MEMORANDUM

PROJECT:	Front Range Passenger Rail Service Development Plan and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
DATE:	Wednesday, November 13, 2019
TIME:	1:30pm – 4:30pm
LOCATION:	Denver Regional Council of Governments, 1001 17th St #700, Denver, CO 80202, USA; Aspen Room
SUBJECT:	Central Segment Stakeholder Coalition Meeting 1

Attendees

Coalition Members and SWC & FRPR Commissioners

- Chuck Attardo, I-25 South Corridor Environmental Project Manager, CDOT
- Adam Burg, Legislative and Government Affairs Administrator, Adam County
- Kathleen Conti, Commissioner, District 1, Arapahoe County
- Scott Cook, CEO, Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lee Cryer, Planning Project Manager, RTD
- Tim Ester, Denver International Airport
- Sarah Grant, Transportation Manager, City and County of Broomfield
- Phil Greenwald, Transportation Planning Manager, City of Longmont
- Art Griffith, Douglas County
- Tim Harris, WSP (not a Coalition member)
- Daniel Hutton, DSTMA
- Andrew Iltis, Senior Manager of Transportation and Mobility, Downtown Denver Partnership
- Matt Jones, Commissioner, Boulder County
- David Krutsinger, CDOT and FRPR Commissioner
- Mark Kunugi, Environmental Public Health Manager, Denver International Airport
- Carl Meese, Senior Campus Planner, Auraria Campus
- Danny O'Connor, Senior Transportation Planner, City of Boulder
- Ron Papsdorf, Transportation Planning and Operations Director, DRCOG
- Carson Priest, NATA
- Natalie Schranz, Boulder County
- Christine Shapard, Vice President, Denver South EDP
- Steve Sherman, Resident Engineer and Project Manager, CDOT
- Jim Souby, ColoRail and SWC & FRPR Commissioner
- Jack Tone, ColoRail
- Bill Van Meter, RTD and SWC & FRPR Commissioner

Project Team

- Jonathan Bartsch, Principal and CEO, CDR Associates
- Spencer Dodge, SWC & FRPR Commission
- Chris Enright, Engineer-In-Training, CDOT
- Daniel Estes, Program Associate, CDR Associates

- Randy Grauberger, South West Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
- Carla Perez, Senior Strategic Consultant, HDR
- Jeffrey Range, Program Manager, CDR Associates
- Sophie Shulman, Chief of Innovative Mobility, CDOT
- David Singer, Environmental Policy and Biological Resources Section Manager, CDOT
- Jennifer Webster, Principal and Founder, Catalyst Public Affairs
- Mandy Whorton, Principal and Owner, Peak Consulting

Meeting Summary

The following summary was developed based on the agenda and general discussions held during the meeting. Attachments to this summary include the meeting agenda and presentation slides.

Welcome and Introductions

As Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) Central Segment Stakeholder Coalition members entered the meeting they were encouraged to write down what the FRPR Study meant to them at this early stage in the proceedings. The outcomes of the activity were taped to posters on the wall via sticky notes and revisited for discussion at the end of the meeting. See the section **Results: Opening Activity (What Does FRPR mean to you…)** below for the input provided by coalition members.

Jeffrey Range, CDR Associates, welcomed the coalition members to the meeting, reviewed the objectives and agenda, and thanked the attendees for their participation. The presentation included a description of FRPR, FRPR Project Development, FRPR Governance, and Stakeholder Engagement. Participants then divided into breakout groups to discuss in more detail. The following describes each meeting section in more detail.

What is FRPR / Past Studies

Randy Grauberger, Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (SWC & FRPR Commission) Project Director, began the meeting by discussing past rail studies, including: State Passenger Rail Plan (2018), Interregional Connectivity Study (2014), Interoperability Study (2017), Rocky Mountain Rail Authority High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study (2010). Randy stated that a key difference between the FRPR Study and previous studies is that FRPR was directed by legislation to implement passenger rail on Colorado's Front Range. Randy also described the makeup of the SWC & FRPR Commission, the groups represented in the commission, and voting vs. non-voting members. Randy then showed a map of the study area.

Participants made comments and asked questions pertaining to the following:

- The availability of water and other resources for future populations needs to be considered in accordance with population predictions via the state demographer throughout the FRPR Study (i.e., how will the FRPR development impact natural resources along the route and beyond)
- Potential partnership opportunities between completing the North West Rail and funding opportunities for FRPR
- Funding feasibility given budgetary constraints

- How the current Bustang operations informed FRPR Study. David Krutsinger, CDOT, responded that Bustang has demonstrated a need and desire on the part of the public for regional travel via public transit.

Purpose / Objectives

Mandy Whorton, Peak Consulting, read the draft project purpose, listed the FRPR Study objectives, offered background context on the development of each, and asked for feedback from participants. The draft purpose and objectives can be found in the attached slides.

Participants asked questions and made comments pertaining to the following:

- The priority of connecting large city centers, including those outside the state, compared to alleviating in-state mobility and congestion. Mandy responded, stating the current priority is Fort Collins to Pueblo, which can then serve as a backbone for wider proximities.
- Whether the phrasing of “in and around the I-25 Corridor” in the purpose Statement was taken from FRPR legislation. Mandy responded, stating that yes, “in and around the I-25 Corridor” was verbiage directly from the legislation. The group discussed the phrasing, suggesting that language “in and around the I-25 corridor” does not adequately describe potential alignments, such as going to Denver International Airport.
- Rail progress and achievements of neighboring states, such as Utah, in regards to passenger rail infrastructure and how FRPR is an opportunity for Colorado to become a leader in public rail services
- That the word “important” in the purpose statement should be amended to be stronger, such as the term “critical”
- The impossibility of “making everyone happy”
- Existing corridors tend to present communities with less negative impacts (construction, travel disruption, etc.)
- Issues could arise regarding transportation access needs from final stop to ultimate destination (feasibility, traffic upon arrival, etc.)
- Action Item: Engage the senior population in the FRPR Study. (The study has the potential to impact this group in a variety of ways, so they should be involved throughout the process.) It was stated that DRCOG is the Area Agency on Aging and could be a resource to this component of the study going forward.

Project Development

Jennifer Webster, Catalyst Public Affairs, described the status of governance and legislative options of the FRPR. The potential governance structures include a Public Rail Authority, a Front Range Rail District, a Rail Enterprise, or expansion of the SWC & FRPR Commission. Details of each governance option can be found in the attached slides.

Participants asked questions and made comments pertaining to the following:

- Make a clear distinction between a Public Highway Authority and Regional Transportation Authority in future governance structure discussions
- There could be a benefit in looking to other states, such as Utah, that have completed similar projects whose governance structures could be studied and/or modeled

- Whether Regional Transportation Authorities require a vote by the public
- The I-70 Mountain Corridor has been discussing the creation of a rail commission of their own, which could impact the FRPR governance as the project progresses

Stakeholder Engagement

Jonathan Bartsch, CDR Associates, discussed the current initiatives to engage stakeholders. These included FRPR Presentations, Stakeholder Interviews, Social and Political Risk Assessment, Online Engagement, Community Meetings, and Stakeholder Coalitions.

Carla Perez, HDR Inc., discussed results from two recent surveys. This included an online MetroQuest survey, which had 6,965 total respondents over 71 days and a public opinion survey, which was requested and funded by the SWC & FRPR Commission and conducted by the consultants RBI and Magellan. The public opinion survey collected input from 600 respondents who are likely voters across 13 Front Range counties.

Participants asked questions and made comments pertaining to the following:

- Whether survey questions asked about a specific sales tax rate. Carla responded, stating for the preliminary surveys a specific sales tax rate was not included.
- Whether there was any response variance between counties. Randy responded, stating that there was barely any variance between counties, around 1-3%.
- FRPR has the potential to widen transit options outward from Denver's Union Station

Breakout Group Activity

Coalition Members divided into two groups to engage in deeper discussions pertaining to FRPR's Regional Benefits, Success Factors, Challenges, and Integration with larger mobility systems. Themes from these discussions include:

Benefits

- Stronger, more reliable transportation network
- Broader connectivity between communities and regions
- DIA A-Line currently has limitations—this would mitigate that by expanding user options
- Remote work possibility during commutes
- Environmental impact (air quality, carbon emissions, etc.)
- Economic diversification
- Stress-free commute—even in poor weather
- I-25 congestion relief
- Expand range for employment opportunities

Success Factors

- User experience (e.g., travel time, minimal transfers, etc.)
- Mutual gains with other initiatives (e.g., mobility hubs, Bustang, NW Rail, SW Rail, North Metro, etc.)
- Sufficient ridership
- Diversified revenue streams

- Time competitive with driving
- Placemaking: creating new places people want to go
- Well-designed stations (accessibility, user experience, etc.)
- Communicative transparency throughout the process
- Viable/long term funding strategy

Challenges

- Public buy-in—particularly in reference to the potential for a long timeline
- Politics in regards to funding (TABOR, etc.)
- Educating public on benefits
- Station location
- Construction phasing: which areas go first, what is the larger process

Integration With Larger Mobility Systems

- Connecting to other regional transportation systems
- "First mile and last mile" commute integration (Lyft, Uber, other options)
- Collaboration with Amtrak and the potential for 'trip pairing'

Action Items Discussed

- Engage the senior population in the research and development of FRPR. DRCOG was mentioned as an area agency on aging.
- Amend the wording of the purpose statement from "Important" to "Critical"

Results: Opening Activity (What Does FRPR mean to you…)

Jeffrey returned to the opening activity and shared answers that Coalition Members had written down answering the question "What does FRPR mean to you?" Answers included:

Descriptors	Solutions	Impact
• Expensive • Exciting • Fast • Vital • A big project • A bold idea • Worth studying for potential • About time to get started • Challenging but a nice vision • Well connected • A bold idea	• Necessity for an expanding mega-region • A great alternative to driving • A key mobility alternative for Colorado's growing elderly population • A key mobility option for growth and employment opportunities • Will help move more people through the I-25 corridor	• Going to be an economic driver • Maybe going to serve my great great grandchildren • Critical to the Front Range's future mobility • A long-overdue and necessary transportation option

Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Randy stated next steps. Those included requesting more feedback and information from stakeholders to improve processes and discussions, selecting corridor coalition representatives, scheduling the next segment coalition meeting, and beginning the development of Level 1 alternatives. Randy then closed the meeting by thanking Coalition Members for their attendance and participation.