

West Corridor

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

*U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD)*

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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WEST CORRIDOR PROJECT

Denver and Jefferson Counties, Colorado

Prepared by the

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
and
Regional Transportation District

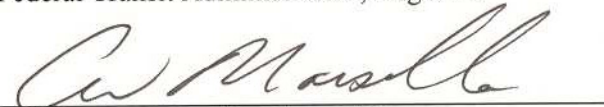
Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended, 41 United States Code (USC) §4332(2); the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508; the Federal Transit Laws, 49 USC 53; Environmental Impact and Related Procedures-Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration, 23 CFR 771; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 16 USC §470(f); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, 49 USC §303; Section 6(f)(3) of The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, 16 USC §4601-U; the Clean Air Act as amended, 42USC §7401-7671; the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 USC § 1531; Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, 42 USC §4601; Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, 33 USC §1342; Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations; Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands; Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management; and all relevant laws and procedures of the State of Colorado.

August 28, 2003
Date



Lee O. Waddleton, Regional Administrator,
Federal Transit Administration, Region 8

Aug. 29, 2003
Date



Clarence W. Marsella, General Manager
Regional Transportation District

Abstract: This Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes the transportation and environmental impacts associated with transportation improvements in the West Corridor to serve the cities of Denver, Lakewood, and Golden in Denver and Jefferson Counties, Colorado. Three alternatives are considered in this EIS: No Action, Enhanced Bus, and Light Rail Transit (LRT). A No Action Alternative is defined and analyzed to provide the base against which the Enhanced Bus and LRT Alternatives can be compared. The potential impacts of each alternative are identified in a broad range of environmental categories including: land use, transportation, air quality, noise, vibration, visual and aesthetics, ecosystems, hazardous materials, water resources, cultural resources, historic resources, parklands, safety and security, and neighborhoods.

The proposed undertaking consists of a 12.1-mile LRT project from downtown Denver to the Jefferson County Government Center, near Golden. The project will provide connections to major activity centers, employment centers, community resources, and other regional transit services provided by Regional Transportation District (RTD). The LRT Alternative would increase mobility in the congested corridor, and provide an alternative to the single occupant vehicle. Additionally, the LRT Alternative would provide dependable transit service within the corridor.

Comments: The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was available to the public for a 53-day review and comment period from March 14, 2003 to May 5, 2003. A public hearing was conducted during the review and comment period at the following location:

Wednesday, April 16, 2003
Sheraton Denver West Hotel
360 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado

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Comments on this document may be made in writing to the Federal Transit Administration through Mr. Beckhouse at the above address.

PREFACE

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Corridor project has been prepared in accordance with regulations developed by the Council on Environmental Quality for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Draft EIS was released for circulation and public comment from March 14 through May 05, 2003; a public hearing was held April 16, 2003. This Final EIS incorporates responses to the comments received. In addition, the proposed light rail transit (LRT) alignment was revised. The alignment will follow the Associated Railroad alignment through Lakewood Industrial Park rather than going south on Quail Street. In addition, the Final EIS updates some information that became available since the circulation of the Draft EIS.

On August 19, 2003, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) Board of Directors selected the LRT alternative as its preferred alternative for transit improvements in the West Corridor. RTD has committed to mitigation measures as identified in this Final EIS. This EIS is organized as follows:

Executive Summary - Provides a summary of the project's definition, purpose and need, impacts it is expected to cause, and the recommended impact mitigations.

Chapter 1: Purpose and Need - Presents a discussion of corridor transportation goals as they compare to the existing transportation conditions in the local area and the region.

Chapter 2: Alternatives Considered - Describes the alternatives considered in the Major Investment Study and the EIS, and discusses the bus and rail operating plans.

Chapter 3: Affected Environment - Describes the existing social and natural environmental conditions in the study area. The discussion provides a description of the environment and resources within the project's study area.

Chapter 4: Transportation Impacts - Presents transit and highway impacts that would result from the No Action Enhanced Bus and the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternatives. Potential mitigation measures to address impacts are defined where appropriate.

Chapter 5: Environmental Consequences - Discusses the No Action, Enhanced Bus and LRT Alternatives' potential impacts on the built and natural environments. Potential mitigation measures to address impacts are defined where appropriate.

Chapter 6: Financial Analysis - Presents a discussion of the baseline revenue sources, and the financial ability of the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to construct and operate the proposed LRT project.

Chapter 7: Public Involvement - Presents summaries of agency (RTD) efforts to solicit agency, committee and public comments during the EIS process.

Chapter 8: Final Environmental Impact Statement/4(f) and 6 (f) Evaluation - Describes, in accordance with Section 4(f) and 6(f) legislation, any publicly owned cultural, parks and recreational resources within the corridor that may be affected.

- *Appendix A* List of Preparers
- *Appendix B* EIS Recipients
- *Appendix C* Responses to Comments
- *Appendix D* Agency Coordination Letters
- *Appendix E* Memorandum of Agreement
- *Appendix F* Documents Included by Reference

NAVIGATION OF THE CD VERSION OF THE WEST CORRIDOR FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The CD version of the West Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement contains links to individual chapters and appendices. Please click on the link of interest in the table of contents to be directed to the chapter or appendix file. A new file will be opened and replace the current table of contents with the specific chapter table of contents. Once the individual chapter or appendix file is opened a more detailed linking system will direct you to a specific section, table or figure in the document. Individual appendix file do not included specific links once the file is open.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| ADT | average daily traffic |
| AST | aboveground storage tank |
| ASTM | American Society of Testing and Materials |
| bgs | below ground surface |
| BTU | British thermal unit |
| C-470 | Colorado Highway 470 |
| CAMP | Colorado Ambient Monitoring Program |
| CDOT | Colorado Department of Transportation |
| CERCLA | Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act |
| CERCLIS | CERCLA Information System |
| CEQ | Council on Environmental Quality |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| COC | contaminants of concern |
| CO ERNS | Spills Database |
| Corps of Engineers | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| CORRACTS | Corrective Action Report |
| CUHP/UDSWM | Colorado Urban Hydrograph Procedure and Urban Drainage and Storm Water Management |
| dB | decibel |
| dBA | A-weighted decibel |
| DRCOG | Denver Regional Council of Governments |
| DTC | Denver Technological Center |
| DUS | Denver Union Station |
| EIS | environmental impact statement |
| FA01 | DRCOG's West Corridor 2001 travel model |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| I-70 | Interstate Highway 70 |
| I-225 | Interstate Highway 225 |
| I-25 | Interstate Highway 25 |
| JCGC | Jefferson County Government Center |
| HOV | high occupancy vehicle |
| HVAC | heating, ventilation and air conditioning |
| lbs | pounds |
| L _{dn} | day-night average sound pressure level |
| LED | light-emitting diode |
| L _{eq} | continuous A-weighted sound pressure level |
| L _{max} | maximum sound pressure level |
| LOS | level of service |
| L _p | sound pressure level |
| LRT | light rail transit |
| LUST | leaking underground storage tank |
| µg/m ³ | micrograms per cubic meter |
| mf | multi-family units |
| MFR | Multi-family residences |
| mph | miles per hour |
| N/A | not applicable |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| NFA | no further action |
| NPL | National Priorities List |
| PAH | polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon |
| PCB | polychlorinated biphenyls |
| PM _{2.5} | particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter |
| PM ₁₀ | particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter |
| PMSA | Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area |
| ppm | parts per million |
| PPV | Peak Particle Velocity |
| Q&A | Question and Answer |
| RCRA | Resource Conservation and Recovery Act |
| RCRIS-SQG | Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System-Small Quantity Generator |
| RCRIS-LQG | Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System-Large Quantity Generator |
| RMS | Root Mean Square |
| RTD | Regional Transportation District |
| SEL | sound exposure level |
| sf | single family units |
| SFR | Single family residences |
| SH | State Highway |
| SWF/LF | solid waste sites and facilities |
| TABOR | Tax Payer's Bill of Rights |
| TDM | Travel Demand Management |
| TIP | Transportation Improvement Program |
| TSSIP | Traffic Signal System Improvement Program |
| US 6 | U.S. Highway 6 |
| US 40 | U.S. Highway 40 |
| USC | United States Code |
| USDOT | United States Department of Transportation |
| USFWS | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |
| UST | under ground storage tank |
| VdB | vibration decibels |
| VHT | vehicle hours of travel |
| VMT | vehicle miles of travel |
| VOCs | volatile organic compounds |
| WC25 | DRCOG's West Corridor 2025 travel model |

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