



RTD FasTracks – Northwest Rail Northwest Rail Governments Team Meeting Summary

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2008, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location: Izaak Walton Clubhouse, Longmont, CO

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND AGENDA REVIEW

Chris Quinn, RTD FasTracks Northwest Rail Project Manager, greeted the Northwest Rail Governments Team (NWRGT), facilitated introductions, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

RTD FASTRACKS UPDATES

Chris Quinn and Liz Telford, RTD FasTracks, presented the NWRGT with the following updates:

North Metro Technology Analysis: The RTD FasTracks North Metro corridor, is re-evaluating its preferred commuter rail vehicle technology. The Northwest Rail (NWR) corridor will remain committed to diesel multiple units and is not currently planning to revisit its technology decision. Even with fuel price increases, the NWR technology analysis from September indicates that DMU remains the most efficient, cost-effective alternative for the corridor. Unlike some of the shorter FasTracks corridors, despite the lower operating costs associated with electric commuter rail, the reduced operating costs would not be low enough to provide a payback for the additional upfront capital costs. However, RTD will continue to monitor fuel prices so that if diesel costs continue to spike, RTD can re-open this analysis just as is being done for the North Metro Corridor where previous analysis indicated a potential payback depending on fuel cost assumptions.

Preferred Alternative Refinement: The Gold Line corridor is conducting the environmental analysis for the Preferred Alternative Refinement (PAR) of the shared portion of track with the Northwest Rail at the southern end of the corridor. Results from the Gold Line's analysis will be incorporated into the Northwest Rail Environmental Evaluation.

Annual Program Evaluation (APE): The RTD FasTracks Annual Program Evaluation is currently underway. Updated cost estimates for all FasTracks corridors will be available for the Board to review at its August 2008 meeting.

NORTHWEST RAIL ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION UPDATES

Chris Quinn and Lissa Myers, URS Corporation, provided updated information about the Northwest Rail Environmental Evaluation (NWR EE):

Modeling: The NWR EE will use the information provided by the Denver Regional Council of Governments 2035 Transportation Model to evaluate ridership and other projections. Results from the DRCOG 2035 model have been sent to AECOM for further review.

Station Planning: The NWR Project Team is currently working with jurisdictional representatives to finalize conceptual station layouts. Three stations remain to be finalized; they are the South Westminster station at approximately 71st & Lowell, the downtown Louisville station, and the Boulder Transit Village station at 30th &

Pearl. When asked about station design, Liz Telford indicated that RTD will present the FasTracks station templates addressing station design elements to the public in September.

Fencing: The NWR Project Team is working with the NWR Fencing Subcommittee to address fencing issues, such as fencing types and section-specific design issues such as wildlife crossings, to formulate recommendations to carry forward into the NWR EE for impacts analysis. In the meantime, NWRGT members are encouraged to provide comments through their Fencing Subcommittee representative(s).

- George Gerstle, Boulder County, requested that RTD still consider adopting a “no fence” policy. This policy could be applied throughout Boulder County in places where access to Open Space is already limited or prohibited through their “no trespass policy”.

Quiet Zones: Progress is being made toward Quiet Zone implementation. Field diagnostic reviews will take place July 17 and August 13, 2008. Following the EE’s noise impact analysis, additional field visits will occur in fall 2008 to determine what Quiet Zone implementation steps need to be taken at each crossing.

- George Gerstle stated that it is important that the Hwy. 52 and Hwy. 119 crossing analysis data be provided prior to the diagnostic reviews. Chris Quinn replied that this crossing will be evaluated in the Quiet Zone process and that RTD will provide information on it.
- The NWR Project Team will give presentations on the project and Quiet Zones on July 15, 2008, to the Boulders at Talisman Home Owners Association. [Note: Contact Andrea Meneghel at CDR Associates, (720) 407-4721 for further information.]
- The NWR Project Team has begun to distribute Noise Impact and Quiet Zone Resource Packets. They have been distributed to the NWRGT and members of the public that have submitted comments to the project about noise concerns. Debra Baskett, City and County of Broomfield, requested that distribution to elected officials and local city councils be coordinated through the jurisdiction staffs.

Railroad Negotiations: RTD FasTracks continues to negotiate with the BNSF Railway about purchasing time slots for NWR operations and is requesting a response on the proposed track alignment, in particular, identifying the location of the new track. The new track will go to the east or west of the existing track, but it will not do so consistently throughout the corridor.

NWR EE Schedule: The NWR Project Team is currently revising the NWR EE schedule and will submit a proposal for its adjustment to the RTD Board of Directors in August 2008, when the Board also reviews the 2008 APE findings. The new schedule will be contingent on the response from the BNSF Railway to the preferred alignment. The project needs to define the preferred alignment before it can begin the impacts analysis.

- NWRGT members discussed whether the impacts analysis could begin without having a preferred alignment. This would entail conducting the impacts analysis on two (or more) alternate alignments. An advantage to this approach is that the project could begin the impacts analysis before hearing back from the BNSF Railway and possibly adhere to the schedule. A disadvantage to this approach is that several sets of impacts data would be generated, which could cause public confusion and concern. In response to this discussion, RTD indicated that it will wait to conduct the impacts analysis until it can perform the evaluation on the single preferred alignment.

- Construction impacts will be identified in the EE, after the track alignment is established. RTD will develop and distribute a construction management plan to communicate what the construction impacts will be, how they will be mitigated, and how construction will be phased.
- A committee member asked what RTD needs from the jurisdictions to begin the process of developing IGA's. Chris Quinn responded that these discussions will begin within the following months.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & NEXT STEPS

Boulder to Longmont: Phil Greenwald, City of Longmont, asked if there is any new information available about the Boulder to Longmont single-track issue. Chris Quinn explained that RTD will approach the BNSF Railway with the service plan envisioned in the FasTracks plan and then BNSF will determine the required capital improvements required to operate that service. These improvements will then be reflected in the cost. Mary Blue, City of Longmont, noted that this issue needs to be resolved before the NWR EE is released in 2009. Lee Kemp, RTD Board of Directors, has inquired about the Boulder to Longmont single track issue and has advocated for full-day service. He stated that the process of receiving information from the BNSF Railway takes time and that everything is still in negotiations.

Commuter Rail Vehicle Demo: Mary Blue stated that Colorado Railcar is shipping local commuter rail vehicles for the Portland, OR, system through Denver Union Station. She suggested that RTD arrange for one of these cars to be available for a public display and demonstration. Debra Baskett supported this type of activity as a form of public outreach.

MEETING MATERIALS AND HANDOUTS

- June 24, 2008 Northwest Rail Governments Team Meeting Agenda
- June 24, 2008 Northwest Rail Governments Team Meeting Presentation
- List of Fencing Subcommittee members, as requested

MEETING ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
1. Audrey DeBarros	36 Commuting Solutions
2. Scott Tempel	Adams County
3. George Gerstle	Boulder County
4. Gary Gonzales	CDOT
5. Andrea Meneghel	CDR Associates
6. Julie McKay	CDR Associates
7. Debra Baskett	City & County of Broomfield
8. Andrea Drake	City of Arvada
9. Louise Grauer	City of Boulder

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| 10. Mike Sweeney | City of Boulder |
| 11. Matthew Appelbaum | City of Boulder, City Council |
| 12. Kerry Bensman | City of Lafayette |
| 13. Nick Wolfrum | City of Longmont |
| 14. Phil Greenwald | City of Longmont |
| 15. Mary Blue | City of Longmont, City Council |
| 16. Heather Balser | City of Louisville |
| 17. Dave Downing | City of Westminster |
| 18. David Averill | NFRMPO |
| 19. Mark Baudermann | RTD |
| 20. Chris Quinn | RTD FasTracks |
| 21. Karen Morales | RTD FasTracks |
| 22. Liz Telford | RTD FasTracks |
| 23. Wendy Wallach | RTD FasTracks |
| 24. John Tayer | RTD, Board of Directors |
| 25. Lee Kemp | RTD, Board of Directors |
| 26. Kelly Maiorana | URS Corporation |
| 27. Kim Proia | URS Corporation |
| 28. Lissa Myers | URS Corporation |