



Meeting Summary

Gold Line Local Governments Team

Tuesday, June 20, 2007

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

RTD Headquarters

1600 Blake Street, Denver

Rooms T&D

Meeting Goals and Agenda

The meeting goals were to:

- Review refinements of the alternatives and results of additional evaluation
- Provide an update on the FasTracks Annual Program Evaluation and its influences on the Gold Line
- Discuss the Gold Line Team's recommendations for the Preferred Alternative (PA)
- Gather LGT input on information to be presented at the Public Workshops (June 26 and 27)
- Prepare the LGT for the June 28 Agency Milestone Workshop (Selection of PA), including assessing the level of agency support for recommendations

The meeting agenda included a review of the Preferred Alternative Public Workshop Presentation, a discussion on the PA Recommendation, Agency Program Evaluation and RTD Board Considerations, and an overview of the next steps for the project.

Meeting Handouts

- Meeting Agenda
- Gold Line Preferred Alternative Public Workshop PowerPoint Presentation
- Gold Line Agency Preferred Alternative Selection Comment Form

Preliminary Items

Liz Telford, RTD Project Manager, welcomed the participants and outlined the upcoming milestone schedule, including the public workshops and Board meetings. Julie McKay, Public Involvement consultant, then overviewed the meeting's agenda and goals and had the attendees introduce themselves.

Preferred Alternative PowerPoint Presentation

Don Ulrich, consultant Project Manager, reviewed the slides of the presentation, which included an alternatives update, an overview of the Agency Program Evaluation and RTD Board considerations, an updated Evaluation Matrix and information on the Gold Line Team's Preferred Alternative Recommendation.

LGT representatives had the following comments and questions during the presentation:

- Lorraine Anderson, Arvada City Council, felt that there wasn't sufficient information available on transit technology for the RTD Board to make a decision by July 24th. She asked whether a decision on technology could be postponed until after value engineering. Liz Telford explained that the timing was necessary in order to keep the EIS moving on schedule and to submit an application for the Penta-P program.
- Shelley Cook, City of Arvada, asked if the July 24th decision on technology would be irrevocable, to which Liz Telford explained that nothing in an EIS is final until the Record of Decision. Liz then outlined two potential scenarios that could arise as outcomes of the July 24th Board meeting. In one scenario, the Board could vote to accept the technology recommended by each corridor team as a result of the EIS evaluations conducted to date, which would mean that the Gold Line EIS would move ahead with electric commuter rail as the preferred technology. In the other, the Board could vote to require diesel technology be evaluated in the EIS for all commuter rail corridors. Liz specified that, per the NEPA process, if the Board directs the teams to evaluate diesel, the Gold Line Team would be required to conduct additional analysis on the technology and gather additional public input before diesel commuter rail could be selected as the preferred technology for the Gold Line.
- John Malito, Arvada City Council, asked if capital costs of EMU and DMU are the same, and Don Ulrich responded that the team believes that upfront costs are lower for DMU but the lifecycle costs (capital and operation costs) are lower for EMU.
- Judy Montero, Denver City Council, requested that the project team explain at the public workshops the specifics of why streetcar is being recommended for elimination.
- Kevin Nichols, City of Arvada, asked whether or not it was possible for the RTD Board to mandate DMU and eliminate EMU, or if they would likely request that both technologies be carried in the EIS. Liz Telford explained that due to the NEPA process, the Board would not be able to name diesel as the preferred technology for the Gold Line until the project team has conducted additional evaluations.
- Crissy Fanganello, City of Denver, stated that it's important for the project team to clarify to the public that the Board isn't able to automatically mandate diesel commuter rail. She requested that the project team be explicit about the possible outcomes of the July 24th Board meeting.
- Shelley Cook expressed some concerns about the Board making decisions based on private interest. She added that she believes that private contractors would want the most proven technology and that there are more manufacturers of electric commuter rail than diesel commuter rail.

- Wally Pulliam, RTD Board, asked the group to keep in mind that the July 24th decision is not just Gold Line but is for four corridors. He mentioned that two of those corridors will likely be DMU. Liz Telford then reiterated that the Board's recommendations must work within the context of the EIS process.
- Judy Montero asked about the lifecycle costs of diesel versus electric and whether that is part of criteria considered through the EIS process. Don Ulrich explained that total annual cost is something that's reviewed both in the DEIS and in public private partnership evaluations.
- Larry Schulz, Wheat Ridge City Council, stated that the group must decide whether performance factors outweigh cost factors. Regarding transit technology, he stressed the importance of looking at the system as a whole and not just the Gold Line corridor.
- Lorraine Anderson said that she hopes the RTD Board can recognize that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to transit technology. She stated that while DMU may be good on longer corridors, it's not good for shorter corridors like the Gold Line, which goes through more populated urban environments. Liz Telford mentioned that she feels the lifecycle analysis that was presented to the Board reflects that notion.
- John Malito mentioned his belief that the constituents need to see pros and cons of EMU vs. DMU. He requested that a slide in the PowerPoint presentation contain more detail so that citizens can understand the differences and provide comments. Liz stated that the team could likely accommodate this request through the transit technology station.
- Larry Schulz stated that the potential for future technological developments and innovations for the different technologies should be mentioned to the public. He also asked whether the team's analysis takes into account the rising energy demands and the effect on cost. Liz Telford responded that while escalated energy costs are accounted for, diesel is more difficult to predict than electric.
- Judy Montero said one of the main issues for northwest Denver is the maintenance facility, since the neighborhood will likely host four FasTracks corridors. She encouraged the team to find a way to discuss the issue with the public.
- Shelley Cook asked whether a "canyon effect" – differences in elevation from the tracks to nearby development or topography – is considered when evaluating impacts in the narrower areas of the corridor. Liz explained that localized air quality impacts are evaluated with a hot spot evaluation, but that she wasn't sure if the air quality evaluations are differentiated based on topography. She said that the noise evaluations will take into account distance from track, topography, acceleration and deceleration, and sounding of bells and horns. Don explained that evaluations completed thus far showed that there were no regional air quality violations for

DMU. Shelley asked that the project team look at the narrow areas to determine if there is an effect on noise and vibration.

Discussion of Gold Line Team Preferred Alternative Recommendations

Andy Mountain, consultant Public Involvement manager, overviewed the upcoming public involvement milestone schedule, including the public workshops on June 26th and 27th, the Agency Working Group meeting on June 28th, and the June 29th deadline by which Participating Agencies must submit their formal written comments. Andy Mountain and Julie McKay then facilitated the attendees' input on the Gold Line Team's recommendations for the preferred alternative. Several comments and questions were raised about the recommendations:

- Shelly Cook requested that the project team specifically name EMU as the preferred technology for the Gold Line.
- Bob Manwaring then asked for clarification on whether one of the meeting's purposes was to make a recommendation as a team on the preferred alternative. Liz Telford explained that for the purposes of the Penta-P application, they would need consensus on the general technology mode, alignment and stations.
- Shelley Cook then suggested that the LGT make a formal expression of its technology preference.

Julie McKay asked the attendees to first provide input on several specific Gold Line Team recommendations. The comments were as follows:

- In response to Recommendation #4, "The Project Team recommends eliminating Alternative 7BB (Streetcar on 38th to Harlan alignment) from further study":
 - The City of Arvada supported this recommendation because they felt the streetcar alternative is not cost effective and doesn't perform as well. They said that the alternative doesn't support vision of FasTracks and is not what public voted for. It was also mentioned that the City of Arvada had spent extensive time planning the TOD for the commuter rail alternative and that streetcar does not support those plans.
 - The City and County of Denver expressed support of this recommendation but stated that it will be important for RTD to continue to look at transit improvements on 38th Avenue in the future.
 - The City of Wheat Ridge expressed support of this recommendation but said that it is important to continue to look at 38th Avenue as a potential future supplement to the FasTracks system.

- Jefferson County wanted to check with its Board, but said that it's a safe assumption that they would support the elimination of streetcar.
- Adams County expressed support for eliminating streetcar.
- In response to Recommendation #1, "The project recommends that the alignment of the Locally Preferred Alternative should be in the BN/UP Railroad Alignment":
 - Adams County expressed support of this alignment
 - Jefferson County wanted to double check with its Board, but felt that they would support the railroad alignment.
 - The City of Wheat Ridge stated definite support of commuter rail on this alignment because they felt it provides the most practical route with minimized impacts and that it meets the vision of FasTracks.
 - The City and County of Denver expressed support of commuter rail on the BNSF/UP railroad alignment.
 - The City of Arvada stated that they support commuter rail on the recommended alignment because it fits the purpose and need and is a reaffirmation of FasTracks vote by the city's constituents. John Malito also asked that the project team better define what commuter rail is, and the differences between EMU and DMU, for citizens at the public meetings.
- Julie McKay then asked if there were any additional technology comments that the attendees would like to mention for the Board or if there was a preference for a particular technology.
 - The City of Arvada expressed support for EMU as the preferred technology because they feel more closely resembles what was shown to people in the FasTracks election and because they believe that the life-cycle costs would be less than DMU. They added that they believe EMU is quieter, cleaner and better lends itself to the possibility of renewable energy sources. They also stated that the city doesn't want DMU because the Gold Line has shorter distance between stations and they are concerned about the noise impacts.
 - The City and County of Denver asked that in regards to technology the Board respect the EIS process and what had emerged as a result of that process, specifically that there has been a lot of interest in EMU within the communities of the Gold Line.
 - The City of Wheat Ridge expressed support of EMU because they think it is what the public has been anticipating and because it's cleaner and quieter. They added that the jurisdictions along Gold Line are solidly united in supporting EMU technology.

- Jefferson County stated that they believe their Board would be supportive of the group and that they want to honor the vote from 2004 as closely as possible.
- Adams County preferred to defer comments until further Board discussion. They added that it's important for Adams County to have a more regional approach since they have two corridors that are likely to be DMU in their county.
- John Malito, Arvada City Council, stated that he feels that the project team should ask the public for specific input on DMU vs. EMU, and he requested that the comment form for the public include wording to that effect.
- Julie McKay confirmed that, based on the feedback thus far, the project team could accurately communicate the LGT's support of eliminating streetcar and support of the preferred alternative of commuter rail on BNSF/UP alignment
- Larry Schultz commented that a change in course for the Gold Line (e.g. adding diesel) would have political implications. He emphasized the importance of stabilizing the communities in their support of FasTracks by avoiding surprises. He also mentioned the public's concerns about double-decker commuter trains and their visual and noise impacts.
- Liz Telford asked if there was general consensus among the attendees that no one technology fits all situations, rather that there are multiple factors to be considered in determining what technology works in what corridor.
- Lorraine Anderson pointed out that the FasTracks vote and the EIS process both identified electric technology for the Gold Line and that she feels the Board must find a way to deliver what they promised to prove the credibility of the process to the public. She added that DMU should be a last resort.
- Larry Schulz added that the Board must consider social costs, not just monetary costs, when deciding on technology.
- Julie McKay asked Jeanne Shreve if Adams County would be able to make a statement in support of EMU for the Gold Line specifically. Jeanne responded that the county needs clarity on differences between two technologies to make an informed decision. She said that while Adams County can relay to the RTD Board that one technology does not fit all corridors, the county could not at this point say that they are only in support of EMU.
- The City of Arvada asked if there was general consensus among the LGT to support EMU. Crissy Fanganello, City of Denver, responded that she thinks there is consensus that the Board should respect the EIS process, which has resulted in the elimination of DMU and has shown strong public support of EMU.

- Jeanne Shreve stated that while the LGT had identified EMU as preferred technology, there was always a possibility of DMU being re-evaluated, pending further Board discussions.
- Lorraine Anderson stated that she felt it's important for the LGT to have a solid preference on technology. She said that it's crucial that the Board doesn't get the idea that the LGT doesn't care about technology. John Malito expressed concerns that without a unified statement from the LGT, the group would simply be allowing the Board to decide. He suggested that the individual municipalities that support EMU technology submit a joint statement to the Board.
- Crissy Fanganello reiterated that the City and County of Denver wants to express its support of both the EIS processes and the public preferences revealed thus far in each corridor. She asked that the Board to pay attention to the input and decisions that were made as a result of the EIS process.
- Liz Telford asked that the LGT allow the project team to present the information to the public and get the input necessary to confirm a preferred alternative. She stated that if certain municipalities wished to submit a joint statement with their technology preferences, they would be welcome to do so. Don Ulrich encouraged all of the participating agencies to submit their official comments by the June 29th deadline.
- After asking if there were any further comments, July McKay adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Participants

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| 1. Jeanne Shreve | Adams County |
| 2. Kevin Nichols | City of Arvada |
| 3. Bob Manwaring | City of Arvada |
| 4. Shelley Cook | City of Arvada |
| 5. Lorraine Anderson | City of Arvada, City Council |
| 6. John Malito | City of Arvada, City Council |
| 7. Judy Montero | City and County of Denver, City Council |
| 8. Bob Kochevar | City and County of Denver |
| 9. Karen Good | City and County of Denver |
| 10. Crissy Fanganello | City and County of Denver |
| 11. David Heller | DRCOG |
| 12. Kate Newman | Jefferson County |
| 13. Larry Schulz | City of Wheat Ridge, City Council |
| 14. Steve Nguyen | City of Wheat Ridge |
| 15. Sally Payne | City of Wheat Ridge |
| 16. Wally Pulliam | RTD Board, District L |
| 17. Liz Telford | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 18. Don Ulrich | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 19. Julie McKay | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 20. Jonathan Spencer | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 21. Chris Proud | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 22. Angela Brand | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 23. Ashland Vaughn | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 24. Andy Mountain | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 25. Megan Lane | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 26. Genevieve Hutchison | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 27. Saundra Dowling | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 28. Terry Ruitter | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 29. Kevin Flynn | Rocky Mountain News |