



## Meeting Notes

**Meeting:** RMRA Feasibility Study Steering Committee

**Date/Time:** July 18, 2008/10:00a.m.

**Location:** Golden

**Attendees:**

Charles Choi, RTD	Richard Morton, Castle Rock PW	Chuck Trout, City of Westminster
Gene Putman, City of Thornton	David Averill, NFRMPO	Ann Skinner, Castle Rock
George Scheuernstuhl, DRCOG	Harry Dale, CCC	Bill Moore, City of Pueblo
Tom Mauser, CDOT	Will Kerns, Jefferson County	Flo Raitano, I-70 Coalition
Diane Mitsch Busch, Routt County	Greg Schroeder, Eagle County	Janice Finch, Denver Public Works
David Menter, City of Colorado Springs	Wayne Williams, Pikes Peak RTA	Terence Quinn, Douglas County
Pete Morlan, City of Trinidad	Allan Brown, PBS&J	Alex Metcalf, TEMS
Charlie Quandel, Quandel Consultants	Chip Kraft, TEMS	Andy Mountain, GBSM
Cody Wertz, GBSM		

### Agenda Items:

1. Introductions & Roll Call
2. Chairman's Report
3. Feasibility Study Report – Alex Metcalf, TEMS
  - a. Public Involvement/Outreach
    - i. PI Plan
    - ii. Draft FAQs
  - b. Data Collection/ Coordination with other studies
  - c. Market Analysis
  - d. Engineering/Operations
4. Other Business
5. Next RMRA Steering Committee Meeting

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### 1. Introductions & Roll Call

Self-introductions were made.

### 2. Chairman's Report

No report was given.

### 3. Feasibility Study Report

- a. Alex Metcalf presented the updated schedule.
- b. Charlie Quandel reported on railroad data collection. He is working on getting the Consultant team added to the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT's) Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) on negotiating a separate confidentiality agreement with the railroads to allow acquisition of track charts and other sensitive information with which to conduct the study on existing rail corridors. He is coordinating with Tammy Lang of CDOT. It was suggested that Tammy attend the

August Steering Committee meeting to report on progress. Harry Dale stated that he would contact Tammy and see if she can attend at 9:00a.m.

- c. Alex discussed their approach to considering potential rail corridors on I-25. Tom Mauser pointed out that the recommendations of the Rail Relocation Study to shift freight rail out of the corridor is not necessarily a given, and that the Rail Feasibility Study (RFS) should consider the possibility that freight rail will still be using the existing rail corridors. The Steering Committee suggested that the study should consider the following three scenarios: share tracks and right of way of BNSF and UPRR with no bypass; use of right of way with freight (other than local) moved to the bypass, and a new rail corridor and tracks. Alex stated that he wants to give more thought to the level of detail needed in studying passenger rail service on the existing corridors without the bypass, and will report the result at the August meeting.
- d. Alex reported on other data collection efforts. Meetings have been conducted or scheduled with the I-70 Coalition and their Land Use Study consultants, CDOT, the railroads, various Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and RTD's FasTracks.
- e. Alex presented the updated Study Area Map, which now shows "corridors" as opposed to specific routes. They are intended to represent flexibility of route locations within the corridors. It was noted that the width of the corridor north of Denver needs to be widened to include Boulder and Greeley so it's understood that those cities would also be considered for stations.
- f. Chip Kraft discussed the development of the Trackman™ Database. He has already collected and incorporated publicly-available track charts. As mentioned above, the team is working on obtaining new track charts from all private railroads, and anticipates receiving these once the Confidentiality Agreements are signed. Once obtained, they will be compared and reconciled before being used in the system. The team is also inputting unit cost data for the area to produce cost estimates. Costs will be produced for new alignments, speed improvements, and line capacity upgrades.
- g. Charlie reported on field data collection activities. They are in the process of conducting site visits of the corridors. They will produce a photo log as part of this data collection effort.
- h. A question was asked about whether quiet zone criteria would be met in the study. After discussion, it was agreed that it would be in the study's best interest to ensure cost estimates for improvements at crossings assume compliance with these criteria in order to reduce the financial burden on local governments, and to promote a positive image of the rail system in the public eye by promoting responsible, quiet system design. However the cost of improvements to adjacent highways, such as signal pre-emption, is beyond the scope of the study. Alex noted that the alternatives would be developed following the concept of a "sealed corridor" regarding gates and other safety measures; they will not have grade separations at all crossings.
- i. A question was asked about the issue of work the planners in Steamboat Springs and Routt County are doing on access routes to Steamboat Springs. The study asked that any information on their work be sent to the TEMS team.
- j. Chip discussed the four categories of rail technology that will be considered in the study, as listed below. He clarified that the study will not consider nor evaluate every possible technology. Instead, it will evaluate technologies in terms of performance criteria and will refer to a representative train of each of the four classes rather than specific train technologies.
  - Incremental Rail, Conventional Amtrak: 79 mph; conventional heavy diesel; no tilt; high center of gravity (CG)
  - Incremental Rail, Talgo T21: 110-130 mph; tilts; lower CG; lighter; more powerful; much quieter; either diesel or electric
  - New Alignment, Siemens ICE: 150-185 mph; all electric; in new, dedicated ROW; lower superelevation rates; longer radii; overhead catenary

- New Alignment, Transrapid Maglev: 250 mph

The committee discussed the desire for the train's ride to be comfortable. This was defined loosely as "the ability to drink a cup of coffee without spilling." Chip stated that this criteria is usually defined as a maximum of 0.1 G.

- k. Alex discussed some of the evaluation factors and the process to screen alternatives – population projections, origin-destination data, time, cost, schedule, mode and rider bias.
- l. Alex discussed population forecasts in the study area as input to the ridership model. The group advised that terminology should be carefully considered. Some communities do not see low growth rates as being a bad thing, so the adjective "pessimistic" shouldn't be used. Alex replied that the terms high, trend, and low would be used. Alex also reported that they are working on developing a stated preference survey for input to the ridership model and evaluation process.
- m. Harry noted that sustainability will be an issue that will make electric technology more palatable particularly for Boulder and the I-70 corridor communities. Harry also noted that the RFS must address how it will interface with FasTracks.
- n. Andy Mountain presented a draft Fact Sheet for the group to review. Comments are due to Harry by July 25, 2008. Several committee members expressed concerns with the term "High Speed" with respect to the title of the study. Those committee members were concerned that some communities would be concerned about safety, noise impacts, and other quality of life issues given that term. But it was also pointed out that this is a criteria for the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) designation, and so the term was an important distinction. The group agreed to retain the term, but to ensure that the term is well defined, and that study messaging be clear to address the objectives of lower speeds, safety, and quiet use through communities.
- o. Andy reported that the draft Stakeholder Outreach Approach is currently under review by the RFS study team and Project Management Consultant and will be distributed to the Steering Committee soon.
- p. Andy reported that the outreach team is preparing for a statewide media launch, is organizing the county-based teams, and developing the approach to the Community Partnership Program. County-based teams on the I-70 Mountain Corridor will be implemented by piggy-backing with the county-wide teams from the I-70 Coalition's Rail Land Use Study, and adding Garfield and Mesa Counties. Denver Metro and the I-25 corridor will be handled at the MPO level, and Transportation Planning Regions will be included as well. Andy clarified that the primary target audience of these County/MPO/TPR meetings would be elected officials/senior staff, but it is expected that staff level folks would be brought in as the study progresses. He indicated that in order to complete the Scoping Report by the end of September, the team would need to conduct the three scoping workshops with the Input Teams by mid-September.
- q. Harry reminded the group that this study is a public process and that all documents are subject to open records laws.
- r. Harry noted that an increased level of coordination with the I-70 Coalition and their RFS Land Use Study would be beneficial to ensure efficient study progress and consistency, and reported that he invited Flo Raitano and Will Kerns to participate on the Steering Committee for that purpose.
- s. Tom reported that the Rail Governance Study is complete, and that an updated copy of the report would be distributed to the group. Any draft versions of the report are obsolete since some substantial changes were made in the final version.
- t. Harry presented the communication and reporting structure for the study. The reporting hierarchy is as follows: RMRA Board, RMRA RFS Steering Committee, Project Management Consultant (PBS&J), RFS Study Team (TEMS/Quandel). He stated that it was important that all Steering

Committee and Board members be aware of this structure and agree with it, as henceforth all communications and reporting will conform to it. No objections were noted.

- u. Harry also noted that all presentations would now go on the RMRA website.

#### 4. Other Business

Harry asked the group whether the current meeting schedule is working. The group replied that it was, so Steering Committee meetings will continue to occur on the Friday morning of the Board meeting.

No Other Business was discussed.

#### 5. Next RMRA Steering Committee Meeting

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2008. If Tammy Lang is able to attend to discuss railroad MOUs, it will begin at 9:00 a.m. If not, it will start at 10:00 as usual.

Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
Coordinate with Tammy Lang to attend Steering Committee Meeting	Harry/Mark	8/1/2008
Provide Steering Committee Update on three scenarios to be used for the study.	Alex	8/22/2008
Provide Harry with comments on fact sheet	Steering Committee	7/25/2008

Please contact **Mark Boggs** with **PBS&J** at **303-221-7275** if there are any changes or questions with these meeting notes. These notes will be considered final unless comments are received within seven days of distribution. Although comments will be incorporated, as appropriate, only major revisions will be redistributed.