



## Comments: Northwest Rail Governments Team

Commuter Rail Technology Selection  
Comments due Friday, September 28, 2007

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Commenting Agency: Boulder County

Comments
1. The Northwest Rail Project Team is making a preliminary recommendation to the public, agencies, and the RTD Board to initiate service for the Northwest Rail corridor in 2015 with <b>Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) Commuter Rail Technology</b> .
<b>a. Do you support this recommendation? If so, why?</b>
<i>This recommendation is acceptable to Boulder County, given the financial constraints and the lesser visual impact associated with DMU.</i>
<b>b. Do you disagree with this recommendation? If so, why?</b>
<b>c. Other comments:</b>



2. After the three Public Workshops, Northwest Rail Governments Team representatives will meet to provide their input on the preliminary Project Team recommendation. This input and the input collected at the public workshops will then be forwarded to the RTD Board.

**a. Taking into account the FasTracks budget and the cost of implementing Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) technology on the Northwest Rail corridor, do you see any other options that RTD should consider?**

*RTD should evaluate whether new equipment that allows a 23 foot clearance under structures for EMU, rather than paying \$300-400 million to retrofit the structures.*

**b. If the RTD Board supports DMU as the recommended technology for the Northwest Rail corridor, what other issues specific to DMU technology should the Environmental Evaluation address?**

*If DMU is selected as the preferred technology RTD should:*

- *Commit to air quality standards and emission levels: These could be accomplished by using clean burning fuels and advanced hybrid technologies. RTD could be strongly encouraged to purchase vehicles that can use cleaner burning fuels, such as bio-diesel, or vehicles that can be more readily retrofitted or upgraded to cleaner-burning fuels as technologies evolve.*
- *Fuel prioritization: In event of diesel shortages, mechanisms must be in place to ensure the trains and other transit operations have priority.*
- *Commitment to service levels: Should the price of diesel dramatically outstrip that of electricity, service on the DMU-run lines should not be cut nor fares hiked solely on DMU lines.*
- *Ensure maximum flexibility: A decision to use DMU on the Northwest Rail line should include a commitment to ensuring the DMU cars can operate on other FasTracks lines, allowing eventual direct service to popular destinations such as DIA.*
- *Noise and Vibration: According to RTD analyses there are more noise and vibration impacts from DMU as compared to EMU, particularly around station areas. As RTD continues to pursue DMU it must commit to implementing mitigation strategies to minimize noise and vibration, including implementing and funding quiet zones and using construction techniques that address noise and vibration.*
- *Air Toxics: Diesel technology has toxic health benefits; request RTD take a leadership role to educate the public about the toxic impacts of DMU. Also, request RTD implement mitigation measure to minimize the health impacts, such as establishing air quality zones (similar to a quiet zone for noise impacts) in dense urban locations, adjacent to schools, etc.*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request RTD not purchase vehicles until after 2011 when the Tier 4 federal requirements for cleaner burning engines are implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>c. Other comments:</b>

<p>3. For the remainder of the year, the Environmental Evaluation will be looking at stations and Commuter Rail track alignment for the Northwest Rail corridor. RTD will present the results of this analysis at Public Workshops in January 2008.</p>
<p><b>a. What should the study consider as it examines these issues?</b></p>
<p><i>Priority should be put on those locations with the greatest early ridership potential, as well as how the local governments will support the station and ridership through local planning, zoning and other methods to encourage ridership in the short and long term.</i></p>
<p><i>A strong supporting transit, bike and pedestrian network connection should be an important component of the station planning.</i></p>
<p><b>b. What other comments do you have about the Environmental Evaluation?</b></p>
<p><i>Quiet zones must be an integral part of the project, mitigation, and funding plans. The noise from crossing horns will be the greatest impact to be addressed through out the corridor.</i></p>