BACKGROUND

RTD
The Regional Transportation District (RTD) was created in 1969 by the Colorado General Assembly to develop, operate, and maintain a mass transportation system for the benefit of people who live and work in RTD’s service area which includes all or part of eight counties in the Metro Denver region. RTD is governed by a 15 member elected Board of Directors. In 2015, RTD provided over 103 million transit rides.

FasTracks
FasTracks is RTD’s 2004 voter-approved rapid transit expansion program transforming transportation throughout the Metro Denver region. Upon completion, FasTracks will add 122 miles of new light rail and commuter rail, 18 miles of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and 57 new transit stations to the RTD system.

Quality of Life
The Quality of Life (QoL) Study is RTD’s data-driven evaluation of progress toward meeting the FasTracks Program goals.

Goal 1
Balance Transit Needs with Regional Growth

Goal 2
Increase Transit Mode Share

Goal 3
Improve Transportation Choices and Options

QoL 2015 Report
This document reports FasTracks progress from 2010 to 2015. It highlights progress made toward completing projects, the impacts of those projects, and overall progress toward the goals.

The full report can be found on the project website www.RTD-Denver.com/QualityofLife
In 2013, RTD opened the W Line in the West Corridor, adding 12.1 miles of rapid transit facilities to the existing 34.8-mile rapid transit system. Investment resulted in:

- 7,600 new transit riders on an average weekday in the West Corridor (12,800 average weekday transit trips on the W Line).
- 30,000 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) were removed from roadways on an average weekday (9 million VMT removed annually).
- 85 fewer gas tanks were filled on an average weekday (400,000 fewer gallons of fuel were consumed annually).
- Based on regional crashes/VMT, 23 vehicular crashes could be prevented every year.
- At this rate, a life could be saved every 12 years and a severe injury could be prevented every two years.

In 2014, RTD opened the Free MetroRide, providing a frequent and reliable connection between Denver Union Station and Civic Center Station for downtown commuters.

- 2014 average weekday boardings: 1,500
- 2015 average weekday boardings: 2,330

In 2014, RTD and their partners completed the construction and renovations at Denver Union Station, creating one of the most vibrant spaces in downtown Denver:

- Transportation is at the heart of Denver. Again. Union Station creates a space for locals, tourists, and business travelers to explore RTD’s network.
- Development has been booming near Union Station. Between 2010 and 2015, 2,770 multi-family units, 130 hotel rooms, 900,500 square feet of office, and 77,600 square feet of retail were constructed.
- Property value per square foot in the neighborhood surrounding Union Station increased 56% from $185 in 2010 to $290 in 2015.
- Between 2010-2015, 11 B-Cycle stations were added within a half-mile of Union Station.
GOAL 1

BALANCE TRANSIT NEEDS WITH REGIONAL GROWTH

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Metro Denver region grew between 2010 and 2015, increasing transportation demands.

- **10% population growth** (280,000 more people)
- **153 people** added to the region daily
- **17% job growth** (219,000 more jobs)
- **230% increase** in housing starts (13,000 new houses)

HOW ARE WE DOING?

RTD provided more transportation services in 2015 than in 2010.

- **24% increase** in areas served by frequent (15-minute) transit service throughout the day
- **22% more rapid transit infrastructure** (12.1-mile W Line)
- **6% increase** in Access-a-Ride service (33,300 more annual hours)
- **3% increase** in transit service (122,200 more annual hours)

RTD Catalyzed Transit Oriented Communities.

- **ALAMEDA STATION**
  - RTD kicked off initial redevelopment around Alameda Station by partnering on a 275-unit apartment complex. Residents now live within steps of the station platform.

- **BOULDER JUNCTION**
  - RTD and the City of Boulder leveraged public-private partnerships to create a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with unique public spaces and regional transit connections.

- **OLDE TOWN ARVADA STATION**
  - RTD and the City of Arvada planned for consolidated parking and transit in a hub to provide commuter and business parking, an RTD bus facility, and TOD property.
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?


- 12% increase in daily vehicles miles traveled in the region
- 84 more miles driven each year per person
- 2% increase in personal vehicle ownership

Transit use is better for the environment, safer for people, and less expensive.

- 13 days exceeded air quality standard (18% increase, 2 additional days)
- 15% increase in vehicle emissions (3,500 tons NOx, VOC, PM2.5)
- 3x more likely to die traveling in a car than on a bus
- 27% more expensive for regional commuters to drive vs. using transit to reach downtown

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Between 2010 and 2015, regional growth outpaced RTD ridership.

- 5% increase in annual RTD boardings (4.6 million more boardings)
- 4% decrease in annual RTD boardings per capita (1.6 fewer boardings per person)

- Light rail ridership has increased 30%, bus ridership has been steady.
- Regional transit commute mode share was consistent at 4%.
- Ridership on the E/F/H Lines has increased 18%.

Customer satisfaction.

- 4.2 out of 5 RTD passenger ratings from both 2011 and 2014

RTD continues to invest in security resources.

- 46% increase in security staff (55 people).
- Overall, RTD customers feel safe on transit vehicles and at stations. However, safety perception at light rail stations has decreased slightly since 2011.
GOAL 3
IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS AND CHOICES

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Auto commute travel times to downtown got longer and less predictable.

- Auto commute travel times to downtown got longer and less predictable.
- Congestion increased between 2010 and 2015.
  - 8 minutes per day average additional time people sat in their cars due to congestion
  - 14% increase in time spent in congestion each day (one more minute, 7 minutes in 2010)
  - 24% of roadways experienced congestion for longer than 3 hours each weekday

HOW ARE WE DOING?

- Investment in high-capacity transit increases person trip capacity.
  - Percent of morning commute trips toward downtown Denver made on transit.
    - Southwest Corridor: 21%
    - Southeast Corridor: 17%
    - West Corridor: 10%

- More people have access to frequent transit and most people reach that transit by walking.
  - 42% more people lived near 15-minute service (119,400 more people).
  - 25% growth in employment served by 15-minute service (102,300 more jobs).
  - RTD added nearly 3,400 parking spaces.
  - 35 B-Cycle stations were added within a half-mile of 18 rapid transit stations.

- How riders accessed transit in 2014:
  - Walk
  - Drive
  - Bike
  - Other