

## **Meeting Summary Agency Working Group**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2009**

**9:30 a.m.**

**RTD FasTracks – Regional Conference Room  
1560 Broadway, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Denver, CO 80202**

### **Meeting Goals and Agenda**

This was a joint Agency Working Group (AWG) meeting for the Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility (CRMF), Gold Line, North Metro, and East Corridor projects. The meeting goals included the following:

- Provide agencies with an update on the environmental process for the Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility
- Provide the agencies with next steps in terms of integration of the impact analyses and comments into the FEIS documents for the corridors
- Summarize the preliminary impacts RTD anticipates to be discussed in the CRMF Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The meeting's agenda included a presentation and discussion of the SEA process. Andy Mountain, Gold Line and CRMF Public Involvement Team Lead, provided a brief update on the AWG's role in the SEA process and the relationship between the CRMF SEA and environmental documents for the four other FasTracks commuter rail corridors (Gold Line, East Corridor, Northwest Rail and North Metro).

Meeting attendees then went around the table to introduce themselves prior to the presentation.

### **Presentation**

Rick Pilgrim, CRMF Consultant Project Manager, initiated the presentation by providing an overview of the environmental process for the CRMF, including project history, the CRMF preferred site, Fox North, and the project study area. Rick also outlined the functions of the maintenance facility and noted the commuter rail corridors served by the facility.

Rick described how the SEA will be integrated into the Gold Line and East Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statements and the associated schedules.

Rick then outlined how the SEA and related public comments will be integrated into the Gold Line and East Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents. Liz Telford, Regional Transportation District (RTD) Gold Line Project Manager and Manager of Corridor Planning-Environmental, mentioned that the 30-day SEA comment period will include a public meeting to present the document and gather public input.

Rick then summarized the Alternatives Analysis process that led to the selection of the Fox North site as the Preferred Alternative for the CRMF. This included a summary of the sites considered, the fall 2008 FasTracks peer-review process and the fall 2008 selection of the preferred alignment for the Gold Line (the Gold Line Draft EIS (DEIS) included two alignment options for the Preferred Alternative).

Don Ulrich, Gold Line Consultant Project Manager, summarized the Alternatives Analysis process that led to the selection of the shared alignment between Denver Union Station (DUS) and Pecos Street, which is also included in the Preferred Alternative for the CRMF. The assessment of the five alignment options were discussed in greater detail, including cost, property acquisition and other impacts. Don summarized that the selected alignment was recommended due to lower cost, less environmental impacts and public support.

Don and Chris Proud, CRMF Consultant Team, then used an aerial map depicting the shared alignment and CRMF, to summarize the impacts and mitigation measures related to the shared alignment and maintenance facility.

Chris described the boundaries of the CRMF Fox North site. He noted that the surrounding area is zoned primarily industrial and, therefore, the Fox North site has fewer impacts because of the existing land use. Chris described the traffic impacts anticipated to be identified in the SEA (impacts to making a left turn from southbound Fox Street onto eastbound 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and how the proposed mitigation measures (restriping) would actually improve the operations of the intersection from their current condition.

Property Acquisition impacts of CRMF and shared alignment construction were also summarized by Chris, noting that the all but one business on the Fox North site would be impacted by the shared alignment and that the remaining business would be impacted by the maintenance facility. Regarding the economic impacts of the business relocations, Chris clarified that the maintenance facility would actually add more jobs to the site than would be displaced by the relocations.

At this time two Agency members asked the following questions:

- Dave Beckhouse, Federal Transportation Administration, asked for clarification on BNSF access to a small triangular parcel used for the TOFC facility.
  - Chris stated that BNSF will still be able to access the area in question and TOFC operations will continue without impact.
- Michael Ramsey, Federal Railroad Administration asked how the 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue grade crossing at the south end of the Fox North site would be impacted.
  - Don explained that the current 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue crossing is grade-separated (48<sup>th</sup> goes over the rail tracks) and would remain that way.

Don continued the review of the Gold Line and Northwest Rail shared alignment north of the facility and pointed out the visual change related to a new structure to provide clearance over the freight yards. Chris added that no water, air or biology impacts were identified in the SEA study area. Liz noted that a two-tiered air quality analysis was conducted for the SEA, which was similar to the study done for Denver Union Station.

Andy then summarized the January 22 public meeting to gather input on the Fox North site to CRMF, noting that there was overwhelming support for the site. The community did have questions about how the site may impact on 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but few other resources were identified as areas of concern.

Andy wrapped up the presentation by summarizing the schedule for the SEA and other Commuter Rail NEPA documents.

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

- Jody Ostendorf, US Environmental Protection Agency, wanted to know why the SEA is being integrated into the corridor EIS documents and asked about the cost associated with that action.
  - Dave Beckhouse explained that the approach came as direction from the FTA headquarters in Washington, DC.
  - Chris and Liz explained that there shouldn't be much extra cost or work associated with the SEA for the other commuter rail corridors because much of the analysis was already completed as part of the Gold Line EIS.

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

### Meeting Participants

- |     |                      |                                       |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Lisa Streisfeld      | Colorado Department of Transportation |
| 2.  | Michael Ramsey       | Federal Railroad Administration       |
| 3.  | Dave Beckhouse       | Federal Transit Administration        |
| 4.  | Jody Ostendorf       | US Environmental Protection Agency    |
| 5.  | Nadine Lee           | RTD FasTracks                         |
| 6.  | Liz Telford          | RTD FasTracks                         |
| 7.  | Bob Boot             | RTD FasTracks                         |
| 8.  | Rick Pilgrim         | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |
| 9.  | Suzanne Arkle-Wilson | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |
| 10. | Don Ulrich           | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |
| 11. | Chris Proud          | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |
| 12. | Andy Mountain        | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |
| 13. | Miles Graham         | RTD FasTracks Consultant Team         |