



Community

Information Line:

303-299-2401

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!

The last several months have been extremely productive, and we are excited to share with you the many accomplishments the West Corridor FasTracks team has recently achieved. As the project team further refines design concepts and incorporates your comments, we hope that you continue to provide your outstanding support and feedback.

### August 2006

#### In this issue you will find:

##### [Save These Dates](#)

[FasTracks Financial Plan](#) - First Annual Financial Plan Review: What it means for West Corridor.

[Urban Design Committee \(UDC\) Update](#) - An overview of our most recent meetings.

[Combined Public/UDC Meetings Coming, Save the Date](#) - Learn about our next public meeting in September.

[Stay Involved](#) - Find out about events our project team is working on to keep you better informed about the entire West Corridor process.

[CM/GC: Selection and General Information](#) - Meet the project's newest addition: The Construction Manager/General Contractor, or CM/GC.

[Environmental Assessment Update](#) - Find out about the status of the engineering and impact analysis work being conducted on the corridor's Environmental Assessment.

[Federal Bridge Reconstruction](#) - Learn the latest on the bridge at Federal Boulevard, which will be replaced as part of the West Corridor project in conjunction with CDOT. Find out who and what will be affected.

[National Transit Oriented Development \(TOD\) Study](#) - Get briefed on a national study that is being conducted to better understand the pros and cons of Transit Oriented Development.

#### **Save These Dates**

Read below for information about these important activities. In the meantime, Save these Dates!

**Coffee with Dennis:** various times, Aug. 22 through 31. See times, locations and [register here](#).

**Combined Public/UDC Meetings:** more information will be available in the coming weeks. Mark your calendars!

- September 27, 6 to 8 p.m., Denver Human Services Building, 1200 Federal Boulevard, Denver
- September 28, 6 to 8 p.m., Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 15200 W. 6th Avenue, Golden

#### **FasTracks Financial Plan**

In 2004, the RTD Board of Directors adopted the final FasTracks plan,

which included a financial plan. The plan projected costs and financing for each of the corridors and projects, and reflected the adopted FasTracks implementation schedule for each corridor. Each year, RTD is tasked with re-analyzing the financial plan to reflect actual program progress, expenditures and receipts. Along with this analysis, RTD used this as an opportunity to reduce program risks, identify opportunities to improve program financing mechanisms, update projections based on the latest financial forecasts, and extend these forecasts from 2025 to 2030. Capital costs for all the FasTracks corridors in the updated plan stay the same as in the original financial plan, with the total program capital costs remaining at \$4.7 billion.

As you know, the West Corridor, and the FasTracks program as a whole, face cost containment challenges due to spikes in materials and commodities prices in the past two years. RTD staff has successfully identified measures to contain these cost spikes without changing the scopes of the corridors. For example, bridge structures could be shortened, rail vehicles could be purchased in advance, in some cases tracks could be shared by two corridors, and some corridors could be constructed using the design-build model. In addition, the financial plan update includes the issuance of \$600 million in bonds in late 2006, providing RTD the opportunity to save as much as \$186 million in long-term interest charges, compared with the interest assumptions in the original plan. This is possible because of lower interest rates available today, estimated at 5.00 to 5.25 percent, compared with the conservative baseline assumptions in the plan of 6.354 percent.

By issuing the bonds, RTD must spend the bond funds within three years of the date they are issued. To accomplish this, the RTD FasTracks team looked for opportunities to accelerate project schedules. They identified three such opportunities.

- West Corridor: Moving the opening date ahead by one year is a key recommendation, as it will also move up the construction schedule, allowing RTD to spend the bond funding within the required timeframe.
- Denver Union Station (DUS): Moving up the opening date for transit improvements by one year will meet bond requirements and help contain costs by spurring development at DUS. The underground transit infrastructure at DUS must be in place for development to occur at this site and to allow the possibility of accelerating the schedules of other FasTracks corridors coming into DUS.
- Light Rail Maintenance Facility: Moving up the opening date of the new light rail facility by one year will help contain the cost of building the facility. Having the new facility in place also will allow the early purchase of vehicles for future light rail corridors, resulting in even more cost effectiveness.

These changes benefit the overall FasTracks Program and other corridors by providing more cost and financing certainty for the whole program.

RTD will provide opportunity for public input on the recommended changes to the financial plan at the September 19 RTD Board meeting prior to any Board action. You can also comment by [clicking here](#).

### ***Urban Design Committee (UDC) Update***

Our Urban Design Committees reconvened for the third time at the end of July to review the progress being made on designing the West Corridor stations. Designs were presented for each station showing how they each fit into the surrounding neighborhood. These drawings also reflected how the themes might be incorporated into the station canopies. The presentation also included drawings of what the tracks could look like between the stations, examples of three possible shelter designs, and views of the Wadsworth bridge and approach ramps. All the station designs are now available on the West Corridor Web site and we encourage you to

take a look and give us your input.

The UDC process will conclude with a final presentation in November when station and aesthetic design will have reached the 65 percent completion mark. Even though the UDC process will be done, we will still be in contact with affected neighborhoods regarding ongoing design progress, sound walls and other areas of interest.

### **Combined Public/UDC Meetings Coming**

September is a big month for the West Corridor project, and will provide an important opportunity for public comment. We will combine the scheduled open house with the September UDC meeting to provide a wealth of information in one evening. Topics to be covered at these information-packed meetings include:

- Railings, fences, walls and related materials
- Bells at grade crossings
- Bridge alternatives at Wadsworth and 6th Avenue
- Bicycle path location along the corridor
- Environmental Assessment Update
- And much more

Additional details will be coming in the following weeks but mark your calendars now!

- September 27, 6 to 8 p.m., Denver Human Services Building, 1200 Federal Boulevard, Denver
- September 28, 6 to 8 p.m., Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 15200 W. 6th Avenue, Golden

You are encouraged, however, not to wait until the September meeting series to submit your comments, questions or concerns. By visiting the West Corridor Web site, you can relay your thoughts to the design team today.

### **Stay Involved**

#### **Design Overview Timeline**

Becoming and staying involved with the West Corridor design process is one of the most important things residents and business owners can do. Our Design Overview Timeline, which you can download for viewing, is a fantastic resource to understanding how the process is organized. The timeline will provide you with an overview through the end of 2006 and updates are made on a regular basis.

#### **Coffee with Dennis**

Our Coffee with Dennis series will begin again on August 22. These small group information sessions were so well received in early summer that an additional six meetings have been scheduled for this month. If you have specific questions or comments you'd like to share, you are encouraged to take advantage of meeting one-on-one with the West Corridor's Project Manager and other project representatives at these meetings. This is a great way to receive first-hand knowledge of the design process, understand how you may be affected by the West Corridor light rail project, or offer suggestions for improvement. A meeting schedule and sign-up forms are available on the project Web site. Sign up soon because three of the six meetings are already at capacity.

#### **Submit Your Comments**

You can also stay involved from the comfort of your own home via the Web. Submit your comments by visiting the project Web site and let the team know what you are thinking. If you know of someone who would like to become more involved or receive our e-newsletter, encourage your friends and neighbors to sign up via our site as well.

### ***Construction Management/General Contractor (CM/GC) Selection and Information***

The team of "Denver Transit Construction Group" (DTCG) is happy to mark our first project in the Denver area. Our team is led by John Rinard, P.E., a registered Professional Civil Engineer and seasoned project manager with over 26 years in world-class rail related projects. DTCG is a diverse team in a Joint Venture of Herzog Contracting Corp. and Stacy & Witbeck, Inc., two nationally qualified firms with an unparalleled history of construction performance in delivering complex light rail projects in urban areas. Our Joint Venture has been together for many years and has completed very successful projects together, such as the \$128 million CTX capacity expansion for passenger rail service in San Francisco, and is currently constructing the \$200 million CM/GC project for Utah Transit Authority in Salt Lake City.

The West Corridor Line is a CM/GC effort as well, and we plan to prove one more time with its construction that we have the experience to be successful in the construction of this line. RTD is complemented on using the CM/GC method that allows the agency and contractor to work arm-in-arm to a successful completion. Key elements are controlling cost and schedule, working with community concerns, minimizing construction impacts and optimizing workforce diversity and opportunities for local Colorado contractors and D/SBE firms. We are proud to state that our DTCG team members have successfully delivered 100 percent of the LRT and passenger rail transportation projects undertaken to date under the CM/GC process.

We are excited to engage a selected group of local Colorado firms who will provide pre-construction and/or construction services. Among these firms are locally recognized companies that include: Edward Kraemer & Sons, Inc. and Lawrence Construction Company, as well as a range of DBE companies such as Jackson Construction Company, Meza Construction Company, Alcam Metal Distributors, Inc., Xcelente Marketing and Advertising, L.F.L. International and Doss Technical Services. We look forward to exceeding expectations, establishing a regional office in Colorado, and to working with many of you and your companies in the future.

### ***Environmental Assessment Update***

Engineering work and impact analysis work continues on the Environmental Assessment as portions of the document have been written and are being reviewed. We will be holding meetings in the near future with the Mountainside Estates manager and probably some residents so they are aware of the change in view from some of the homes (which will be of a retaining wall that in some cases will block noise from 6th Avenue). We have met with federal and state agencies to discuss the changes in the project.

At the September meetings, we will be providing updated engineering information and preliminary information about changes in impacts.

### ***Federal Bridge Reconstruction***

During the planning of the West Corridor Light Rail Project, the project team, in conjunction with CDOT, determined that the Federal Boulevard bridge over Lakewood Gulch needed to be replaced. Construction will take place in both Rude Park and Paco Sanchez Park, but will not negatively affect the ball field. An area approximately 45 feet by 215 feet within Paco Sanchez Park will be taken for this replacement, but it will not impact any trails, benches or park amenities. On the east side of Federal Boulevard, the footprint of the new Federal Boulevard bridge will use an area of land

approximately 20 feet by 215 feet within Rude Park.

Additionally, RTD would like to hear any input, comments or concerns from the public on this proposed bridge replacement and the need to use portions of Rude Park and Paco Sanchez Park in order to improve the bridge structure. *Comments can be submitted* via the project Web site or you may contact Robert Boot with the RTD FasTracks Team at 303-299-2426.

### ***National Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study***

The West Corridor is being studied as part of a year-long effort funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to examine the linkages between affordable housing and transit investment policies. The study is being conducted by the Center for Transit Oriented Development at Reconnecting America, a California-based non-profit organization whose mission is to link transportation networks and the communities they serve. The study will focus on regional and corridor-level initiatives in Charlotte, Denver, Portland, Boston and Minneapolis. The goal is to provide national and local policymakers with an overview of the barriers and opportunities to using TOD to achieve affordable housing goals.

### ***Need more information on the West Corridor?***

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