



## September 2007 Technology Workshops Public Comments Summary

The Northwest Rail Project Team hosted a series of three public workshops to share the findings from its vehicle rail technology analysis, present the preliminary recommendation for vehicle rail technology and gather relevant public input. These meetings were held on September 19, 20 and 24, 2007 in Broomfield, Denver and Boulder, respectively. An open house format, which included an optional introductory presentation, allowed individuals to pursue the issue areas of most interest to them by meeting with project staff and viewing posters at stations organized around: 1) Project Background, 2) Noise and Vibration, 3) Air Quality and Energy, 4) Cost Effectiveness and 5) Visual Impacts.

Participants were encouraged to submit their written comments at an established Comment Station, where copies of the Comment Form were provided. The form seeks to answer: a) whether the individual supported the preliminary recommendation and their justification, b) options that RTD should consider (considering the cost of EMU technology), c) other issues specific to DMU technology that the Environmental Evaluation should address, d) what the EE should include in its study of commuter rail stations and track alignment and, e) other issues of importance in the Environmental Evaluation.

Of the 205 individuals whom attended one of the three workshops, 97 submitted comments in response to the preliminary vehicle rail technology recommendation. Below is the geographic origin of these 97 comments:

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Arvada              | 2  |
| Boulder             | 49 |
| Broomfield          | 7  |
| Denver              | 13 |
| Gunbarrel           | 1  |
| Lafayette           | 3  |
| Longmont            | 5  |
| Louisville          | 2  |
| Niwot               | 2  |
| Westminster         | 10 |
| <i>Not provided</i> | 3  |

Most comments addressed the first section of the Comment Form, regarding their perspective on the preliminary recommendation. The text of the question and an overview of the responses follows.

**The Northwest Rail Team is making a preliminary recommendation to the public, agencies and the RTD Board: To initiate serve for the Northwest Rail corridor in 2015 with Diesel Multiple Units (DMU) Commuter Rail Technology.**

a. **Do you support this recommendation? If so, why?**



30% of all individuals who submitted comments support the recommendation

- % from Broomfield Meeting 27%
- % from Denver Meeting 27%
- % from Boulder Meeting 47%

The reasons for support included the practicality of DMU over EMU, the cost effectiveness and the aesthetic preference for DMU.

**b. Do you disagree with this recommendation?**

60% of the participants disagree with this recommendation

- % from Broomfield Meeting 22%
- % from Denver Meeting 10%
- % from Boulder Meeting 68%

Those in disagreement with the recommendation cited the following concerns (listed in order of frequency, from highest to lowest):

- Noise
- Air quality
- Environmental
- Fossil fuels/diesel
- Vibration
- Maintenance facility (environmental impact on local communities)
- Cost
- Environmental justice

Several individuals suggested that the system should be uniform, that RTD should assist communities in the establishment of quiet zones, take care to protect unique/historical properties, and ensure that the travel time on the rail would offer a time savings compared to other public transportation options.

**Other Options to Consider/Recommendations**

Some specific recommendations made by participants include:

- During non-peak hours, trains from Denver to Longmont and back need to run no more than every 30 minutes. Reduce the planned train runs from 60 per day to 46/day (2 peak periods of 3 hours each @ one train every 15 minutes and one train every 30 minutes during other 11 hours of operation day).
- If you will lay a second track along rail between Sheridan Blvd and 88th Ave (roughly parallel to 86th Ave), place the new rail on the NORTH side of the existing tracks. Or, run the commuter train on the existing rail.
- Explore alternative fuel sources (bio-diesel, natural gas, hybrid technology)



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- Leave bridges at their current height and just make sure the train is moving fast enough so it will have power from the overhead electric lines leading to each bridge, and the leading edge of the train will pick up the electricity as it exits the bridge
- Lower tracks