Who is involved in the I-70 East Corridor EIS?

- RTD
- FTA (Federal Transit Administration)
- DOT (Department of Transportation)
- Union Pacific
- BNSF
- City of Aurora, Colorado
- US Army Corps of Engineers

Rail~Volition 2005 – September 10, 2005
Who is involved in the I-70 East Corridor EIS?
What is the I-70 East Corridor EIS?

- Multi-modal transportation project
- Highway improvements
- New rapid transit line to airport

Case study
  - Community impact assessment
  - Environmental justice
Where is the I-70 East Corridor?
### Why a case study?

#### Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Denver</th>
<th>Corridor Neighborhoods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent minority</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>55.4 – 95.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent children in poverty</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>4.3 - 39% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual household income</td>
<td>$55,129</td>
<td>$35,519 - $64,401 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Only one neighborhood below Denver average
2. Only two neighborhoods above Denver average

Source: Piton Foundation
History of distrust

- Overall governmental distrust and neglect
- I-70 original construction
  - Split two communities
  - Condemnation issues
- RTD demonstration line
  - Compromises made
  - Promises made
How to overcome distrust?

- Build on existing relationships
- Include everyone
- Contact early and often
- Be committed
- Ask, don’t tell
- Low-tech solutions
Outreach program overview

- Goals

- Approach/tools
  - Branding
  - Training
  - Door to door outreach
  - Scoping meetings
  - On-going outreach
Outreach process goals

- Solicit participation from every segment of the corridor
- Reach previously underserved residents and businesses
- Fulfill NEPA requirements
Overall outreach approach
Branding the project

- Logo
- “Yellow shirts”
- Outreach bags
- Name tags
- Flyers
- Business cards
- Advertising
Outreach training

- Requirement for outreach
- History of neighborhoods
- How to go “door to door”
- Ethnic courtesy
- Lose the “techno-speak” and DYA
“After consultation with the FTA, FHWA, EPA and the CEQ, the Figure 1 matrix clearly illustrates why our AA – based on metrics derived from the purpose and need to evaluate fixed-guideway technologies – eliminated BRT, but identified LRT and commuter rail technology (specifically DMU) as the preferred alternatives for the DEIS.”
Door to door outreach

- Pass the test!
- Specialists from the neighborhoods
- Bilingual teams
- Administer questionnaire
- Educate and invite
- Information on local services
Block meetings

- 8-16 block radius
- Hosted by neighbor in backyard or park
- Intimate – 10-15 people
- Discuss block issues
- Meals and translation
Neighborhood meetings

- Larger meetings – up to 120
- Flyers
- Food, translation, child care
- Discuss neighborhood issues
Corridor-wide meetings

- Largest meetings – up to 250
- Flyers, newsletters, and advertisements
- Food, translation, and child care
- Bring together all perspectives
- Dynamic format
Ongoing outreach

- Working groups
- Website (www.i-70eastcorridor.com)
- Neighborhood specific meetings
- Stakeholder presentations
- Project office
Working Groups

- Issue specific
- Informal setting
- Education and group discussion
- Hands-on exercises
Lessons learned

- Client support a must
- Reduced level of acrimony
- Removed agency bias and team hierarchy
- Many aspects can be used anywhere
  - Engage people
  - Communicate
  - Educate
  - Treat people with respect
Lessons learned

- Overcoming agency skeptics, keeping the faith
- An open process but with limits
- Setting precedent for other studies
Overcoming Governmental Distrust to Engage Sensitive Communities

Mike Turner, AICP

Rail~Volution 2005
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