

Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

Outreach Plan

March 24, 2011

Colorado's State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (SFPRP) will be a cornerstone of the Department of Transportation's Division of Transit and Rail and therefore requires a comprehensive stakeholder coordination plan and balanced public involvement program, which we have identified as the Outreach Plan. By utilizing innovative and customized communication methodologies, the Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) team will seek and receive valuable input and feedback from stakeholders and the public as it relates to both passenger and freight rail interests in an efficient timeframe.

Stakeholder Identification

In order to gather and identify needs, ideas, comments and feedback, CDOT, in coordination with the PB team, has identified a diverse group of leaders to serve as members of the Steering Committee (SC). The SC represents a balance of passenger and freight interests across the State.

The PB team will also work with the Stakeholder Group (SG), Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC), and the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) to gather additional input and feedback throughout the process. The SG is continuously growing and evolving throughout the SFPRP process. Any individual or group who expresses an interest in contributing to the SFPRP will be included as a member of the SG.

In order to gather feedback from the public-at-large in a meaningful and productive manner, the PB team will work with the SC, SG, STAC, TRAC, local elected officials and other interested groups to identify geographically dispersed thought leaders to help host focused working sessions throughout the state. These thought leaders will include self-selected community leaders that represent a diverse population of individuals and ideas. By self-selecting, these thought leaders are typically more committed to sharing information presented and bear the responsibility for presenting their constituents' comments/feedback. This "buy in" provides for active engagement and ensures quality feedback from diverse interests in a timely manner.

The PB team will work with CDOT to expand the stakeholder universe even further. We will incorporate stakeholders from past rail studies and include all other interested parties identified throughout the process. Stakeholders will be incorporated and organized into a centralized database. This database will continue to grow throughout the outreach process. It will be used to share

information including thoughts, updates, priorities, etc. with the greater public. The database will include contact information and will be utilized to “spread the word” to large groups of people efficiently.

Communication Methodologies

As previously mentioned, the SC and the SG are relatively small so we will apply direct, face-to-face communication methodologies to facilitate dialogue and gather input and feedback as it relates to the SFPRP. We anticipate that these groups will meet three times throughout the study. The SC kickoff meeting in April will include a visioning session. In the second meeting, the Project Team will present status updates on the various tasks related to the SFPRP efforts. The final meeting will consist of reviewing the major comments and themes related to the draft SFPRP in order to address them in the final document. The CDOT Project Manager (PM), in coordination with the PB team, will distribute information, meeting minutes and other follow-up materials to the SC within five to seven days of meetings. Once the SC has reviewed the written materials, the CDOT PM will provide the information to the SG in a timely manner.

Another communication methodology that will be used will be focused working group sessions. These focused working group sessions are intended to represent various constituents and the “public” throughout this planning process. In order to attract active and engaged participants, the PB team will issue a call for interest through the SC, STAC and TRAC, as well as local elected officials, community leaders and community groups throughout the state via telephone calls and emails, as well as contacts in neighboring states that might be interested in participating. Once these individuals are identified, we will host four geographically dispersed working group sessions throughout the state to engage the representatives in various elements of the plan. These sessions will occur mid-way through the study (August/September), following the second meeting of the SC and SG. CDOT and the PB team highly encourage TRAC participation in these sessions to help facilitate discussion. The feedback and dialogue gathered from these meetings will be incorporated into the draft SFPRP.

Once the SC’s comments are incorporated into the draft SFPRP, the Stakeholder Group will have an opportunity to review the draft SFPRP following review by the SC. Comments will be tracked in the comment database and incorporated into the plan as deemed appropriate by the SC.

CDOT’s Public Information Office will keep the general public informed about the Study’s progress through email blasts on GovDelivery and the project website. PB will provide CDOT with relevant information on a regular basis to update the project website including posting discussion boards on topics such as the SFPRP vision. A project phone number for those members of the public without access to a computer will also be provided. At the mid-way point in the SFPRP process, the Project Team, with input from the SC, will determine if there is a need to host public open houses.

Database, Comment Log and FAQ's

As previously mentioned, the PB team will maintain a database of all stakeholders. This database will grow throughout the project. It will include contact information, a log of all comments received and a listing of how and when the team responded to the comments. The Project Team will respond to all stakeholders in a timely fashion, and will use the database to distribute information as well as incorporate the feedback gathered into the draft and final versions of the SFPRP. This database will serve as a testament to the outreach process as well as provide a tool for ongoing communication for the Division of Transit and Rail (DTR).

Additionally, we will create a frequently asked questions document to post on the website or for use when answering inquiries from the stakeholders, the media and the general public. This information will be the basis for crafting the summary of public outreach efforts for incorporation into the final version of the State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan.

Timeline

See Attached.