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**Preferred Alternative Refinements Considered for
Gold Line EIS**

DENVER - The RTD FasTracks Gold Line team is analyzing alignment refinements to the preferred alternative of electric commuter rail on the BNSF/Union Pacific Railroad right of way. The environmental study continues to move forward while RTD continues negotiations with the railroads.

As part of RTD's system-wide negotiations with Union Pacific, the railroad presented a package of properties that proved to be unaffordable. The package included portions of land included in the proposed Gold Line alignment between the 38th Avenue and Pecos stations.

Although talks continue with the railroad, the Gold Line EIS team is evaluating refinements to portions of the preferred alternative between Denver Union Station and Pecos St. that would not require significant amounts of railroad right-of-way in the North Yards area (the area between the 38th Avenue and Pecos stations) and would not affect railroad operations in this same area.

The team identified four potential design refinement options for the Gold Line and is recommending that one option, on the east side of the railroad tracks, be evaluated in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, expected to be published later this year.

Gold Line Team Studies Potential Refinements to the Preferred Alternative

Page 2

“We are committed to pursuing the Gold Line preferred alternative that our project team has put forward and we are currently studying potential refinements to the Gold Line design that will help us reach that goal,” said Liz Telford, RTD project manager.

The Gold Line team will evaluate the design option/s using the same criteria that led to the selection of the preferred alternative. This analysis will include potential property acquisitions, cost, engineering feasibility, environmental effects and agency and public input.

The Gold Line study team also notes that any refinement of the Gold Line preferred alternative will include all of the original planned station locations for this FasTracks corridor, as previously outlined.

In order to publicly discuss these potential refinements to the Gold Line preferred alternative, RTD is hosting a pair of public meetings to answer questions and receive valuable feedback from the community. Meetings are scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4 at the Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd., Arvada and Thursday, March 6 at the Highlands Masonic Center, 3550 Federal Blvd., Denver.

The Gold Line EIS team is expecting to release the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that includes these potential additional refinements later this year and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to be completed in early 2009. Additional public meetings to discuss these and other project milestones will be scheduled as the Gold Line team continues its evaluation effort.

About Gold Line Corridor EIS

The Gold Line is an 11.2-mile rapid transit corridor extending from Denver Union Station in downtown Denver to the vicinity of Ward Road in Wheat Ridge. In the 2004 FasTracks election, voters approved funding for the Gold Line, serving Denver, Arvada, Wheat Ridge and unincorporated Adams County. The two-and-a-half year Environmental Impact Statement analyzes transit alternatives in this corridor and includes extensive public involvement.

About FasTracks

FasTracks is RTD's voter-approved \$6.1 billion, 12-year program to expand rail and bus service throughout the RTD service area. Scheduled for completion in 2017, FasTracks will create six new commuter rail and light rail corridors, extend three existing corridors, add 21,000 new parking spaces, and expand bus service across the entire District.

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