

Denver Workshop/Open House Meeting Notes – August 23, 2011

Please provide us with your comments by October 14, 2011. Comments received at the Open Houses and Workshops, and via email and letters will be considered and used to help refine goals, objectives and priorities. CDOT does not intend to address each comment individually but all comments will be considered, included in the appendix of the report with a response provided as to how information was considered in the course of the study.

Questions:

- How will energy impacts be integrated into the plan?
- Will this study educate the public on the safety aspects of various modes?
- Will this plan help identify state initiatives or funding sources for identified improvements?
- Will we perform an analysis to show how modes can complement one another and show how much transit improvements cost vs. highway improvements?
- What is the best way to deliver comments? What is the timing for commenting?
- What is the travel demand in the state? Does this study have a demand modeling component? How are we addressing these needs?
- Where are potential intercity passenger rail routes? How do we address the demand?
- How can we shift freight delivery to rail to free up highway capacity and improve environmental impacts?
- How will priorities be determined in this type of “high level” study?
- Will this study identify investments in rail that can shift freight off the roadways?
- How do we consider the future of population growth 30 years from now to determine high priority corridors and discuss appropriate transportation modes to accommodate those projections?
- Will we deal with bottlenecks in this plan so that we will be eligible for federal, state or private dollars?
- Can our train horns become quieter? Can we restrict using horns at night?
- How do we have conversations with the railroads to engage them in the process?
- What are “best practices” in dealing with railroads and developing relationships with them?

Comments:

- Bus and rail travel are safer modes than automobiles. Freight rail is safer than truck transport. We need to educate the public on the safety of rail vs. auto use.
- CDOT will be initiating two studies focusing on passenger rail transportation in the near future: The Connectivity Study and the Automated Guideway System (AGS) Study.
- There appears to be a gap in the study as it relates to analyzing potential passenger rail service.
- Engage metro-area elected officials such as RTD and DRCOG.
- The costs of dealing with railroads are always high.
- Put significant emphasis on I-25 North and other traditional commuter rail services and not just on high speed rail.
- This study needs to incorporate statistics on highway fatalities and injuries including those involving bicycles.
- CDOT’s website is too complicated and includes too much information.
- We should look at passenger rail, bus and auto needs from a statewide perspective and identify those services on one map.

- Colorado should come up with a list of priorities (from small improvements to major projects) to take advantage of federal dollars when they become available.
- Castle Rock's issues generally lie within highway/rail conflicts. They also experience quality of life impacts due to noise. There is not enough funding for quiet zones. The southbound line can have long backups and trains are stopped through the middle of residential areas.
- Arvada also experiences quality of life issues due to noise.
- Economic development officials should inventory the different businesses served by rail to help the railroads predict future growth. The Rail Plan should encourage meetings between elected officials and economic development people to discuss opportunities. We need to better understand how to work with the railroads and understand the economic values rail brings.
- Loveland is divided by two rail lines, so their impacts are great. They have quiet zone issues and issues with utilities in the rail right-of-way.
- Locals do not have strong relationships with freight rail operators in their communities. There is a lack of communication between communities and railroads.
- BNSF would like to see state-sanctioned community planning guidelines to help guide local developments surrounding rail lines.
- Make sure the SFPRP identifies potential right-of-ways that might be abandoned, so we can take advantage of potential intercity passenger rail and interstate rail opportunities.
- The study should look at Loveland's Aerospace Clean Energy (ACE) project for potential rail service.
- Consider demand where people and freight meet. Consult other studies and population forecasts to understand future demand.
- Leadville and Salida will need better transit connections to future rail passenger service.
- Reduced fuel use, or energy efficiency should be a project evaluation criterion of the SFPRP.
- A study has shown that a primary indicator of passenger demand is "what people want".