

transit times

DISTRICT 0 RTD FasTracks quarterly news link

DISTRICT 0

- Allenspark
- Boulder
- Jamestown
- Lafayette
- Louisville
- Lyons
- Nederland
- Superior
- Ward



Crews installing light rail track on the West Corridor.

GREETINGS FROM YOUR RTD BOARD MEMBER

DISTRICT 0 PROFILE

District 0 is 625 square miles
Population of District 0 is 152,500

BOUNDARIES:

- North** – Boulder County/Larimer County line
- East** – N. 75th Street from the Boulder County/Larimer County line to the Boulder County/Jefferson County line
- South** – Boulder County/Jefferson County line
- West** – Boulder County/Grand County line

**Boundaries are approximate*

CONTACT INFO

For more information on District 0 or the RTD Board of Directors, contact the RTD Board Office at 303-299-2303 or go to www.RTD-Denver.com

For existing bus and light rail route and schedule information call RTD at 303-299-6000

You can contact Director Tayer via e-mail at john.tayer@RTD-Denver.com www.johntayer.org or 303-955-8474.



Dear Transit Supporter:

The RTD Board set a deadline of May 3 for its decision to pursue a sales tax increase in 2011 that will accelerate completion of the FasTracks system. While, as of the press date for this quarterly newsletter, I haven't decided whether to support moving forward in 2011, there are a number of very good reasons to take the matter to voters this year:

The public wants to complete FasTracks. A recent survey found that 75 percent of the participants believe it is important to them "personally" that we build out the entire FasTracks system. A strong majority of them were willing to pay a higher tax rate to complete the system sooner. We owe the voting public a chance to accelerate achievement of their regional transit vision.

Building the FasTracks system now will save money. The price tag for FasTracks exploded shortly after voters approved the plan in 2004 due to an exorbitant rise in the cost of construction materials and contractor rates. All of these costs dropped significantly during the economic recession and are holding, for the moment. We can lock in favorable construction rates with the backing of voter-approved sales tax dollars.

FasTracks will get our economy moving. Full-scale construction of the FasTracks system will create 10,000 direct and indirect jobs for the Denver metropolitan region. That is exactly the kick in the pants that our economy needs to break us out of the post-recession gloom. Further, with all the business development that transit investments attract, FasTracks will continue to pay economic dividends far into the future.

There are many other considerations that come into play when deciding whether to seek voter approval for a tax increase. The backing of government and business stakeholders, a healthy commitment of campaign resources, and feedback from District 0 residents are among the factors I will be weighing up until the May 3 deadline. Campaign politics aside, it is clear that accelerating the completion of FasTracks is right for our economy, will save us money, and is what the people tell us they want.

Regards,
John Tayer
RTD Director, District 0

WHAT'S NEXT FOR FASTRACKS?

To maximize the benefit of FasTracks for the entire region, it is critical to protect and leverage the \$1.03 billion in federal grant money that RTD anticipates being awarded for the Eagle P3 project (East Corridor, Gold Line, and a segment of the Northwest Rail Corridor). While RTD requested that \$150 million of this federal money be committed in the President's Fiscal Year 2012 budget, the President's budget actually includes a recommendation for \$300 million – double our request. This shows a huge vote of confidence by the federal government in RTD, our track record for being good stewards of taxpayer dollars and the manner in which we've brought this innovative public-private partnership project from concept to contract.

In addition, there is \$305 million in short-term funding remaining in the FasTracks budget to get construction underway on additional FasTracks projects. This includes:

- **U.S. 36 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** – Complete managed lanes extension to Interlocken (\$90 million)
- **North Metro** – Complete from Denver Union Station (DUS) to Stock Show Complex (\$90 million)
- **I-225** – Complete from Nine-Mile to Iliff (\$90 million)
- **Northwest Rail** – Complete Longmont Station (\$17 million)
- **Central Corridor** – Additional technical analysis (\$0.5 million)
- **Southeast Corridor** – Final design and federal environmental process (\$9 million)
- **Southwest Corridor** – Relocate Union Pacific Railroad track (\$8.5 million)



Construction worker starts the relocation of a major fiber optic cable for RTD's East commuter rail line to Denver International Airport.

FasTracks 2011 Financial Plan

On March 8, the RTD Board of Directors approved the 2011 FasTracks Financial Plan, which assumes a ballot initiative in 2012 for a .4% sales and use tax increase with the flexibility to seek an election in 2011 if conditions support it. A successful .4% sales tax increase in 2011 would complete the FasTracks program by 2019. A successful .4% tax increase in 2012 would complete the program by 2020. RTD is evaluating a number of triggers to determine if 2011 is a viable year to ask taxpayers to consider an additional tax investment in FasTracks. These include economic conditions, gas prices, stakeholder support and financial support. The Board will make a final decision on whether to pursue a sales tax election in 2011 no later than May 3.

The process leading up to the Board's approval has been a comprehensive one, which has revealed that people continue to support FasTracks as a regional priority and want to see the program built and operating sooner, rather than later.

When the FasTracks budget was estimated in 2003, cost and revenue projections were

developed with the best available information at the time, based on historic 10- to 20-year averages. Over the course of the worst economic downturn in more than a generation, a "perfect storm" formed that directly impacted the original budget – reduced revenues and a sharp increase in the cost of construction materials like copper, concrete, steel and diesel fuel.

To build the revised FasTracks budget, RTD worked with regional experts to develop a methodology to forecast more conservative long-term sales tax revenues. In addition, the revised costs for FasTracks projects are based on the increased pricing, conservative cost escalation assumptions, and advanced project design that has occurred over the past six years, which greatly reduces the risk for cost fluctuation.

The Board fully understands the current economic climate and the accompanying challenges, and is discussing these with regional partners before making a final decision on the best next steps to keep FasTracks moving forward.

CORRIDOR OVERVIEW

Central Extension – Staff recommended to the RTD Board of Directors that of the \$305 million remaining funds, \$5 million be applied to final design and a federal environmental process for the Central Corridor Extension. The project team is moving forward with the plan to begin further study of the corridor, including study of a streetcar alternative.

Denver Union Station – The temporary Amtrak Station at 21st and Wewatta opened in February. All Amtrak service will operate out of this location until 2014. The west end of the underground bus facility will be completely covered soon.

East Corridor – Utility relocations are underway and final design is progressing. Property acquisition is proceeding, and Denver Water will soon start a major relocation project in the corridor.

Gold Line – Right-of-way acquisition is underway on the portion of the corridor leading north to the site of the commuter rail maintenance facility. The project team is working on final design, to get ready for construction to begin following the award of a Full Funding Grant Agreement from the Federal Transit Administration, which is anticipated late this spring.

I-225 Corridor – The final design efforts for Segment 1 have been completed. The project team is developing implementation plans for possible construction procurement packages for the segment and is exploring opportunities for partnering with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for the combined construction of I-225 light rail extension and the highway expansion projects.

North Metro Corridor – The North Metro team released the Final Environmental Impact Statement to the public in January and held public hearings in February. The Record of Decision is anticipated in April.

Northwest Rail – The first segment of the rail line to south Westminster is included in Phase Two of the Eagle P3 project. Construction on this segment is anticipated to begin sometime in 2011. On March 8, the RTD Board approved the completion of the Longmont Station for \$17 million, which can begin after funding for the Eagle P3 project is finalized later this year.

Southeast Extension – The RTD Board of Directors approved the 2011 FasTracks Financial Plan that includes the use of \$9 million of the \$305 million remaining funds, for final design and completion of a federal environmental process for the Southeast Extension.

Southwest Extension – The RTD Board of Directors approved the 2011 FasTracks Financial Plan that includes the use of \$8.5 million, of the \$305 million remaining funds, for the relocation of Union Pacific Railroad track for development of the Southwest Extension.

Coordination with CDOT regarding the alignment and planned CDOT flyover at Santa Fe and C-470 remains ongoing. Recently, CDOT secured funding for the flyover and is going forward with this project.

RTD FASTRACKS SYSTEM MAP



US 36 Corridor – Construction on the Table Mesa Pedestrian Bridge and queue jumps at are scheduled to begin this summer. On March 8, the RTD Board approved \$90 million to build the BRT project to Interlocken, which can begin after funding for the Eagle P3 project is finalized later this year.

West Corridor – Construction continues as crews prepare to install rail track crossings through the Lakewood neighborhoods this summer. Parking is the top news for this next quarter as the parking structure at Jeffco continues to take shape and crews work diligently to open the new Federal Center Station for parking and bus transfers in mid-May when the old Cold Spring park-n-Ride will close.

**RTD FASTRACKS
FACTS**

- Six new rail corridors
- Three extensions of existing rail corridors
- Denver Union Station redevelopment into regional transit hub
- Enhanced transit throughout the region
- 122 miles of rail
- 18 miles of Bus Rapid Transit
- 57 new transit stations
- 31 new park-n-Rides
- 21,213 new parking spaces

FASTRACKS ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Interested in learning more about FasTracks?

To request a presentation for your group or organization, call the FasTracks Public Information Team, at 303-299-6908.

FasTracks has accomplished a tremendous amount in its first six years:

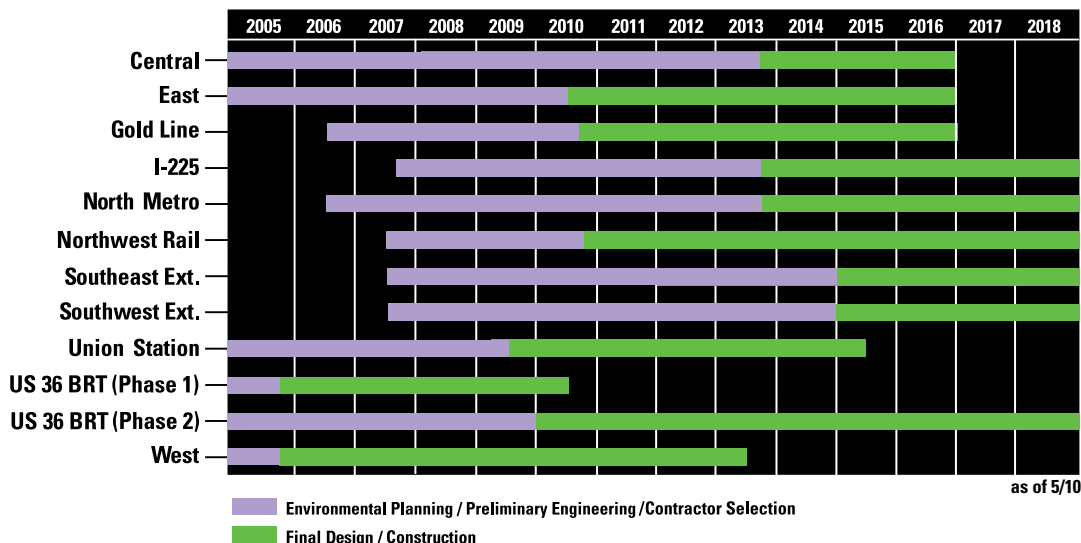
- 48 miles of new rail lines are currently in construction or under contract to begin construction
- U.S. 36 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor Phase 1: First FasTracks project was completed in May 2010
- Eight projects will be under construction this year
- Elati Light Rail Maintenance Facility: Complete in 2011
- West Corridor: 72% Complete
- Denver Union Station (DUS): 30% Complete
- East Corridor: Broke ground in August 2010
- Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility: Groundbreaking in 2011
- Gold Line: Groundbreaking in 2011
- Northwest Rail (to Westminster): Groundbreaking in 2011
- U.S. 36 BRT Phase 2 Projects (Table Mesa Pedestrian Bridge and Queue Jumps): Groundbreaking in 2011

- Environmental process wrapping up on the final corridor – North Metro
- RTD signed agreements with BNSF Railway Company and Union Pacific Railroad
- \$308 million in federal New Starts funding for West Corridor
- \$301 in federal loans for Denver Union Station
- Submitted all information required by FTA to apply for \$1.03 billion federal grant for the Eagle Project

Exciting activities on the horizon:

- New construction planned with \$305 million in short-term funds
- A \$1 billion Full Funding Grant Agreement from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Groundbreakings on Gold Line and Northwest Rail
- The completion of a Record of Decision on North Metro
- The completion of work already underway (West Corridor, DUS, etc.)

RTD FASTRACKS IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE



did you know?

Approximately 7,700 transit agencies provide public transportation in the United States.

All corridor schedules subject to change and based on actual bid and financial plan adjustments.
U.S. 36 (Phase 2) schedule dependent on CDOT funding.
Schedule assumes new revenues beginning January 2013.