

**Denver Union Station
Final Environmental Impact Statement**



APPENDIX I—PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

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PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF
PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE DENVER UNION STATION DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

April 19, 2006
6:00 p.m.

Denver Convention Center



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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. SHELLEY: Good evening. Welcome to the
3 Denver Union Station Draft Environment Impact
4 Statement Public Hearing. My name is Dave Shelley.
5 I'm with RTD and am the RTD project manager for this
6 project.

7 I need to first ask if there's anybody in
8 the audience that needs sign language interpretation?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. SHELLEY: Thank you for coming. We've
11 been working on this project a long time. We're
12 finally starting to see the end of the planning
13 process which, when completed, will allow us to get
14 something built.

15 I'd like to make a few introductions.
16 First, City Councilwoman Judy Montero from the City
17 Council for the City and County of Denver and
18 members of the PMT. THE PMT is the Project
19 Management Team who are the representatives from the
20 four public agencies who have been working on this
21 project: The City and County of Denver, RTD, CDOT,
22 and DRCOG. Jason Longsdorf and Ellen Ittelson are
23 here from the City and County of Denver; as is George
24 Gerstle from CDOT.

25 The Denver Union Station project involved a

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1 public advisory committee, called the USAC; the Union
2 Station Advisory Committee. One of our co-chairs
3 from the committee is here: Shannon Gifford. The
4 two other co-chairs are: Brian Klipp and Jim
5 Graebner.

6 There's also several members from the USAC
7 committee in the audience who I would like for them
8 to stand up so you can see who they are. They spent
9 a lot of time and hours with us putting this whole
10 plan together.

11 I'd also like to recognize and introduce a
12 couple of people from the Federal Transit
13 Administration: Dave Beckhouse and Charmaine
14 Knighten.

15 Also in the audience are many of our sub
16 consultants from the project team. Everybody raise
17 your hand if you are a sub consultant. These are the
18 people that did the work on preparing the Master Plan
19 and this Draft EIS.

20 With that, I'd like to introduce Judy
21 Aranda, who is with the project team. She's going to
22 run the rest of the meeting.

23 MS. ARANDA: Tonight's agenda will highlight
24 the key elements of the project that we've developed
25 over the past four years. We will review the project



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1 time line -- where we are in the process and the next
2 phase of the project. We'll also describe the
3 project purpose and need for the Draft Environmental
4 Impact Statement, followed by a summary of the
5 alternatives analysis and screening process we
6 followed. We will also describe the results of the
7 environmental analysis and the project costs.

8 Finally we will open the meeting to public
9 comments. Those of you who signed in tonight were
10 asked to indicate whether you wanted to provide
11 comments. If you would like to give oral comments,
12 please raise your hand and we'll get somebody to make
13 sure that you are added to the commenters list. At
14 the end of the presentation, we will call each of you
15 up to the microphone to hear your comments.

16 Project Time Line. The project started
17 about four years ago with the initiation of the
18 Denver Union Station Master Plan. It began in April
19 of 2002. The Master Plan was adopted in September
20 and October of 2004 and served as the medium for the
21 alternative development, analysis and screening
22 process that was used to select the alternatives that
23 were evaluated in the Draft Environment Impact
24 Statement.

25 In June 2002, we published a Notice of

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1 Intent in the Federal Register to inform the public
2 that we planned to prepare a Draft Environment Impact
3 Statement.

4 The comment period for the Draft
5 Environmental Impact Statement began on March 24, and
6 will end May 8.

7 Following this public hearing, we will
8 respond to public comments received on the draft
9 document and will incorporate our response to
10 comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

11 Following the completion of the FEIS, we
12 will publish a notice in the Federal Register and
13 wait for a 30-day period prior to preparing a Record
14 of Decision. The Record of Decision is the decision
15 document that justifies the project, summarizes the
16 alternatives considered and rationale for selecting
17 the preferred alternative. It will also document
18 commitments we have made in terms of mitigation to
19 mitigate impacts caused by the project. Once the
20 Record of Decision is signed, the next phase of the
21 project begins final design.

22 Master Plan and EIS Participants. The
23 Federal Transit Administration is the lead agency for
24 this project and the project sponsor is the Regional
25 Transportation District



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1 Back in 2001 an Intergovernmental Agreement
2 was signed between RTD, the Colorado Department of
3 Transportation, the Denver Regional Council of
4 Governments, and the City and County of Denver.
5 These agencies entered into an IGA to purchase Denver
6 Union Station and related property and to initiate
7 the development of a Master Plan.

8 The Union Station Advisory Committee, known
9 as the USAC, is a 99 member committee of which half
10 of that membership attended meetings over a
11 three-year period to help develop the Master Plan,
12 participate in the development of alternatives and
13 screening. We also conducted three major town
14 meetings to receive comments from the public on the
15 alternatives that were being considered.

16 The prime consultant is Parsons
17 Brinckerhoff. The PB team included 21 sub
18 consultants.

19 How Does Union Station Fit Into the
20 FasTracks Plan? As most of you know, FasTracks is a
21 major regional transit initiative, that was passed by
22 the voters in November 2004 to bring transit into the
23 Denver region. As you can see from the FasTracks
24 map, all of the FasTracks corridors will serve Denver
25 Union Station either directly or indirectly.

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1 On the FasTracks map, the orange and green
2 lines reflect the US-36 corridor which will provide
3 bus rapid transit and commuter rail service. South
4 of the US-36 corridor is the West Corridor and the
5 Gold Line, both of which will be LRT corridors. The
6 North Metro Line is just getting started and no
7 technology has been selected. The Southeast and
8 Southwest corridors indirectly also will serve Denver
9 Union Station.

10 Currently, we have 2.64 million people in
11 the Denver region. In 2030, that number will
12 increase to over a million people to 3.88 million.
13 And there will be an additional 800,000 jobs in 2030.
14 So, just handling the growth is one of the challenges
15 for our transportation system.

16 Purpose of the Project. The purpose of the
17 project is to enhance the function of Denver Union
18 Station as a multi-modal transportation center, a
19 station that will serve all of the region and the
20 State of Colorado. As you've seen from the previous
21 slide, a lot of corridors are depending on Denver
22 Union Station.

23 In its heyday, in 1881, Denver Union Station
24 served over 13 railroad companies and had 24 rail
25 tracks. Today, transit has changed dramatically to



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1 very limited service. The C-line LRT serves Denver
2 Union Station as well as the 16th Street Mall,
3 Amtrack, the Ski Train, and some limited bus service.

4 Need for the Project. All of the FasTracks
5 corridors assume that improvements to Denver Union
6 Station will be in place. No alternative sites were
7 considered to serve these corridors. The purpose of
8 converging all of the service lines into Denver Union
9 Station is to optimize the transportation system and
10 to make the system as efficient and effective as
11 possible and to provide ridership options to the
12 community. We also expect to increase ridership due
13 to ease of transit connections from downtown, or to
14 other parts of the region for purposes of shopping,
15 employment, services, entertainment, and so on.

16 Redeveloping Denver Union Station into a
17 multi-modal hub should make transit connections easy
18 and convenient for passengers and hopefully encourage
19 them to consider taking transit to reach their
20 destinations.

21 Transit Ridership Estimates. If no
22 improvements are made to Denver Union Station, in
23 2030, about 7600 trip ends will occur at Denver Union
24 Station during the peak hour and about 28,800 daily
25 trip ends.

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1 With improvements planned for Denver Union
2 Station, peak hour service will increase 400 percent
3 to 42,800 trip ends or on a daily basis 175,000 trip
4 ends.

5 As you can see, a big difference in
6 ridership is expected. The trips ends include riders
7 passing through Denver Union Station as well as
8 getting on and off at Union Station.

9 Goals and Objectives. A number of goals and
10 objectives were established that served as the basis
11 for alternative development and screening. The
12 goals and objectives included optimizing the system's
13 efficiency, to increase ridership in the region, to
14 provide people more modal options and to design the
15 station compatible with the context of the
16 surrounding area. Denver Union Station is not only a
17 historic building, but it also located in one of the
18 most historical areas within this region. So, it was
19 important that any design improvements pay attention
20 to the historic character and its historic use that
21 was intended when it was built.

22 It was also important in our analysis of
23 alternatives to maximize development potential within
24 the site. Denver Union Station itself sits on 19.85
25 acres. There is a lot of property around the



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1 structure itself, opening the possibility for public
2 and private development.

3 Lastly, for the Master Plan, the
4 establishment of a governance structure to manage the
5 developments that are planned to occur on the Denver
6 Union Station property.

7 At this point I need to make a distinction
8 between the Master Plan and the Draft Environmental
9 Impact Statement. The Master Plan envisions both
10 transportation improvements and private development to
11 occur on the 19.85 acre site. The Draft EIS only
12 discusses and evaluates the transportation components
13 of the Master Plan.

14 So, if you read the Master Plan, and see the
15 term "Vision Plan," it's relating to both private and
16 public developments as well as the transportation
17 improvements planned at Denver Union Station. When
18 you read the Draft Environmental Impact Statement,
19 the Vision Plan Alternative addresses only the
20 transportation improvements. The transportation
21 element is the only element that we are seeking
22 environmental clearance and federal funding for.

23 Area of Study. The yellow boundary is the
24 area of study. On the north is 23rd Street and
25 Cherry Creek is on the south. The Consolidated

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1 Mainline is on the west side, and Wynkoop is on the
2 east.

3 This was the study area for the
4 environmental analysis.

5 Alternative Analysis Process. The
6 alternative analysis process took two years to
7 complete. We started in July 2002 and completed the
8 analysis in July 2004. I don't think there was any
9 rest during that two-year process. The alternative
10 analysis was performed during the development of the
11 Master Plan and involved a four-tiered process.

12 The alternative development and screening
13 process was a collaborative effort. I cannot
14 overemphasize how collaborative it was. The Denver
15 Union Station Advisory Committee met during the
16 entire period every three weeks. They met with the
17 project study team to help assess the alternatives
18 and screen them.

19 The four-tiered screen process started at a
20 very general conceptual level or fatal flaw type of
21 analysis. As it progressed through different stages,
22 the engineering became more specific, and the
23 analysis became more detailed. We evaluated over 40
24 alternatives or concepts. In the Master Plan, the
25 alternatives were called "concepts." However, in the



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1 environmental document, we call them "alternatives."

2 Over 40 Alternatives/Options Evaluated. It

3 may be hard to believe that we considered 40

4 alternatives since all of the alternatives were

5 within the Union Station property. No off-site

6 alternatives were considered. The alternatives we

7 developed showed light rail and passenger rail at

8 grade, below grade, or elevated above street level.

9 RTD regional bus service was also positioned at

10 different locations within the site.

11 Our goal was to maximize system efficiency

12 and optimize connections between different modes. We

13 looked at how a passenger would get through the

14 station to connect to different modes. We looked at

15 minimizing the need to traverse several flights of

16 stairs to reach their connections. We also looked at

17 ease of operations and at the ability to expand

18 services in the future.

19 We also considered intersection conflicts.

20 One of the considerations, as an example, was the

21 number of trains that would cross Wynkoop. In this

22 example about 40 trains, would have crossed Wynkoop,

23 which would have made the intersection fail.

24 The final evaluation resulted in selecting

25 the Vision Plan Alternative. Eric Anderson, to my

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1 left here, will give the details on the Vision Plan
2 Alternative. But in general terms our proposed
3 Vision Plan Alternative is to ultimately place below
4 street level light rail, passenger rail, and the RTD
5 regional bus service below Denver Union Station.

6 The first phase of the Vision Plan was
7 studied in detail in the Draft Environmental Impact
8 Statement. The Phase I improvements are what we can
9 pay for or what we actually have funds for. So, we
10 conducted a general analysis of the impacts of the
11 Vision Plan Alternative and studied in a lot more
12 detail the first phase of the Vision Plan.

13 That first phase is to bring in light rail
14 below ground and to leave passenger rail at grade.
15 We are seeking environment clearance only for Phase
16 I, because that's the phase we have funding
17 identified.

18 The expectation is, as funding is
19 identified, that future phases will be defined and
20 future environmental documents will need to be
21 prepared to clear those future phases.

22 So with that summary, I'll turn it over to
23 Eric.

24 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Judy. I'm going
25 to talk first about the Vision Plan Alternative that



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1 we have studied in the EIS. Then I will talk about
2 Phase I, which is the work we hope to clear as part
3 of the process.

4 Vision Plan Alternative - Key Elements. On
5 the Vision Plan, the drawing that you see here shows
6 the lower level or below grade level. What we're
7 doing here is placing the major components of light
8 rail, passenger rail, and regional bus all below
9 grade. This plan frees up the at-grade space to make
10 it much more of an urban site. We're also providing
11 space for regional bus, shuttles, taxis, and rental
12 cars. I'll show that in the next slide.

13 But the light rail is below grade. If it
14 was at-grade, there would be too many rail crossings
15 at Wewatta, which is an arterial street. That would,
16 of course, pretty much block that street during rush
17 hour.

18 We moved passenger rail below grade because
19 that allows us to improve 18th Street as a through
20 street. This will help with the circulation around
21 this site and also will help to connect more of the
22 town to the Central Platte Valley. The regional bus
23 facility, the RTD regional bus facility, is below
24 grade because that provides convenient access to all
25 modes and also provides space for public plazas

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1 above. So, there is light rail, passenger rail, and
2 the regional bus.

3 Vision Plan - Street Level. This is Wewatta
4 Street -- or Wynkoop Street. Excuse me. You'd think
5 after four years I would know where Wynkoop Street is.
6 Wynkoop Street. Denver Union Station is a historic
7 building and Wewatta is on the west side of the
8 building. This is the 16th Street Mall.

9 We are relocating the mall shuttle
10 turnaround to this side of Union Station. Remember
11 this is at street level, and, this is over the
12 passenger rail facility below.

13 The downtown circulator will help to
14 distribute passengers from rail, in buses, to
15 downtown. This is because the mall shuttle can't
16 handle all those passengers that Judy talked about
17 earlier, so another mode is required.

18 We have some flex space here that is in the
19 program, at the moment, as a deck over passenger rail
20 along 18th Street. The orange blocks that you see
21 are development parcels. As they hit the ground, it
22 may be hotel or restaurant uses. The access to the
23 bus facility, below grade, is right here. Then, we
24 have a public space or Wynkoop Plaza here on Wynkoop.

25 Vision Plan: First Floor Level. The next



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1 level up, the development parcels you can see get a
2 little bit bigger because those can span over the
3 mall shuttle and the commercial bus facility at this
4 area here. The yellow block that you see is the
5 commercial bus facility, which is Greyhound, tour
6 buses, and charter buses at that location. Here you
7 can see 18th Street going through at street level.

8 This is a very short synopsis of what the
9 Master Plan is. Again, we are looking at 36
10 different modes of transportation coming into Denver
11 Union Station.

12 Phase I Elements. But Phase I, which is
13 what we are attempting to clear through this DEIS, is
14 what we can build now with available funding.

15 Phase I - Light Rail. First, there is light
16 rail. Light rail will be underground on 16th Street
17 in an open-air station adjacent to Wewatta. We go
18 back underground on 18th Street, which either goes to
19 the north to the Gold Line or back around to the
20 Southeast or Southwest Corridors.

21 Passenger rail will remain at grade. There
22 are the five tracks that are out there today, and
23 they'll get rehabbed with some new platforms. There
24 are other site elements like the mall shuttle,
25 Kiss-and-Ride, a landscaped plaza, et cetera, that

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1 will be used to connect all of these modes together.

2 So, on light rail, Cherry Creek is right
3 here. It drops down to a tunnel on 16th Street, so
4 all the tracks that are out there today will be
5 underground. You are underground into the station
6 here and then back underground on 18th Street. This
7 is the Gold Line access, and then back out to
8 southeast or southwest. So that's a below grade
9 station.

10 There is an open trench area where the
11 tracks come back around and return to grade from
12 being about 35 feet below ground right at the portal.
13 At this point, the tracks come up to grade. I will
14 show you a picture of that in a second.

15 We've modified the existing passenger tunnel
16 that connects to Union Station. If you've been out
17 there today, to walk to light rail through the
18 historic building, there's a historic tunnel that
19 goes underneath the passenger rail tracks. We have
20 to modify that a little bit. We are looking at how
21 foundations for future development can get built into
22 the light rail station, so that the pads are ready
23 for development when it occurs. We also have to
24 modify the 15th Street bridge. It has to be lowered
25 to allow tracks to start to drop down so that the



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1 grades aren't so steep that the light rail can't run
2 on it. Then we will reconstruct 16th Street to
3 create a better pedestrian environment once the
4 tracks go away.

5 Phase I - Open Trench Next to the CML. So
6 here you see the station. This is the piece along
7 the Consolidated Mainline, and then the 15th Street
8 bridge.

9 This is the existing condition looking from
10 the Millennium Bridge to the north along the
11 Consolidated Mainline, which is right here and has
12 lofts through here. This is the 40-foot right-of-way
13 that RTD already owns for light rail purposes.

14 Phase I - Open Trench Next to the CML. This
15 is an image of what that could look like with the
16 open trench along here and the portal that goes into
17 the 18th Street tunnel is on the right just before
18 18th Street.

19 Don't you like the green grass? Isn't it
20 nice what computers can do? This is after a rain.

21 Phase I - Tunnel Portal at 16th Street.
22 This is from the Millennium Bridge looking back
23 toward downtown. You can see all the tracks at grade
24 here. That is the current C-line that comes into
25 Denver Union Station.

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1 Phase I - Tunnel Portal at 16th Street. The
2 tracks get placed underground. There would be a
3 portal somewhere between Chestnut and Wewatta Street,
4 where the train is fully underground. So, the
5 catenary lines and the track all come out at 16th and
6 don't cross Wewatta at grade; they would cross below
7 grade.

8 Phase I Elements. On passenger rail, the
9 first thing we will do is construct the track throat,
10 that is the area between 20th and 23rd. There is
11 currently a two-track throat out there. We will put
12 in a five-track throat. What that allows us to do is
13 to have trains coming from the east corridor, North
14 Metro, or US-36, to be able to get to any track at
15 the station, along with AMTRAK and the Ski Train.

16 We have five tracks that are currently at
17 the station. So, this throat allows all switching
18 movements to get to all these tracks. We would then
19 build three new commuter rail platforms for those
20 three lines that come in. These two longer yellow
21 bars are the long platforms that are required for
22 AMTRAK and Ski Train, which are currently out there
23 today.

24 Phase I Site Improvements. Some of the site
25 improvements, of course, would be landscape and plaza



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1 improvements.

2 The 16th Mall shuttle turnaround. There
3 would be an HOV bus boarding plaza along the existing
4 HOV lane. We are also showing a Kiss-and-Ride here
5 and the station improvements.

6 Phase I - LRT Relocation. This is at the
7 corner of 16th and Wewatta, looking back toward the
8 station. It's the existing condition. You can see
9 all the catenary lines and the tracks that are
10 currently there.

11 When Phase I gets built, all those things go
12 away. They will go underground about 25 feet at this
13 location. You can see just the end of the mall
14 shuttle turnaround right here.

15 Phase I - Station Design Options. Here you
16 see one of the potential options for the canopies
17 that could cover the light rail station.

18 This option spans with more of a flat roof.
19 These are tension membrane structures right now.
20 Again we're just looking at options. These options
21 will all be refined in the final design when the
22 project moves forward after the Record of Decision is
23 signed.

24 Here is a cross-section of the station. We
25 are down about 35 feet. There are three tracks below

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1 grade and three platforms. There are also
2 escalators, stairs, and elevators at each end of the
3 light rail platform.

4 Phase I - Station Design Options. This is
5 another option for what those canopies may look like.
6 Again, we're trying to cover the stairs, escalators,
7 and elevators so that they are covered. Here you can
8 see the station below. The station is 115 feet wide
9 and 400 feet long. So, it is a very big space.

10 And, with that, I think I will turn this
11 back over to Judy to talk about the results of the
12 environmental analysis.

13 MS. ARANDA: Alternatives Analyzed. The
14 alternative analysis that is summarized in the Draft
15 Environmental Impact Statement evaluated two
16 alternatives. One is the No Action Alternative,
17 which assumes all of the existing and committed
18 projects that are currently in our region's
19 long-range transportation plan.

20 In addition, it includes the 18th Street
21 tunnel that Eric just described as an early action
22 item. A private development is being planned later
23 on this year to build a hotel and some other
24 commercial structures along 18th Street. As a
25 result, it is a good opportunity to build the LRT



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1 tunnel early so that we don't have to tear out 18th
2 Street in a couple of years. So, we assumed the
3 tunnel as part of the No Action Alternative
4 conditions.

5 The build alternative is what Eric just
6 described. The detailed analysis focused on the
7 Phase I improvements of the Vision Plan Alternative.

8 Elements of the Environmental Analysis. The
9 environmental analysis, is shown in four broad
10 categories. We looked at over 23 elements of the
11 natural, human, and cultural environment. On the
12 left side is the urban element. We looked at the
13 impacts of the Vision Plan as well as Phase I of the
14 the Vision Plan in terms of impacts to the visual
15 quality.

16 We just saw a little bit of some of the
17 visual changes that Eric just described. What will
18 the improvements do to air quality? What kind of
19 noise impacts would occur with all of the transit
20 services coming into Denver Union Station? Are there
21 any hazardous materials or contaminated soils on
22 site? Land use impacts, social impacts, and what
23 happens to the LoDo area where Denver Union Station
24 is situated? We also evaluated public safety and
25 security and utilities and so on.

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1 We also looked at impacts to the natural
2 environment. What water resources may be impacted,
3 water quality, and impacts to biologic resources,
4 which is primarily wildlife both in terms of
5 vegetation and animals.

6 On cultural resources, Denver Union Station
7 is a historic structure that is on the National
8 Register. It's also situated in LoDo, which is a
9 historical district.

10 So, we have a rich community to consider
11 what impacts we might have on the cultural resources,
12 including parks.

13 The last column includes transportation
14 impacts. What would the impacts be to the traffic in
15 the vicinity of the project, to the pedestrians who
16 are shopping and living in that area, to the
17 pedestrians who are getting on and off the transit
18 services that Denver Union Station would provide, and
19 bicycle facilities and parking.

20 So these are the elements we studied.
21 However, not all of these elements were impacted.
22 So, the rest of the presentation will focus on what
23 you see highlighted in the four categories I just
24 described. I will also summarize impacts from
25 construction of Phase I and finally secondary and



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1 cumulative impacts.

2 Visual Resources - Phase I. You saw some
3 renderings of before and after conditions. Pretty
4 much, when light rail is placed below ground, all of
5 the overhead electrical power source, or catenary,
6 will be below ground, so you would not see that or
7 the tracks. Both items would be removed from street
8 level.

9 The second photo in the middle shows what it
10 would look like with these items gone. The
11 two-tunnel portals along 16th Street and along the
12 Consolidated Mainline would be visible.

13 For the passenger rail and the tracks that
14 Eric mentioned, canopies similar in design to the
15 canopies that are there today would be added.
16 Finally, the mall shuttle would be moved over to 15th
17 Street. However, there would be some landscaping
18 added. In general, the visual quality of the area
19 will actually improve to what's there now.

20 Air quality. We are bringing in a lot of
21 new service into Denver Union Station. Air quality
22 is certainly a strong community concern with members
23 of the Union Station Advisory Committee and others in
24 our community.

25 On a regional scale, Denver Union Station --

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1 well, let me back up. There are seven criteria
2 pollutants that are of concern when you prepare an
3 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. They are
4 called criteria pollutants. They include carbon
5 monoxide, lead, ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen
6 dioxide, and particulate matter in microns of 2.5 or
7 10.

8 The region is in non-attainment for ozone.
9 Meaning that we have exceeded national standards for
10 ozone levels. However, we are in a maintenance area
11 for carbon monoxide and particulate matter of 10
12 microns.

13 The maintenance area designation means that
14 the region was formally in nonattainment for those
15 two pollutants.

16 The region has entered into an Early Compact
17 Agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency to
18 get into compliance by the end of next year; by 2007.
19 If we succeed, we will be considered an attainment
20 area by 2008. So that's the context of our air
21 quality condition in the region.

22 Air Quality - Phase I (2030). For the air
23 quality analysis we conducted three types of
24 analyses: A mobile source analysis, which looks at
25 the impacts to the intersections within the project



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1 vicinity and stationary source, since we are bringing
2 in a lot of buses and locomotives into Denver Union
3 Station.

4 We also conducted an air toxics emissions
5 analysis, which is not a criteria pollutant.
6 However, it is an issue of concern to the community.

7 The results of our air quality analysis
8 showed that we will be within the National Ambient
9 Air Quality Standard for both mobile and stationary
10 sources. And, in fact, some of the intersections
11 actually showed lower air quality concentrations
12 compared to the No Action Alternative primarily due
13 to improved traffic operations and bus service. That
14 is why lower levels of concentrations were found at
15 some of the intersections.

16 The result of air toxics emissions analysis
17 showed we will be about 60 percent below existing
18 levels. The reduction is pretty significant and is
19 primarily because of the cleaner cars and a lot of
20 improvements that EPA is requiring of our nation's
21 vehicles.

22 However, looking at the year 2030 for Phase
23 I, we will be about 1 to 5 percent higher compared to
24 the No Action Alternative for air toxins. With
25 regard to diesel particulate matter, that is, dust in

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1 the air, we will be 43 percent higher within the
2 immediate project vicinity, which we call Tier 1.
3 That is the yellow area I showed earlier which
4 borders the study area.

5 Looking at a much broader study area,
6 between I-70, 6th Avenue, Federal Boulevard, and
7 Dowling Street, we would be about 7 percent higher in
8 the larger area, or Tier II, for diesel particulate
9 matter burdens.

10 The increase in diesel particulate matter is
11 due to all of the additional passenger rail service
12 that is coming into Denver Union Station.

13 Noise Analysis - Phase I. We monitored
14 seven sites in the project vicinity. What we found
15 is that we will exceed the noise standards at two
16 locations based on the Federal Transit
17 Administration criteria. An increase between 1 and 3
18 decibel levels will occur. To the human ear, you
19 really can't notice a 3 decibel change in sound.
20 However, it's still a noise impact according to FTA
21 criteria.

22 Two of the buildings along the passenger
23 rail track will be in the noise impact zone.
24 Therefore, we will need to consider mitigation
25 measures for these two buildings. The photo shows



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1 two structures: The Icehouse and One Wynkoop Plaza.

2 Both buildings are along the tracks.

3 Part of the reason why noise impacts are not

4 greater is it's pretty loud there now. So there

5 won't be much of a differential in future noise

6 levels.

7 In terms of mitigation, we are not certain

8 what the exact mitigation will be. This will depend

9 on the fuel source for passenger rail, which is under

10 study right now.

11 The EISs being prepared for the US-36 and

12 I-70 corridors will determine what kind of power

13 source will be used for passenger rail. For example,

14 if an electrical multiple unit is used as the power

15 source, noise level impact may be reduced. We won't

16 know the answer for a while. This decision is not

17 part of this analysis.

18 Other mitigation possibilities include

19 low-noise equipment or treatments to the buildings

20 themselves, such as triple-paned windows.

21 Transportation Analysis - Phase I. We

22 analyzed 23 signalized and unsignalized intersections

23 within the immediate study area. The results of the

24 analysis show that there are four intersections that

25 will need improvements. We propose to add two

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1 left-turn lanes at two intersections: Along 20th
2 Street at Chestnut and Wazee.

3 To handle the volumes of pedestrian traffic
4 that would be in the area due to the expanded transit
5 services that are being provided, traffic signals
6 would be needed along Wynkoop at 17th and at 18th
7 Street.

8 Historic Resources Analysis. We surveyed
9 over 23 properties within the vicinity. The area
10 that you see in red in the graphic are all of the
11 properties that we surveyed.

12 The area of potential effect included
13 historic properties within the LoDo District, as well
14 as other resources in the area. We will impact
15 several historic resources. The existing tail tracks
16 that are there now will be removed. Phase I will
17 also affect the Union Station passenger tunnel.
18 There are currently three tunnels. Two of the
19 tunnels, the north and south tunnels, have already
20 been filled in. The center tunnel, however, will be
21 impacted. About 18 feet will be removed -- 18?

22 MR. ANDERSON: About 20 feet.

23 MS. ARANDA: 20 feet of the tunnel will be
24 removed. We will also be removing some of the
25 historic doors and lighting fixtures that are



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1 currently in the tunnel.

2 Finally, Phase I will impact a historic
3 sewer called the Delgany Sewer. The Delgany Sewer
4 was unique in that it was built in three rows of
5 concentric bricks. About 160 feet will be removed at
6 the two ends where the tunnel is being built.

7 We are working with the State Historic
8 Preservation Officer to develop a Memorandum of
9 Agreement on mitigation we need to do because of the
10 impacts to these three resources. The Memorandum of
11 Agreement will be included in the Final Environmental
12 Impact Statement. At this time we don't know what
13 the mitigation will be to reduce impacts to these
14 resources.

15 Hazardous Materials. Contaminated soil
16 exists in the study area. As you can imagine in
17 being in railroad operations for well over a hundred
18 years, both organic and inorganic compounds and heavy
19 metals have been found. There is a graphic in this
20 room that shows the exact location of the
21 contaminants. With the eventual undergrounding of
22 all the major transportation modes, we will be
23 excavating quite a bit of soil out of the area. The
24 soil will be treated, and then an appropriate
25 disposal site will be found.

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1 Construction. Construction of the Vision
2 Plan is expected over a 20-year period -- a very long
3 period of time. That's also a guess. The timeframe
4 really depends on identifying funding. Therefore,
5 the time frame could be shorter. Our expectation is
6 20 years, at least in the long term without knowing
7 exact funding sources for the total buildout of the
8 Vision Plan.

9 For the first phase, we expect the
10 construction period will be three to four years.
11 Construction will certainly have an impact on the
12 local businesses in the LoDo area and to people who
13 come there to shop and to visit the area. Although
14 best management practices will be employed during the
15 construction, there will inevitably be noise and dust
16 and vibration with all of the equipment that would be
17 used to construct the improvements at Denver Union
18 Station.

19 The mitigations include working with the
20 community to install signage, so that people who come
21 into the area know that the businesses are still
22 open. We will work with those businesses to discuss
23 what we can do to help keep them alive. We expect
24 there may be some business loss because three to four
25 years of construction may hurt some smaller



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1 businesses. But in general, it's our expectation
2 that working and coordinating with the community and
3 residents that live there to minimize impacts as much
4 as possible including any inconvenience.

5 Cumulative Effects. NEPA, the National
6 Environmental Policy Act, requires that we look at
7 our project in context with other projects that are
8 being built in the area or have been built in the
9 area in the past, current, and the reasonably
10 foreseeable future.

11 The intent of this analysis is to see if
12 there may be additional impacts that are not
13 addressed in the direct impacts analysis that I just
14 described for you. In our estimation and analysis,
15 we feel that the cumulative effects of proposed
16 Denver Union Station improvements will actually
17 enhance the area. Planned improvements will continue
18 the type of development that is occurring now.

19 We expect it will stimulate the local
20 economy for all of the businesses in the area and
21 will add vitality to the area. However, there will
22 be visual impacts to Union Station due to the private
23 commercial developments planned outside of the Denver
24 Union Station property. Some of the views of Denver
25 Union Station will be impacted, especially behind the

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1 station. Views that currently exist now will be
2 blocked by private development.

3 Project costs for Phase I. The estimated
4 cost is about \$200 million for all of the
5 improvements that are planned in this first phase.
6 We currently have \$150 million identified under the
7 FasTracks program and an additional \$50 million from
8 federal sources. You can see the breakdown of the
9 different cost categories on the graphic.

10 This is the end of our formal presentation.
11 Now we will open this meeting to formal comments. We
12 asked those who wanted to provide comment to indicate
13 this on the sign-in sheet. We ask that you keep your
14 comments to three minutes. We'll give you a
15 one-minute notice when you have one minute left to
16 speak. If you're shy and you don't want to speak in
17 front of the group, you can also mail your comments
18 to Dave Shelley. You can also submit comments on the
19 website at www.DenverUnionStation.org or call the hot
20 line at 303-322-3320.

21 The comment period will continue through May
22 8, so we encourage you to comment. This is your
23 opportunity to say what is important to you and what
24 your concerns are.

25 So with that, I will open comments to the



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1 first person. Albert Melcher. Would you please
2 state your name and your address for the record.

3 MR. MELCHER: My name is Albert Melcher,
4 7504 East Jefferson Drive, Denver.

5 I'm speaking on behalf of the Sierra Club
6 and two other environmental organizations: Colorado
7 Environment Coalition and Environment Colorado. Two
8 years ago we requested that the historic views of the
9 station be given adequate consideration.

10 And then, secondly, some of the members of
11 that group participated in a workshop a year ago
12 about open spaces. The upshot of that was that the
13 plaza itself can become one of Denver's great public
14 spaces. It can be constructed, but the process of
15 working that out needs to be pursued. And it looks
16 to me as if, A, there's a predetermination that the
17 plaza will be tightly constricted. Secondly, that
18 the citizen workshop has not been ignored.

19 When I see the visual analysis, it does
20 include views of the station, which we know will be
21 lost from the Wewatta north street and the west
22 street side. I don't know why they are not
23 addressed. Thank you very much for the chance to
24 comment.

25 MS. ARANDA: Keith Dameron.

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1 MR. DAMERON: Good evening. My name is
2 Keith Dameron. I'm representing the Platte Valley
3 Trolley. Platte Valley Trolley, as most of you know,
4 runs on the west side of the Platte River. However,
5 we have done feasibility and ridership studies, and
6 would someday like to approach Union Station.

7 I mean, you have a plan to come down 15th
8 Street and down Wynkoop Street, and that is something
9 we hope to do in the future. My only request during
10 the last four years is that nothing on this plan
11 preclude the possibility of the trolley coming
12 downtown on Wynkoop and being on the front side of
13 Union Station there.

14 And I thank the committee and everybody that
15 worked on this. There's nothing so far that
16 precludes it. I'll have to clarify the area of the
17 lowering of the 15th Street bridge, whether or not
18 that precludes the trolleys from going underneath the
19 15th street underneath the railroad tracks and all
20 that.

21 So, anyway, I'm really grateful for all the
22 work that was done by everybody on this. They
23 answered a lot of silly questions, and some of those
24 were mine, as we went through this. The breakout
25 groups were very handy to learn more about the rail



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1 capabilities and possibilities. And I'm grateful for
2 that. The multi-modal approach to everything, I'm
3 really grateful for that.

4 I was not sure when this started that would
5 really work that way. I'm very satisfied with the
6 result. And I would say that the group did a very
7 good job of meeting its goals in this. And from the
8 trolley point of view, thank you for your work.

9 I will change hats real quickly to say I
10 work as an Operation Life Saver for Railroad Safety,
11 and I'm impressed with the safety aspects for all the
12 rail connections through this. I think that that's
13 going to work out real well also. I'm grateful for
14 the efforts on the safety side of everything that's
15 been talked about.

16 I'll make one last comment that I promised
17 Eric I would make. I'm still not convinced we have
18 to eliminate the tail tracks across 16th Street. I
19 do believe the Public Utilities Commission will never
20 give back the right to cross 16th Street if we take
21 up the right-of-way that currently exists. And I'm
22 not sure that that's good idea. I think in an
23 emergency, it would be nice to be able to turn parts
24 of a train or use the tail tracks. Maybe it's
25 necessary to not cross 15th Street, but I'm not

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1 convinced we need the tail tracks removed, and we
2 could still have a lot of street. You could pave
3 between the rails and still allow for an emergency
4 train or doing something in the tail tracks.

5 Thank you very much for your time.

6 MS. ARANDA: Would you tell us your address
7 for the record.

8 MR. DAMERON: 2000 Little Raven Street,
9 Number 103, Denver 80202.

10 MR. ANDERSON: Jessica Baker.

11 MS. BAKER: I'm Jessica Baker. I'm the
12 Urban Planning Manager for the Downtown Denver
13 Partnership. I'll give my work address, if that's
14 okay? It's 511 16th Street, Suite 200, Denver 80202.

15 I'm just here to say that the Downtown
16 Denver Partnership is in support of the Draft
17 Environmental Impact Statement for Denver Union
18 Station as having been a fair and transparent
19 process. And the Downtown Denver Partnership, so far
20 the results have been satisfactory. We support the
21 process to date and are looking forward to moving
22 ahead with special attention in the redevelopment
23 process for the potential of developing greater
24 public spaces in the plazas of Denver Union Station.

25 MS. ARANDA: Are there any additional



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- 1 comments? Thank you very much. You're welcome to
- 2 continue looking at the information we have. We have
- 3 all of our technical specialists here in order to
- 4 answer any questions you might have. Thank you very
- 5 much.
- 6 (The proceedings concluded at 6:57 p.m.)