

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Technical Advisory Committee**

#### **Colorado Rail Relocation Implementation Study**

**CDOT Auditorium, February 28, 2008**

Tammy Lang, CDOT's Project Manager for the Rail Relocation Implementation Study, opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. and asked those in attendance to make self introductions. Tammy welcomed Ron Davis to the Committee. Ron is replacing Cathy Garcia and will represent Action 22. An attendance roster of those attending the meeting is shown at the end of these meeting minutes.

Tammy welcomed those in attendance to the second meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). She introduced Cassie Gouger, the Rail Team Lead for the Consultant Team.

Cassie discussed two maps that showed the alignments for the two bypasses being evaluated in this Study.

Alignment A begins on the north with a connection to the BNSF Railway (BNSF) at Omar (west of Wiggins) and consists of new rail construction from that point south to a junction with existing UP line at Peoria (east of Byers). From there Alignment A proceeds along the existing UP line for approximately 70 miles to Aroya (20 miles west of Kit Carson). From Aroya, new rail construction proceeds south through a point east of Haswell. It then proceeds on south to the BNSF line east of Las Animas.

Alignment B begins at the north with a connection to the BNSF line just east of Brush and consists of new rail construction from that point south crossing I-70, US 287/40 and the UP and Kyle railroads east of Limon. It continues to the southeast with new rail construction to a point east of Haswell where it then is on the same alignment as Alignment A connecting to the BNSF line east of Las Animas.

Cassie next discussed a handout which contained the railroad design criteria being used for the bypass alignments. The most conservative assumptions from the typical sections of both railroads are being used. The following major categories were discussed with some additional details occurring within these major categories:

- Typical Section
- Horizontal and Vertical Alignment
- Vertical Clearance
- Right-of-way
- Track Centers
- Additional tracks
- Turnouts

Hot Box Detectors (HBD)/ Dragging Equipment Detectors (DED)  
At-Grade Crossings  
Railroad Signals  
Communications

Cassie was asked how many at-grade crossings would there be on the two new alignments. She indicated the answer to this question was not yet available. Another question asked if the intersections with existing railroads would be at-grade or grade separated. She noted that all railroad intersections were being assumed to be grade separated.

Cassie asked the railroad representatives to provide their comments on their specific needs at the north and south connections as well as comments regarding the presented design criteria, necessary yards, maintenance, mechanical and fueling facilities on the bypass alignments. Cassie will follow-up with an email request to the UP and BNSF.

Next, Steve Wickersham initiated the presentation on the Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) modeling of the existing system (the Base Case). A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed to the attendees. Steve described the purpose of RTC modeling, showed examples of the inputs to the model that had been provided to the Consultant Team by both railroads, and showed a schematic of what the Base Case looked like to a dispatcher from Brush to Amarillo, Texas. The loaded trains are modeled to come as close as possible to the actual operation of all trains operating together on the network.

Once the Base Case is validated by both railroads, the Alignments A and B will then be modeled in order to compare the railroad operational savings that would accrue from building either Alignment. It was agreed that members of the Consultant Modeling Team would meet with the UP and BNSF's modelers in Omaha and Ft. Worth as soon as possible to get the railroads approval and sign off of the modeled Base Case.

Dick Makse next discussed some of the specifics of the Base Case model. He showed an example of the Train Performance Calculator (TPC) which showed how critical the grade of the route is to loaded coal trains. The model shows that loaded coal trains going over the Palmer Divide north of Monument, CO are only going 9 MPH at the peak of the Palmer Divide. The TPC also showed the big difference in grades for loaded trains going south to Amarillo via Las Animas and Springfield as opposed to the much more severe terrain for the empty coal trains returning by way of Trinidad and Walsenburg.

The next steps in this process are getting concurrence from the BNSF and UP and making a presentation to the Regional Transportation District (RTD) if requested. This will be followed by comparing Alignments A and B to the base case for analytical evaluation.

Nick Amrhein next described the analysis being done related to Transportation Net Benefits. Additional benefits related to environmental and economic development categories will be commencing in the near future. The category of Transportation Net Benefits includes:

Railroad Operating Efficiency Gains  
Avoided Capital Costs for New Grade-separated Crossings  
Reductions in Travel Delay at Railroad At-grade Crossings  
Reductions in the Number of Train-Vehicle Accidents

Nick discussed the assumptions that were used in the 2005 Public Benefits Study and noted where different assumptions were being used or were under development. For example, in regard to evaluating the Railroad Operating Efficiency Gains, the Public Benefits Study assumed the hourly value of a train operation to be \$850/hour. That figure is being re-evaluated by the Consultant Team. Also, a discount rate of 3% (of what?) was used in the 2005 Study. That figure will also be re-evaluated for the purposes of this Study.

There is a difference in the assumptions being used in calculating the Avoided Capital Costs for New Grade-separated Crossings. The 2005 Study looked at other rail improvements in the state in addition to the north-south bypass (Alignment A). The railroads have directed the Consultant Team in this Study to evaluate only the Bypass Project and not look at other railroad infrastructure improvements in the State. Therefore the number of grade separations that may be avoided with the construction of a new north-south bypass is potentially less than the number discussed in the Public Benefits Study.

Nick then discussed the methodology to be used in determining the Reduction in Auto Travel Delay at Existing Railroad At-grade Crossings. Again, some differences in assumptions from the 2005 Study are being made (i.e., the per hour delay costs for autos and trucks (value of time) are being increased for this Study based on the use of updated wage data from the State).

Nick closed by noting that the funding and financing task of the Study is just being initiated and that more detail on this task would be available at the next Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

The question was asked as to the level of detail that the Study will entail regarding the benefits that would accrue to the public from acquiring access to the existing Front Range rail alignments for use by passenger rail. Randy Grauberger, Parsons Brinckerhoff's Project Manager noted that this element of the analysis had not yet been initiated but that the Scope of Work did call for some analysis in relation to this "rail passenger service" related benefit. He mentioned that the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority was about to initiate a Feasibility Study of High Speed Rail Passenger Service along both the I-25 and I-70 corridors. That Study would be getting into much more detail relative to passenger specific use of the I-25 corridor and will be coordinated closely with this Rail Relocation Study.

Randy Grauberger next distributed copies of the Draft Purpose and Need statement that had been developed for this Study. The document was created to set the stage for future NEPA related activities that will be required with the implementation of either Alignment

A or B. Randy asked the TAC members to provide any comments on this document to either Tammy Lang or him. The document will be attached to the meeting minutes in order for comments to be made via “Track Changes”.

Randy noted that the public involvement component of the Study had not yet been initiated. He stated that it was expected that a press release on the Study would be forthcoming soon, and that a series of Open Houses would take place soon after the next TAC meeting. This would allow the TAC the opportunity to comment on the content of the materials to be used at the Open Houses. Randy noted that Brush, Limon, Pueblo and Castle Rock had volunteered to “host” such Open Houses. Ron Davis volunteered to “host” an Open House in La Junta.

Randy asked if any of the TAC members had additional comments they wanted to make. Limon’s Joe Kiely noted that he had attended a meeting earlier in the week where Governor Ritter stated that this project needs to take place if the rail passenger service that is being discussed is to ever occur.

UP’s Grant Janke asked that for future meetings, materials be distributed to TAC members in advance for their review. Tammy agreed and stated that in the future, TAC members would receive meeting materials one week to ten days in advance of meetings.

Paul Smith commented about the competitive balance between BNSF and UP, noting that this north/south benefited BNSF more than UP.

Following a brief discussion of available dates, it was determined that the next TAC meeting would be held on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and would include a working lunch; possibly from noon to 4 p.m. (more details on this meeting will follow based on room availability, etc.)

The meeting adjourned at 3: 35 p.m.

For those individuals that wished to stay after the meeting, Steve Wickersham and Dick Makse showed the RTC model of the base case in “animation mode”. This allows you to visualize the various trains moving around the Base Case network as a dispatcher would actually see them.

## Meeting Attendees

### TAC Members:

<b>Tammy Lang</b>	<b>CDOT Project Manager</b>
<b>Randy Grauberger</b>	<b>Parsons Brinckerhoff Project Manager</b>
<b>Grant Janke</b>	<b>UP Railroad</b>
<b>Dick Hartman</b>	<b>UP Railroad</b>
<b>Bill Brunskill</b>	<b>UP Railroad</b>
<b>Colleen Deines</b>	<b>BNSF Railway</b>
<b>Jack Moy</b>	<b>BNSF Railway</b>
<b>Michael Sickler</b>	<b>BNSF Railway</b>
<b>Steve Rudy</b>	<b>DRCOG</b>
<b>Pam Fischaber</b>	<b>Colorado Public Utilities Commission</b>
<b>Henry Stoppolecamp</b>	<b>RTD</b>
<b>Paul Smith</b>	<b>Smith Consulting</b>
<b>Ron Davis</b>	<b>Action 22</b>
<b>Joe Kiely</b>	<b>Town of Limon/Ports to Plains</b>
<b>Doug Lehnen</b>	<b>Town of Castle Rock/Rocky Mtn. Rail Assoc.</b>
<b>Mike VanWagenen</b>	<b>VST Railroad</b>
<b>Mike Ramsey</b>	<b>Federal Rail Administration</b>
<b>Scott McDaniel</b>	<b>CDOT Region 1</b>
<b>Pete Graham</b>	<b>CDOT Region 4</b>
<b>Jim Paulmeno</b>	<b>CDOT Region 6</b>
<b>Mehdi Baziar</b>	<b>CDOT Mobility Section</b>
<b>Tom Mauser</b>	<b>CDOT Intermodal Planning</b>

### TAC Members not in attendance:

<b>Bill Moore</b>	<b>Pueblo MPO</b>
<b>Eric Bergman</b>	<b>DOLA</b>
<b>New Rep. to be named</b>	<b>City and County of Denver</b>
<b>Jim Orchard</b>	<b>Rio Tinto Energy America</b>

### Other Attendees:

<b>Craig Larson</b>	<b>Federal Highway Administration</b>
<b>Cassie Gouger</b>	<b>FHU – Consultant Team Rail Lead</b>
<b>Jerry Albin</b>	<b>FHU – Consultant Team</b>
<b>Steve Wickersham</b>	<b>Parsons Brinckerhoff – RTC Modeling Team</b>
<b>Dick Makse</b>	<b>Parsons Brinckerhoff – RTC Modeling Team</b>
<b>Nick Amrhein</b>	<b>PB Consult – Benefits/Costs Analysis</b>