

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

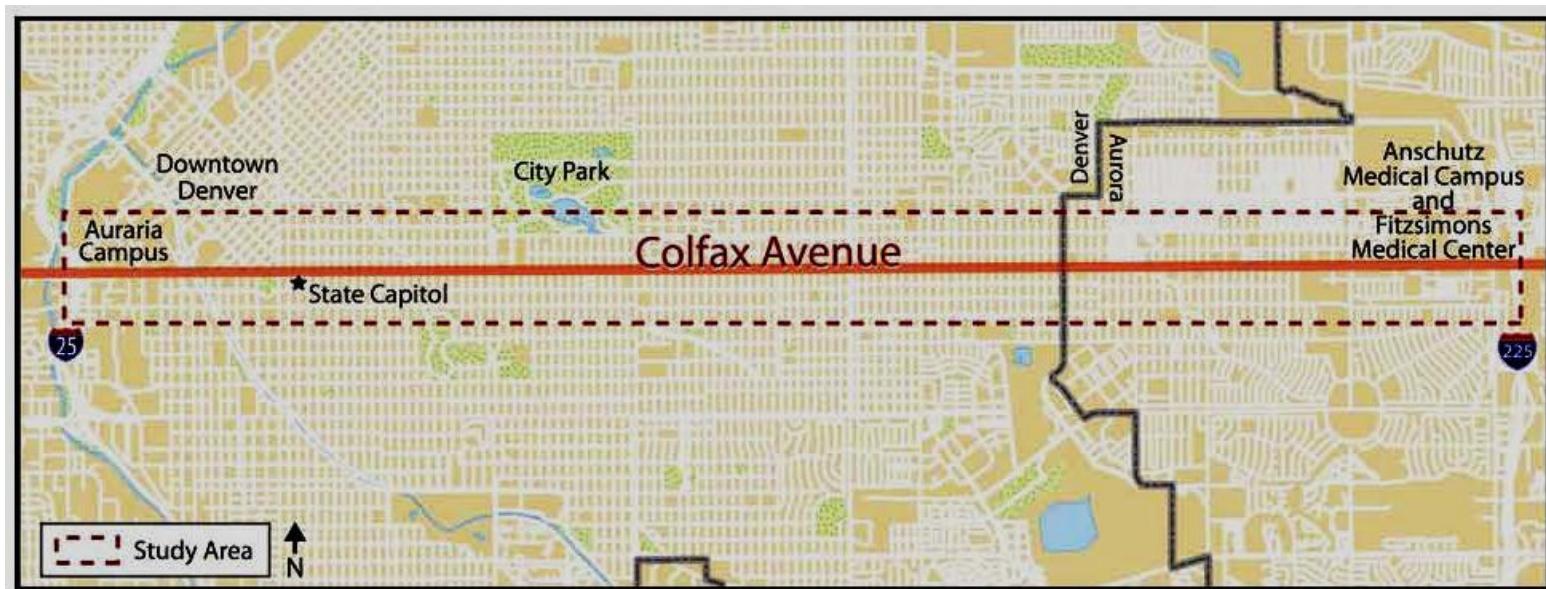
- Bureaucratic exercise to justify a decision already made
- A substitute for good regional planning



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

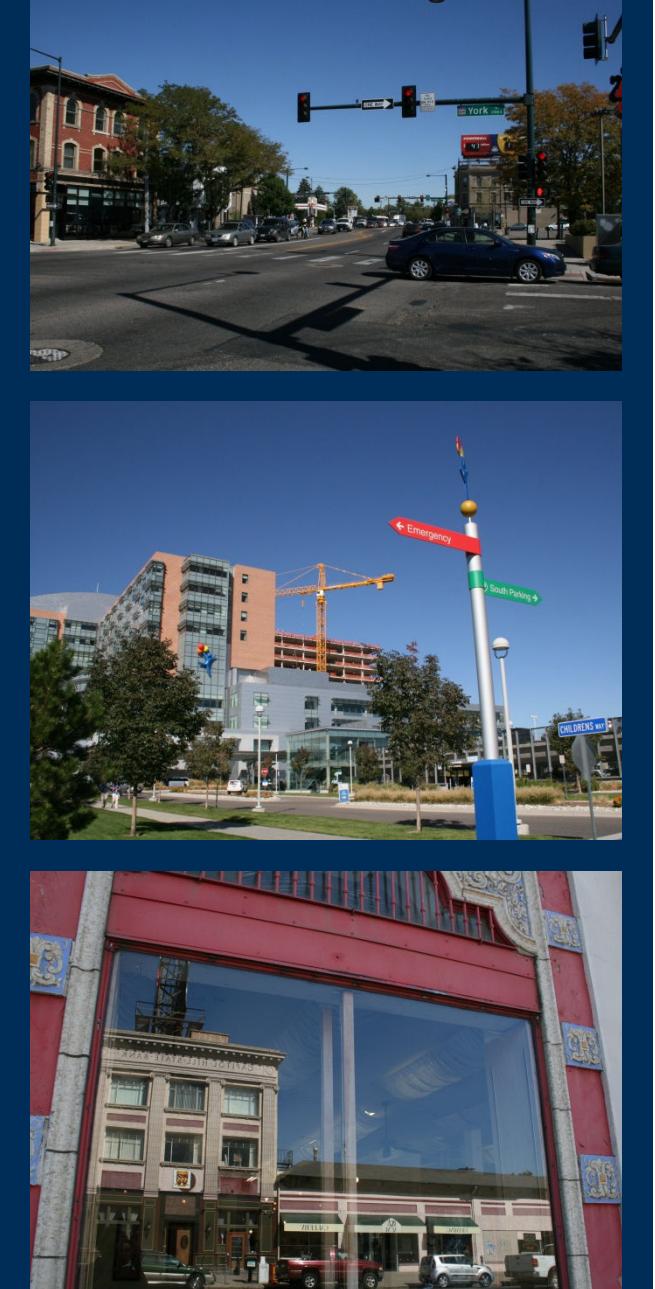


Downtown

Broadway to
Colorado

Colorado to
Aurora

Aurora



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)