

Northwest Rail Corridor Update

Governments Team Meeting

June 17, 2010

Welcome & Introductions

Meeting Purpose



- Update the Northwest Rail (NWR) Corridor Governments on the release of the Final Environmental Evaluation (EE)
- Present common topics and responses from the Draft EE
- Discuss how the Northwest Rail project will fit into the Eagle P3 project and discuss next steps.

Meeting Agenda



- Summary of what was heard from the Draft EE
- Common Topics and responses
- Final EE Release
- Northwest Rail up to 71st Avenue/Lowell – Eagle P3
- Next Steps

Summary of Draft Environmental Evaluation

Draft EE Summary



- Draft EE was released in February
- Three public meetings were held in March
 - More than 200 attended
- 30-day comment period followed the release
 - Nearly 80 comments were received

What was heard on the Draft EE



Issue Topic	Response
<i>Project Schedule, Funding and Phasing</i>	RTD is committed to completing NWR in its entirety and is exploring all possible funding options to do so. Phase 1 of NWR will be built to the South Westminster/71 st Ave. Station and future phases as funding allows.
<i>Local and Regional Connectivity</i>	Part of the RTD FasTracks plan is to expand the overall bus network for enhanced suburb-to-suburb travel, and bus routes would be planned to provide convenient connections to rapid transit stations. Further expansion of bus operations/connections will be developed with input from public and the local jurisdictions.
<i>Noise Impacts & Mitigations</i>	The planned noise mitigation for the Northwest Rail project is the implementation of a Quiet Zone at all but 7 grade crossings. The implementation of Quiet Zones would mean that neither NWR commuter trains nor freight trains would be required to sound their horns, resulting in a net reduction of noise when compared to existing conditions.

What was heard on the Draft EE



Issue Topic	Response
<i>Commuter Rail Vehicle Technology</i>	An extensive comparison analysis on electric multiple unit (EMU) and diesel multiple unit (DMU) technology was conducted as part of the NWR EE. DMU technology was selected for the NWR corridor based on short and long-term costs, consistency with the 2004 RTD FasTracks Plan, visual impacts and the potential ability to use alternate fuel in the future.
<i>Right of Way and Property Impacts</i>	RTD understands concern over potential negative impacts to property and will continually work to minimize those effects to the extent possible. RTD will continue to communicate with property owners throughout the project.
<i>Bicycle and Pedestrian</i>	RTD will provide bicycle parking and storage facilities at all rail stations. Bicycles will be accommodated on the Northwest Rail trains, but how they are accommodated will depend on the design of the vehicles selected for the corridor. Additionally, station area plans have been designed to allow bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. RTD will continue to work with local jurisdictions on specific design issues related to stations during final design

What was heard on the Draft EE



Issue Topic	Response
<i>Station Area Parking</i>	The parking supplies shown in the current station area plans are a preliminary plan developed between the jurisdictions and RTD. RTD monitors parking demand and market conditions at stations.
<i>Fencing</i>	Extensive coordination with jurisdictions regarding fencing types was conducted as part of the NWR EE. RTD is committed to continued coordination with local jurisdictions on the final selection of fencing throughout the corridor during design.
<i>Bus Transit and Bus Rapid Transit Options</i>	Future bus routes and service levels provided by RTD will be based on ridership demand and are subject to annual review. RTD's bus service plan will continue to be refined to meet consumer demands.

Final EE Release

Final EE



- Comments received during the formal comment period were addressed in the Final EE
- May 18 the Final EE was adopted by the RTD Board
 - Provides necessary information to apply for Section 404 Individual Permit (*Nationwide Permit previously granted for Phase I*).
 - Allows the project to move forward with design, construction and operation as funding becomes available
- All comments and responses are included in their entirety in the Final EE

Final EE Release



- Online at www.RTD-FasTracks.com and click on “Northwest Rail Corridor”
- Hard copies at local public repositories
 - Denver Public Library – Central Branch
 - RTD FasTracks office
 - Adams County Planning & Development
 - College Hill Public Library
 - City and County of Broomfield Community Development
 - 36 Commuting Solutions
 - Louisville Public Library
 - City of Boulder Transportation & Planning
 - Longmont Public Library

Eagle P3 Project

Eagle P3 project



- Includes East Corridor, Gold Line, Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility and a portion of Northwest Rail (to South Westminster Station)
- Construction to begin: Fall 2010
- Project Funding - \$2.3 Billion
 - Includes \$1 billion in federal funds



Eagle P3 project



- **Phase I**
 - Property acquisition begins
 - East Corridor construction
 - Maintenance facility and control center
 - Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) vehicles
 - Electrical systems at Denver Union Station
- **Phase II (once federal funds are awarded)**
 - Gold Line construction
 - Northwest Rail to Westminster construction

Next Steps

2010 Annual Program Evaluation Recap

- **2010 Vote**

- Board of Directors in April opted not to pursue a vote in 2010.

- **Potential 2012 Vote**

- A successful sales and use tax election of 0.4% in 2012 means program can be completed by **2019**
- An estimated increase of at least \$200 million to the program cost

- **No Vote or Unsuccessful Tax Vote**

- Assuming no additional tax revenues, program can be completed by **2042**

Construction Ready Task Force

- **Depending on funding availability, RTD Board may decide to:**
 - Construct shorter segments rather than whole corridors
 - Complete Design-Build bid packages on one or more corridors
 - Advance design on one or more corridors (i.e., use Design-Bid-Build vs. Design-Build procurement method)
 - Some combination of the above

2010 Annual Program Evaluation Recap

- **RTD is aggressively pursuing any additional sources of funding for the FasTracks program**
- **RTD Board may want to consider upgrading Environmental Evaluations to meet full requirements for federal clearance**
 - Would require additional analysis of a few specialized technical areas (e.g., historic/cultural resources, etc.) and limited additional public process
 - May provide more opportunities for applying federal funds (e.g., jobs bill, additional New Starts funding, livability grants, etc.) if they become available
- **FTA in process of updating/revising New Starts program requirements**
 - Once the new rules are available (estimated in 2011), RTD will be able to determine whether any additional FasTracks corridors will qualify.

Key Milestones and Decision Points

- ❑ **June 2010:** Concessionaire selected for Eagle Project: *Denver Transit Partners*
- ❑ **End of August 2010:** Financial close with selected concessionaire
- ❑ **October 2010:** RTD staff updates financial plan (incorporating the final costs for the Eagle Project) and presents the following information to the RTD Board
 - What funding is left for the remainder of the FasTracks program prior to an election?
 - A list of specific activities that could be accomplished with the remaining funds (e.g., final design, construction of a small corridor segment, etc.)



Key Milestones and Decision Points

- ❑ **October – December 2010:** RTD Board works with stakeholders to obtain feedback on the list of activities that could be accomplished with the remaining funds
- ❑ **December 2010:** Board takes action to identify which activities to move forward
- ❑ **January – February 2011:** 2011 Annual Program Evaluation results presented to the RTD Board

Questions and Comments?

How Can You Stay informed?



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