

East Colfax Transit Alternatives Analysis, Environmental Assessment and Model Assessment

Land Use and Transportation
Infrastructure Committee Briefing
Tuesday, February 7, 2012



Recent History

- Strategic Transportation Plan completed 2008
 - Identified 20-30% increased person trip demand in corridor by 2025
- Colfax Streetcar Feasibility Study completed 2010
 - Identified four transit routes in study area, with current use ~30,000 riders per day
 - Determined all four routes at capacity during peak
 - Routes 15 and 15L at capacity throughout day, with ~22,000 riders per day
- Led to FTA Alternatives Analysis grant

FTA: Alternatives Analysis Purpose

- To pick a project that is likely to be built
- To enhance likelihood of success:
 - Scope and cost are consistent with benefits
 - Realistic financial plan
 - Supportive land use and other policies
 - Local support



FTA: Alternatives Analysis IS

- Focused look at alternatives at the corridor level
- Means to reach decision on appropriate investment strategy to pursue in a corridor



FTA: Alternatives Analysis IS NOT

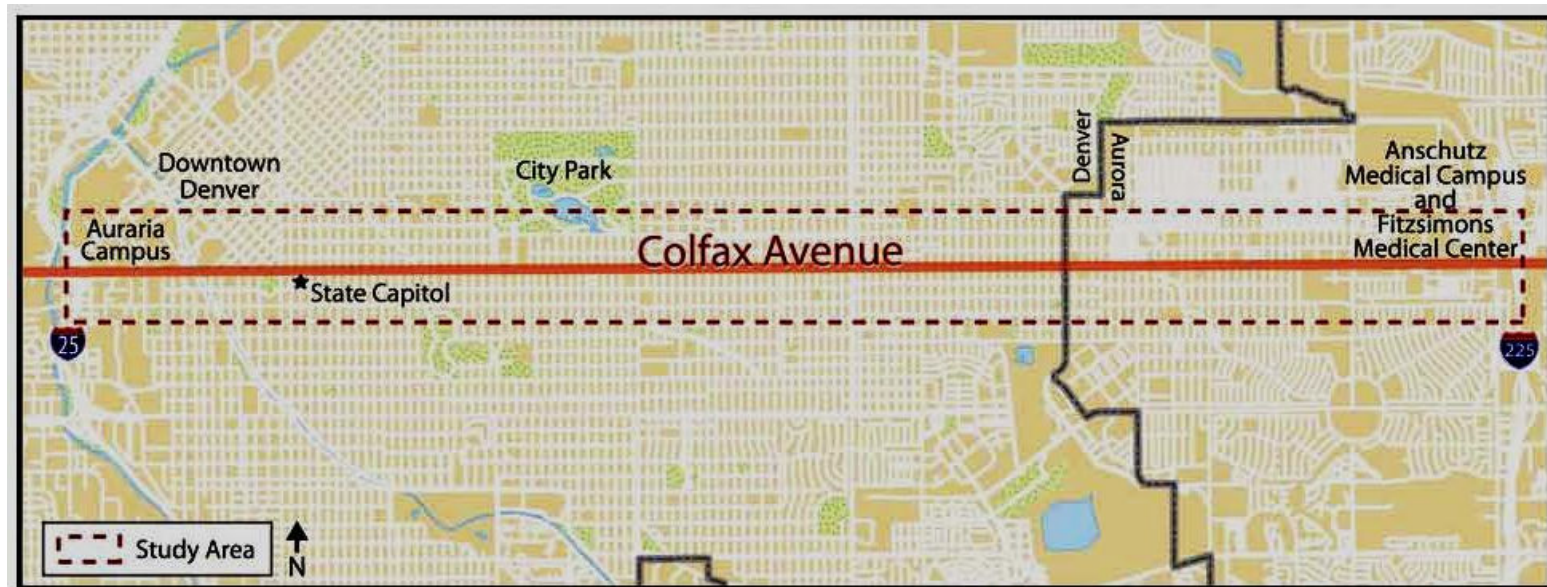
- Bureaucratic exercise to justify a decision already made
- A substitute for good regional planning



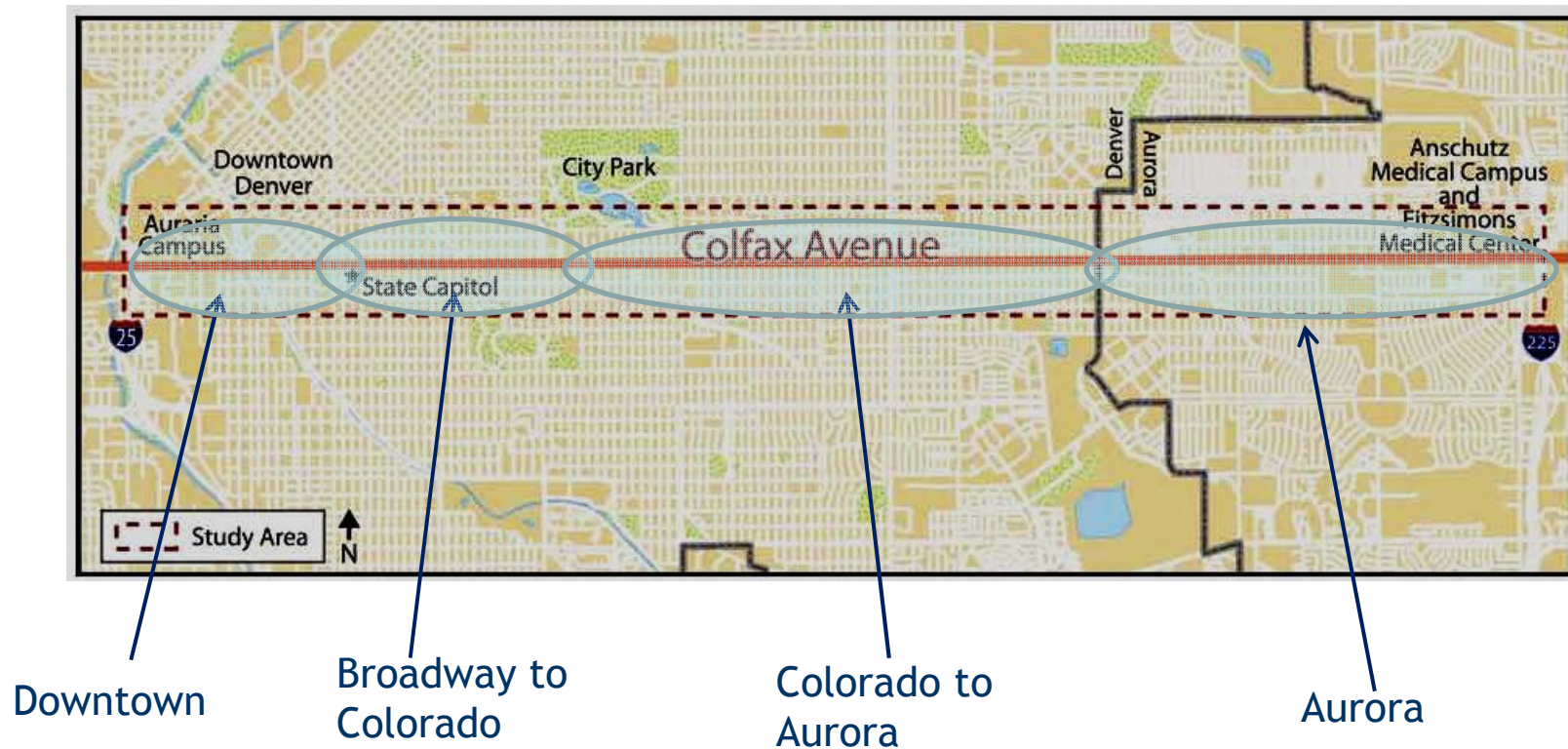
FTA: Questions to ask in AA

- What's the problem?
- What are reasonable alternatives?
- How much do they cost?
- How well do they address the problem?
- What are their environmental impacts?
- Are they worth the investment?
- Can we afford them?
- Who gains? Who loses?
- What are the trade-offs?
- What are the risks?

Study Area



Study Area: 4 Key Sections





Goals

- Identify actions to meet transportation needs of Colfax corridor over 25 years
- Analysis of all reasonable alternatives
- Phasing and costs
- Comply with NEPA requirements
- Provide basis to apply for federal funds, if reasonable

“Reasonable” Alternatives: No Predetermined Outcome

- Alignments
- Vehicle technologies
- Mix-and-match
- Objective analysis



Project process:

- Scoping
- Long list of alternatives
- Screen 1 - fatal flaw
- Screen 2 - short list
- Environmental assessment
- Recommendation of Locally Preferred Alternative

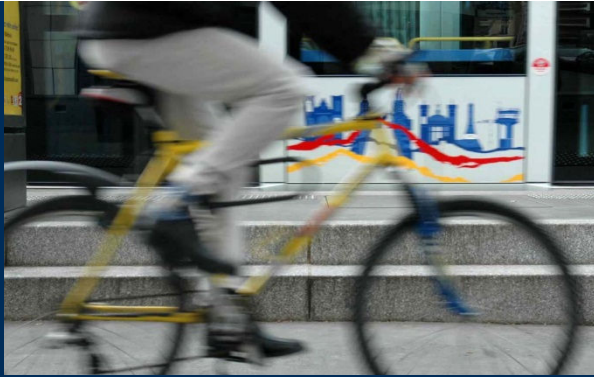
Ongoing coordination:

- RTD
- Federal Transit Administration
- Aurora
- Parallel ridership analysis
- Parallel Colfax transit priority study

Public involvement:

- Pro-active and comprehensive
- Early and often
- Task Force (6 meetings)
- Public meetings (4 meetings including scoping)
- Community leader outreach meetings
- Community partnership meetings
- Barbershop/coffeeshop meetings





Key Issues:

- Coordination
- Education: another study vs. a new study?
- Evaluation process
- Range of alternatives
- More than just Colfax
- Understanding the details
- Focus on implementation

Model Assessment

- DRCOG and RTD developing new transportation demand model, *Focus*
- FTA accepted opportunity to assess model effectiveness
- Will be applied to this project's short list of alternatives



Consultant Selection

- Alternatives Analysis and Environmental Assessment
 - Steer Davies Gleave
- Model Assessment
 - AECOM

Project Teams



City Council Actions

■ Three ordinance requests

Initial request

- Approve interagency agreement with RTD for access to FTA grant (\$2M with \$1M match)

Two contracts to complete work

- Steer Davies Gleave for Alternatives Analysis and Environmental Assessment (\$2,027,590)
- AECOM for *Focus* Model Assessment (\$700,000)