

I-225 CORRIDOR

Times

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RTD FASTRACKS QUARTERLY NEWS LINK

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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A message from the RTD Board of Directors

The RTD-FasTracks I-225 Corridor project team continues to make great strides toward recommending a Preferred Alternative for the light rail alignment and station locations. Since our last public meeting, the team has worked closely with our partners to further refine corridor alignment alternatives. We have held numerous neighborhood and community meetings from which we have received valuable input on the alignment, station and park-n-Ride locations. We continue working with the City of Aurora to define possible and additional parking opportunities within the city.



Christopher Martinez
District B



Barbara Yamrick
District F



Bill McMullen
District E

A great deal is being accomplished and our progress is only enhanced by the recent groundbreaking for the new bus transfer facility located at Sable and

Center Point near the Aurora City Center, due to be completed by the end of this year. This multi-modal facility within the town center will serve as a key hub for the entire eastern part of the RTD District. It also represents the commitment of both RTD and the City of Aurora to provide the community with a well planned, integrated, state-of-the-art transportation system. Director Barbara Yamrick said, "It has been 25 years of hard work. Aurora will have a bus transfer facility near our city and county buildings within walking distance of retail shops and the public library. Soon, we will be able to transfer from all parts of Aurora to a future light rail station located within our multi-modal center. Aurora will truly be the dawning light of a new age."

With all of our progress, we find ourselves facing a number of challenges here at RTD due to current economic conditions. Lower tax revenues and significant increases in construction material costs have greatly impacted major infrastructure projects, including FasTracks, and will require RTD to be more creative and innovative. While RTD is committed to moving forward with the FasTracks program, additional strategies for its implementation must be pursued. During our August meeting, the Board was presented with three general alternatives for moving forward with the FasTracks Program:

- Build what can be afforded by 2017
- Extend the schedule beyond the original completion date of 2017
- Seek additional revenue sources

The RTD Board and staff are reviewing these options and will be seeking your input at public meetings in the upcoming months. While the task of determining the future financial aspects of the FasTracks Program may be daunting, our dedication has not wavered. We remain engaged, excited and committed to the continued development of an unparalleled regional transportation system of which we can all be proud.

I-225 Recommended Preferred Alternative Update

The RTD-FasTracks I-225 Corridor project team has made significant progress on recommending the Preferred Alternative since the last public meeting held on March 12, 2008. The project team has been working very closely with its project partners, the City of Aurora, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the City and County of Denver, the Federal Highway Administration, the Public Utilities Commission, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) to define a Preferred Alternative that includes light rail alignment and station locations. The project team has met with numerous stakeholders to discuss alternatives that avoid, minimize or mitigate potential impacts.

A detailed overview of the recommended Preferred Alternative will be available for public review and comment at the project's next public meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008, at the Summit Conference and Event Center. We encourage you to attend and provide your input and feedback.

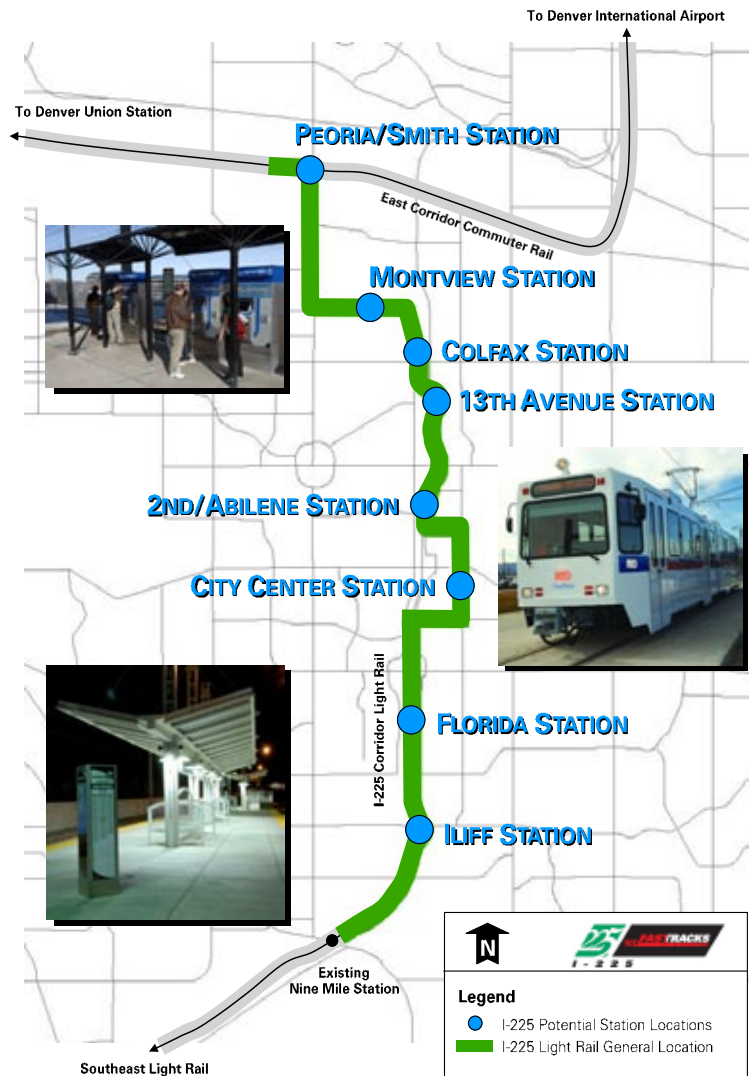
Light Rail Alignment

A recommended light rail alignment has been developed based on the project Purpose and Need statement that was developed in 2007, and reviewed by the public at the Nov. 11, 2007, Public Meeting No. 1. This alignment incorporates work done during this and prior studies. Concepts presented at Public Meeting No. 2 on March 12, 2008, have been evaluated and screened using criteria based on the Purpose and Need for the project and public input gathered during the course of the study. Incorporating input gathered from previous public and key stakeholder meetings throughout the I-225 Corridor has been crucial to the refinement of the recommended Preferred Alternative. An overview of these refinements as well as details to minimize or avoid impacts to the public will be presented to stakeholders at the upcoming Sept. 30 Public Meeting.

Station Locations

During the Sept. 30 Public Meeting, the project team will also provide an overview of the recommended Station Locations. Station Locations have been developed through an interactive process with the project partners and the public. Key criteria used to locate stations include ridership, parking availability (where applicable), and access for patrons connecting to the station via transit, automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle modes. Additionally, station accessibility for ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) patrons is an important criterion, as is consideration of community benefits and avoidance of impacts. To address this latter criterion, the project team has worked closely with the City of Aurora's station area planning efforts. Since the last public meeting in March, a possible eighth sta-

I-225 Corridor Alignment and Station Locations



tion has been proposed at 13th Avenue on land owned by RTD. This may be a viable option for providing parking, while minimizing congestion at the Colfax Station further north, which does not include parking. The recommended station locations, from north to south are: Peoria Street/Smith Road; Montview Boulevard; Colfax Avenue; 13th Avenue; 2nd Avenue and Abilene Street; Aurora City Center; Florida Avenue; and Iliff Avenue.

The development of a station footprint requires close coordination with RTD to determine how a particular station fits operationally into the system-wide bus and light rail service plan. Consideration as to how a given station works within a series of stations, the spacing needed between those stations, the operations at each station, and how a particular station fits in with the local and regional bus connections are critical for providing a smooth transition between all modes of transportation.

Parking

Parking is a key issue in the I-225 light rail corridor. RTD has a fixed number of surface parking spaces that are budgeted within the corridor. That number of parking spaces, approved by voters in 2004, as part of the FasTracks program, is 1,800. The table to the right outlines the currently budgeted number of parking spaces for each station on opening day. The project team and the City of Aurora are working together to identify additional areas for parking and possible funding sources, while balancing the needs of future Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities.

Station Location	Number of Parking Spaces
Peoria/Smith	550
Montview Boulevard	0
Colfax Avenue	0
13th Avenue	250
2nd & Abilene	200
Aurora City Center	200
Florida	0
Iliff Avenue	600
Total Parking Spaces	1,800

Concurrent Station Area Planning and Strategic Parking Study

In addition to the current planning efforts underway by RTD, the City of Aurora has embarked on two parallel studies. The first addresses potential development opportunities surrounding the stations. The second addresses the City's concern with parking demand and management needs as a result of the extension of light rail and the introduction of commuter rail in the City of Aurora. The project team and the City of Aurora are working cooperatively on both efforts.

Station Area Planning

Crandall Arambula, an urban design firm experienced in transit-oriented development, was hired by the City of Aurora to assist RTD in the development of station area plans around the

bus and automobile connections, identify redevelopment opportunities and recommend land uses, and building and urban design elements. The station area plans are intended to establish land use and future traffic circulation, guide possible policy and zoning changes, identify infrastructure improvements, establish funding priorities and implementation schedules, and identify responsibilities based on the community's vision and objectives.

Public involvement for this effort has been an integral part of the process. Two community workshops have been held thus far including Community Workshop No. 1, where objectives were developed and Community Workshop No. 2, where land use and circulation alternatives were reviewed. Additionally,

two community open houses will be held in the upcoming months where the public will review refinements of the preferred land use and circulation alternatives. The open house for the Iliff Station will be held in mid-September

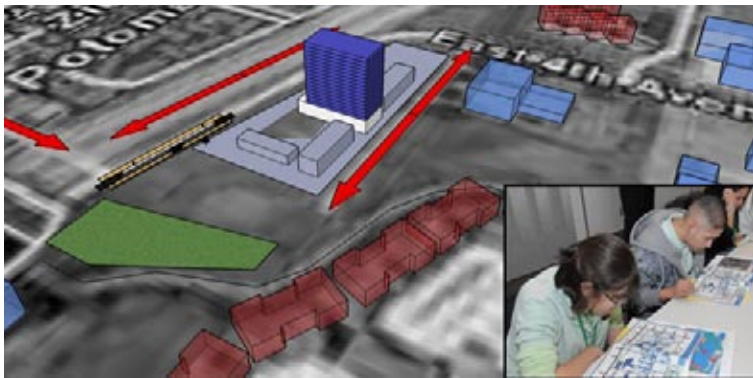
and the open house for Peoria/Smith, Fitzsimons/Colfax, 13th Avenue and Abilene stations is expected to be held in November.

Strategic Parking Plan and Program Study

The Wilbur Smith Associates/URS study team, also hired by the City of Aurora, has made considerable progress toward a comprehensive review of parking demand in the I-225 corridor and parking management needs within the City of Aurora. This consultant team is investigating parking policies and evaluating best practices for the management and financing of existing and future parking facilities. Specific elements for evaluation include:

- Management of spillover parking at transit stations
- Sources for funding additional parking at transit stations
- Land use and development goals along each transit line and at each proposed station
- Techniques to encourage use of the rail system
- Options for managing parking demand at stations
- Opportunities and constraints to shared parking at stations

In addition to the study elements listed above, the Wilbur Smith Associates/URS consulting team is interested in developing outreach techniques that engage commuters in station planning issues and to cultivate dialogue that encourages public input. Again, we invite you to attend the I-225 FasTracks Public Meeting on Sept. 30, and provide your comments and input on the Strategic Parking Plan.



Last Spring, local high school students from the "Ride to Dream" program offered Colfax Station area planning concepts to RTD

Peoria/Smith, Fitzsimons/Colfax, 13th Avenue, Abilene and Iliff light rail stations. The purpose of the study is to develop concepts for pedestrian, bicycle,

Next Steps:

Environmental Evaluation and Preliminary Engineering

Following the public meeting on Sept. 30, 2008, the project team will consider input received and begin preparing an Environmental Evaluation document and Preliminary Engineering level plans, which are anticipated to take about one year to complete. The Environmental Evaluation will describe the benefits and impacts of the project, identify mitigation measures that may be needed to address adverse impacts, and highlight permits or other approvals necessary for the project.

WEB/PHONE

For questions and/or to be notified of future public meetings, visit our project Web site at www.RTD-FasTracks.com and click on I-225 Corridor, or call **(303) 299-2000** and follow the prompts.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

COME SEE WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO! Please join us for Public Meeting No. 3.

We will present the recommended I-225 Corridor Preferred Alternative Alignment, Station Locations, and related information. Elements of the City of Aurora's Strategic Parking Study will also be presented. Your input and comments are important to us!

When: Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008

Session One: 4 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Session Two: 6:15 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The same information will be presented at both sessions.

Where: Summit Conference and Event Center

411 Sable Boulevard • Aurora, CO 80011
(off 6th Ave. and Sable Blvd.)

Location served by RTD Bus Routes 10 and 15L

COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The following communication assistance is available for all Regional Transportation District public meetings: language interpreters, sign-language interpreters, assisted listening devices, alternate formats such as large print or reasonable accommodations for special needs. Contact RTD at **(303) 400-6175** at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to discuss your special needs and request for accommodations.



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