

September 2008 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Update

The following is an update on the progress of the RTD North Metro DEIS.

RTD FasTracks Update – Aug. 21, 2008

RTD FasTracks Budget & Annual Program Evaluation (APE)

The RTD Board of Directors was presented an overview on Thursday, Aug. 21 of the status of FasTracks, including the financial challenges that the program is facing. If the cost of construction materials continues to increase at a rapid rate and long-term revenues continue to remain in a slump, the price tag of the project may increase to \$7.9 billion to build the entire program by the planned 2017 schedule.

On Sept. 2 the revised cost estimate to build North Metro, \$1.065 billion, was presented to the RTD Board of Directors. There are three areas where costs have gone up for North Metro – railroad right-of-way, the alignment change from the UP to BNSF Railway and construction materials.

Special meetings to discuss possible alternatives for North Metro will be announced soon.

As was the case a year ago, RTD's three general alternatives for moving forward with FasTracks include:

- Build what can be afforded by 2017
- Extend the schedule but stay within the voter-approved revenue limits
- Seek out additional revenue sources

No decisions have been made yet this year on the above three alternatives. Last year, consideration of these same three alternatives resulted in the FasTracks Team pursuing a Public-Private Partnership to provide additional revenue.

Please look for announcements for the special meetings on these alternatives in September and October.

What Vehicle Technology Will North Metro Use?

Last year, RTD selected Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) technology for the North Metro Corridor over other technologies as the recommended alternative because it was the most efficient and cost-effective alternative at the time.

When we evaluated the environmental impacts and the cost of both the Electric and Diesel Multiple Units in 2007, the price of diesel was \$2.52/gallon. This year, we are all watching fuel prices increase dramatically.

While DMU was the recommended technology, RTD will now re-analyze the capital and operating costs of DMU and Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) technology. The project will also re-analyze the environmental impacts of the two vehicle technologies. These analyses will be conducted in the DEIS and a final recommendation will be provided at its conclusion.

RTD will Reanalyze EMU and DMU Vehicle Technologies



North Metro to Parallel the BNSF Corridor between Denver Union Station and Commerce City

RTD announced this spring that North Metro would move service over to parallel the BNSF Railway corridor between Denver Union Station (DUS) and Sand Creek Junction at I-76. This move became necessary when RTD determined it would not be purchasing the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad right-of-way it previously hoped to use between DUS and I-76. RTD can tie the BNSF corridor to the UP Boulder Branch right-of-way south of I-76, as RTD still anticipates agreements with the UP Railroad Company for purchase of that section.

Paralleling the BNSF corridor in the south refines the definition of North Metro's Build Alternative. The project team's preliminary analysis of this change looks promising, and the refined Build Alternative's impacts to our human and natural environments will be detailed in the DEIS. The DEIS will be available for public review in early 2009.

Map Shows Location of North Metro's BNSF Corridor Alignment and Associated Station Options



The Station Site in the BNSF Corridor

The Globeville/Elyria neighborhood will receive a station site in the BNSF corridor (this replaces the Swansea/Elyria neighborhood station site which would have been served by the UP track). Many station options have been developed along the BNSF alignment on the north and south sides of I-70. Two will be further analyzed in the DEIS, but only one will be selected for the Globeville/Elyria neighborhood. The options are named Coliseum/Stock Show *South* and Coliseum/Stock Show *North*. These two station option sites are depicted in the above map.

Next Public Meetings

Please plan to attend our public meetings in September – meetings are scheduled Sept. 24 and 25. We will discuss North Metro’s refined Build Alternative. We will present refinements to the station options in the 18-mile corridor, and we plan to provide results of the additional DMU and EMU technology. The locations for the public meetings are:

Sept. 24
Skyview High School
8990 York St.
Thornton, CO 80229

Sept. 25
Adams City High School
4625 E. 68th Ave.
Commerce City, CO 80022

North Metro Schedule Update

With our new analysis of the refined Build Alternative and re-analysis of vehicle technology, the North Metro DEIS should be available for public review in January 2009. Public hearings will follow in February.

Tell us what you think

Send us your comments via the Web site, e-mail, fax or mail:

Project Web site: www.RTD-FasTracks.com. (Click on North Metro.)

E-mail: comments@northmetro.com

Fax: 303-693-7738

Mail:

Denver Union Station
Dave Shelley, Project Manager
1701 Wynkoop, Ste. 215
Denver, CO 80202