



## **Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Meeting Notes**

**Date of Contact: 7/22/2008**

**Meeting: Kick-Off Public Workshop**

**Presenters: Rick Pilgrim, Nadine Lee, Mark Baudermann and Tracy Boyle**

**Number of Attendees: 77**

**Purpose: To kick-off EA process, introduce community to current plans for the CRMF and BMF and create opportunity for public questions and comments.**

### **Meeting Summary**

A kick-off public workshop was held on July 22, 2008 at the Transfiguration of Christ Cathedral in Denver to present the EA process to the public, answer questions from the public, allow the public to submit comments, and to provide the public with one-on-one time with project representatives. The meeting started with a 30 minute general PowerPoint presentation, where Rick Pilgrim presented the project purpose and need, project background, site selection process, the Bus Maintenance Facility overview and the EA process and schedule. Tracy Boyle then presented the public involvement effort planned to accompany the environmental assessment process. She informed people on the upcoming meetings, how to stay involved and the next steps. Following the general presentation, the project team conducted a three hour Q&A session with the public.

The Q&A session was structured the following way. The public was invited to ask all their questions or submit all their comments on the CRMF and the BMF before the project team answered them. This allowed the project team to group the questions under common themes and answer them according to topic. The common questions and themes the public commented on included the following:

### **Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility**

Twenty seven members of the community asked questions or stated comments regarding the Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility. The main themes and issues expressed were the following:

- Collaboration between RTD and the Community
  - Most residents expressed a need to work in conjunction with RTD on the aesthetics and design of the CRMF. Specifically, they were concerned with RTD diminishing the revitalization of the area with the new facility. They want a guarantee from RTD that they will not devalue everything the community has worked towards, and a guarantee that RTD will involve the community throughout the process, especially the TAXI development.



- They wanted to know if RTD would include art projects to beautify the facility and area, and they expressed a willingness to work together towards creating an aesthetically appealing facility to benefit both parties.
- Project Background
  - The public wanted further clarification as to why the Union Pacific site did not work. They wanted to understand what criteria were used to pick the CRMF site.
  - Rick discussed the 24 proposed sites and selection process that occurred as part of the East Corridor EIS.
- Environment
  - The public wanted to be assured the project would be environmentally responsible when working on the facility.
  - They wanted to understand what buffers will be created along the TAXI site that will be environmentally sound.
  - Rick discussed how an Issue Focused Team made up of citizens would address buffers, aesthetics and sustainability and encouraged people to sign up if they have strong opinions.
- Zoning
  - The public wanted to understand how the CRMF fell within the mixed use zoning in the project area. Furthermore, they wanted to understand how they can have City Council re-zone the area.
  - Rick said that RTD would work with the City on zoning issues.
- Responsiveness
  - The public wanted a commitment from RTD to be responsive and address each issue in order to help the community get a more complete understanding of the project.
  - Rick agreed to arrange a meeting with TAXI residents to address Zeppelin Development's proposed integrated RTD/TAXI plan the following week.
- Public Involvement
  - The community wanted to understand if the community involvement is enforceable, and how RTD will guarantee they will be heard. They wanted to understand who the decision makers were and how they fit into the overall process.
  - Nadine described the enforceability of the Environmental Assessment document and that specifications could be incorporated into the Request for Proposal and contract for the public-private partnership. She also listed the decision makers at RTD as the project manager, senior management as well as the RTD Board of Directors. The decision-maker for the EA is the Federal Transit Administration.



## Bus Maintenance Facility

Eight questions were submitted regarding the Bus Maintenance Facility. These concerned:

- Site Selection
  - How did RTD pick the Post site as the final site?
  - Will they consider moving the site to the suburbs?
  - Did RTD consider future zoning in the site selection process?
  - How will this impact TOD in the area?
  - Mark and Rick explained that the Post site is in an area zoned for industrial use and met the list of criteria needed to host the bus facility, including the three mile distance from Union Station needed for the mall shuttles. They expressed that RTD is committed to working with the neighborhood to minimize the effects on future development in the area.
- Traffic
  - The public wanted to know what the traffic plan was.
  - How will the traffic impact Fox St, 44<sup>th</sup> Street and the elementary school?
  - Rick discussed that a traffic analysis will be conducted and presented back to the public.
- FasTracks Budget
  - How did the Denver Post site fall within the RTD FasTracks budget?
  - RTD is anticipating the cost of the building will be approximately what the previous owners sold it for earlier this year, but that an appraisal is still pending.
- Regency Community
  - What will the impact be on the Regency student housing community?
  - Rick discussed that a traffic, noise and air quality study will be done and presented to the public, and that RTD intends to seek public input on the mitigation options if they are necessary.

After the question and answer submission period, Nadine Lee, Rick Pilgrim and Mark Baudermann answered questions that were grouped into categories. It was agreed that the project team would meet with the TAXI residents in a week to discuss their specific concerns. Although the Q&A session went over the planned time frame by two hours, the project team decided to remain available to allow for one-on-one interaction with the public at the information stations. These stations were provided as follows: Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility, Bus Maintenance Facility, Environmental Assessment, RTD FasTracks and a Comment Station. Project team members met with the public for 30 minutes to further clarify any individual concerns. At the end of the meeting, the project team invited the public to sign up for issue focus teams, and assured them that they would be contacted regarding upcoming meetings.



The public was able to submit additional comments through computer comment stations and via hand-written comment forms.