

Meeting Minutes

Project:	Front Range Passenger Rail	
Subject:	Team Chartering Meeting	
Meeting Date:	Wednesday, August 28, 2019	
Location:	CDOT - 2829 W Howard Place 80204 Denver	
Attendees:	Bill Van Meter, Rail Commission Carla Perez, HDR Chris Proud, HDR Cinamon Watson, BluePrint Danielle Smith, Triunity David Krutsinger, CDOT David Singer, CDOT Eric Richardson, CDOT Jeffrey Dawson, CDOT Jeffrey Range, CDR Jennifer Webster, BluePrint Jonathan Bartsch, CDR Justin Fox, AECOM Katie Angell, HDR	Lindsey Sousa, AECOM Mandy Whorton, Peak Consulting Matthew Inzeo, CDOT Meghan Boydston, HDR Paul Jesaitis, CDOT Peter Rickenhauser, Rail Commission Randy Grauberger, Rail Commission Staff Rebecca White, CDOT Rick Klein, Rail Commission Sal Pace, Rail Commission Sophie Shulman, CDOT Spencer Dodge, Rail Commission Staff Steve Long, HDR

This summary reflects the general notes and action items for this meeting to the best of the knowledge of the note taker. If you have any questions or find any errors, please contact Meghan Boydston at meghan.boydston@hdrinc.com.

Introductions, Chartering Purpose and Icebreaker

Project manager, Randy Grauberger kicked off the meeting and set the tone and purpose. He explained that notice to proceed was effective Friday, August 23rd. Randy discussed historic transportation events in Colorado and discussed the potential for this to become a monumental transportation improvement in the state. Jonathan Bartsch facilitated introductions and reviewed agenda. Attendees paired up for roundtable introductions. Jonathan described the purpose of this chartering session:

- For the Front Range Passenger Rail Service Development Plan and National Environmental Policy Act (FRPR) project team to identify project success factors, clarify team roles and responsibilities, and identify project risks and initial strategies to address them.

Project Overview

Carla Perez provided a history of rail studies in Colorado. She described how transportation is changing and how this project can leverage new trends. Carla explained the project team structure. There are three entities teaming up for this project, including the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (Rail Commission), Colorado Department of

Transportation (CDOT), and the project team. The project area is generally defined as Fort Collins to Pueblo. Carla introduced each task and project team members gave a task overview.

Task: Project Initiation, Management, and Continuing Requirements

Chris Proud discussed his role in project coordination and explained that he is tasked with keeping team members on schedule. Chris asked attendees to give feedback on timeline. He explained the phases of the project and explained engagement activities are key to this task.

Questions/Comments:

- Randy's contract will end before the project timeline ends.
- The CDOT Office of Policy and the CDOT Office of Communications should be on the organizational chart.
- The project team should keep in mind that the project is part of a rail system (SW Chief/Amtrak), rather than an isolated project.
- The legislative session is January to May, so project team should plan accordingly.
- It is important to recognize the progress CDOT has made, including 17 rail studies, work on planning mobility hubs, etc. FRPR should capitalize on this work.
- The project tasks will be concurrent rather than consecutive.
- Colorado transportation investments that are precursors to FRPR include Bustang and RTD rail. These projects help educate the public on transit. CDOT has done work around corridors that will also help this process.
- Region 1 is working on Mobility Hubs at Burnham Yards and at State Highway 7 and I-25; these projects will be beneficial to FRPR.
- The FRPR messaging should be consistent and avoid unmet expectations.
- The project team needs to define what the project is before the message is determined.

Task: Strategic Engagement

Jeffrey Range explained that this project is unique because of factors like the schedule, communities affected, and the timeline. As a result, the team has created a strategic engagement approach that is inclusive. The team is going to be asking for input from the public on a continuous basis. This will avoid any surprises for the project team and also help the public to feel included. The social and political risk assessment allows the team to understand stakeholders' interests and needs and the team will tailor activities accordingly. Jeffrey explained the strategic engagement process diagram. The most important components are the segment stakeholder coalitions and the corridor stakeholder coalitions. They are made up of key community members and will be leading public involvement in their communities. A couple of representatives from the segment coalitions will be members of a corridor-wide coalition.

Questions/Comments:

- What is the timeline for segment stakeholder coalitions? The team will identify key community members and start interviewing them. They will start with the corridor wide coalition and then they will begin the segment stakeholder coalitions. However, there was some discussion that this order may be reversed; the segment coalitions may occur first.

- The enthusiasm in Pueblo area is significant and the project team needs to find people who have dedication and enthusiasm to be part of teams. The project team should avoid offending those who are not selected. Jeffrey will develop a list of people who are interested in the process.
- There are some sensitive questions around jurisdictions, i.e. Longmont; is it in the North or Central segment?
- The coalitions will provide input and help build champions for the project.
- A communication plan has several pieces. The questions that will be answered in the communications plan are: What do we need to communicate and when? The public is looking for information and wants to help. What do we request for communication back? There needs to be one source of information.
- The project team should allow everyone to help that wants to help, maybe as advisory groups, so people have a sense of ownership. Sal Pace has a list of 5,000 supporters of rail who have signed past petitions. Who is responsible for figuring out governance, finance and district boundaries?
- In regard to the coalitions, the project team should be mindful of tapping into community leaders and educating them. Before determining “what” needs to be discussed with coalitions, figure out the about “why”, as people will jump to the potential problems of the project.

Task: Political Engagement

Cinamon Watson explained that this project team will be situationally aware and provide for bidirectional communication. The team will identify persuasion points or bring pressure. The team will be working with communications and other team members. The CDOT policy office and has already started working on this. They will manage social/political risk but will hit triage at some point.

Questions/Comments:

- Make sure the district and tax structure does not get overlooked.
- There are already coalitions in place that the team can take advantage of, like US 34 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL). There are other PEL coalitions that can be used as opportunities for communication.
- The segment coalitions are important because some members of the public are more experienced in working on coalitions than others. The Rail Commission is also like a coalition.

Task: Pre – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Mandy Whorton explained that NEPA is a decision-making process. The goal is to get some of the main issues worked out before NEPA starts, like looking at a range of alternatives. The team will make sure the public’s voice is heard. This team wants to figure out where to focus. This will make NEPA easier.

Task: Service Development Plan (SDP) and Engineering

Justin Fox explained that the SDP group will figure out the FRPR speed, technology, location, etc. The SDP group will leverage past planning efforts. Early coordination with the Federal

Railroad Administration (FRA) is very important. FRA may administer grants. Justin explained the four elements of the SDP.

Steve Long explained that the biggest engineering challenge is to determine what can be completed by the beginning of the legislative session. The project team has to use what has been developed in the past to meet the schedule. The team needs to figure out what needs to be defined by the end of December.

Questions/Comments:

- The team may also identify “cons”. NEPA will address needs which can be the same as “cons”. The needs build off the purpose, and identify the needs for transportation in the state.
- The phasing strategy is different for different demographic populations. Residents in the north Denver metro area are upset about tollways and perception that they do not get a ‘fair share’ of investments in their communities. As a result, people in the north are not supporting certain CDOT projects. The project team should think through how to gain their support and be aware of phasing complications.
- Will the SDP work with the railroads? Justin replied that the rail companies will be involved early on.
- The Union Pacific Railroad Commission member Sara Cassidy has resigned from Commission, but has already been replaced by UP’s Nathan Anderson from Salt Lake City. He is excited to be a Commission member.

Task: NEPA

Mandy explained that this process is informed by the “One Federal Decision” and the team will be preparing for this during the pre-NEPA phase and implementing during the NEPA phase.

Questions/Comments:

- What is timeline around NEPA? Mandy responded that once the notice of intent to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is submitted, there are two years to complete it. Most rail projects have taken longer than that. There are some projects that have taken 20 or more years. T-REX had eight years of planning in advance. The pressure in the Pre-NEPA phase is to get work done in one year to prepare for NEPA. In order to meet that, the team needs to be focused. The team is trying to get most of the decision-making into the pre-NEPA phase.
- There is a Purpose and Need for both SDP and NEPA, how do these work together? Mandy responded that each agency has a different definition for Purpose and Need, but these should be aligned. The team will need to figure out the lead federal agency for NEPA.

Vision

Jonathan and Jeffrey explained that this is a high level discussion and there will be subsequent discussions in September. The project team wants input from everyone. The following ideas were provided for the vision by meeting attendees:

- Improved travel time reliability.
- Stress free.
- Function in all-weather.
- Quality of journey.
- Increased productivity of people on train.
- Allow people to show up to work having already worked on train.
- User Experience, including ticket sales and station environment.
- Supporting economic development and new nodes around station area.
- Maintaining economic competitiveness as a state.
- Improves travel choice for passengers and movement of freight, companies would want to locate here if employees could take the train.
- Affordability and accessibility for all – the project must have robust first and last mile options and affordable fares.
- Integrate modes, the project should connect to other mobility options, and there needs to be infrastructure for walkability.
- This will become the spine or backbone of the transportation system.
- How does this align with how communities want to grow? The project will connect communities to each other.
- Connecting people in a way they have never been connected before. Allows people to live in different municipalities than where they work.
- Provide a safer way to travel and also takes cars off the highway.
- RTD Survey on Colorado Public Radio brought idea that people choose the “best choice” of travel for them. The rail needs to be competitive with other modes. Europe high speed trains provide a service that can’t be beat.
- There are many pros- speed, ability to work on train, etc. But, there are many people who choose to drive because their employer provides parking. Municipalities should change their land use and TDM choices around parking to incentivize it.
- Think about the future and freedom. Millennials think of freedom as not needing to have a car. This is a different vision than previous generations. Anticipate the mobility needs of the future generations.
- Provide access to recreation destinations.
- Don’t compromise on vision because of longevity, invest in it now. Make difficult decisions that will prepare us for the future. This is a longer time frame than highways.
- Provide opportunity for people to “age in place”.
- What kind of 6.5 million person city do we want to be? Think about what areas it should be linked to.
- Connect to the current and future national rail network.
- This is a unique opportunity.
- Sustainability and leveraging technology for a greener future.

Jonathan asked the attendees, “What are things you would not include in the vision?” The attendees provided the following responses:

- Technologies that cannot meet the project's time frame for implementation should not be part of this project (for example Hyperloop). It was noted that due diligence will be completed to evaluate a range of appropriate technologies and rule out those that do not meet the criteria of the project. While unproven technologies will not likely be a solution for this project, consideration should be given to providing flexibility along the corridor, if new technologies become viable in the future.
- The rail will not provide short connections and serve every community. What do we say to towns that will not get a station? FRPR is not a local transit service.
- It was noted that the FRPR project's focus is to serve the Colorado Front Range; not I-70. The team should stay focused on delivering what the Rail Commission enabling legislation stated.
- The team will look at earlier studies for guidance and learn from them, including both good and bad (build off previous efforts).
- This project is not a replacement for I-25, and allows people to continue to travel by car. The project should not pit modes against each other. We might win support from people who would not use the train.

Jonathan asked the attendees if they had any concerns with the discussion. The attendees provided the following responses:

- The speed factor is important. There are some people who would not take the train if the speed is not faster than driving. However, traffic may make car travel slower. Reliability could also be the high quality.
- Avoid promoting FRPR sustainability because some voters may not agree with that and think we are focused on taking the cars off the road. Instead, the message should be that FRPR improves all the modes
- In certain communities, rail has a bad perception because of at-grade crossings.
- **Avoid overlooking the CDOT and Rail commission relationship.** There is representation from the Front Range planning organizations and their perspective will be important to understand.

Jonathan asked the attendees about success factors. The attendees provided the following responses:

- FRPR needs to have broad, diverse public support.
- In the past, CDOT has brought broad coalitions together to buy into a mega project. FRPR needs to put together a coalition of county commissioners.
- Do not over-promise for what the project or set unachievable expectations.
- FRPR needs early legislative engagement. David and Randy met with Speaker of the House recently. She was concerned with past issues with RTD, and wanted project team to coordinate with legislature.
- Politicians must be engaged early, often, and consistently. This also needs to be focused. Everyone needs to have the same elevator speech.
- The project team needs to work together well and provide clarity around decision making, expectations, etc.

- Need buy-in from the local transit agencies and identify who the stakeholders are.

Discussion and Break-Out Groups: Roles and Responsibilities

The attendees broke into four groups, including SDP, Policy, Stakeholder Engagement and Pre-NEPA/NEPA. The groups discussed and then reported back on the following questions:

- Identify key responsibilities by team leads
- How does this blended team function?
- How are key decisions made?
- What are the communication protocols?
- What are factors and forces that are potential barriers to FRPR?

Group One - SDP

This group reported the following from the break out discussion:

- Decisions will be informed by the range of stakeholders through the corridor coalitions.
- In addition to FRA, the SDP develop will require input from the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), local jurisdictions, transit agencies, etc.
- A reasonable range of options will be weighed and compared. CDOT is here to support, and provide data and analysis.

Group Two - Policy

This group reported the following from the break out discussion:

- This group proposed an executive committee including:
 - Sal Pace, Jill Gaebler, Randy (Rail Commission).
 - Herman Stockinger and Shoshana Lew (CDOT).
 - Carla, Cinamon (consultant team).
 - Additional support will be available as needed from Eric Richardson, Andy Karsian, Sally Chafee, Sophie Shulman, Rebecca White, and Spencer Dodge.
- The project team needs CDOT support around legislative decisions. The Rail Commission would then review the options and work with CDOT for concurrence. In the end, there must be support from the Governor's Office. The team should meet weekly (every other week in person).
- The team should determine what the project can produce for the 2020 legislative session.
- Sal would like to be part of this process, but had to leave the meeting early.
- The project team will put options together to share with the executive committee.
- The team needs to set a timeline and develop a calendar for decision making. This will include the key milestones for elected officials.
- There are a series of teams in place, and we must clarify how each team relations and supports one another. This will be defined at the next meeting.

Group Three – Stakeholder Engagement

This group reported the following from the break out discussion:

- The team will have a large group of partners, including CDOT Communications, the consultant team, and Rail Commission staff. There will be different leads on different components.
- The action items include developing a communication plan and agency coordination plan. This will determine how the blended team will work. A process will be developed to approve messages.
- Potential barriers include bottlenecks. The state's car culture is also a barrier, and they will need to bring in support of people who drive. CDOT should make sure this fits within the agency priority. The equity issue and missed opportunities in the north, like North Metro and Northwest Rail, are also potential barriers.
- The MPOs are going through five year updates for mobility plans, and CDOT is completing a statewide transportation plan. The project team must make sure the FRPR conversation is part of these processes. The project team needs to clarify what oversight is needed from the Rail Commission.
- Early decisions must be made regarding the SDP to clarify those alternatives to advance and be analyzed. It was suggested that a list of questions for the Rail Commission to use in discussions with their constituents to project input on decision-making. The project team must distinguish between areas where a decision is needed vs. the need for input vs. sharing of information.
- The project team should provide the Commissioners with a calendar of decisions they will need to make. This will be valuable for Commissioners to look ahead about decision making.

Group Four – Pre NEPA/NEPA

This group reported the following from the break out discussion:

- Blended teams are typical for NEPA in Colorado and have existed for 10 years.
- The project team must empower people and agencies to do their best.
- A communication protocol and organizational chart must be developed and maintained.
- The CDOT staff assigned to the project, consultants, Commission staff, and Commissioners must make FRPR their priority.
- NEPA roles are generally well defined. The project team must determine how the Rail Commissioners and State Legislature is involved in the NEPA process. There are good working relationships among consultants and CDOT.
- The Rail Commission should empower the consultants to get NEPA done and endorse decisions and process. They do not need to be directly involved.
- The key components include US Department of Transportation (USDOT) coordination and leveraging the Transportation Environmental Resource Council (TERC).
- Potential barriers include decision making, cost, phasing, equity, study area, appropriate analysis, right of way implications, and determining the appropriate analysis/methodology.
- Highway projects are very different than this and other transit projects and are of a different scale.
- The project team needs to determine the level of detail needed to make decisions.

Force Field Analysis

In the interest of time, Jonathan combined the Force Field Analysis building on the previous break out group's discussions. The goal of the Force Field Analysis is to identify high level factors that support FRPR and factors that may be barriers; identify priority strategies to capitalize on positive forces and ways to overcome barriers. Jonathan noted draft factors will be drawn from the break out team discussions and considered as part of the vision development and future risk assessment/mitigations.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Randy and Jonathan thanked the team for their active participation and enthusiasm for the project. Jonathan reviewed the accomplishments achieved in the meeting.

Randy noted the project survey is still live and feedback has generally been very positive to date. Randy provided information cards that explain and encourages the survey. These cards are available to the team to provide to their constituents. The results show high support by those who have taken the survey. This should encourage the project team even if there is negative feedback in the future.

Jonathan noted that the team will inform and update the Rail Commission members that did not attend the meeting.

Jonathan noted that the project team will follow up with a summary of this meeting; and at a later date develop a draft project vision based on the discussions from this chartering.

Randy stated that the meeting exceeded his expectations and thanked the participants.

Attachment: Chartering Presentation



Front Range Passenger Rail

Service Development Plan and Project Specific NEPA





- 01** INTRODUCTIONS, ICE BREAKER, AND PURPOSE
- 02** PROJECT OVERVIEW, WORKPLAN, AND SCHEDULE
- 03** PROJECT VISION, GOALS, AND SUCCESS FACTORS
- 04** BREAK OUT: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- 05** FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS
- 06** NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS

01

INTRODUCTIONS, ICE BREAKER, AND PURPOSE

Meeting Purpose

- Identify project success factors and vision
- Clarify team roles and responsibilities
- Identify factors that:
 - Support Front Range Passenger Rail
 - Potential barriers
 - Priority strategies to capitalize on positive forces and overcome barriers



02

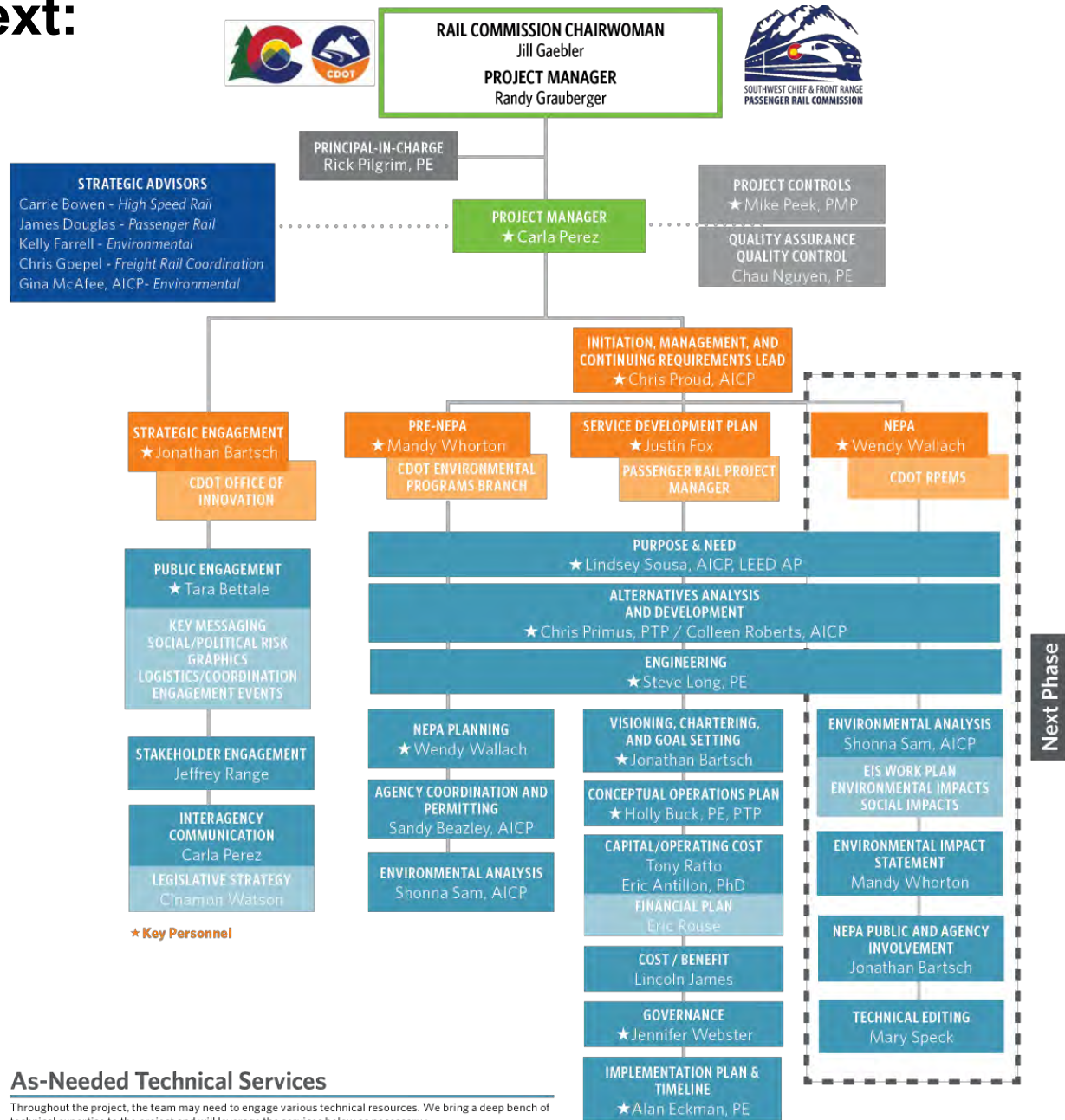
PROJECT OVERVIEW, WORKPLAN, AND SCHEDULE

Context

- Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (Rail Commission):
 - 2017, Colorado Senate Bill 17-153 created the Rail Commission
 - 2018, Colorado Senate Bill 18-001 provided \$2.5 million for studies, staffing and Federal grant match
 - 2019, the Rail Commission engages support the development of Front Range Passenger Rail service
- Our team's charge:
 - Advance planning, engagement, legislative support, and environmental



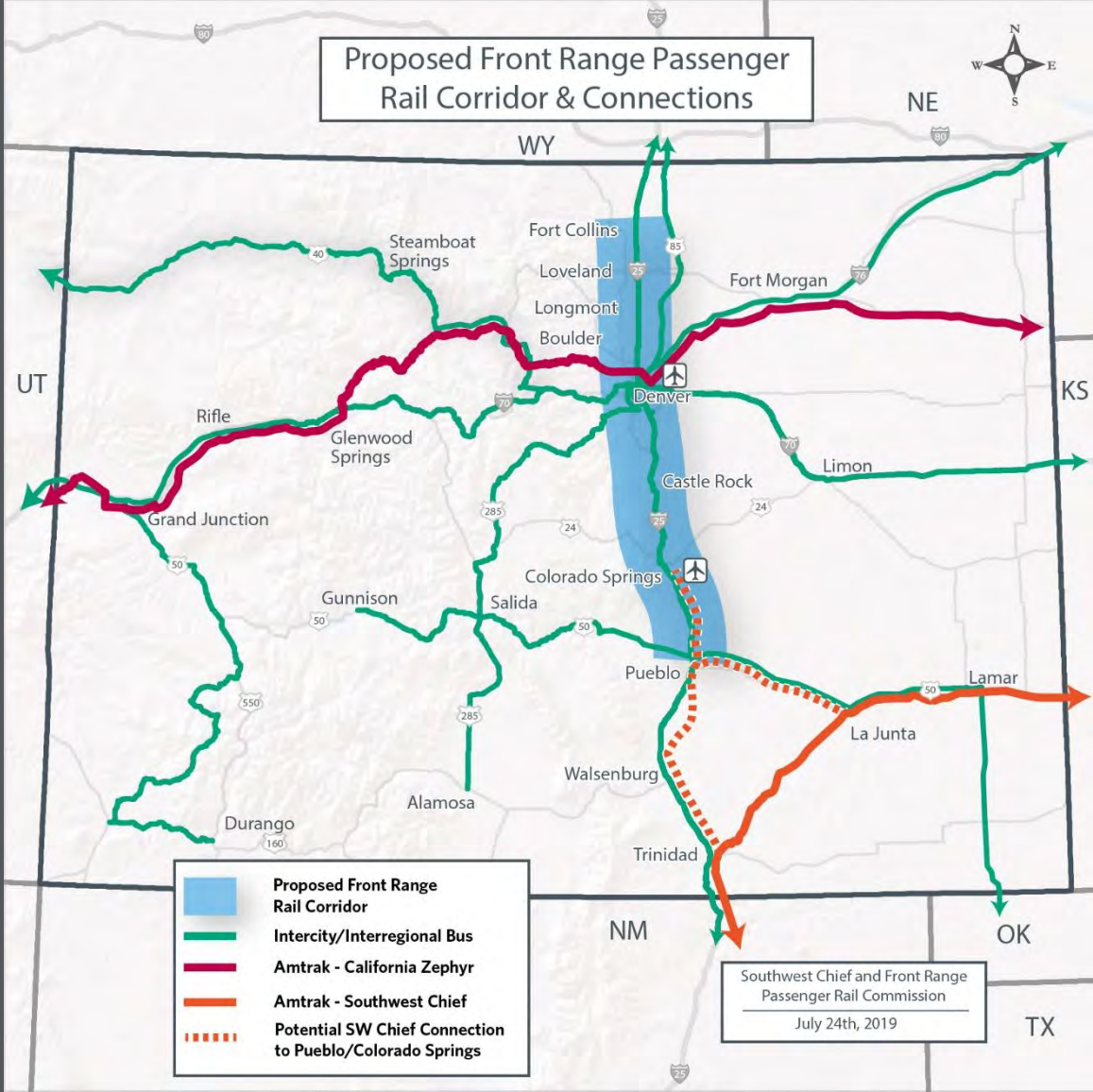
Project Context: Organization



As-Needed Technical Services

Throughout the project, the team may need to engage various technical resources. We bring a deep bench of technical expertise to the project and will leverage the services below as necessary:

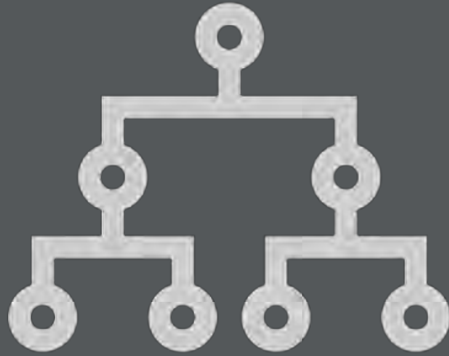
Project Study Area





Overview – Staying on Track

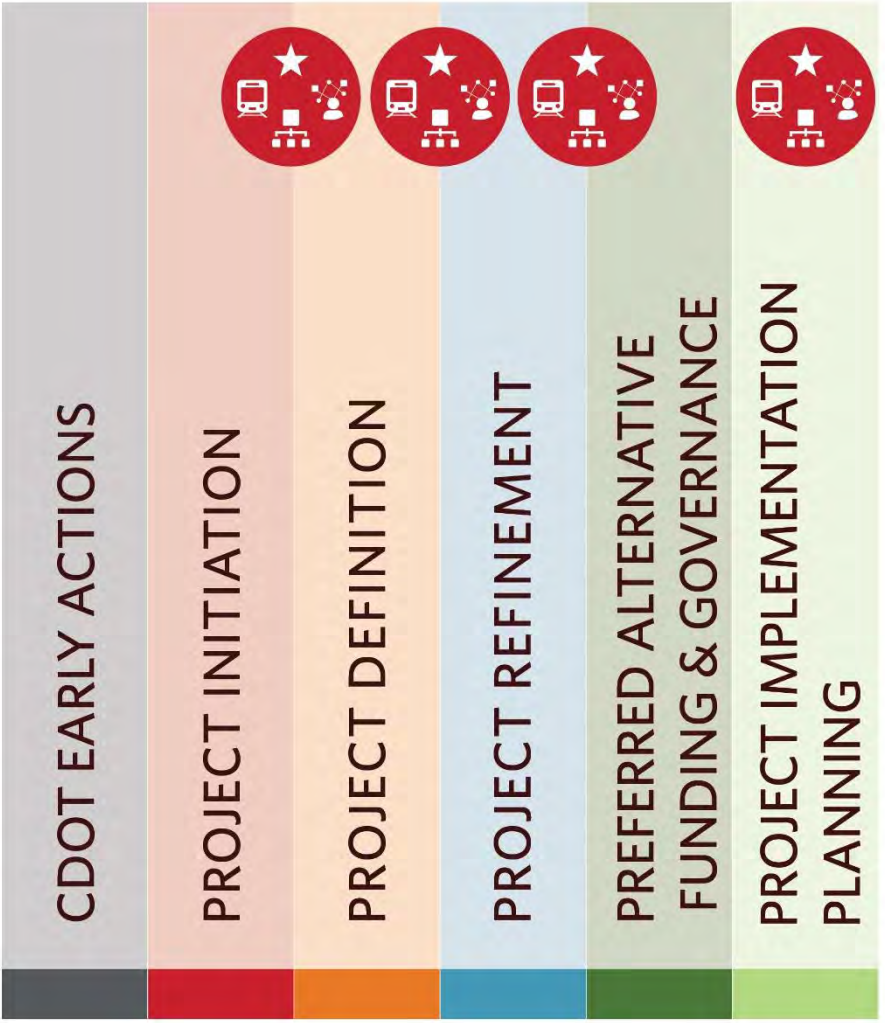
- Task 1: Project Initiation, Project Management and Continuing Requirements
- Task 2: Strategic Engagement
- Task 3: Pre-National Environmental Quality Act (NEPA)
- Task 4: Service Development Plan (SDP) and Engineering
- Task 5: NEPA



Task: Project Initiation, Management, and Continuing Requirements

- Create structure: focused deliverables and clear responsibilities
- Coordinate and unite the team: efficient, blended team
- Manage to the desired outcomes: rigorous detail, quality, and issue resolution

Task: Project Initiation, Management, and Continuing Requirements (Process)

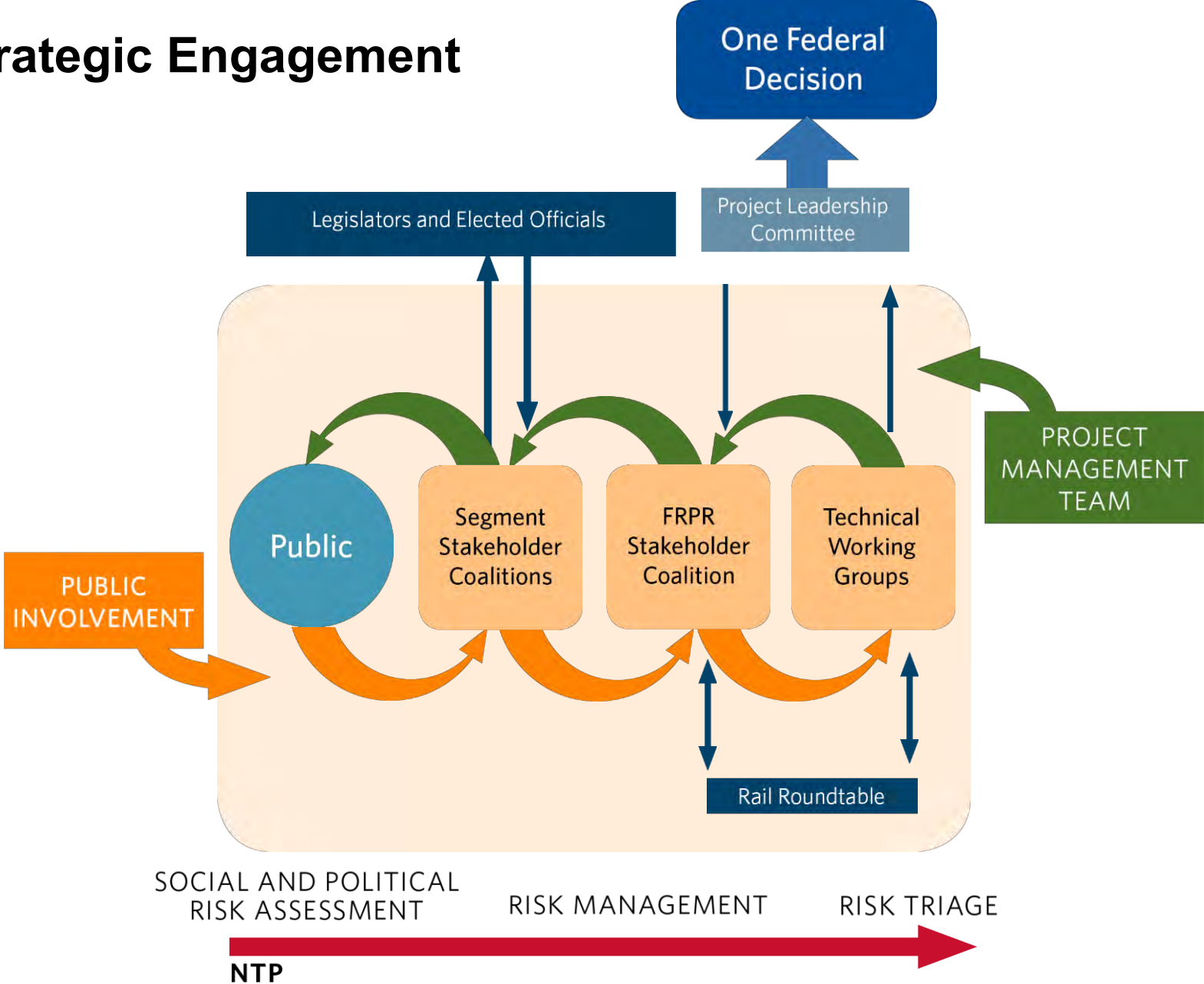


Task: Strategic Engagement

- Targeted outreach and engagement
 - Proactive and inclusive
 - Decisive and incremental decision making
 - Risk: assess, manage, and triage



Task: Strategic Engagement



Task: Strategic Engagement (Committees)

Corridor Stakeholder Coalition

- **Function:** Stakeholder-based input for corridor-wide decisions
- **Members:** Stakeholder Coalition, consultants
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Recommendations to PMT
- **Frequency:** Quarterly - First meeting tentatively Nov 2019

Project Leadership Committee

- **Function:** Resolution of issues; contact for media; policy-level agency liaison
- **Members:** Rail Commission, CDOT, Governor's Office, Lead Federal Agency, Consultants
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Decisions on policy issues, and study feedback
- **Frequency:** Major milestones

Rail Industry Roundtable

- **Function:** Provide rail industry-focused input s
- **Members:** Rail Commission, Consultants
- **Responsibilities & Authority:** Advise the Rail Commission, Coalition, and the Project Team
- **Frequency:** Mid project or as needed

Segment Stakeholder Coalitions (North, Central, South)

- **Function:** Provide project information to and obtain feedback at the local level
- **Members:** Local stakeholders, consultants
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Share project information with segment communities; Gather community input and share with Corridor Stakeholder Coalition
- **Frequency:** Quarterly

Task: Pre-NEPA

- Assess and leverage past work
- Identify and focus on filling in gaps
- Define project and range of alternatives through coordination with the SDP
- Issue Notice of Intent (NOI) when timing is right
- Prepare for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



Task: Political Engagement

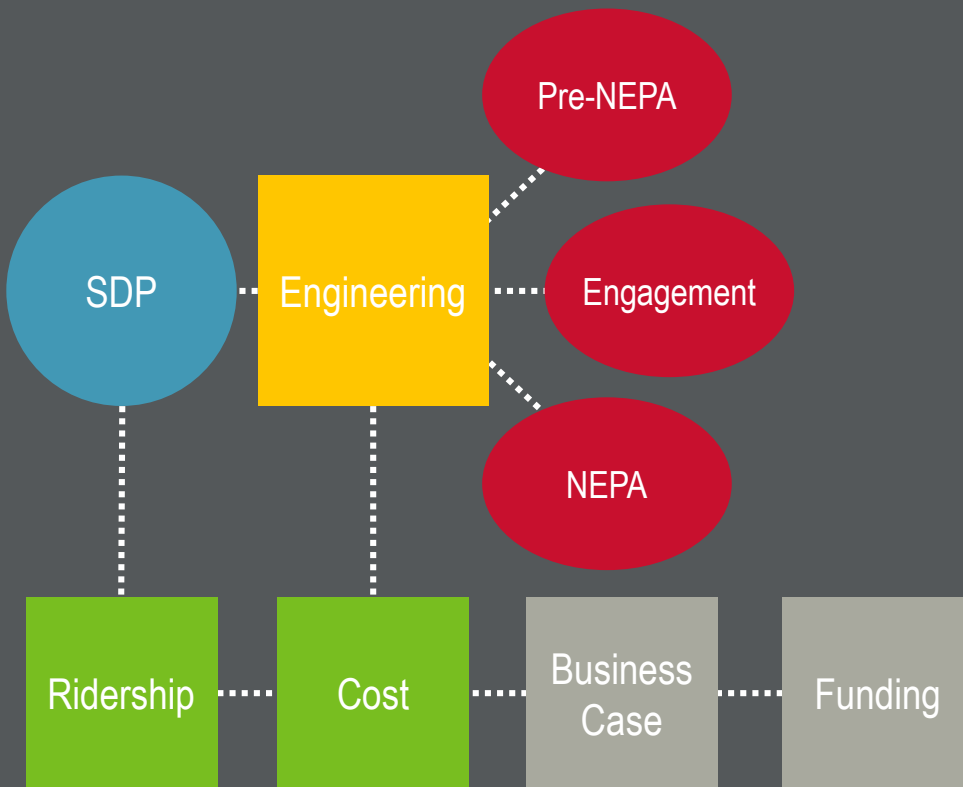
- Situational awareness
- Bidirectional communication
- Persuasion points vs. pressure points





Task: Service Development Plan

- Leverage past planning
- Integrate Pre-NEPA and NEPA
- Early coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- SDP Elements:
 - Purpose and need
 - Reasonable alternatives
 - Define the concept(s)
 - Phasing strategies
- Technology (commuter rail, higher-speed rail, high speed rail, etc.)



Task: Engineering

- Incremental design to support SDP alternatives, Pre-NEPA, and NEPA
- Engineering feasibility influences all tasks

Task: NEPA

- Technical considerations
- Creative/adaptive mitigation
- Pre-NOI and permitting tracking
- Frequent stakeholder check-ins



03

PROJECT VISION, GOALS, AND SUCCESS FACTORS

Potential Vision Elements

Potential Elements

- Develop partnerships
 - Encourage collaboration
 - Improve mobility, access, and choice
 - Improve travel time reliability
 - Improve, not retain, the status quo
 - Improve all weather transportation
 - Improve safety
 - Support economic development
 - Support density in the right place
 - Integrate payment “one system” concept for mobility
- Meet users’ wants and needs:
 - Competitive pricing
 - Comfort
 - Access to work
 - Access to education
 - Access to health care
 - Access to shopping
 - Access to recreation
 - Access to family and friends
 - Provide complimentary services
 - Provide choice for underserved populations
 - Improve air quality

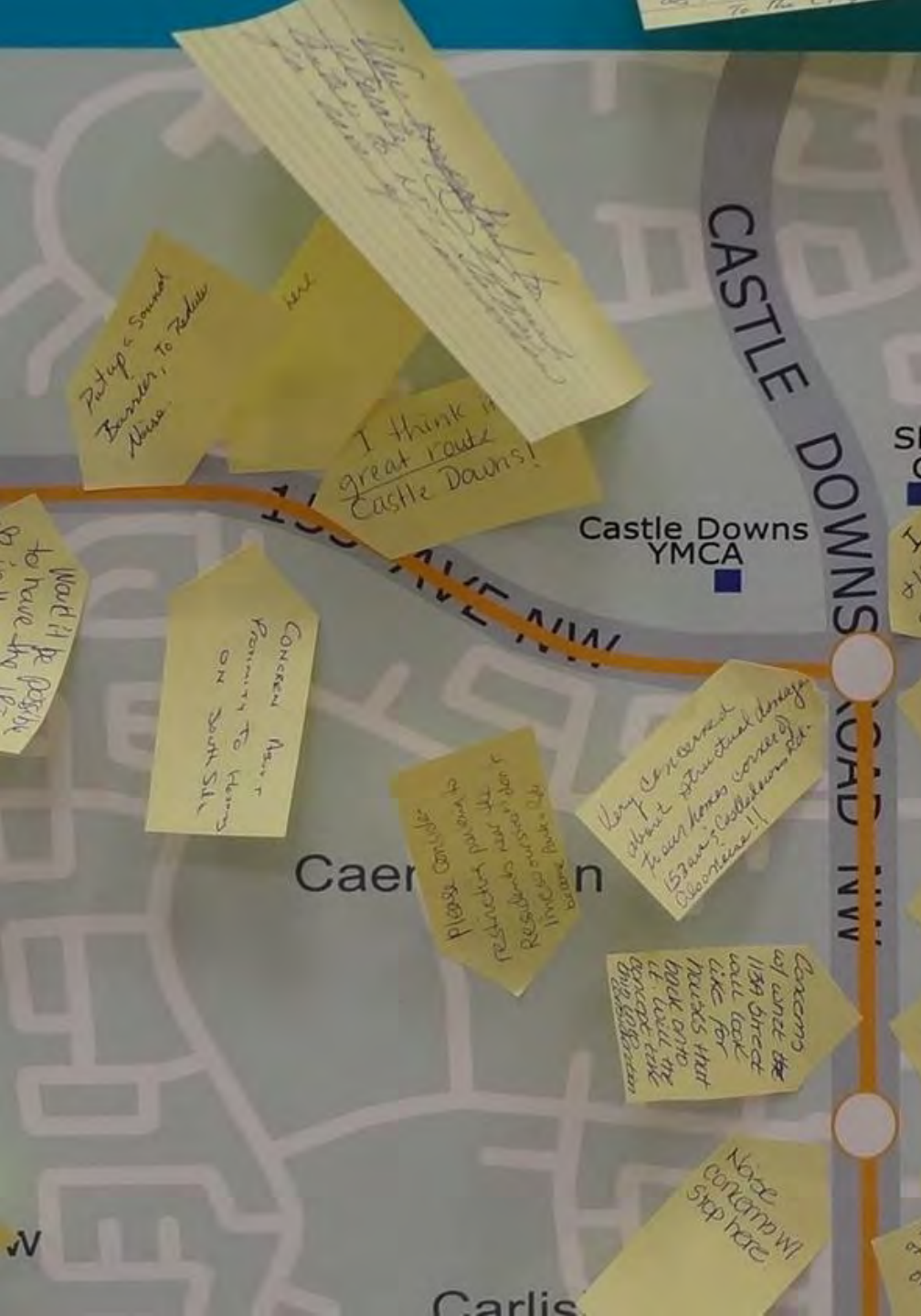
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BREAK OUT: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Breakout Preface: Roles and Responsibilities

- Rail Commission
- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Consultants



Breakout Instructions

- 1 Self select one of four discussion teams:
 1. SDP (Steve Long)
 2. Policy (Carla Perez)
 3. Stakeholder (Jeffrey Range)
 4. Pre-NEPA/NEPA (Mandy Whorton)
- 2 20 minute facilitated team discussions to answer:
 - Identify responsibilities by team leads
 - How does this blended team function?
 - How are key decisions made?
 - What are the communication protocols?
 - What are factors and forces that are potential barriers to FRPR?
- 3 Report out by teams

05

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS



Preface Force Field Analysis: Survey Update

- 3,590 Participants to date
- 91% support establishing
- 91% would use the service
- 94% believe rail could help their community

Force Field Analysis

Forces For and Barriers Against Front Range Passenger Rail

Forces For

- Executive Level Support
- Growing Congestion
- Mobility Enthusiasm
- ...

Barriers Against

- Numerous Ballot Initiatives
- Presidential Election
- Previous Transportation Ballot Measures
- ...

Strategies

- ...

Strategies

- ...

06

NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS



Next Steps and Action Items

- Meeting action items summary
- Advance Project Management Plan and blended team coordination
- Advance engagement and political strategies
- Advance SDP planning and related pre-NEPA activities
- Summary briefing for those not in attendance today

THANK YOU



HDR