

Meeting Notes
Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
Steering Committee

Denver, CO – March 16, 2012

Meeting Attendees

Steering Committee Members (or representatives)

Mehdi Baziar	State Rail Plan Project Manager
Gary Beedy	Lincoln County/Colorado Counties, Inc.
Henry Stoppolecamp	Regional Transportation District (RTD)
Ann Rajewski	Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA)
Cathy Shull	Progressive 15
Mark Radtke	Colorado Municipal League (CML)
Vince Rogalski	State Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC)
Sarod Dhuru	BNSF Railway
Deborah Cameron	Office of Economic Development & International Trade
Pete Rickershauser	(for the Union Pacific Railroad)

CDOT

Mark Imhoff	Director – Division of Transit and Rail (DTR)
David Krutsinger	CDOT - DTR

Via Conference Call

Mike Ogborn	OmniTrax (SC Member)
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Consultant Project Team

Larry Warner	Parsons Brinckerhoff - Project Manager
Randy Grauberger	Parsons Brinckerhoff - Deputy Project Manager
Roger Sherman	CRL Associates
Bob Felsburg	FHU
Evan Kirby	FHU
Marie Arroyo	FHU
Matt McDole	LS Gallegos

CDOT Project Manager Mehdi Baziar called the meeting to order at noon. He welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) for the State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (SFPRP). Mehdi asked everyone to make a self introduction including those calling in.

Following introductions, Mehdi asked Division of Transit and Rail Director Mark Imhoff to make introductory comments. Mark began by noting that David Krutsinger had been hired to head up the Rail Programs group within DTR, replacing Wendy Wallach. David will be the project manager for the Interregional Connectivity Study (ICS) and the Advanced Guideway System (AGS) feasibility study.

Mark also expressed his thanks to Project Manager Mehdi Baziar for a job well done in managing this project. This project was originated within the Division of Transportation Development and Mehdi did an excellent job in dealing with the transition to DTR.

Mark also expressed his thanks to the State Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) and Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) for their efforts in the State Rail Plan's development and their recommendations for approval by the Commission.

Mark discussed next steps and noted that DTR would soon be initiating an Intercity Bus Study and that would be followed by a Statewide Transit Plan. In addition, Mark noted the aforementioned ICS and AGS studies which were now under contract.

Lastly Mark noted that DTR would like to move forward with some type of short line railroad assistance program within Colorado and also begin early implementation steps on commuter rail between Denver and Fort Collins.

Mehdi thanked the SC and the Consultant Team for their efforts over the past 15 months and indicated he enjoyed heading up this project!

Mehdi next began a discussion of some of the major comment themes received during the review of the January 30 Draft State Rail Plan. Mehdi noted that there had been concerns that tourism wasn't adequately addressed and asked for and received support from the SC to add an additional Plan Objective that addresses rail related tourism as well as the addition of two new scenic railroads in the Chapter 3 discussion. The SC also supported the addition of a new Plan Policy recommendation focusing on "embracing a performance based evaluation process". The SC also suggested that the word "tourism" be included in to the Plan Policy Recommendation related to economic development.

There were also numerous comments that the Plan was not focused sufficiently on "transit". Mehdi pointed out that "transit" was in fact not the focus of this effort; and that would come in the Statewide Transit Plan.

Larry Warner next thanked and recognized the sub-consultants to Parsons Brinckerhoff: Felsburg Holt and Ullevig (FHU), LS Gallegos and Associates, and CRL Associates for their considerable efforts in the development of the Plan. He also thanked Randy Grauberger for his role as Deputy Project Manager for this project. Larry also noted that the consultant team will be under budget on this project.

Larry emphasized the considerable stakeholder involvement in this project. He said there were over 200 comments on the January 30 Draft and probably 400+ comments during the initial public review period following the six Workshops and Open Houses in September and early October.

Larry reminded the SC members that each of their names and the organization they represent is shown on the "Acknowledgements" page on the back of the cover of the Executive Summary. In regard to the Executive Summary, Pete Rickershauser provided the Consultant team with additional comments.

Mark Imhoff noted that CDOT has already utilized the State Rail Plan. The Great Western Railroad, in conjunction with the Town of Windsor, has submitted a TIGER IV grant request for projects that were included in the Rail Plan. Mike Ogborn thanked CDOT for their support of this project.

Mehdi then discussed the next steps related to finalizing the Plan. The Commission is expected to approve the Plan at its meeting on March 22, and then the Plan will be forwarded to FRA once all of the edits are made. Mehdi asked the Steering Committee members how they would like to receive "copies"

of the Plan. Both Gary Beedy and Henry Stoppelcamp indicated they would like hard copies and two extra CDs. The remaining Steering Committee members will receive CD's containing the full document and Executive Summary and all of the appendices.

The last item on the agenda was an open discussion to assist CDOT in its future rail planning activities. The following three questions related to the State Rail Planning effort were asked of the SC:

- What went well?
- What might be considered process improvements?
- What might be done differently next time?

What Went Well

- Project finished within budget
- Having a thorough public & stakeholder process means the final product was better than it would have been otherwise.
 - The meetings geographically covered the state well, with 4 meetings in the scope and 6 meetings delivered
 - Staggering the stakeholder and steering committee meetings, schedule-wise, helped the overall process
 - Efficient responses to steering committee requests, usually within one or two days, was helpful
 - Monthly PMT meetings were very good for the project
- Meetings and project organization were better than the previous Rail Relocation Implementation Study completed in 2009.
- FRA involvement throughout the study was a wise decision and important to the final acceptance of the project
 - Having Mark (or similar) DTR representation in face-to-face meetings in Washington DC established credibility

Suggested Process Improvements for Next Effort

- More metro Denver/Front Range meetings. Although the past study efforts provided good geographic coverage, east and west, north and south, having more meetings in the populated areas would be helpful
- Make more use of technology for public input in future updates, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, telephone/teleconference town hall meetings
- CDOT needs to provide much better quality teleconference/videoconference (particularly the sound quality) for Steering Committee and other meetings. One example is WebEx and/or similar vendors currently used for on-line training and meetings.
- Spend more time making roles clear early in the process. There were so many new stakeholders along the way that meeting time was spent "catching up" the newcomers to the process. This slowed the ability of other continuous participants to move decisions forward more quickly.
 - Stakeholders grew from 35 to over 400 during this process

- Because Steering Committee meetings are open to the public, have a standing “public testimony” item early on the agenda so that comments can be taken, and the meeting can then move forward.
- Identify early in the study process what level of detail the final product will address: what it will and will not do.
 - Show how comments with detail beyond the intended scope of the final product will be used or recorded for future use.
- Anticipate that expectations for the next State Rail Plan / State Rail Plan Update will be higher. We have a good foundation.
 - Connecticut plan is an example of a plan with a very intensive amount of detail and prescriptive types of recommendations related to passenger rail
 - Kansas is a good example of a plan with a strong short line railroad assistance program
- Emphasize the State Rail Plan in the [2040] Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Don’t just include the State Rail Plan by reference, but work to use the information from this plan in the LRTP.

Do Differently

- Make the Waybill Data request from CDOT to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) earlier so that the freight data are available sooner. Alternatively, explore other sources of the data, like the Transportation Technology Center Incorporated (TTCI) located in Pueblo, which could deliver the data sooner.
- Provide periodic (quarterly, annual, other?) updates on the actions taken with the State Rail Plan, in between 5-year update intervals.

There being no further business, Mehdi thanked everyone for all of their attendance, participation and support and adjourned the meeting at 2:00p.m.