

**I-225 Corridor Public Meeting No. 3 Summary**  
**September 30, 2008**

Since the last public meeting held in March 2008, the RTD-FasTracks I-225 Corridor project team has made significant progress in developing the recommended Preferred Alternative alignment and station locations. The project team has worked cooperatively with the City of Aurora staff to address potential development opportunities surrounding the stations and elements of their Strategic Parking Study, which addresses the City's concern with parking demand and management needs as a result of the light rail extension and the introduction of commuter rail in the City of Aurora. During the past six months, the project team has continued to provide opportunities for effective public involvement and community outreach as necessary for the success of the I-225 Corridor Project. The project team has met with, and presented to, numerous key stakeholders, businesses, property owners, neighborhood and civic organizations, elected officials, and city staff to gather input and feedback on the refinement and recommendation of the Preferred Alternative alignment and station locations. Incorporating input gathered from previous public and key stakeholder meetings throughout the I-225 Corridor has been crucial to the refinement and recommendation of a sound Preferred Alternative that meets the Purpose and Need statement approved by the public in late 2007. Following is summary that provides an overview of the recommendations presented by the project team at Public Meeting No. 3 held on September 30, 2008, as well as an overview of the input and feedback received from the public in response to the recommendation.

**Public Meeting Format**

**Public Meeting No. 3:** The third public meeting for the I-225 Corridor Project was held on September 30, 2008 at the Summit Event and Conference Center located at 411 Sable Blvd in Aurora. The meeting was presented in two sessions from 4:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with the same information presented at both meetings. A total of 101 members of the public attended the two sessions to participate in the open house, to review the recommended preferred alternative alignment and station locations, visit display boards and most importantly to talk to project team representatives about their concerns and ideas. Also on display was information for two concurrent planning efforts currently underway with the City of Aurora for the Station Area Planning and Strategic Parking Study. Meeting participants were provided comment sheets as they registered. Questions listed on the comment sheet focused on the preferred alternative alignment, station platform locations, parking, community and environmental issues, and other issues and concerns.

**Open House:**

The open house portion of the meeting consisted of four tables each holding an aerial map for one of four sections of the corridor containing alignment, station locations and parking evaluated by the project team. The 10.5-mile corridor was divided geographically into the following four sections:

- Table No. 1 – Nine Mile to Exposition
- Table No. 2 – City Center
- Table No. 3 – Ellsworth to Fitzsimons/Montview
- Table No. 4 – Fitzsimons/Montview to Peoria/Smith

Meeting participants were asked to provide their input and feedback on the preferred alternative alignment, stations platform locations, and parking. A summary of what was heard and recorded by the project team is provided below.

Display boards were situated around the perimeter of the room for viewing. These display boards contained information on the following items:

- Welcome
- How Did We Get Here?
- How Do We Get There?
- What is included in this project?
- Public Participation in the Planning Process
- Existing RTD Light Rail Station Examples
- What is an Environmental Evaluation?
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/Abilene – High Line Canal Station Concept
- Ride to Dream Student Mentor Program
- Related City of Aurora Projects:
  - o Strategic Parking Study
  - o Station Area Planning
  - o Fitzsimons Multi-Modal Study
- Related East Corridor Commuter Rail Project
- Related CDOT Projects

**Presentation:**

Larry Warner, RTD-FasTracks I-225 Corridor Project Manager, presented a brief overview of the FasTracks Program and the provided a list of upcoming meetings that the public is invited to attend to hear options that are being discussed to implement the FasTracks Program. RTD is seeking input on those options and if there are other viable options for the Program.

Dwight Schock, Consultant Project Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation that included a guided virtual tour of the corridor using Google Earth to orient the participants to each of the four sections of the corridor and to identify detailed information regarding the preferred alternative alignment and station platform locations recommended by the project team. Huiliang Liu, Principal Transportation Planner for the City of Aurora, provided an overview of the city's strategic parking plan and program study currently performed by their consultants Wilbur Smith Associates and URS Corp.

**What We Heard?**

There were a total of 30 comments received and collected through various means; recorded during the Open House and Q&A portions of the public meeting, online using the bank of computers available at the meeting, written comment sheets submitted during the public meeting or mailed/faxed afterward, and comments e-mailed to the project team or project e-mail address and comments submitted online through the project website.

**Section Table Reports:**

Prior to the Q&A session, a project representative from each of the four tables noted above provided a report of what they heard while discussing the various alignments, station location options and parking evaluated by the project team. The following is a summary of comments recorded by project representatives during both open house sessions:

**Table No. 1 – Nine Mile to Exposition**

- General support for project and alignment.
- Suggestion for RTD to address existing parking problems and the low ridership of the G Line at Nine Mile before looking to extending the I-225 Corridor line.
- Add pedestrian paths on maps to show where they would be located.
- General overall concern for park-n-Rides and the limited number of parking spaces throughout the corridor.
- Concern for pedestrian crossings and bicycle access at all stations.
- Concerns regarding degree of traffic that Iliff Station will generate.
- Need for parking at Florida. Question whether RTD can have shared parking agreements with big boxes along Abilene to provide parking at Florida.
- Concerns regarding bus service and connections/service to stations.
- Why is the LRT alignment on the east side and not in the middle of the I-225 ROW?
- Need to construct sound walls on west side by residential.

**Table No. 2 – City Center**

- Parking concerns at City Centre and overflow parking impacts to the mall.
- Preserving access to and enhancing safety at the crossing of the light rail at the Highline trail at 2nd and Abilene.
- Suggestion to include bike lockers at the 2nd and Abilene station due to proximity to the High Line Canal.
- A number of attendees asked how firm the alignment is and expressed concern for impacts to their properties.
- Owner of a vacant property at Ellsworth and Sable – concerned about access and direct impacts with roadway widening.
- Owner of the office building on Exposition across from the Wal-Mart expressed concern for direct impacts to his building. Seemed pleased with narrower roadway section that lessens impact but wants more detail.

- Owner/manager of the credit union was more insistent on having the light rail realigned on Abilene to the west side to preserve his access.
- Representative of Cherry Grove East Condominium complex wanted further information regarding:
  - Vertical grades along Ellsworth – specifically regarding back side of parking garages and access preservation
  - Expressed concern with changes in access during construction
  - Expressed concern with the loss of full movement access with the train in the middle
  - Concern for ADA accessibility and children/pedestrian access to the Target complex.
  - Seemed pleased with the new signal at the park-n-Ride
- Participants wanted to better understand how transit was going to be integrated into the existing city streets, such as reconstruction of the streets, widening to allow for transit, access modification.
- Questions regarding why the City Center station was not further east, closer to Aurora’s municipal complex.
- A question was asked about a bus shuttle system.

**Table No. 3 – Ellsworth to Fitzsimons/Montview**

- General concern for the number of parking spaces at each station.
- A question was raised regarding the schedule for completion of the LRT.
- Why isn’t Colfax an at-grade crossing, similar to Speer crossing in Downtown Denver, to reduce the cost.
- Questioned if the at-grade crossing at 17th Place would cause traffic congestion at the interchange.
- High Line Canal trail crossing of Abilene would be improved by the alternative.
- Would the LRT alignment along Tollgate Creek be fenced, and what type of fencing would be used to prevent deer from moving onto the tracks.
- Fitzsimmons campus should have more stations, similar to Downtown Denver.
- Concern was expressed for the number of school children currently use the 13th Avenue trail and pedestrian bridge for walking/biking to and from school. Concerned with how safety will be maintained with the introduction of LRT.
- Traffic concerns along Sable to 13th Avenue and along 13th Avenue to the park-n-Ride.
- Concerned that 13th Avenue is a very narrow road and may have to be improved to accommodate traffic, pedestrians and bikes, potentially causing some property impacts along 13th Avenue.

**Table No. 4 – Fitzsimons/Montview to Peoria Smith**

- Concern for parking capacity at the station and for those traveling to the airport and considerations for long and short term parking.
- Concern for seamless transfer between LRT and commuter rail at Peoria/ Smith Station.
- Suggestion for an additional station located near the intersection of Peoria and Fitzsimons Parkway
- How will business access be maintained along Peoria?
- Questions on whether LRT will be fenced and/or barricaded.
- Questions regarding what the Fitzsimons Master Plan includes and what the full build out will look like. Will Fitzsimons golf course be closed.
- Concern for impacts to businesses during construction and mitigation measures.
- Will there be call-n-Ride services provided.

**Question & Answer Summary:**

Questions taken from the audience were facilitated by Nanci Regnier and answered by Larry Warner, RTD-FasTracks Project Manager and Dwight Schock, Consultant Project Manager. Many of the questions asked during the question and answer session carried similar themes expressed at the individual map tables. Additional comments included:

- Several questions centered around parking including:
  - Common belief that parking is underestimated, and based on current gas prices, there will be even more demand in the future.
  - Nine Mile has no parking available after 7 am.
  - RTD should build concrete parking structures to help accommodate the need, instead of dirt parking lots. Concerned about the ability to expand parking in the future, if needed. Knows that parking garages are expensive, but necessary to protect open space.
  - Some planned parking is a good distance from the actual station, will that encourage people to park in the neighborhoods to be closer to the station?
  - Is the parking study limited to the Light Rail or does it include the Fitzsimons neighborhood/area? What are the boundaries of the study?
  - Questioned how Aurora got involved in addressing parking needs at RTD stations.
- Request to include adequate provisions for bicycle parking or lockers at stations.
- How much of the land needed has already been acquired and how much still needs to be acquired?
- What is the travel time from Nine Mile to Peoria/Smith? How often will the trains run?
- How will they charge for zones if 225 line is a circle and you can get to anywhere, what will the zones be?
- University of Colorado at Denver representative expressed appreciation and enjoyment in working with the 225 Project Team. Impressed with level of cooperation in addressing issues regarding electro magnetic interference (EMI) and performing additional testing to analyze potential impacts to their research facility's sensitive equipment and identifying possible mitigation measures.
- Children's Hospital representative stated that they can't wait for the line to be built, both emotionally and economically. "Let's bite the bullet and build this thing".
- Much discussion centered around patrons angry to hear from RTD that ridership is up and revenue is down. Frequently sees people riding trains and buses for free and believe there is lost revenue. Also, feels RTD Board is trying to penalize people with EcoPasses and make them pay to park at the parking garages when others are riding for free. There were several ideas for rectifying these issues including:
  - Installation of turnstiles or other mechanism to prevent "free riders" especially at Nine Mile at the base of the stairs.
  - Require patrons to carry a pass instead of the driver having to collect bus fare.
  - Use swipe system (like DC) to track the number of zones passed through and charge accordingly.
  - "Harden" the system to make sure everyone pays.

### **Written Comment Summary**

Virtually all of the written comments received at or after the public meeting on September 30th were consistent with the comments recorded at the section tables and during the Q&A session of the public meeting. The highlights were adequate parking, traffic impacts to already congested roadways, safe pedestrian and bicycle movements and overall satisfaction with the level of public involvement and community outreach.



**Table 1**  
**Distribution of Public Comments Received**  
**as of September 30, 2008**

	<b>Comments Received Between March 20-Sept 20, 2008</b>	<b>Comments Received to Date</b>		<b>Comments Received Between March 20-Sept 20, 2008</b>	<b>Comments Received to Date</b>
<b>Alignment Alternatives:</b>			<b>Economic:</b>		
Bus Transit	2	7	Business Impacts	5	12
Costs	3	11	Economic Impacts	2	6
HOV Lanes	0	0	Environmental Justice/Equity	0	0
Park-n-Rides (Parking)	19	45	Land Use	3	4
Shuttles	0	5	<b>Operations:</b>		
Stations	14	53	Safety/Security	1	8
Toll Lanes	0	0	Transit Ridership	4	14
Rail Transit	1	6	Travel Time	3	8
Other	6	26	<b>Construction:</b>		
Bus Rapid Transit	0	0	Construction Impacts	0	6
Grade Separation	4	14	Construction Schedule	3	11
<b>Environmental:</b>			Short-term Impacts	1	1
Aesthetics & Urban Design	2	8	Access	2	2
Air Quality	0	2	<b>Project Planning:</b>		
Animal & Wildlife	0	1	Alternatives Analysis	12	43
HAZMAT & Waste Site	0	0	Evaluation Methodology	0	6
Historic Resources	1	1	Public Involvement	9	25
Noise	5	11	Purpose and Need	1	22
Traffic	4	21	Project Schedule	4	14
Vibration Analysis	1	1	Funding	13	17
Water Resources	1	2			
Mitigation Measures	1	3			
Visual Impacts	2	3			
<b>Community:</b>					
ADA Accessibility	2	6			
Bicycle/Pedestrian	9	19			
Community Impacts	5	18			
Emergency Response	0	0			
Parking (Neighborhoods)	6	8			
Parks & Recreational Facilities	0	2			
ROW & Property Acquisition	4	10			