

Meeting Notes
Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
Steering Committee

Denver, CO – July 6, 2011

Meeting Attendees

CDOT

Mark Imhoff	Director – Division of Transit and Rail (DTR)
Tammy Lang	Division of Transportation Development (DTD)

Steering Committee Members (or representatives)

Sarod Dhuru	BNSF Railway
Steve Gregory	San Luis and Rio Grande RR
Mike Ogborn	OmniTRAX, Inc
Jonathan Hutchison	Amtrak
Henry Stoppolecamp	Regional Transportation District (RTD)
Ann Rajewski	CASTA
Mark Radtke	Colorado Municipal League (CML)
Mehdi Baziar	Rail Plan Project Manager
Wendy Wallach	Rail Plan Deputy Project Manager
Sandi Kohrs	Statewide Planning Manager

Steering Committee Members (or representatives) via conference call

Vince Rogalski	STAC
Cathy Shull	Progressive 15
Tim Larsen	Colorado Department of Agriculture
Gary Beedy	Lincoln County/Colorado Counties, Inc.
Matt Cheroutis	Office of Economic Development
Craig Casper	Pikes Peak Area COG

Consultant Project Team

Larry Warner	PB Project Manager
Randy Grauberger	PB Deputy Project Manager
Joe Gurskis	PB Senior Advisor
Roger Sherman	CRL Associates
Evan Kirby	FHU
Jerry Albin	FHU
Matt McDole	LS Gallegos

CDOT Project Manager Mehdi Baziar called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) for the State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (SFPRP). Mehdi asked everyone to make a self introduction.

Following introductions, Mehdi Baziar asked the SC to describe the level of detail that they would like meeting notes to appear. The options were “very detailed” or “more general”. The SC determined that general meeting notes would be appropriate.

Mehdi next indicated that in conversations with the consultant team, it appeared that an additional Steering Committee meeting would be desirable to provide CDOT and the consultant team with appropriate input into the upcoming stages of the development of the State Rail Plan. It was determined that an additional meeting of the SC would take place on September 13 at CDOT from 9 a.m. to noon.

Larry Warner next asked if there were any additional comments on or changes to the Vision that the Steering Committee had developed at its April 20 meeting. Following a brief discussion minor changes were made and the final Rail Vision for Colorado will be as follows:

Colorado Rail Vision

The Colorado rail system will improve the movement of freight and passengers in a safe, efficient, coordinated and reliable manner. In addition, the system will contribute to a balanced transportation network, cooperative land use planning, economic growth, a better environment and energy efficiency. Rail infrastructure and service will expand to provide increased transportation capacity, cost effectiveness, accessibility and intermodal connectivity to meet freight and passenger market demands through investments which include public-private partnerships.

Roger Sherman, CRL Associates, next discussed the status of outreach that has taken place. The State Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC), Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC), the Transportation Commission’s Transit and Rail Intermodal Committee, have all been provided with a PowerPoint overview of the SFPRP. Also, Wendy Wallach described the process by which CDOT staff is making a general presentation on the Division of Transit and Rail’s Rail Program and current rail initiatives to individual Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) around the state and a briefing on the SFPRP is part of those presentations. The members present at the TPR meetings are encouraged to participate in the SFPRP by going to the project website and adding themselves to the Stakeholder Committee list.

Roger next discussed the upcoming six events scheduled as workshops and open houses. The format for these meetings will be an “invite only” workshop from 2 – 4 p.m. followed by an Open House from 5 – 6:30 p.m.

The following meetings will be held:

- August 15 Akron
 Washington County Event Center
 551 West 2nd Street

- August 17 Limon
 Limon Community Building, South Side
 477 D Avenue

- August 23 Denver
 CDOT Auditorium
 4201 East Arkansas Ave.

- August 25 Grand Junction
 Mesa County Courthouse – Multipurpose Room
 544 Rood Ave.

- August 31 La Junta
 Otero Jr. College
 1802 Colorado Ave.

- September 1 Alamosa
 Alamosa County Administration Building
 8900 Independence Way

There was a request to coordinate with DTD TPR liaisons before each meeting and to maintain close coordination so that DTD can review considerations for integration into the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. Larry Warner stated that DTD will be contacted for early coordination. DTD wants to be sure that TPR Chairs and the key people in each area are invited to the SFPRP workshops and DTD will help identify these participants.

Roger will be putting invite lists together next week so they can be reviewed and the invitations sent out sufficiently in advance. There was a comment that it is hoped that UP and BNSF should be able to assist in getting shipper representatives to the meetings.

PB’s Joe Gurskis provided a PowerPoint presentation related to Best Practices in State Rail Planning. Joe noted that the Federal Railroad Administration has not gone through formal rulemaking procedures to define the requirements of a FRA accepted State Rail Plan [In the first quarter of 2010, FRA did issue a draft outline that serves as guidelines for State Rail Plans.] Following Joe’s presentation the following comments were made: Planning for all modes of transportation should be closely coordinated with the Governor’s Office of Economic

Development. Also, the plan should relate what improvements in service would be anticipated from an infrastructure investment of a certain dollar amount. Mark Imhoff indicated his goal is to define performance measures for the rail mode that will put it “on the same playing field” with highways.

PB’s Randy Grauberger noted that Tasks 1 and 2 had been revised and finalized based on comments received from SC members and have been posted on CDOT’s SFPRP website. Upon inquiry, the website seems to be functioning adequately and is updated on regular basis.

Evan Kirby, Felsburg Holt and Ullevig (FHU), next presented a PowerPoint describing the status of data collection and analysis. The Surface Transportation Board’s Waybill data has been received and the analysis of that data has begun. Evan presented some examples of how the waybill data would be shown in the SFPRP. These are proposed to be: Top 5 – Inbound Commodities, Top 5 – Outbound Commodities, Maps depicting origin/destination states with rail traffic through the state, percentage of rail traffic in the state originating, terminating and through the state. Also shown were maps identifying the maximum speeds on rail lines in Colorado and the location of grain elevators and associated agricultural lands. Lastly, examples were shown of how the various data and other information related to the Class I, short line railroads and tourist railroads would be depicted in the SFPRP.

Craig Casper asked if commodity flow maps, similar to the “heat” maps depicting flows between states could be produced at the county level for Colorado. Joe Gurskis indicated the waybill data does contain detail down to the county level, but the confidentiality of this data would preclude it being shown at this level in the SFPRP.

Larry Warner next led an effort to develop State Rail Plan goals linked to the Rail Vision for Colorado. A lengthy discussion led to the following goals being identified:

Plan Goals Linked to State Rail Vision

- **Create a balanced transportation system utilizing cooperative land use planning to create intermodal connectivity and accessibility without compromising existing service and infrastructure.**
- **Provide for the safety of people, infrastructure and goods.**
- **Expand rail infrastructure and freight and passenger rail services to meet future demand through strategic investments which include public-private partnerships.**
- **Promote through education the energy efficiency, environmental, and economic benefits of freight and passenger rail transportation throughout the state.**
- **Utilize the efficiencies of freight and passenger rail to develop livable communities which enhance economic growth throughout the state.**

It was proposed that these goals would be provided to the Stakeholder Group at their August meeting at which time that group would be asked to develop more specific objectives related to these goals.

Randy Grauberger led the discussion related to the next agenda item, "Discuss Potential Project/Prioritization". He noted that some projects had been identified earlier by the Stakeholder Group and it was expected that numerous additional projects would be proposed during the six upcoming workshops to be held around the state. Joe Gurskis briefly described a handout showing a proposed project prioritization methodology. The following questions will need to be answered before this phase of the rail plan is initiated: Should only those projects that may be utilizing federal funding be evaluated in detail, or should all projects be evaluated to some extent (going through a screening process)? Also, should only public projects be shown or should private projects-especially those of Class I railroads be included? It was suggested that this topic could be the focus of the September SC meeting.

Mark Imhoff asked the SC members to be thinking about possible uses for the \$9 million that the state is anticipating receiving for the sale of the Towner line. The creation of a short line railroad assistance program similar to the Kansas DOT program has been suggested but Mark encouraged the SC members to think about other possible uses for these funds which will be placed in the State Rail Bank.

It was also noted that DTR is developing performance measures for the Division and a meeting had been held in which the Consultant team was asked to develop performance measures to evaluate proposed projects in the SFPRP. These measures should not preclude division wide measures being developed by DTR and DTD.

There being no further business, Mehdi adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.