



Comments: Northwest Rail Governments Team

Commuter Rail Technology Selection

Comments due Friday, September 28, 2007

Email: jmckay@mediate.org or fax to Julie McKay (720) 407-4754

Commenting Agency: City of Boulder

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 Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) Commuter Rail Technology.

a. Do you support this recommendation? If so, why?

The City of Boulder fully supports implementation of the Northwest Rail. It will provide transit connectivity to regional destinations not served by BRT, create increased long term capacity for transit, increase options for travel on the corridor (such as during snowstorms), provide an alternative during US 36 construction, and serve energy efficiency goals.

That being said, the city neither supports nor opposes the Project Team's specific recommendation concerning technology.

b. Do you disagree with this recommendation? If so, why?

The city neither supports nor opposes the recommendation.

c. Other comments:

The city's lack of comment on the technology recommendation should not be interpreted as a lack of interest on the issue. Indeed, the city is aware of a great level of concern by the community on this matter. However, detailed information on the technology question was not provided to the city until September 13th. Furthermore, public comment within the city on this issue was not solicited until September 24th. This did not allow our City Council the time necessary to consider whether or not to support the recommendation by the September 28th deadline.

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?



| |
|--|
| No |
| 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? |
| <p>Understanding there are noise, vibration and air quality impacts with DMU, the city would like the following performance and mitigation measures to be included in the Northwest Rail Environmental Evaluation (EE):</p> <p>Noise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The city asks RTD to commit to a full range of noise mitigation strategies as outlined in the West Corridor’s “Noise Mitigation Measures for Moderate Impacts” in the severe and moderate category.▪ We request the project team share all analysis around noise, vibration, ridership projections and air quality with the local governments along the Northwest Rail corridor at your earliest convenience and as further analysis is completed.▪ The EE process must identify what quiet-zone related infrastructure RTD will build as part of the project. <p>Air Quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The city requests a strong commitment to maintaining and improving air quality by using clean burning fuels and advanced hybrid technologies. <p>The MCC expects RTD will adhere to federal and state air quality standards, including the EPA’s Tier 4 exhaust emission standards when implemented. We understand new vehicles will be purchased every two years, which allows an opportunity to stay in compliance with changing regulations. A review should be conducted prior to each purchase of new units to make use of new emission-reduction technology. Any new units purchased, shall meet or exceed EPA air quality standards for DMU emissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The city is concerned about the toxic health effect of diesel emissions and request that RTD analyze these impacts and include mitigation measures to minimize the health impacts..▪ To mitigate emissions at the rail stations, we ask RTD to incorporate IT resources to inform commuters driving to the station where parking spaces are available, and to include strong local transit, bicycle and pedestrian connections in the design of stations. <p>Fuel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The city would like to see RTD undertake fuel prioritization strategies to insure diesel is available for the trains and other transit operations in the event of fuel shortages.▪ The city requests that RTD commit to basing service levels of the trains on system-wide productivity levels, rather than on the price of diesel fuel. |



Interoperability of Technology

- The city requests that RTD commit to ensuring maximum interoperability between the DMU on the Northwest Rail and the rest of the system. By insuring DMU vehicles can operate on EMU lines, service expansions to popular destinations such as DIA would be possible.

c. Other comments:

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.

a. What should the study consider as it examines these issues?

More time, at least a month, should be allowed between the period when detailed information is provided to the Government's Team, inclusive of a summary of public input, and when comments are requested. The city's representatives to the Northwest Rail Government's team have only limited direction from the City Council. Complex and controversial decisions, like technology choices, will often first require Council input. In order for city staff to prepare Council for making such decisions, city staff must first analyze the issue in light of all available information, including public comments, and then provide Council with a written recommendation. Given City Council's busy schedule, and the deadlines to submit memo's for their packets, increased lead time is necessary.

b. What other comments do you have about the Environmental Evaluation?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |