
Draft Meeting Summary

Agency Working Group (AWG)

Tuesday, August 12, 2008

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

RTD FasTracks - Regional Conference Room
1560 Broadway, 7th Floor, Denver, CO

Meeting Goals and Agenda

This was the eighth Agency Working Group meeting for the Gold Line Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The meeting goals included the following:

- Provide a summary of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Discuss agency questions about the DEIS review/comment process
- Summarize DEIS comments received so far

The meeting's agenda included a presentation and discussion of the results of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The presentation also discussed the DEIS comment process, including the opportunities for the public, local governments and agencies to submit DEIS comments, as well as an overview of the comments received to date.

Preliminary Items

Andy Mountain welcomed the meeting attendees, reviewed the agenda and initiated introductions among the meeting attendees.

Presentation

Don Ulrich, consultant Project Manager, conducted the first portion of the presentation. Don's presentation overviewed the purpose of a DEIS, the chapters contained in the DEIS, the purpose and need of the Gold Line, the alternatives considered, the areas evaluated in the DEIS, and the impacts and mitigation measures of the Preferred Alternative, including impacts to the environment and transportation systems in the corridor.

Andy Mountain, public involvement consultant, then summarized the public involvement process and methods of submitting DEIS comments. He also summarized the upcoming milestones and next steps for the project, followed by an overview of the comments received to date on the DEIS.

The meeting attendees had the following questions/comments following the presentation:

- Margaret Langworthy, United States Army Corps of Engineers, asked when the railroad negotiations would be completed. Liz Telford, RTD project manager, responded that RTD has been meeting with the railroads weekly and that they expect to have the negotiations finalized by the time the Gold Line Final EIS is complete.
- Liz added that RTD received direction from the Federal Railroad Administration requiring them to use a higher decibel level for the Gold Line's horns in the noise analysis. She said that RTD has also begun to discuss what the plan would be if Quiet Zones aren't in place by the time the Gold Line opens, and that the project team will have to develop a back-up plan for mitigating noise impacts in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Liz clarified that sound walls aren't a feasible mitigation for the Gold Line corridor, since the source of the noise impact is horn noise. A sound wall would have too many breaks in it (because of the numerous crossings) and so would not be effective. Additionally, any noise walls would have to be very tall to minimally attenuate the noise and that would add a visual impact to the corridor. As a result, the back-up plan would likely include wayside horns.

- Bill Brunskill, Union Pacific Railroad, asked if the Quiet Zones would include the area between Lowell and Tennyson and whether the Quiet Zones would affect both railroads. Liz Telford responded that RTD is only looking at doing Quiet Zones where there are noise impacts, which is limited to the area west of Lowell. Bill noted that railroad engineers may get confused if some areas are designated as Quiet Zones and others aren't - particularly if there are "pockets" of track that differ from the rest of the corridor.
- Mike Ramsey, Federal Railroad Administration, stated that each intersection would have to incorporate certain safety treatments in order to qualify for a Quiet Zone. Liz Telford added that RTD has committed to completing the basic safety requirements for all railroad crossings and to complete the extra measures required for Quiet Zones in the areas with noise impacts.
- In response to the comment synopsis, Bob Kochevar, City & County of Denver, mentioned that Denver had completed a parking review and study of T-REX that was presented at Railvolution. He offered to share the presentation with the other municipalities and agencies. Bob stated that the study came up with some good parking solutions for neighboring communities around stations.

After asking if there were any further questions or comments, Andy Mountain adjourned the meeting.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

1. Jeanne Shreve Adams County
2. Bob Kochevar City and County of Denver
3. Steve Nguyen City of Wheat Ridge
4. David Heller Denver Regional Council of Governments
5. Dave Beckhouse Federal Transit Administration
6. Mike Ramsey Federal Railroad Administration
7. Will Kerns Jefferson County
8. Bill Brunskill Union Pacific Railroad
9. Margaret Langworthy US Army Corps of Engineers
10. Jody Ostendorf US Environmental Protection Agency
11. Jonathan Spencer RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
12. Liz Telford RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
13. Don Ulrich RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
14. Ashland Vaughn RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
15. Megan Lane RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
16. Andy Mountain RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
17. Terry Ruitter RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
18. Angela Brand RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team
19. Kate Mahoney RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team