



RTD FasTracks – Northwest Rail Jurisdictional Staff Meeting Summary

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2009, 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Louisville Public Library, Louisville, CO

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, MEETING PURPOSE AND AGENDA REVIEW

Andrea Meneghel, CDR Associates, greeted the group, facilitated introductions, explained the meeting purpose and presented the meeting agenda.

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of the meeting was to update the Northwest Rail (NWR) Corridor jurisdictional staffs on progress of the Environmental Evaluation (EE); present preliminary impacts and proposed mitigations from the NWR EE; solicit and respond to questions/comments on impacts and proposed mitigation measures for the EE; and to receive comments on the presentation for the NWR Governments Team (NWRGT).

RTD FasTracks PROGRAM UPDATE

Karen Morales, RTD FasTracks, provided an update explaining the two key assumptions for implementing the 2009 financial plan for funding FasTracks: an additional tax increase beginning in 2011 and proceeding with the Eagle P3 project to secure Full Funding Grant Agreements (FFGA) for the East and Gold Line corridors.

RTD FasTracks Tax: Karen indicated that the RTD Board's 2009 financial plan assumes that an approximate 0.4% tax increase is expected to go to a public vote by 2011. A formal decision about pursuing a tax increase in 2010 will be made by the RTD Board no later than August 2010.

Eagle P3: Karen stated that the RTD FasTracks financial plan assumes that the East and Gold Line Corridors included in the Eagle P3 will receive FFGAs totaling \$1B. She explained that the Eagle P3 will occur in two phases: 1) Construction of the rail maintenance facility with the track to reach it and the construction of the East Corridor; and 2) Completion of the Gold Line and a 2-mile portion of NWR to the South Westminster Station, since RTD will own the right-of-way (ROW) for that segment of the Northwest Rail Corridor. The Eagle P3 RFP will be released to the three short-listed concessionaire teams by the end of September. Proposals are due March 31, 2010 and RTD anticipates awarding Phase 1 of the contract next summer. Funding for Phase 1 will come from private entities and RTD. Construction of Phase 2 of the Eagle P3 is contingent upon being awarded the FFGAs, anticipated sometime in 2011.

- The FFGAs are not contingent upon a successful ballot measure for a tax increase. Currently, RTD is working with FTA on an Early Systems Work Agreement and a stipend to begin Phase 1 of the Eagle P3 while waiting for the FFGAs to be issued once reauthorization of the federal transportation bill is completed. In addition to the stipend, Phase 1 will be funded with private and local dollars.
- Martha Roskowski, City of Boulder, asked whether Eagle P3 construction could commence prior to authorization of the FFGA. Karen responded that private and local funds will be used to begin construction, and that the FFGA will allow for reimbursement of these funds upon authorization.
- RTD is currently in negotiations for additional ROW purchases which will be paid for with general FasTracks funds.
- The approach of the Eagle P3 and phased construction of NWR will not impact the Quiet Zone application process for the corridor.

TIGER Grant: The US 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition (MCC) requested a \$25M commitment from RTD for US 36 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to support their TIGER grant application. The RTD Board will discuss the contribution at its September 8th meeting and make a formal decision about the contribution at its September 22nd meeting.

NORTHWEST RAIL EE UPDATES

Chris Quinn, RTD FasTracks Northwest Rail Project Manager, provided an update on project issues that have been addressed.

Railroad Negotiations: RTD reached an agreement with the BNSF Railway on the purchase of ROW for the segment of NWR between Utah Junction and the South Westminster/71st Ave. Station. Negotiations for an operating agreement for the remainder of the corridor are in progress.

Modeling/Ridership: The latest modeling results are available from DRCOG (May 2009) and 2035 estimates indicate that there will be 8,400 riders on the average weekday for the FasTracks funded stations; and 12,100 riders on the average weekday for the All Stations scenario.

Fencing: The Fencing Subcommittee met in March 2009. Following that meeting, RTD provided the jurisdictions with a clarification statement about fencing requirements for the corridor and solicited additional jurisdiction input. RTD then conducted field visits and responded to jurisdiction comments. In July 2009, RTD and the jurisdictions concurred with the fencing recommendations for the NWR EE.

Quiet Zones: After a series of diagnostic field reviews, reports, and analysis, RTD determined the locations for proposed Quiet Zones (QZ). Next steps include: reviewing proposed QZ locations and treatments with jurisdictions; preparing a technical noise analysis and QZ report; drafting a Notice of Intent; and conducting a corresponding public involvement process to address jurisdiction requests/needs.

- Nadine Lee, RTD FasTracks, indicated that a technical noise analysis and QZ report will be available, explaining QZ requirements and safety measures. Nadine indicated that she and Bob Boot, RTD FasTracks, can provide more information to the jurisdictions on this issue in the coming months.

NORTHWEST RAIL EE: PRELIMINARY IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATIONS

Chris Proud, CH2M Hill, provided an overview of the preliminary impacts and proposed mitigations included in the NWR EE. He explained that the NWR EE focused on three study area sections: 1) project sections (sub portions of the corridor based largely on transportation analysis zones), 2) individual resource study areas (i.e. wetlands) and 3) stations (including both the FasTracks funded stations and All Stations scenarios). Chris provided an overview of the impacts analysis completed for the NWR EE, and focused the presentation on the issue areas in the section below.

NORTHWEST RAIL JURISDICTIONAL STAFF MEETING FLIP CHART NOTES

The group's direct comments, requests, and suggestions as they relate to the impacts and mitigations presented at this meeting and what they would like to see at the Northwest Rail Governments Team (NWRGT) meeting, were captured during the meeting on a flip chart by Andrea Meneghel. Those comments are provided in a separate document and should act as a supplement to this summary. The flip chart comments were distributed to all attendees from this meeting and reviewed for their agreement immediately following the meeting and prior to the NWRGT meeting on September 3, 2009.

NORTHWEST RAIL EE: ISSUE AREAS

Environmental Justice (EJ): Chris Proud identified the EJ communities within the NWR corridor and described the EJ outreach strategy. He explained that 15 of the 16 residential land acquisition and relocations attributable to NWR stations are within an EJ community that is situated in the future location of the Downtown Longmont station. In accordance with the Uniform Act, residential owners will be compensated at fair market value and anyone living in the residence will receive relocation assistance. Additionally, RTD will provide free ECO passes to all household members of displaced residences for 1 year.

- Martha Roskowski, City of Boulder, asked how EJ communities are identified, specifically those located in Boulder. Chris responded that several demographic and census figures are taken into account in addition to proximity to the NWR tracks.
- Jurisdictions would like to be notified when there are small group meetings in the EJ communities within their jurisdictions so they can attend if they want to.

Property Acquisitions and Relocations: Chris Proud reviewed property acquisitions and relocations caused by NWR track alignment or station footprints in each project study area. Individual station maps were presented at the meeting indicating the acreage that is needed for the construction of each station. Track alignment impacts to properties were also presented.

- When asked when RTD would acquire properties, Chris Quinn explained that track construction and property acquisitions could begin as early as 2011 (pending available funding) and should be complete by 2035.
- Lisa Streisfeld, CDOT, requested that property impacts to public ROW, specifically CDOT's, be displayed in the NWR EE. The NWR Project Team will follow up with Lisa to provide her with the information requested or make the necessary changes in the NWR EE.
- George Gerstle, Boulder County, requested that impacts to unincorporated Boulder County be broken out from City of Boulder impacts for property acquisitions in addition to other issue areas such as noise and traffic. The NWR Project Team will follow up with George to provide him with the information he is requesting, where possible.
- The group was told that detailed maps illustrating parcels needed for property acquisition would be included in the NWR EE.

Economic Considerations: The NWR Project Team has examined and analyzed economic considerations of the project, and made recommendations to minimize impact and promote benefits to the corridor. The project will have temporary construction impacts, and is projected to create direct and indirect construction jobs through construction. Impacts and benefits are detailed in the Construction Management Plan (CMP) and RTD will coordinate with local jurisdictions, affected business, and business districts in accordance with the CMP.

- Jurisdictional staff requested that the direct impacts related to any loss in tax revenue be documented for both 2015 and 2035.
- The employee relocation information presented counted the number of current employees in a given area rather than the number of potential employees per available commercial space, because the potential of current vacant space can not be accurately projected.

- Future land use has been analyzed in the NWR EE. However, consistent with the approved methodology the projected economic revenue based on future planned land use is not taken into consideration within the economic impacts.

Noise Impacts and Proposed Mitigations: Noise analysis was conducted for the two station scenarios (the FasTracks funded stations and the All Stations scenario). Overall noise impacts are greater for the All Stations scenario due to DMU speed and throttle profile at additional stations; although the primary source of noise is the train horn.

- Although FTA regulations do not require mitigation for moderate noise impacts, the NWR EE includes mitigation for upper moderate noise impacts. There are some lower moderate impacts (post-mitigation) that remain.
- Nadine Lee confirmed that RTD will work with both the jurisdictions and the BNSF Railway on the implementation of Quiet Zones, which will also apply to freight horns. Nadine also confirmed that the NWR project footprint includes space for the needed improvements required for Quiet Zones.
- It was explained that a jurisdiction can opt out of receiving noise mitigation in its community if the residents or effected stakeholders choose to do so.
- Mike Sweeney, City of Boulder, requested cost information for Quiet Zones where RTD is not required to mitigate and where jurisdictions would be responsible for paying for Quiet Zone upgrades.
- Paul Rayl, City of Lafayette, requested cost estimates and design details for proposed noise walls.
- Jurisdiction staff members requested the technical noise analysis report prior to the release of the Draft EE so that their comments, questions, or concerns can be addressed prior to the public release of the document. The noise tech memo will be available upon request when the EE is released. In the mean time, the Project Team will distribute the Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Administration's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* document to jurisdictional staff as a resource.
- Lissa Myers, URS Corporation, reminded the group of the various fact sheets and other noise-related resources the Project Team has distributed in the past to this group.
- Some members indicated that the seven non-noise-mitigated crossings/areas contradict a previously held belief that the entire corridor would be designated a Quiet Zone and that all crossings in Boulder County would receive mitigation.

NORTHWEST RAIL EE: TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS AND PROPOSED TRAFFIC MITIGATIONS

Amy Lewin, URS Corporation, provided an overview about NWR transportation impacts and proposed traffic mitigations. Amy reviewed other issues such as impacts on bus and freight operations, traffic impacts near stations and at grade crossings, and the proposed treatments at rail crossings throughout the NWR corridor.

- George Gerstle, Boulder County, expressed concern about the reduction of BOLT operations in lieu of NWR service because the two transit options meet the needs of different markets by serving different routes. He requested that RTD avoid reducing current BOLT Service levels. George stated that it is important to understand what overlap in ridership there is between the BOLT and NWR.

- Jurisdictional staff members expressed strong support for the consideration of bicyclist and pedestrian safety and the maintaining of pedestrian and bike path access at all rail crossings
- The City of Lafayette and City of Arvada requested additional information on indirect traffic impacts to neighboring communities of the NWR. The two jurisdictions would like to understand the traffic impacts of people coming into (or through) their communities to access nearby stations. The Project Team will follow up with each jurisdiction directly to provide them with the information requested.

NEXT STEPS

Next steps for the NWR project include:

- Present impacts analysis to the NWR Agency Workgroup and the NWRGT (September 3, 2009)
- Release the Draft EE
- Hold Corridor-wide Public Meetings (Fall/Winter 2009)
- Submit Final EE to USACE (early 2010)
- Present the Final EE to the RTD Board (early 2010)
- Request decision document/permit from USACE.

MEETING MATERIALS AND HANDOUTS

- August 25, 2009 NWR Jurisdictional Staff Meeting Agenda
- August 25, 2009 NWR Jurisdictional Staff Meeting Presentation

MEETING ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
1. Audrey DeBarros	36 Commuting Solutions
2. Jeanne Shreve	Adams County
3. George Gerstle	Boulder County
4. Mark Gosselin	CDOT, Region 4
5. Bob Hays	CDOT, Region 4
6. Lisa Streisfeld	CDOT, Region 6
7. Joan Kathol	CDR Associates
8. Andrea Meneghel	CDR Associates
9. Louise Smart	CDR Associates
10. Chris Proud	CH2M Hill
11. Debra Baskett	City & County of Broomfield
12. Brian Pinkerton	City & County of Denver
13. Patty Lorence	City of Arvada
14. Louise Grauer	City of Boulder
15. Martha Roskowski	City of Boulder
16. Mike Sweeney	City of Boulder

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| 17. Paul Rayl | City of Lafayette |
| 18. Phil Greenwald | City of Longmont |
| 19. Heather Balsler | City of Louisville |
| 20. Paul Wood | City of Louisville |
| 21. Matt Lutkus | City of Westminster |
| 22. Sharon Terranova | DRCOG |
| 23. Nadine Lee | RTD FasTracks |
| 24. Karen Morales | RTD FasTracks |
| 25. Chris Quinn | RTD FasTracks |
| 26. Wendy Wallach | RTD FasTracks |
| 27. Amy Lewin | URS Corporation |
| 28. Lissa Myers | URS Corporation |