



North Metro EIS – DEIS Public Hearing Summary December 9 & 10, 2009

This document provides a qualitative summary of the public comments drawn from the North Metro Draft EIS Public Hearings held on Dec. 9 and 10, 2009 and outreach efforts associated with encouraging the public to review the DEIS document and provide comment prior to the end of the comment period end date - Jan. 15, 2010.

Wednesday, December 9
Public Open House/Public Hearing
Adams 12 Conference Center
Attendees = 46
Written Comments Received = 6
Verbal Comments Recorded = 8

Thursday, December 10
Public Open House/Public Hearing
Adams City High School
Attendees = 37
Written Comments Received = 3
Verbal Comments Recorded = 18

Purpose of Meeting: To provide an overview of the environmental evaluation findings and gather public feedback on the alternatives evaluation.

Public Hearing Format: The public hearings were held from 6:00 pm to 8:00 p.m. and organized in an open house format. One hour was allotted to the open house and featured display boards describing the status of the project and significant features included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Specific display stations were organized to convey a summary of the DEIS and organized in the following order: Executive Summary, Alternative Analysis & Evaluation, Transportation Characteristics and Impacts, Environmental Findings, and Public Involvement. Maps depicting the full length of the corridor were also displayed on tables throughout the room and included such features as the preferred alignment, proposed station locations, proposed placement of noise walls and significant environmental features identified for analysis.

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to the Public Hearing proceedings and designed as a venue for the public to submit formal verbal comments and concerns relative to the DEIS document. Participants wishing to submit their verbal comments were encouraged to sign up to speak and were restricted to a maximum time limit of three minutes. A court reporter was present to record and document the entire hearing proceedings.

Ways to Comment: The project team encouraged participants to comment and provided the following opportunities during the meeting and continued to accept comments through Friday, Jan. 15, 2010. Comment sheets and computer stations were made available during the meetings for the public to submit comments online; otherwise, they could submit comments the following ways:

- Submit a written comment form to a project team member or drop in comment boxes provided
- Submit an electronic comment form at computer stations provided at meeting
- Provide comments verbally to the court reporter during the public hearing or in private
- Submit comment online at www.RTD-FasTracks.com (click on North Metro Corridor)
- Send e-mail to comments@rtdnorthmeto.com
- Mail comments to: David Beckhouse
Federal Transit Administration, Region 8
c/o North Metro Project Team
999 18th Street, Suite 900
Denver, CO 80202



- Call project hotline: (303) 299-2000 (follow prompts to North Metro)
- Submit comments via fax: (303) 693-7738

Presentation: The project team provided an overview of the project process to date, an overview of the environmental process and findings included in the following presentation topics were used to solicit input from meeting participants:

- Overview of the Alternatives and Station Locations
- Overview of the recommended technology
- Overview of Environmental Findings
- Next Steps

Public Hearing: The project team reminded meeting participants that in order to provide formal verbal comments they need to have signed up to speak and that comments would be taken in the order of the names entered on the sign-up sheet. Speakers were limited to three minutes and asked to respect the maximum time limit.

The project team concluded the hearing with a reminder that comments would be accepted until Jan. 15, 2010 and that all comments would be addressed in the Final EIS and made available for public review in early Summer 2010.

What We Heard:

Below is a brief summary of what was heard during the DEIS 45-day comment period. Comments were submitted through the website, recorded by a court reporter during the public hearing proceedings, comments sheets provided at the public hearing, and emails sent to the project team. Detailed comments will be provided and addressed in the FEIS.

Topic	Summary
Air Quality	Concerns regarding health effects from diesel exhaust produced by local highways.
Alternatives	Overwhelming support for Alternative B2 in the southern reach, consideration of both above and below-grade crossings, visual and economic impacts, security and public safety, and inclusion of additional future bus routes. Also two additional alternative recommendations.
Biology	Concern for Bald Eagle, Owl and Black Raven within proximity of tracks.
Bus	Need for a circulator bus system connecting neighborhoods to stations throughout the corridor.
Construction Impacts	Minimize impacts to businesses during construction.
Economics	Concerns regarding economic impacts, potential burdens and decrease in property values. Expansion opportunities for local industry, businesses and neighborhoods resulting from location of alignments, stations and crossings. Concern regarding increased vandalism, graffiti and loitering and their impacts to property values.
HazMat	Concern regarding potential contamination during construction.
Historic	Concern regarding impacts to historic properties.
Noise	Concern regarding affects of train and construction noise on schools and residential properties.
Operations	Comments regarding operations including consistency of technology among corridors, further exploration of a 3 rd rail, increased bus services and circulator buses, headways, and grade separations.

Topic	Summary
Park/Trail/Section 4(f)	Recommendations for proper access to trails, protected routes for school children, below or above grade crossings, mitigation and restoration back to existing conditions in and around construction areas.
Parking	Parking concerns related to access, capacity and impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.
Program	Many comments praising the FasTracks program and the public involvement process. Residents expressed concern regarding inequities in service, full program build out, financial feasibility, and redevelopment opportunities.
Public Safety/Security	Concerns for pedestrian safety, increased accidents and closures, security and public health.
Right of Way	Majority of right of way comments were related to economic, environmental and social impacts to surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, schools and recreational facilities.
Schools	Concern regarding safety of school children.
Social	Concern that Environmental Justice is misunderstood.
Stations	Stations comments included support for and opposition to specific station locations; pedestrian and vehicular access and safety; construction impacts; parking capacity and support for TOD and aesthetics and facility practicalities.
Technology	Overwhelming support and preference for EMU technology; although concern was expressed for visual impacts from EMU infrastructure.
Traffic	Concern expressed regarding traffic impacts, proper signalization and the need for accurate ridership projections.
Visual	Concern that EMU technology, stations and above grade crossings may create visual and visibility impacts to surrounding businesses and neighborhoods.

Outreach Efforts:

Preceding and following the public hearings, significant efforts were made to encourage the public to review the DEIS document and provide their comments before Jan. 15, 2010.

DEIS Distribution: Copies of the DEIS were delivered to nine library locations throughout the North Metro Corridor and remained available for the public to review through Jan. 15, 2010. The nine locations included: Denver Public Library (Central), Brighton Branch Library, Commerce City Branch Library, Northglenn Branch Library, Perl Mack Branch Library, Rangeview District Administration Offices, State Library, Thornton Branch Library, and Valdez-Perry Branch Library.

Website: The DEIS document was posted in chapters to the project website and made available to all members of the community for review and comment. The public was also provided an opportunity to comments directly through the website.

Newsletters: A bilingual newsletter that included an announcement that the DEIS was available for review, locations where the document could be viewed, an overview of the build alternative, station locations and recommended technology, a summary table providing an overview of potential environmental benefits, adverse impacts and mitigation, an RTD FasTracks Program update, and an announcement noting the dates and locations of the Public Hearings was mailed to over 1,500 members of the community. In addition, the bilingual newsletter was emailed to nearly 2,000 additional members of the community.



E-News/Video Announcements: A video and E-News was developed to announce the availability of the DEIS for public review and comment, a list of library locations where the document could be viewed, and dates and locations for the public hearing dates and locations was distributed via email to nearly 2,000 members of the North Metro community. A PDF of the project newsletter was included in the announcement as well.

After the public hearings, a video recap summarizing the public hearings was developed and included a reminder that the DEIS review and comment period ends on Jan. 15, 2010. The video recap and E-News was distributed to nearly 2,000 members of the North Metro community.

Legal Notices/Advertisements: Legal notices and advertisements were developed to announce the availability of the DEIS for public review and comment, a list of library locations where the document could be viewed, and dates and locations for the public hearing dates and locations. Legal notices were published in local newspapers to coincide with the publication of the release of the DEIS in the United States Federal Register. Advertisements were also published to within a week of the Public Hearings announcing the availability of the DEIS document for public comment and review and the dates and locations of the Public Hearings to be held on Dec. 9 and 10, 2010. Locations where the legal notices and advertisement were placed include:

- Federal Register
- Brighton Blade
- Denver Daily
- Gateway
- Thornton/Northglenn Sentinel
- Viva

Hispanic/Latino Outreach: As the project team has continued to provide information and reach out the Hispanic and Latino residents and business owners living and working in the North Metro community, members of the project team distributed newsletters and fact sheets regarding the status of the North Metro project and encouraged members of the Hispanic/Latino community to participate in the Public Hearings held on Dec. 9 and 10. Newsletters and fact sheets of the Build Alternative, Station Locations and recommended technology, a summary table providing an overview of potential benefits, adverse impacts and mitigation, and announcement of the DEIS Public Hearing dates and locations were produced in Spanish were hand delivered to businesses and community centers throughout the North Metro community. Example community centers include but are not limited to the Cross Community Coalition located in Denver, A Better Life Foundation and at the monthly meeting of Hispanic/Latino business leaders located in Commerce City.

In addition, daily radio spots at Radio Luz (1650 AM), Radio El Camino (810 AM), and Radio La Buena Onda (1150 AM), were sent a short audio file inviting the Hispanic/Latino listeners to attend the public hearings.