ColoRail

ASSUMPTIONS: THE FUTURE

• Front Range Population grows by 57% by 2050! 1 in 5 elderly, many younger people transit oriented with different lifestyles

• Public realizes the current transportation system faces “carmageddon”

• New, smarter technologies change the landscape for communities and citizens reducing first mile/last mile issues and costs

• Younger generations get politically motivated to secure their future
ColoRail
ASSUMPTIONS

• Front Range Corridor Freight ROW is best bet
• Service must be competitive with auto travel
• A building block approach makes the most sense
• There are useful models around the nation
• State Rail Plan and possible legislation are key
ASSUMPTIONS

Freight ROW is Best Bet

- Connects the key communities north and south of Denver
- Provides a feasible path through Denver with service to Denver Union Station
- Can be staged to allow future service to DIA from north and south
- Provides Service to most voters who must approve funds
- Freight Railroads capacity must be protected and principles adhered to (see Handout from BNSF Railway)
ASSUMPTION
Service Must Be Competitive With Auto Travel

- Trip time between DUS and Fort Collins and DUS and Colorado Springs must be 75 minutes or less with minimal stops
- Fares must compete with auto operating costs, parking; will employers subsidize fares to reduce parking fees?
- Travel by train must be consistently comfortable, convenient and reliable in all weather conditions
ASSUMPTION
A Building Block Approach Makes the Most Sense

• Develop through car service to the south, stop by stop
• Develop peak service to the north, perhaps 3 am and pm trains at the outset
• Expand service and infrastructure based on demand, working cooperatively with the host railroads to protect their needs
• Grow ridership and acquire facilities strategically
ASSUMPTION
There Are Useful Models Around the Nation

• Sounder Train, Seattle - Tacoma
• NorthStar, Minneapolis – Big Lake, MN
• BNSF/METRA Aurora Line – Chicago – Suburbs
• Virginia Railway Express – Washington, DC – Fredericksburg, VA
• BrightLine – Orlando – Miami, FL
ASSUMPTION
State Rail Plan and Possible State Legislation are Key

• State Rail Plan qualifies Colorado for federal funding
• State Rail Plan must posit Front Range Passenger Rail in its long range plan component
• State Legislation would create a community based Front Range Rail planning authority similar to the Southwest Chief Commission and including continuation of that Commission’s activities
• The authority would bring back a plan for the development and operation of Front Range Passenger Rail and win public support for the concept