



Draft Meeting Summary

Gold Line Local Governments Team

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Wellington E. Webb Municipal Office Building

201 West Colfax Avenue, Denver

4th Floor, Room 4.G.2.

Meeting Goals and Agenda

The meeting goals were to:

- Review the outcomes of the Neighborhood Specific Issue Focused Teams
- Provide a project update and review Level 3 Detailed Evaluation information, including preliminary recommendations on the Alternatives to carry forward
- Identify and discuss Detailed Evaluation issues of importance to LGT representatives
- Gather LGT input on information to be presented at the February 5 and 7 Public Workshops
- Prepare LGT for the February 15 Agency Milestone Workshop (Detailed Evaluation)

The meeting agenda included a review of the outcomes of the Neighborhood Specific Issue Focused Teams; review of the Level 3 Detailed Evaluation presentation for the Public Workshops, including findings and preliminary recommendations; and preparation for the February 15 agency workshop.

Meeting Handouts

- Meeting Agenda
- Gold Line EIS Contact Reports for Issued Focused Team meetings
- Detailed Evaluation Maps of Alternatives (3, 6DD, 6G, 7BB)

Preliminary Items

Bob Kochevar, City and County of Denver, welcomed the Gold Line Local Governments Team (LGT). After introductions, Julie McKay, facilitator, reviewed the meeting goals agenda, which were approved by the group.

Neighborhood Specific Issue Focused Teams

Andy Mountain, consultant Public Involvement manager, summarized the recent round of Issue Focused Team meetings, which began with an orientation meeting of all teams in early January and were conducted as a partnership between the LGT and the RTD FasTracks Gold Line Project Team (Project Team). Andy reviewed the purpose, schedule, and key issues for each of the teams. He also described the size and composition of them, noting that there was good representation of both those who support and those who oppose the alignments through northwest Denver (Alternatives 6DD, 6G, and 7BB).

Andy distributed the written summaries from each meeting, so that LGT members can review the input gathered. These reports will also be sent to meeting participants for additional comment. (Note: The summary for the January 29, 2007, Harlan/Sheridan Issue Focused Team is forthcoming.) In addition, Andy highlighted the following:

- There is near-universal support for continuing to evaluate Alternative 3 (Electric Rail on the BNSF/UP alignment), particularly from members of the west end communities.
- The teams recommended that the Project Team continue to find ways to increase the amount of exclusive Right-of-Way (ROW) for the northwest Denver Alternatives. They are interested in reducing travel times for Light Rail Transit (LRT) or Streetcar in order to ensure use of the transit system. In particular, the 38th Avenue teams expressed an interest in more detailed evaluation to better understand the impacts of reducing the number of vehicular travel lanes on 38th Avenue to accomplish this goal.
- There is significant interest in parking issues for all of the Alternatives. In particular, these include the location of park-n-Rides and how station locations may impact on-street parking in neighborhoods.

After reviewing this input, Andy noted that a key issue for the LGT is the recommendation to increase opportunities for exclusive ROW (second bullet above). Specifically, there is some community interest in exploring the option of reducing

38th Avenue to one vehicular travel lane for this purpose. LGT representatives made the following comments:

- Wally Pulliam, RTD Board, suggested that it would be helpful to know what other community members– those that did not participate in a team– think about this issue.
- Rick Garcia, City and County of Denver, asked how this suggestion evolved. Andy speculated that the community is gradually recognizing that the Alternatives need to be competitive with one another. Thus, there is an increased willingness to consider reducing the number of traffic lanes on 38th Street in order to make the northwest Denver alignments competitive with the railroad one.
- As a follow up, Rick indicated that the Project Team can continue to look at this issue as time and resources allow. He, however, is concerned about how this option will affect the City and County of Denver’s plans to implement (including zoning) a “Main street” concept for 38th Street. Parking is critical to this vision. He also noted that the Gold Line’s parking study is based on current uses.
- Bob Kochevar added that there is a need to clarify for the public what “losing parking” means. There is a need to be specific about where parking would be lost and what kind it would be.
- Judy Montero, City and County of Denver, clarified that there is residential street parking between Bryant and Decatur on 38th Street.

During the discussion, Liz Telford, RTD Project Manager, clarified that the Gold Line has conducted preliminary studies of traffic and parking on 38th Street. She noted that additional discussion is needed to determine how the Alternatives can best operate in-street (in mixed flow) on 38th Street. She suggested that, as a result of the Issue Focused Team meetings, the public is more informed about the operating issues related to this approach.

Level 3 Detailed Evaluation

Don Ulrich, consultant Project Manager, reviewed the findings of Level 3 Detailed Evaluation, including the project’s preliminary recommendations. This review took the form of providing the LGT with a “preview” of the presentation for the February 5 and 7 Public Workshops. The LGT also referred to the maps of the four Alternatives that were provided during the meeting.

During the preview, the LGT discussed project issues and also provided input on the presentation itself. The following sections summarize both.

LGT Discussion

Issues discussed by the LGT included:

- **Project Schedule:** Don Ulrich noted that the selection of a Preferred Alternative may be delayed because of the continuing negotiations with the BNSF and UP railroads. However, this may not necessarily affect the project's schedule because, if necessary, two Alternatives can be evaluated in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which is on track for December 2007. However, because a Preferred Alternative is needed to begin Preliminary Engineering and finalize the environmental documentation.
- **Project Budget:** Rick Garcia asked whether the capital cost estimates for the four Alternatives will be revised because of increasing construction costs. To clarify, Don Ulrich explained that the capital cost estimates are calculated in 2007 dollars. The project uses FTA's escalation factor, but has the option to use a higher one. Liz Telford added that the project has not escalated the 2007 numbers because there are different points of view over which number to use. She also added that unit costs of construction have been updated to take into account the West Corridor and nationwide experience. At the end of the discussion, Kevin Nichols, City of Arvada, clarified that the project budget of \$463.5 is the number to meet on opening day in 2014, which Liz Telford confirmed.
- **Alternative 7BB (Streetcar):** Throughout the discussion and in reviewing the Technical Team's preliminary recommendations, LGT members made the following comments on the Streetcar Alternative:
 - **Parking Needs:** In response to a question from Stephanie Syner, City and County of Denver, Liz Telford explained that all four Alternatives were modeled with seven stations. Alternative 7BB was modeled with only one walk-on station.
 - **Bus Service:** In response to Jeanne Shreve's comment that the public will be interested in knowing how Streetcar compares to bus service (both existing and planned), Liz Telford confirmed that the DEIS will include a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative that will evaluate bus service in relation to the No Action and other build Alternatives. This analysis will talk place in Summer 2007.
 - **Access to Denver Union Station (DUS):** Stephanie Syner noted that the public will be interested in seeing how streetcars access DUS.

- Performance of Alternative: Karen Good, City and County of Denver, suggested that the Project Team focus on optimizing the performance of the Streetcar. Liz Telford added that the Project Team intends to do this and will, in part, focus on areas where Streetcar would operate in mixed flow and where it would have exclusive ROW.
 - Larry Schultz, City of Wheat Ridge, suggested that if the project selects Alternative 3, another option may be to pursue Streetcar as a demonstration project.
- Skip Fischer, Adams County, indicated that Adams County continues to prefer Alternative 3 for the Gold Line.
 - David Heller, Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), noted that if Commuter Rail or Streetcar technology is selected for the Gold Line, the regional plan will need to be amended. Liz Telford noted that the regional plan describes the technology for the Gold Line in more generic terms however, if the plan does need to be amended then RTD will do so.

LGT Input on Public Workshop Presentation

Here is the list of recommended edits from the LGT to the draft PowerPoint presentation for the Public Workshops:

Slide	Title	Edit
3	What is the Gold Line EIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Budget number should be \$463 million
5	Gold Line DEIS Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graphically indicate which star we are at in the process ● Extend schedule to show final design, construction, and opening date, so that the public will know when they will begin to experience impacts
9	Recap of Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delete this slide but generally summarize Level 1 analysis in Slide 8: "Where are we in the process."
10	Recap of Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delete this slide but generally summarize Level 2 analysis in Slide 8: "Where are we in the process."
11	What We Heard Throughout the Planning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update first bullet to say, "Issue Focused Teams and general-public comments identified greatest interest in:" so that sources (activities) of input are known
14	Electric Rail - BNSF/UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add note indicated "Original FasTracks alignment." (Locally Preferred Alternative from Major Investment Study) ● Confirm that slide shows FRA-compliant

		EMU
16	What are the Differences Between the BNSF/UP and Alternative Alignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make “Main Street” two words in sub-bullet under Alternate Alignment Considerations • Include display boards that show Alignments
23	Key Discriminators Among the Final Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that parkland (4f) impacts include property acquisition and should be indicated as such, including the acres to be acquired, not just impacted • Distinguish between mixed flow operations with exclusive ROW operations in relation to traffic impacts. For example, Streetcar may be moderate-high for traffic impacts. • Show “No Build” and “Best Bus” so public can make “how is it better than the bus system” comparison. There will be questions about the advantages of Streetcar versus bus, particularly given current northwest Denver bus service and FasConnects. • Update EMU Cost to “\$383 M” (figure in presentation was incorrect)
24	Technical Team Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the term “carry forward” to indicate that the DEIS will likely include these Alternatives

Next Steps and Action Items

The Next Steps for Detailed Evaluation include:

- Public Workshops on February 5 (Highlands Masonic Center, Denver) and February 7 (Arvada Center, Arvada), 2007. Both meetings will be held from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- Agency Milestone Workshop on February 15. The meeting will be held at the RTD FasTracks Office in Denver from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. This workshop will consist of the LGT and Agency Work Group (AWG).

Liz Telford noted that the goal of the workshop will be to gather input and assess levels of support from the LGT and AWG for the project’s preliminary recommendations.

The following Action Items were identified during the meeting:

- The Project Team will incorporate the LGT's input into the presentation for the Public Workshops. (See table above.)

Meeting Participants

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|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Skip Fischer | Adams County, County Commission |
| 2. Jeanne Shreve | Adams County |
| 3. Kevin Nichols | City of Arvada |
| 4. Judy Montera | City and County of Denver, City Council |
| 5. Stephanie Syner | City and County of Denver |
| 6. Bob Kochevar | City and County of Denver |
| 7. Karen Good | City and County of Denver |
| 8. David Heller | DRCOG |
| 9. Tim Murray | Jefferson County |
| 10. Larry Schulz | City of Wheat Ridge, City Council |
| 11. Steve Nguyen | City of Wheat Ridge |
| 12. Wally Pulliam | RTD Board, District L |
| 13. Liz Telford | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 14. Bob Boot | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 15. Don Ulrich | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 16. Julie McKay | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 17. Tim Baldwin | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 18. Jonathan Spencer | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 19. Chris Proud | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 20. Angela Brand | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 21. Ashland Vaughn | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 22. Andy Mountain | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 23. Mark Beudermann | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 24. Genevieve Hutchison | RTD FasTracks Gold Line Team |
| 25. Jeff Leib | Denver Post |