



Community

Information Line:

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rtdwestcorridor.com



The \$511.8-million FasTracks West Corridor project consists of constructing a new 12.1-mile, double-track light rail line, extending west from the existing light rail line at Auraria West Station in downtown Denver, through Lakewood along 13th Avenue, continuing along 6th Avenue (U.S. 6) and ending at the Jefferson County Government Center.

E - NEWS



WELCOME!

Summer is here and the FasTracks West Corridor final design project is well underway. Your community participation at recent events has been very strong and the input we've received is once again proving to be valuable. The upcoming Urban Design Committee and *Coffee with Dennis* meetings will further enhance the communication process that you have helped shape, and we now have many updates to the West Corridor Web site.

Additionally, a Design Overview Timeline is now available to the community. We've designed it to outline issues and activities that we hope provide you with a better understanding of what is happening and when. All of this is being done to ensure that you, our local residents, businesses and commuters, can and do remain as well-informed as possible about new and exciting developments!

July 2006

In this issue you will find:

Who's in the Neighborhood - Find out more about the people painting, digging and surveying in your community.

Listening to You - An update on the activities of the July Urban Design Committees.

Save These Dates! - You're invited to a number of upcoming meetings and events!

What is an Environmental Assessment and Why is it Required? - An overview of the Environmental Assessment process related to changes in the West Corridor alignment.

Keeping Up with Final Design - Use our Design Overview Timeline to keep up with activities.

Coffee with Dennis - Check out the August schedule for this new small group discussion forum.

Where Can I Get More Information - A list of resources available to everyone.

Who's in the Neighborhood

Safety First:

In construction work, working safely should be everyone's #1 priority. Because of this, RTD recognizes the importance of evaluating all of its projects for a variety of utility and safety considerations - before construction starts. We do this to improve safety and reduce costs for everyone. For example, when a gas line is damaged, it is expensive and dangerous. So, careful excavation, proper support and backfill around gas lines are important to maintain safety and the continued reliability of gas service. You may notice small teams around your neighborhood that are dressed in basic utility uniforms and marking existing underground utility lines with paint, or other workers digging test holes to see what type of soil is underneath. This information is necessary when drawing construction plans.

In addition, you may also have noticed crews on the roadways performing tests called noise analyses. Although these checks have been completed, these tests provided information on existing noise levels so we can accurately measure the noise difference that will happen during construction and light rail service. The results are now being studied to

ensure that potential noise impacts are given adequate consideration during light rail project development. Information will be provided at the September public meeting.

Listening to You:

Urban Design Committee Meetings - The project team would like to extend a sincere "Thank You" to all the volunteer members who make up the Urban Design Committees (UDCs). Through your dedication, support and input, our project has been positively affected in more ways than you might imagine. The RTD team would like to welcome all newcomers, too. Anyone who is still interested in participating as a member, please know that it's not too late to sign up!

As we enter our third round of UDC meetings scheduled for the end of July, project designers will have the opportunity to share with you more advanced drawings of the new stations and some of the larger bridge structures throughout the corridor. Incorporated into these developing designs will be the group recommendations received from the station enhancement groups (during the Environmental Impact Statement process) and the UDC meetings earlier this year. Attendees will again have the chance to share their thoughts about refinements, corridor themes, lighting, safety and general aesthetics.

Other agenda items will include information on what the light rail line may look like between stations. Alternatives related to bridge selection and between-station layouts will focus on the pros and cons of various designs. Information on Design Overview Timelines, station design updates, noise analysis updates and the August series of Coffee with Dennis meetings will also be available. Your input will be important in assisting the design team to understand your concerns about topics ranging from meetings and events to designs and aesthetics of the entire line.

Each of these meetings will present the same information, but will be divided geographically. The first meeting will focus on elements from the Auraria Station through the Wadsworth Station. The second meeting will focus on the Wadsworth Station through the Jefferson County Government Center Station including, for the first time, the Denver Federal Center Station.

Save These Dates!

UDC Meetings:

West Corridor Urban Design Committee Meeting #1
Wednesday, July 26, 2006, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Cleburne Community Center
Columbine Room
1580 Yarrow Street, Lakewood

West Corridor Urban Design Committee Meeting #2
Thursday, July 27, 2006, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Jefferson County Government Center
Lower Level
100 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden

We look forward to meeting with you over the coming weeks. As always, feel free to contact us with any comments or questions.

What is an Environmental Assessment and Why is it Required?

Last May, the RTD project team conducted a value engineering (VE) exercise. The purpose of this was to determine changes that could provide cost containment measures. Due to the proposed changes resulting from

the VE exercise, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requested that an Environmental Assessment (EA) be completed in order to fully investigate and document the extent of any potential impacts from these changes.

As part of the EA public involvement process, RTD needs your comments and wants to know your considerations regarding many of the proposed changes. Specific topics of discussion include:

- Moving the light rail alignment and the Red Rocks Station to the south side of 6th Avenue from the Denver Federal Center to just east of Indiana Avenue.
- Moving the Jefferson County Government Center Station to the east (front) side of the complex. (Alternatives to this are being researched.)
- Reducing the time between trains between the Denver Federal Center and the Jefferson County Government Center to every 15 minutes on opening day.
- Shifting the track alignment at Colfax Avenue (State Highway 40) and 6th Avenue slightly to the north.
- Eliminating the pedestrian tunnel under Howard Place at Federal Boulevard and replacing it with a crossing at street level.
- Eliminating the pedestrian bridge across 6th Avenue at Red Rocks Community College.
- Reducing retaining wall heights to allow for drainage improvements between Harlan Street and Decatur Street, and
- Eliminating the maintenance facility at Harlan Street.

A map detailing these proposed changes can be found by visiting: www.rtdwestcorridor.com and clicking on "[Document Center](#)."

RTD is preparing an EA that is in compliance with the regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The EA is a comprehensive study that evaluates potential environmental impacts - both positive and negative - of the various alternatives under consideration. It provides the community and decision-makers a comprehensive source of key information about the potential impacts of these alternatives as they relate to the built, natural and social environments of the study area.

If there are no significant impacts, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is prepared by the FTA. If the EA indicates that there are significant impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared.

The EA for the proposed changes to the West Corridor alignment will evaluate potential impacts to ecological resources such as wetlands and wildlife, air quality, noise, community impacts, hazardous materials, cultural resources, socio/economic considerations, low income and minority populations and right-of-way. Ways to minimize or avoid potential impacts are also discussed in the EA. By performing an EA before any changes to the project are started, we will be able to minimize adverse impacts to the environment and to our health.

For information on the last set of open houses and upcoming public involvement opportunities related to the EA, [click here](#). Information on the public input process is available on the last page of the document. During the open houses held in June, members of the project team presented valuable information and were available for one-on-one question and answer sessions afterward. Comments can still be submitted by visiting: www.rtdwestcorridor.com/ea_openhouse.asp

Keeping Up with Final Design

We understand that keeping up with so many different events, activities and processes may become confusing at times! To help you stay up to date as well as manage your calendars, we have created a Design Overview Timeline that is available online by [clicking here](#).

It will also be distributed monthly as part of our E-Newsletter series. This will be a great resource for all recipients who want to learn more about achievements and milestones that the project team has attained, and in addition it will offer the capability to look weeks and months down the road at upcoming events. Please keep in mind that the timeline is subject to change and may be dependent upon events such as weather conditions or outside influences that affect the project team.

The month of June was extremely productive for our design team as they reviewed and confirmed the structural design of the corridor's bridges, and began design for general layouts, shelters, walls and other station concourse elements. Pedestrian and bicycle access was at the top of the agenda, as well. Other areas of design support included obtaining noise measurements on private properties, integrating the alignment of previously determined utility relocations and assessing findings from various traffic study updates.

July will prove to be a busy month as well, as project team members refine and integrate artistic themes at stations, work closely with the public to determine bridge aesthetics, reassess utility locations and focus on general system designs.

Coffee with Dennis

Our new public involvement effort on the West Corridor project called "Coffee with Dennis" kicked off in June with fantastic support! More than 35 attendees during our first round of 11 meetings in June received answers to their questions focused on many in-depth topics.

Top Ten Topics:

1. Parking, parking structures & traffic
2. Sidewalks and station access
3. Track re-alignment on western portion of line
4. Noise and vibration
5. Design related to specific stations
6. Property acquisition
7. Bridges and bridge design
8. Bicycle access and bike path
9. Fences and barriers
10. Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Designed to give the community an opportunity to meet with Project Manager Dennis Cole and members of the design team, our next set of meetings will begin in late August. Watch your e-mail or check our Web site to sign up for a time and location that works for you. You will be prompted to answer a few short questions, including identifying those topics that you may wish to discuss.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Getting and staying involved in the West Corridor project is essential to ensuring a successful process! We strongly encourage you to register via our Web site by providing your e-mail and regular mailing addresses to receive periodic updates on new issues, events and activities. Encouraging your friends and neighbors to add themselves to the list is another way to make sure everyone in your community is kept informed about the project. Visit us online at www.rtdwestcorridor.com and click on the "Get Involved Now" link for several ways to be part of the process!

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