

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1

Meeting Summary

Date/Time: May 23, 2013 / 1:00-3:00pm
Location: Westminster City Hall
Multi-purpose Room (Lower Level)
4800 W. 92nd Avenue
Westminster, CO 80031

Goals and Purpose: Study Scope and Schedule Overview
Review US 36 BRT Program, Arterial BRT Connections and North I-25 Reverse Commute Information

1. Welcome and Introductions

Andy Mountain (GBSM) kicked off the meeting and asked the participants to introduce themselves by stating their name, organization, role and how long they've been involved in the project. Chris Quinn (RTD) welcomed and thanked everyone for participating.

Andy Mountain outlined the following housekeeping items: missing PAC/TAC Designation Forms, DashPort Access Forms.

Andy Mountain then described the focus of the Collaboration Summit on May 29. The Collaboration Summit will be a process-oriented meeting, rather than a technical one. He asked the TAC to please relay that message to their policy reps.

Andy Mountain outlined the following meeting goals:

- Review Study Scope/Schedule
- Review US 36 BRT Program
- Review Arterial BRT Approach
- Review I-25 Reverse Commute Approach/Analysis

2. Project Overview

Liz Rao (HNTB) gave a project overview. She outlined the following project elements:

- Northwest Rail phasing and operational/service options
- North Metro Corridor extension feasibility
 - Alternative A - Preferred Alignment from the North I-25 EIS
 - Alternative B - Utilize the Boulder Branch turning northward on US 287; includes spur to Boulder

- Alternative C - Utilize the CDOT North I-25 alignment from ICS Study to SH 119
- US 36 Bus Rapid Transit commitments
- Arterial Bus Rapid Transit evaluation
- I-25 Reverse Commute analysis

Gene Putman (NATA) asked if the study will consider North Metro extension alternatives beyond the three outlined, such as the RMRA alignment. Liz Rao responded that the study team wants the TAC's input into these alternatives in addition to help identifying other potential ones.

Liz Rao then gave an overview of the evaluation process and how the study will engage the public through a variety of channels such as the website, fact sheets, Telephone Town Hall and public open houses. She asked for the TAC's help in sharing study information with constituents.

Liz Rao then reviewed the Study Schedule and Key Decisions in the first 90 days:

- Final Agreement on US 36 BRT Program Commitments
- Identify Solutions for North I-25 Reverse Commute Challenges
- Evaluation Process - Methodology and Measures to Evaluate Stand-Alone and Priority Package(s) of Improvements
 - Linking Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures
 - Guided by the Collaboration Summit - May 29th
- Identify Stand-alone Alternatives to Be Evaluated
 - Arterial BRT Candidates
 - Northwest Rail – Operational and Phasing Alternative(s)
 - North Metro Extension - Alternate Alignment(s)

George Gerstle (Boulder County) asked how the study schedule relates to DRCOG's schedule. Jacob Riger (DRCOG) responded that they are currently in the midst of the 2040 update to their master plan. It will conclude at the end of the year and they will be able to incorporate study outcomes and recommendations be incorporated into the plan.

3. Draft US 36 BRT Service and Capital Program Opening Day/2035

Liz Rao (HNTB) referred to the US 36 BRT Summary Report as a more detailed description of what she would cover which included:

- Operating/Service Plan
- Capital Improvements Schedule
- FasTracks US 36 BRT Corridor Costs and Funding Reconciliation
- Final US 36 Program Commitment – by the end of July 2013

Liz Rao started by outlining the major components of US 36 BRT which were based on FTA criteria. They include specifications for: Running Way, Stations, Vehicles, Fare Collection, ITS and Branding.

Liz Rao then outlined the expected service headways for US 36 BRT (in 2015 and 2035) and noted that US 36 BRT will be coordinated and integrated with RTD's other services.

Next, Liz Rao presented the capital program, overall schedule and US 36 Costs and Remaining FasTracks Commitments, noting that many of the items have already been completed. She highlighted the remaining items and noted that a major goal of this process is to come to agreement on those remaining commitments by the end of July 2013.

Liz Rao discussed opportunities to accelerate funding including RTD's Risk Allocation Matrix which is projected to create a \$300 million savings for FasTracks to be added to the FasTracks Internal Savings Account (FISA). Pending board action, RTD has identified completion of US 36 BRT and the construction of North Metro to at least 72nd St. among the highest priority allocations for the FISA, in addition to other partially funded FasTracks projects.

Liz Rao asked the TAC to review the US 36 BRT Technical Report and provide comments by June 5. The project team will follow-up and present responses by the Joint PAC/TAC meeting on June 17.

Nadine Lee (RTD) commented on upcoming workshops and indicated that she felt there needed to be another, more focused, forum to discuss the various US 36 BRT activities through its construction. She suggested holding monthly workshops – separate from NAMS – to provide updates on design/construction and to discuss issues not included in NAMS. She indicated she plans to work with Audrey DeBarros (36 Commuting Solutions) and Heather Balsler (City of Louisville) to schedule. Chris Quinn (RTD) added that a monthly dialogue will be critical the program gets closer to opening day,

Jacob Riger (DRCOG) asked if the FISA money will be spent as accumulated or not until 2017. He also asked how the FISA money relates to the remaining US 36 BRT commitments. Chris Quinn responded that FISA is one way of accelerating the funding for the completion of US 36 BRT but that the timing of when it would be spent is unclear at this time.

Kevin Standbridge (Broomfield) asked about the remaining bike path commitment given that some of those improvements have already been made. He also asked how RTD is tracking the local match. Nadine Lee responded that the bike path money is being preserved for US 36 BRT and that RTD would need a letter from the communities if they wanted to roll the money into other commitments. Regarding local match, Liz Rao commented that in other corridors, it was the local governments who came together to make agreements on how to create a credit/match program and presented it to RTD for their consideration.

Tracey Winfree (Boulder) asked how the US 36 BRT service and program elements relate to other BRT projects across the country that HNTB has done and inquired as to whether there is anything that this corridor is missing.

Wayne Feuerborn (HNTB) commented that compared to other projects, US 36 is far exceeding general BRT expectations as it relates to capital investment and operating plan. He cited dedicated lanes, more frequent headways and 22-hour service span, and noted that the system is very comparable to LA Metro in term of characteristics. Andy Mountain confirmed that the group would like more information on how US 36 BRT compares to other BRT systems across the country at a future TAC meeting and they agreed.

Tracey Winfree noted concern about sufficient prepaid fare kiosks (especially in heavy loading areas), level boarding for rapid on/off (for both vehicles and stations) and a desire for US 36 specific branding.

George Gerstle (Boulder County) commented that no other corridor in FasTracks is tied to a certain dollar amount. Instead of saying, here's what we can do for this price, will the consultant team provide guidance on what we can do to make the system better/true BRT? He noted that the communities are aiming for stellar BRT, not just the minimum.

Debra Basket (Broomfield) asked the consultant team to provide more information on ITS and the visual changes that will take place on highway.

George Gerstle requested that the project team coordinate messaging with local governments and that they make sure local reps understand they are part of the discussion.

Heather Balsler (Louisville) asked about the format of the Telephone Town Hall and whether stakeholders would be properly prepared and represented. Andy Mountain (GBSM) and Liz Rao indicated that the Telephone Town Hall was scheduled for mid/late June to give them plenty of time to reach consensus on messaging.

4. Arterial BRT Connections

Dave Hollis (HNTB) provided an overview of the arterial BRT portion of the study. He began by outlining the considerations for defining arterial BRT which include service characteristics, running way, ITS/TSP, stations/stops/amenities, vehicles and branding.

Next, Dave Hollis discussed the study's methodology for identifying candidate arterial BRT routes. He showed a map of the key destinations in the study area which include schools/universities, performing arts venues, medical centers/hospitals and shopping centers. He then compared 2010 and 2035 inter-county travel patterns using DRCOG's compass and focus models and summarized the study team's initial observations.

He noted that more detailed information has been requested from DRCOG and it will be presented to the PAC and TAC at their June 17 meeting.

Next, Dave Hollis compared current and future population and land use densities (b/t 2010 and 2035) and summarized the project team's initial observations.

Dave Hollis then outlined the following three candidate arterial BRT routes and asked for TAC input on additional candidate corridors.

- Table Mesa PnR; Foothills Pkwy; SH 119 Longmont
- US 287 Between Broomfield and Longmont/US 36
- East/West Connections: Boulder, Louisville, Lafayette, and onto Brighton

George Gerstle (Boulder County) commented that the map with the candidate routes indicates SH 7 coming into Baseline Road. He asked whether the alternatives are limited to the specific roads/highways illustrated on the maps or if they along more general corridors. Dave Hollis responded that they are general and broad-based.

Tracey Winfree (Boulder) added that it is important from a capital perspective that US 36 is shown as going beyond Table Mesa on the maps.

Debra Basket (Broomfield) asked if the study would consider projected density for planned growth/development along the potential alignments (e.g. SH 7 b/t Sheridan and I-25). She asked if the future development was noted in DRCOG's plan and Jacob Riger (DRCOG) noted that it was.

George Gerstle added that the CU East Campus would also be growing. Jacob Riger (DRCOG) noted that the model analysis needs to stay within regional control total model.

Heather Balser (Louisville) asked about the service criteria for the routes – level of service, expectations for the future service levels and boarding. Dave Hollis responded that route criteria will be provided by RTD; HNTB has provided examples of criteria from other parts of the country. Chris Quinn (RTD) commented that RTD will define specific service standards recognizing these will be different than any services RTD currently has. Dave Hollis added that there could be multiple types of services.

Troy Russ (Louisville) asked the consultant team for the definition of arterial BRT and how enhanced local service differs from BRT. He noted that the BRT map shows that 96th in Louisville has service, but it does not. He does not want to see an exclusive bus lane, but would like signal improvements on 42nd and 96th.

Kevin Standbridge asked what arterial BRT is designed to serve. He noted that the key destinations map is confusing because it focuses only on special generators but doesn't account for key employment centers and other key destinations. He recommended dropping that map altogether or combining the key destinations and key density maps to provide a better overall picture.

Dave Hollis concluded by outlining the next steps for arterial BRT.

5. North I-25 Reverse Commute

Jerry Mugg (HNTB) provided an overview of the I-25 Reverse Commute portion of the study noting that a full analysis of the issues and proposed solutions (if warranted) would be recommended by end of July 2013. He noted that the Boulder travel market to and from Denver needs some exclusive priority service, but said that the prevailing question is whether the reverse commute between downtown and US-36 needs some kind of priority service too.

Jerry Mugg presented the study team's assessment methods. He outlined existing and projected travel and transit times for the reverse commute.

Jerry Mugg then gave a summary of the team's initial findings which included:

- AM Reverse Commute (Outbound)
 - Downtown to US 36 - little to no current travel delay
 - The Managed Lanes currently being constructed on US 36 will provide exclusive service
- PM Reverse Commute (Inbound)
 - US 36 to Downtown – Some slight delays (3 to 4 minutes current) occur due to southbound downtown backup
 - Localized I-25 traffic congestion – not systematic
 - I-25 Valley Section improvements underway
 - Managed Lanes on US 36 and I-25 North will provide exclusive service
- Downtown street network provides reliable travel times (2 minutes from Denver Union Station to I-25)
- Reverse Commute traffic is estimated to grow (12% to 13%) and the reverse commute delays won't reach current Peak Commute levels beyond the planning horizon of this study(> 2045)

Troy Russ (Louisville) asked about the baseline indicated on the travel time maps. Jerry Mugg responded that it is scheduled running time of the current buses. Troy Russ followed up by indicating that the bus schedule includes congestion delays already and asked that the study team consider the actual running time of the reverse commute in terms of transit to better assess the problem and determine if the schedule could be faster and more reliable. He also asked how the study team would account for non-recurring events like accidents and weather

Kevin Standbridge (Broomfield) asked if the study team could also correlate ridership to transit travel time.

Kevin added that transit reliability is a high priority for corridor stakeholders, noting that they won't feel like they have reliability with BRT if they're subject to congestion on general lanes around downtown.

George Gerstle (Boulder County) asked that the consultant team look at both short term and long term options, including routes beyond the I-25 ROW.

Andy Mountain (GBSM) indicated that a detailed tech memo would be issued shortly, and that there will be time to discuss following TAC review of information.

6. Wrap-Up & Next Steps

Andy Mountain (GBSM) provided a summary of the following action/wrap-up items:

- MS Office Outlook invites will continue to be sent out
- Meeting Questions will be distributed by Tues. May 28
- The project team will provide a definition of Arterial BRT and the I-25 Reverse Commute Technical Memo
- Agendas and presentations will be printed for each meeting; all other items will be emailed.

The next meeting is of the Joint PAC/TAC (Collaboration Summit). It will be focused on Study Process and Goals & Objectives.

Collaboration Summit
Wed. May 29
7:30-11:30
Westminster Recreation Center

The next TAC Meeting/Workshop will focus on Northwest and North Metro Rail.

Thur. June 6
1:00-5:00
Broomfield City & County Building (basement Bal Swan Room)

Meeting Attendees

- Eric Anderson (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
- Heather Basler (City of Louisville)
- Debra Baskett (City and County of Broomfield)
- Carl Castillo (City of Boulder)
- David Cook (CU - Boulder)
- Andrea Cunningham (GBSM, Inc.)
- Audrey DeBarros (36 Commuting Solutions)
- Dave Downing (City of Westminster)
- Nataly Erving (RTD)
- Wayne Feuerborn (HNTB Corporation)
- George Gerstle (Boulder County)
- Randy Grauberger (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
- Phil Greenwald (City of Longmont)
- David Hollis (HNTB Corporation)

- David Krutsinger (CDOT)
- Nadine Lee (RTD)
- Shawn Lewis (City of Longmont)
- Jillian Mauer (Pinyon Environmental)
- Eric Miller (RTD)
- Beth Moyski (Town of Superior)
- Andy Mountain (GBSM, Inc.)
- Jerry Mugg (HNTB Corporation)
- Aric Otzelberger (City of Westminster)
- Gene Putman (NATA)
- Chris Quinn (RTD)
- Liz Rao (HNTB Corporation)
- Paul Rayl (City of Lafayette)
- Jacob Riger (DRCOG)
- Troy Russ (City of Louisville)
- Jeanne Shreve (NATA)
- Marta Sipeki (RTD)
- Kevin Standbridge (City and County of Broomfield)
- Karen Westover (City of Lafayette)
- Tracy Winfree (City of Boulder)