8 Agreement," from the Federal Transit Administration,
9 which is money to the tune of about 50 percent of the
10 capital spent for the project.

11 One of the stipulations of getting that
12 grant is to write Environmental Impact Statements,
13 which discloses impacts and helps with the
14 decision-making in terms of alternatives, and in terms
15 of whether or not to even implement the project.

16 It also serves as a forum for public
17 input, as many of you around the room know, as you have
18 been through all of the different public workshops we
19 have had. We wouldn't necessarily have that without
20 the NEPA process.

21 Okay. How do I read the document? From
22 my opinion and standpoint, I would suggest you read the
23 executive summary, and if there is something in the
24 executive summary that you question, then dive into the
25 detail within the body of the report. And if you even

1 have more questions, then dive into the appendix. And
2 if you have to dive that deep, we probably haven't done
3 a very good job of summarizing the information.

4 The first chapter covers the purpose and
5 need, the study area, how the study area was developed.
6 Chapter 2 discusses all the alternative that we looked
7 at. Originally, there was over 20 alternatives that we
8 pared down to a selected alternative, and multiple,
9 what we call, "design options," which are permutations
10 of an alternative that we have evaluated and shared
11 with you.

12 The third chapter is sort of the meat and
13 potatoes of the DEIS. It is the affected environment
14 and the actual environmental impacts associated with
15 the project. The fourth chapter talks about
16 transportation systems. How many people will ride the
17 project. What is the travel time. What would the
18 effect of the transit system be on surface
19 transportation, and so forth.

20 The fifth chapter is a financial chapter,
21 which talks about trade-offs, comparing the project
22 costs to the project benefits. The sixth chapter is a
23 memorialization of the public comments and agency
24 coordination process that we have all been through.

25 And the last chapter is one of the

1 regulatory chapters. It's called the, "Draft Section
2 4(f)/6(f) Evaluation." It just basically discloses
3 what impacts the project has on parklands or historic
4 features, okay?

5 The purpose of the project you've heard
6 us communicate, over the last two years, is to
7 implement the fixed guideway transit between Denver
8 Union Station and Ward Road. The study area is
9 comprised of four basic sections, starting with the
10 Denver section, the Adams section, the Wheat Ridge
11 section and Arvada section. And we divided it up that
12 way, because it's such a large area that it helped us
13 organize the impact analysis going from east to west.

14 Okay. What alternatives were considered?
15 This project has been going -- not this project, but
16 the analysis of the Gold Line corridor started in
17 earnest with the Major Investment Study, approximately
18 10 years ago. And during that study, we looked at the
19 whole gamut of alternatives, such as highway widening
20 on I-70. We looked at bus rapid transit. We looked at
21 HOV lanes. We looked at commuter rail, and we looked
22 at light rail, with that, the alternatives analysis,
23 and the EIS that has been done.

24 Lastly, we focussed on the fixed
25 guideway. Remember the previous slide said, "Fixed

1 Guideway Transit." This is fixed guideway with
2 commuter rail, streetcar and light rail. We also
3 looked at alternative alignments, railroad alignments
4 and surface street alignments. Those were the
5 alternatives screened.

6 The evaluation factors, as you recall,
7 there were multiple criteria; that they generally fell
8 in one of four buckets. They were mobility criteria:
9 How well does the project work in terms of the
10 transportation feature. Environmental criteria:
11 What's the impact on parkland? What's the impact on
12 land use? What are the impacts on the wetlands, air
13 quality and noise, and so forth? How much community
14 support was there? If an alternative doesn't get any
15 community support, we don't want to consider it, if the
16 intention of this alternative is to improve our
17 communities.

18 Lastly, what is it going to cost, and the
19 inverted pyramid there shows the process. In the fatal
20 flaws analysis, we looked at the, as I recall, 26
21 alternatives, and then nine alternatives, and in Level
22 2, and four in Level 3, two alternatives in Level 4.
23 Then, in Level 5, we refined it to what was called the
24 "Preferred Alternative."

25 Public feedback, since that influenced

1 the decision, certainly, there has been a sort of
2 running total grouped into some of the various topics
3 associated with the alternative selection process. The
4 first is there was a lot of interest in an alignment,
5 meaning where was the project going to go. Was it
6 going to go on surface streets or was it going to go on
7 the railroad alignment. What type of technology was
8 it? Was it diesel technology, electric technology,
9 light rail, streetcar and so forth, and on down the
10 line. As we got later into the project, some of the
11 environmental issues became more significant.

12 As you recall, in the alternative
13 alignments, some of these alternatives were kind of
14 neat, but, frankly, they had more impacts than the
15 railroad alignment, and the performance was
16 comparatively poor. They took longer to get from Ward
17 Road to Denver Union Station. And they had more
18 property acquisitions and more community impact to
19 implement them.

20 So, after the two-year process, we have
21 what's called the "preferred alternative." And the
22 preferred alternative is the 11.2 miles, the first 3
23 1/2 miles from Denver Union Station to Pecos, being
24 shared with the Northwest Rail Project system, seven
25 stations, and we are on budget at \$552 million

1 approximately for the 2014 cost of this project.

2 Okay. How were impacts evaluated? As
3 many of you recall, we talked about the direct impacts,
4 the indirect impacts and the cumulative impacts.

5 Probably the most -- the impacts that people relate to
6 more are the direct impacts. If you build a bridge
7 over the Platte River, what's the impact of building
8 that bridge in terms of the sedimentation in the river
9 and/or disturbance to the vegetation on the bank and so
10 forth.

11 The indirect impacts are a little more
12 arcane and difficult to understand. It's, if I build
13 the project, what happens later. And generally, for
14 this particular project, what happens later if you
15 build a station, you got a transit-oriented development
16 and densification of land use around the stations.

17 And then, lastly, cumulative impacts are
18 what happens if you build this project and everything
19 else that's going on in the Denver metro area. And,
20 so, those are the three categories.

21 So, what are the results? We looked at
22 over 20 resources. Those highlighted in the gold color
23 are significant or have a significant or measurable
24 difference over the no-action alternative, which isn't
25 exactly doing nothing but it's not building this

1 particular project. So, I would like to go through
2 some of those impacts, and we bucketed them into
3 community impact and then more scientific environmental
4 impacts.

5 The first of the community impacts is
6 this big project, 500, almost half a million dollar
7 project, 11 miles long, where there are houses next to
8 the track. In construction, there would be noise,
9 dust, increase in construction traffic, all of these
10 impacts can be mitigated and they're short term.

11 The land-use changes, as we mentioned,
12 that's related to the transit-oriented development.
13 With the project, every single one of the station
14 locations is compatible with local land-use planning,
15 in regards to transit-oriented development, and, you
16 know, that is -- that's really a benefit to this
17 project, frankly.

18 The land acquisition for right-of-way.
19 As you recall, a lot of alignment is outside of the
20 railroad right-of-way. There are no residences that
21 would be acquired for right-of-way and there is up to
22 12 to 23 businesses. Well, that's a pretty big range.
23 Remember, we still have three stations that we are
24 looking at in the vicinity of 38th Avenue, and there's
25 little measurable difference in the number of

1 properties associated with each one of those
2 stationhouses, even though the size of the station is
3 about 9 acres in all cases. And up to 62 acres of
4 nonrailroad property or nongovernment property would be
5 acquired for the project, of which about 50 of that is
6 for stations.

7 Visual changes, again, we're building
8 more track. We're building catenary. We're building
9 stations. And we have trains running on the track, and
10 that is a permanent visual change in the community,
11 so -- the communities that it goes through.

12 Okay. Probably the environmental area
13 that has the most interest in this project is noise.
14 And we used the most conservative worst case noise
15 criteria we could. And, without mitigation, we have
16 approximately 192 residences affected by noise, 10
17 multi-family buildings, one park, one museum, and also
18 eighteen residences would be affected by vibration.

19 The good news is that there would be the
20 implementation of a quiet zone. We can mitigate noise
21 to the point that actual noise in the corridor -- and
22 most of these impacts are in the Arvada section of the
23 study area -- would be mitigated to the point it would
24 actually be quieter than it is now, because it also
25 would affect freight train operation.

1 And, lastly, vibration impacts can be
2 mitigated with what we call, "isolation treatment of
3 the track." Think of a rubber mat or a rubberize
4 material, placed under the rail, to reduce the amount
5 of vibration.

6 Okay. Now, on the scientific side, in
7 many cases, some of this is interesting, but it's very
8 important, in terms of regulatory effect of the
9 project, and how long it will take to implement. We
10 have about 1.2 acres of wetland that will be affected.
11 We have temporary impacts to two trails, one at Clear
12 Creek, one at Ralston Creek. When we build a bridge
13 over the creek, there is a bike trail/pedestrian trail.
14 We'll have to either relocate that trail or -- frankly,
15 relocate the trail. So, that is for obvious reasons.
16 We don't want to drop any construction material on
17 someone as they are going by.

18 Air quality: There's a small positive
19 impact for air quality from implementation of the
20 project. On biological resources: Remember, you saw
21 the picture of the bridge going over the creek. Where
22 the bridge goes over the creek, there is a potential
23 for disturbing an acre of property, which is, given the
24 urban setting of the project, among the more valuable
25 biological habitat.

1 Water resources: Possible erosion and
2 sedimentation during construction which can be
3 mitigated, and really is not of terrible concern.

4 Hazardous materials tend to scare people
5 to death. There are 18 sites that we would, right now,
6 we think that would be influenced by the construction.
7 These sites are not -- really, there's no Love Canals
8 here. These are like leaking underground storage
9 tanks, maybe some contaminated soils. The good news is
10 that it would be remediated as part of this project
11 and, in theory, the study area would be cleaner after
12 the project.

13 Okay. Other environmental issues is the,
14 basically, we have one historic building, which this
15 would be taken or would be acquired or demolished with
16 one of the station options at 38th. If we don't select
17 that station option, there will be no historic impacts
18 of this project, which is phenomenal, frankly, for a
19 project this large.

20 Mineral resources and geology, there is
21 no impact, but there are some geologic conditions that
22 we'll have to design around. Shrinking and swelling
23 soils, for example, may be an issue for foundation. We
24 have some foundational conditions. We're going to have
25 to use rolled piers instead of spread footings, and so

1 forth. Those are project costs, not really
2 environmental issues.

3 Floodplains and hydrology, again, not
4 many issues there. Safety and security: No increase
5 in crime as a result of the Gold Line. The study, as
6 done by the RTD and other transit agencies, suggest
7 that crime around the station area is the same as the
8 crime in the neighborhood that was there before the
9 station was there. So, a low crime neighborhood
10 remains a low crime neighborhood. A higher crime
11 neighborhood will remain a higher crime neighborhoods.

12 Okay. Transportation: The good news is
13 we're faster than the automobile or the bus. In the
14 year 2030, it's 19 minutes from Ward Road to Denver
15 Union Station and 27 minutes via the automobile. We
16 have over 20,000 riders. We would reduce vehicle miles
17 traveled by about 14,550 per day. That's one of the
18 reasons that you have a slight improvement in air
19 quality, and no impact on freight operations because
20 it's a separate commuter rail track. It is not shared
21 with the freight rail track.

22 Some mitigation would be required on the
23 transportation system, where we have stations. There
24 are instances where we would have to add turning lanes
25 or, in up to three cases, traffic signals, to mitigate

1 traffic going in and out of the station. And there are
2 19 at-grade crossings, of which most of these would be
3 improved with additional signalization and devices to
4 allow us to qualify for, No. 1, for a quiet zone, and,
5 No. 2, for safety and in our due diligence planning of
6 the project.

7 Okay. Andy would like to talk about how
8 the public has been involved.

9 MR. MOUNTAIN: I need your clicker.

10 So, Don mentioned Chapter 6 of the Draft
11 Environmental Impact Statement. This summarizes the
12 public outreach effort, of which this public hearing is
13 a piece of that. The table that you have got up there
14 just gives you kind of a quick snapshot of a lot of
15 activity that we have done, which, what you see there,
16 I have done 12 public workshops so far. We have had
17 public hearings. Tonight is No. 13 and tomorrow night
18 is going to be No. 14 for us. And those are the larger
19 forum meetings that we have done like this.

20 Listening sessions: Those are smaller
21 neighborhood meetings or organization meetings, whether
22 it be in a meeting with the planning
23 community/development committee for Sunnyside or
24 Highlands, or you know, different congruous groups or
25 business organizations, that sort of thing, those sorts

1 of meetings with organizations, we've done 35 of those.

2 Issues focus teams: I know I see a lot
3 of familiar faces of folks who have participated on our
4 issue focus teams on this. We have done those on
5 various topics, ranging from alternative alignment
6 technology and station designs, as far as that kind of
7 significance of that sort of thing.

8 In total, as far as physical people
9 showing up, we have had well over 2600 people showing
10 up at the meetings.

11 We're definitely getting in the digital
12 age. I think we're getting more -- many, many more
13 comments via the computer comment station, via the
14 Website, via e-mail, that sort of thing. I think,
15 actually, according to what we're seeing in the verbal
16 comment registration tonight, that trend continues here
17 tonight, in that people are wanting to do some more
18 comments. But the Web has been a great tool for us,
19 with e-mail updates. We have done that sort of thing
20 on that front, just so everyone is on the same page
21 here.

22 The presentation we have got here was
23 uploaded to the Website this afternoon. You can go on
24 there -- it's www.rtdgoldline.com -- you can go there
25 and download this presentation. The boards that you

1 see upstairs, we're getting lower resolution 3Ds of
2 those that we'll have up on the Website by the end of
3 the week. So all of the information that you have got
4 here will all be on the Website as well.

5 We still do have a number of things to
6 do. I mean, the draft EIS is a big milestone, but
7 those of you who have had a chance to review the
8 document, know there are some limits in this, where we
9 got options and we need comments on those options to
10 make a decision.

11 Going into the final EIS, there are
12 obviously railroad negotiations. We propose to put the
13 majority of this alignment in the freight railroad
14 right-of-way, and RTD is negotiating with the
15 railroads, and those negotiations need to continue to
16 gain access to those.

17 The second bullet I want to draw a little
18 bit of attention to, we're conducting preliminary
19 design charrettes. What that really comes down to, the
20 boards that you see upstairs, we have got footprints.
21 Really, it's almost a pretty two-dimensional rendition
22 of kind of the maximum kind of boundaries of where the
23 station may be, what we need to do to further that
24 design.

25 Right now, our engineering is at about 10

1 percent complete, so, we still have a long ways to go
2 on that front. On the kind of more designy elements of
3 it, if you will, what we're going to do is be bringing
4 groups together for each of the stations. Those
5 stations where we have got options, we're going to
6 select an option before we get into design and then
7 begin to talk about the kind of station types and
8 themes and kind of the potential treatments and options
9 to be looking at the -- as different elements that
10 relate to the station platform and parking areas.

11 One of the things that RTD has got a team
12 of folks working on right now is kind of developing
13 some concepts that really help these stations reflect
14 the areas around it, so that we have got some ways to
15 do things cost-effectively, but still have it really
16 reflect the communities that the stations are in.

17 Refine and select mitigation measures.
18 Again, we recommended mitigation measures. We hope we
19 will get some comments on that. A good example of
20 that, I think, is the quiet zones that Don referenced
21 to with relation to noise. We are going to be, you
22 know, obviously recommending quiet zones as they
23 propose the mitigation there. And then, you know, we
24 need a backup plan, but that will be selected as the
25 proposed mitigation option. And we'll be doing that

1 with all of the areas where we have got mitigation
2 required.

3 Quiet zones, again touching on that, RTD
4 is working with the local governments, the process
5 there, just so everybody is on the same page. The
6 local governments actually apply for the quiet zone
7 status. RTD is committed to basically building the
8 line and upgrading intersections on the basis that the
9 local governments will be able to get that applied for,
10 that they don't have to worry about the upgrades. The
11 RTD does the technical side and the local governments
12 submit the paperwork, is the process there.

13 Finally, public involvement during the
14 final EIS process. I think there's going to be a big
15 focus as it relates to the station design piece. I
16 think another piece we're going to begin to get into is
17 kind of the fencing options, that sort of thing.
18 Another one -- where is that -- I have seen previously
19 a lot of community interest in how those look, how they
20 operate, how they function, that sort of thing.

21 So, we will probably be forming some
22 groups around that. In addition, based on comments
23 that we see coming in on the draft EIS, we may form
24 some more groups to address some more specific issues,
25 if we find something that is new and needs more input.

1 We will be doing another public meeting
2 in coordination with the Final Environmental Impact
3 Statement. That's something that's not required as
4 part of the NEPA process that you hear people talk
5 about, with the environmental study that's going on,
6 but we see it as one of the things that we feel is very
7 important.

8 Obviously, you are seeing more tonight on
9 submitting your comments. We document those in the
10 Final Environmental Impact Statement and respond to
11 those in that, and we figure you will probably want to
12 know what the final proposed project is that's being
13 submitted to the Federal Transit Administration. So,
14 we'll do another round of meetings when that's done, by
15 the end of the year.

16 Putting some dates to some of that -- I
17 am not going to hit all of these. I want to draw you
18 attention to a few key points. Again, the public
19 comment on the document. Those are going to be due by
20 September 1st. And, again, you've got the opportunity
21 to make verbal comments tonight.

22 E-mail comments, you can go to the
23 Website and submit comments. You can drop them in the
24 mail, and we do have the computer comment station over
25 there. We'll be doing a lot of preliminary station

1 design work in September, on the time frame, in hopes
2 of getting the final EIS completed by the end of the
3 year.

4 And there is a -- we have heard questions
5 from folks, what's the difference between the draft and
6 the final EIS? What really happens there, three key
7 things that happen between the draft and the final.
8 One is every single one of your comments -- and the
9 local municipalities will be submitting comments --
10 each one of those comments will be included in the
11 Final Environmental Impact Statement, with responses
12 provided to it. That's element No. 1.

13 The second piece is the final decision.
14 Right now, we have got recommendations. That's why
15 it's a draft document. This is a, you know,
16 recommended project or recommended alignment,
17 recommended station location, that sort of thing.
18 We'll be making final decisions that will clearly
19 define what exactly that project is.

20 The best example of that, thinking about
21 this community here, is the 38th Avenue station. If
22 you were upstairs, you saw the handouts and the boards.
23 We have three options for that 38th station right now,
24 before the final EIS. And quite frankly, whatever the
25 station designed charrette, we're going to be picking

1 one of those as the proposed station and selecting the
2 mitigation.

3 I've got to touch on this previous one.
4 Where we've got options for mitigation, we'll be making
5 a final recommendation on what those mitigation options
6 should be. That, again, gets submitted to the Federal
7 Transit Administration, for their approval. It's
8 called a "Record of Decision." We have it here as the
9 "FTA decision." You may hear people call it the,
10 "Record of Decision," or "Record of Documentation."

11 It's, basically, the Federal Transit
12 Administration's seal of approval on a project. Again,
13 we talked about this in some of the previous meetings.
14 We basically have to sign up. We get that Record of
15 Decision. So, we have done all of this analysis. We
16 cannot proceed until -- with some type of design or
17 construction of this project until the Federal Transit
18 Administration approves it, and they approve it with
19 that Record of Decision. So, until that happens, we
20 are kind of at a stopping point.

21 So, when it's going to be built, if it
22 all gets approved, that's kind of like a lot of
23 questions we tend to hear from folks. Will we stay on
24 schedule? Right now, construction beginning in 2011,
25 with the line opening by 2016. So, we're still up in

1 here. We're about three years away from really
2 beginning full construction of the alignment, if it's
3 an approved alignment, if it's approved, with
4 opening -- I guess we're about seven years away from
5 that, seven and a half, something like that.

6 So, comments tonight on the RTD Gold Line
7 kind of things. I'll beat the dead horse. You can
8 submit comments multiple ways: Verbally tonight at the
9 public hearings; you got the computers there; Website;
10 e-mail; regular mail. All of the information is there.
11 Again, it's the rtdgoldline.com Website.
12 Commentsatrtdgoldline.com is the e-mail, and then by
13 mail. It actually goes to the GBSM offices. We
14 forward all of those onto David Beckhouse, who works
15 for the Federal Transit Administration. Then, again,
16 the reminder on the bottom. The comment deadline for
17 the comment period is September 1st.

18 So, we're going to move into the verbal
19 comments. And there you were given a handout, those of
20 you who signed up to submit verbal comments. If you
21 haven't signed up to submit a verbal comment, please go
22 out in the hall. We got a registration table for that.

23 This is just kind of a couple of key
24 highlights from that. First off, again, register
25 outside. What we're going to do, we do need a record

1 of everyone who has signed up to submit a verbal
2 comment. So, we may just have to make sure we get your
3 name and so forth. So, we do need you to do that, and
4 then, we'll be grouping in order that way, so we'll
5 randomly select, within each group -- we'll do groups
6 of 10.

7 And we're going to open the document
8 review room back up. If folks want to be up there, and
9 they haven't signed up to submit a comment yet, we'll
10 make announcements when the next group is being pulled
11 together for verbal comments. That way folks don't
12 feel obligated to just kind of being stuck to their
13 chairs.

14 With the verbal comments this evening,
15 for the hearings, there's a three-minute limit. We
16 have got a little time, so I will actually show you,
17 before we begin the verbal comments, so you will see
18 how that's going to work. Your time cannot be deferred
19 to other people, or anything like that. It's your
20 three minutes to use or not use, and then they expire
21 when you stop using them.

22 Finally, the other piece -- and this is
23 an important one. Obviously, we got the registration
24 upfront. If you can just clearly state your name and
25 city of residence before you begin your comments. And

1 we won't start the three minutes until after that is
2 done. Just state that clearly. And, again, we got a
3 reporter here who's documenting everything, every word,
4 verbatim, that is coming out of your mouths, so -- that
5 will come out of your mouths tonight. I would
6 appreciate it if you can, you know, get that stuff out
7 so she can hear it clearly from you.

8 So, that's, essentially -- let me just
9 point out another good rule. And this is, again,
10 typically, we have done more of a Q and A at the end of
11 public meetings. Again, I mention this about comments
12 coming in. All of the responses to comments are
13 actually written responses that go in the Final
14 Environmental Impact Statement. So, your comments or
15 questions that come in will be responded to that way.
16 We won't actually be verbally responding to things
17 tonight. You will get an official response in that
18 final document.

19 Okay. Here's just a preview, just
20 because I don't want you to be caught off guard,
21 especially that first speaker, as to how the timer goes
22 down. What we have done, just to -- I want to make
23 sure you got a visual cue, as you are speaking. You
24 can kind of time and pace your comments appropriately
25 to get everything in within the three-minute limit.

1 We have got basically just a repeatable
2 presentation here of, I have got a three-minute slide
3 for you, a two-minute slide for you, and a one-minute
4 slide for you, 30 seconds, 15, you're seeing a trend
5 here, yellow, caution. And, you know, typical Colorado
6 drivers, we speed up when we see yellow. So, running
7 out of time there. And I will give you a 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,
8 and then it will turn red. At this point, I would ask
9 you to wrap-up your comments.

10 So, I do appreciate you kind of
11 respecting that time limit for us. Hopefully this
12 gives us kind of a good visual cue as you are speaking.
13 You are able to kind of pace it that way.

14 And, again, some other things. Some
15 folks may have shown up with, you know, written
16 comments that are -- written comments they want to read
17 that may extend longer than the three minutes. What I
18 would encourage you to do, in that situation, is speak
19 the, verbally, the comments and bring your comments,
20 written comments up over to the comment station there,
21 and we'll get the entire thing documented in. It will
22 be included in the Final Environmental Impact
23 Statement, with a response to it.

24 So, with that, I feel like I am kind of
25 drawing names here for winning prizes, but what -- the

1 other thing, I am going to -- I will let you know who
2 is speaking first. The other person, I will just let
3 you know who is going to be next. That way folks kind
4 of have time to prepare.

5 Another thing, don't feel obligated to be
6 stuck here. We're going to open back up the document
7 review room. If you want to be reviewing the documents
8 up there, or hopefully provide information with the
9 documents, that sort of thing, there's folks up there
10 as well.

11 Our first commenter is going to be Dave
12 Brehm. And Keith Dameron is going to be on deck.

13 MR. BREHM: I am Dave Brehm. It's
14 spelled, B-r-e-h-m, and I live in the City and County
15 of Denver.

16 MR. MOUNTAIN: That's actually -- I would
17 remind everybody, again, when you state your name, go
18 ahead and spell it too, so we do get it accurate.

19 MR. BREHM: I am going to focus my
20 comment on what you have said about selecting the
21 station. And the question that I am going to have is
22 what criteria did you use? Who makes that selection?

23 And when you have mentioned that you will
24 make the selection and invite us to tell you what color
25 to make the fences and do the design for it, that

1 aspects. This feels like a real attorney-driven
2 process. You are not going to comment on what I say.
3 I am going to have to read your comments. I'm sure
4 there was -- it would be nice to have a dialogue, to be
5 able to talk to somebody, rather than a microphone,
6 about how this goes, because I do some of this stuff,
7 and, really, talking to people, you end up with a
8 better solution. Not talking to a microphone and
9 reading the hearing statements. So, that's just my
10 commentary on that, kind of the attorney feeling of
11 this very formal process. So, thank you.

12 MR. MOUNTAIN: Thanks, Dave. Keith
13 Dameron and then our next commenter will be John
14 Valerio.

15 Keith, just state your name and spell it
16 before you begin.

17 MR. VALERIO: Good evening.

18 MR. MOUNTAIN: I'll go back to the bin
19 for folks.

20 MR. VALERIO: Good evening. My name is
21 Keith, K-e-i-t-h, Da-m-e-r-o-n. I'm a resident of
22 Denver. And I live about six blocks north northwest of
23 Union Station. And I will be able to see every Gold
24 Line train going in and out, so I have a vested
25 interest.

1 The first comment has to do with the
2 public, or the -- I'm sorry, Pecos East station. I
3 believe that's much preferable to the Pecos West.
4 Several reasons, is the potential for the northwest
5 corridor connect there. And that, to me, is very
6 important, is the connection. That makes transit work,
7 so that's my -- ends that one.

8 I prefer 41st Avenue, was my own opinion,
9 because I think 41st is better. It appears to be
10 better, just from a bus standpoint. 39 -- or the 39
11 bus will be turning onto the curve, it looks like.
12 Just from an engineering standpoint, 41st would seem to
13 be much better for parking and bus technology and
14 everything else. I'm a big fan of 41st Avenue, even
15 though it's slightly farther away from where I live.

16 The last one is, I'm not clear -- I know
17 there's a connection between the Gold Line and east
18 corridor, how they connect to Union Station. And I
19 have been told that Union Station is being built for an
20 eight-car platform, maximum length of a train to go to
21 the airport or the Gold Line, and that the east
22 corridor is proposed for an eight-car train. It was
23 not going to be built that way originally, but it's
24 going to be expanded. My understanding is the Gold
25 Line will also be expandable to eight cars.

1 My concern is, that I believe we're going
2 to reach that capacity much sooner than what the EIS
3 would propose. And I'm concerned that -- why
4 single-level cars is the only thing that I hear talked
5 about. I believe bi-level cars, which practically
6 double the capacity per car, would save a whole ton of
7 money for the number of cars needed and the length of
8 station platforms that would be required, including,
9 potentially, the number of blocked streets.

10 A three-car light rail train downtown
11 takes all of those long blocks. I am trying to picture
12 an eight-car train and how many city streets you
13 blocked if you have to go through, so that doesn't make
14 sense to me, to use single-level cars when a bi-level
15 car would save a whole ton of money and platform
16 building and stuff.

17 And I believe the technology is out
18 there. It may be in Europe, but it's -- I believe the
19 technology is out there. I believe an RFP should at
20 least be tried, to find people to build those cars.
21 And if you don't start with bi-level cars, please,
22 build your catenary, for example, have the poles tall
23 enough that if five years or 10 years after this opens,
24 you go to bi-level cars, at least you won't have to
25 redrill and put in new poles. All you have to do is

1 raise the catenary on the existing pole. That could be
2 planned in advance, for the future of using bi-level
3 cars for additional capacity.

4 Thank you for your time.

5 MR. MOUNTAIN: Thanks, Keith. I got John
6 Valerio. And John, you are the last of the public
7 commenters tonight.

8 What we'll do, with any more verbal
9 comments -- it's 7 o'clock right now, so, we'll take
10 John's comments. And then, again, what we will do is
11 do a wave of comments again at 7:30.

12 And, so, if folks decide they do want to
13 submit verbal comments, even though they haven't spoken
14 now, we will go for another wave at 7:30 for folks, and
15 then we'll take it from there, see where things are
16 going.

17 With that, John, state your name and
18 spell it and give us your city of residence.

19 MR. VALERIO: John Valerio,
20 V-a-l-e-r-i-o; John, J-o-h-n. I am a Sunnyside
21 resident, so I am close to the Inca and 38th station.
22 I would just generally like to say, you know, I support
23 the alignment that you guys have come up with. I think
24 it's been a good process of going through all of the
25 different possible alignments and coming down to this

1 one. I am very pleased to see that you are choosing
2 passenger rail in this corridor rather than, you know,
3 more highway improvements.

4 A question, really, about the quiet
5 zones. I wonder if the yard there, at 38th and Inca,
6 can you impose a quiet zone on the freight railroad
7 operations? It's a switching yard in there. I just
8 wondered if you even have a quiet zone in there.

9 I would like to second Keith's comments
10 about planning for the double decker trains. I know
11 there is an issue around this route -- I guess it's the
12 Boulder route that has bridge issues, but, you know,
13 being able to accommodate more capacity, provide more
14 capacity through double decker trains is important.
15 So, I can see that included in the longer plan.

16 Through movements at Denver Union
17 Station. Again, it's a capacity issue with Denver
18 Union Station. I understand that having a through
19 station, compared to a stub station, which is what
20 we're planning, will really cut the capacity in half,
21 in the peak hour. And we're going to be hitting that
22 peak at some point, probably sooner than later.

23 And, so, I think, what's really needed is
24 to look at how you get from Union Station south,
25 whether it be on a train that would continue south, or

1 switching to another train that would continue south,
2 but the connection to Union Station to go south to
3 Littleton or Castle Rock or Colorado Springs, it's not
4 a good connection, and that should be looked at.

5 Another comment about the 38th and Inca
6 station. I would hope that we could shift the station
7 a little bit north, so it's not right up against 38th
8 but closer to the 39th, 40th, 41st, somewhere in there,
9 in order to allow some room for DOT to happen. If you
10 put the station right at 38th, you are kind of creating
11 a zone that's close to busy roads and makes it a little
12 more difficult to see good development happen.

13 And one small design issue, which -- I've
14 brought this issue up at a number of these types of
15 meetings, and never seen anything being done about it,
16 but I notice that all eight stations on light rail,
17 throughout the Denver metro area, I can't think of one
18 of them that has a clock. I would like to see the
19 design part of this -- it's not such a foreign concept
20 to have a clock at a station, train station.
21 Everybody's got cell phones and watches now -- I just
22 bought a watch yesterday. So, if RTD imposed a \$15
23 cost on me -- if we could have a clock at the station,
24 it really facilitates passenger movement.

25 MR. MOUNTAIN: Thank you for using your

1 three minutes. All right. So, again, what we'll do,
2 with the flow of the evening here, as a matter -- the
3 document review room is upstairs, with copies of the
4 DEIS, board staff, that sort of think. Then what we'll
5 do, at 7:30, we'll take another wave of comments. If
6 folks decide they have got comments, that didn't get a
7 chance to speak yet -- and the computer station over
8 there is another opportunity for you to submit
9 comments.

10 (Recess.)

11 MR. MOUNTAIN: Can I get your attention
12 in the hearing room here?

13 What we are going to do, we did have at
14 least one more individual signed up. What we will do,
15 we'll do it at 8, which is about 13 minutes from now.
16 Anybody else who does want to submit a verbal comment,
17 again, sign up right outside in the hallway. We're
18 going to do that at 8 o'clock. That will be the last
19 round of verbal comments for the evening. If you would
20 like to speak, sign up for before 8.

21 (Recess.)

22 MR. MOUNTAIN: Okay. We're going to
23 begin our final comment for the evening, momentarily.
24 I know he's not in the room yet. Once he gets down
25 here, we will have the final comment, verbally, for the

1 evening.

2 (Discussion off the record.)

3 MR. MOUNTAIN: Okay. So our last
4 commenter for the evening is going to be Keith Howard,
5 and just a reminder for those of you who have talked
6 with us tonight, if you do want to submit comments
7 tomorrow night at the Arvada Center, we will have the
8 same presentation and same information, so you have got
9 an opportunity then as well. So, again, thank you for
10 coming.

11 Keith, if you would, we want to make sure
12 we get the spelling and your city of residence.

13 MR. HOWARD: Keith Howard. That's
14 H-o-w-a-r-d. I am a resident of Denver. I also
15 currently serve as the president of the Sunnyside
16 United Neighbors, Inc. I'm sorry there's not more
17 people to be here and to congratulate the entire Gold
18 Line project team for moving the project to this point,
19 a major effort.

20 I have a few remarks about the 38th
21 Avenue station and it's difficult for us to comment
22 intelligently on the choices between the -- among the
23 three alternatives, and until the bus part of the
24 location issue is settled.

25 I would like you to explain, in some

1 form, whether there's any option of any extended
2 comment period. And if not that, what is the
3 possibility of reevaluating the station location after
4 a bus barn decision is made, so -- the bus barn to the
5 southwest, the bus maintenance facility.

6 The other recommendation I want to raise,
7 and I believe should be addressed in public, is the --
8 I guess it's not part of the NEPA process here, but
9 both the purpose, and Appendix H of the draft, that
10 we've been seeing since last month, describe the
11 public-private partnership -- or mentioned the
12 public-private partnership arrangements and the
13 Public-Private Partnership Pilot Program, which this is
14 planned to be a principal financing and building
15 mechanism for the Gold Line.

16 I think that the public are not
17 well-informed, at this point, as to how these
18 mechanisms work, and what they cost the public,
19 although this may be the only mechanism that such a
20 project can be built, under the present circumstances.
21 The public needs to understand that there are costs to
22 the -- tax revenue costs to the public purse, both by
23 the financing mechanisms of the private entities,
24 applied to raising the money they are going to invest;
25 and also their ability to depreciate the assets that

1 they create over a quite short period of time costs the
2 treasury a large amount of money.

3 And then, additional questions, once they
4 have depreciated it as much as they can, will they be
5 allowed to sell the assets they have, which is the
6 lease, and under that arrangement, to another entity,
7 which will then carry out the entire process again?

8 So, my real point is, here, in my 30
9 remaining seconds, that it's important for the public
10 to understand what the whole costs of the project are.
11 Public-private partnerships are not the cheapest way to
12 fund infrastructure, and we need to be thinking about
13 that. Thank you.

14 MR. MOUNTAIN: Thank you, Keith. So,
15 that wraps up our public hearing tonight. Thank you,
16 again, for those of you who did show up this evening.
17 And, again, the public comment period runs through
18 September 1st. Comments will be accepted on-line,
19 e-mail, regular mail, or tomorrow night's public
20 hearing. I think I have nailed all of them about fifty
21 times for you tonight.

22 So, I did see lots of people using the
23 computer comments. Thank you, folks, for those who
24 submitted that way. We look forward to getting more
25 comments throughout the comment period. Thanks again

1 for the great night.

2 (Whereupon these proceedings were
3 concluded at 8:10 p.m. on August 6, 2008.)

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CERTIFICATE

STATE OF COLORADO) ss
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER)

I, Harriet S. Weisenthal, Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public for the City and County of Denver, State of Colorado, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken in shorthand by me at 3550 Federal Boulevard, Denver, Colorado on the 6th day of August, 2008, and was reduced to computer-aided typewritten form under my supervision;

That the foregoing is a true transcript of the proceedings had; that I am neither attorney nor counsel, nor in any way connected with any attorney or counsel for any of the parties to said action or otherwise interested in the event;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 15th day of August, 2008.
My Commission expires October 15, 2009.

Harriet S. Weisenthal