

I-225 Corridor EE/EA & PE Public Meeting No. 4



I-225 Public Meeting No. 4 Q&A Notes

First Session

Q: What is the estimated date the first train will run from Nine Mile to Fitzsimons northbound?

A: Anticipated opening was 2015. Because of finances, we are uncertain of when opening day will occur. We will do everything we can to be "shovel ready" as soon as funding is available.

Q: Could you elaborate more on the electromagnetic problem that is associated with this project?

A: There is a lot of sensitive equipment at the Anschutz/Fitzsimons Medical Campus. We had to identify a way to minimize the impact of EMF/EMI on equipment. A split power system is the mitigation approach that RTD and the Anschutz/Fitzsimons Medical Campus selected.

Q: Will the buses still run up and down Sable after the project commences?

A: Buses will still run along Sable -- Routes 15 and 15L (Any other routes?)

Q: Will there be guards or barriers on the tracks so that pedestrians cannot cross the tracks?

A: Yes there will be guard rails and perhaps fencing to keep people off of the tracks along most of the corridor. The LRT alignment along Montview will be similar to that of Downtown Denver where barriers and fencing would not be present.

Q: Are you going to allow for trails to continue in places where trails cross the proposed alignment?

A: Trail connections will be maintained and/or improved, none will be eliminated. Highline Canal Trail will be relocated and improved and the crossing over Abilene will be enhanced.

Q: Will there be any major reconfigurations of bus lines in Aurora following Opening Day?

A: There will be no major reconfigurations. There will be route enhancements instead because there will not be much overlap in service between buses and the LRT.

Q: How will the alignment cross waterways?

A: Waterways will be bridged with two crossings over Toll Gate Creek and one over Sand Creek.

Q: At 25th and MLK/Sand Creek Parkway, how will LRT vehicles cross?

A: LRT will be handled via the planned signal at the intersection.

Q: Please describe access that LRT vehicles users will have to the VA hospital.

A: An elevator will be available to access street level and then pedestrians would have to cross Fitzsimons Parkway.

Q: How will the project affect 17th?

A: LRT will be handled via the planned signal at the intersection.

Q: What will be done to mitigate traffic congestion along Harvard as congestion increases with motorists heading to Iliff Park-n-Ride?

A: RTD will continue to work with the city to try to minimize disruption to the neighborhood through signalization, traffic calming strategies & innovative traffic engineering techniques. Signage can be quite effective.

Second Session

Comment: A concern was expressed about permanent access change in the City Center Area. The Central Business District was referenced as an example of how project can be implemented effectively. An emphasis seems to be placed too highly on limiting left turn movements into businesses, creating too many negative impacts.

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Response: Safety is a big concern. Left turns over at grade crossings are already a big concern of Public Utilities Commission. There have been numerous accidents downtown at at-grade crossings and one accident is considered one too many. Access restrictions on this project are a result of those concerns.

Q: As the route goes north along Colfax, how deep will it go into the Toll Gate Creek channel? What about flood control measures there? In other words, will the LRT be at-grade or above grade?

A: LRT will move through underpass and will be slightly elevated until it touches down on west bank. The garages at Cooper Flats will have to be moved. There will be no impact to floodplain there.

Q: A comment was raised about the high demand for the project and a more timely construction turnaround, especially with Anschutz/Fitzsimmons. What about selling bonds to increase cash flows?

A: The current financial plan for FasTracks has maxed out RTD's current bonding capacity. If there is an eventual election and approval for a sales tax increases, RTD's bonding capacity will be increased and utilized. RTD has accounted for those increases in the various financial scenarios.

Q: What type of noise should we anticipate?

A: The noise of the LRT vehicles is minimal. Along the interstate, for instance, the noise from the highway generally overwhelms the noise of the LRT. Horns, warning pedestrians/vehicles that the train is coming will most likely be the predominant impact. In areas like City Center, vehicle operators will be more diligent about using bells and whistles because they are needed.

Q: What times will the LRT run?

A: RTD would begin service at 5:00 and would close at about 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning. There is about 22 hours of service.

Q: How long will it take for construction?

A: Right now, the answer is unknown because of the financial situation.

Q: Traffic is so heavy on Sable as it is without the LRT. Are there plans to mitigate traffic congestion along Sable from vehicles heading to 13th Ave Station?

A: Traffic volumes will not change drastically according to traffic models. Increase will be nominal but there will be an increase. Buses will run on the same schedule as they are right now.

Comment: Take a hard look at prairie dog issue.

Response: Both RTD and CDOT have policies on how to deal with prairie dogs. Colorado Revised Statue says you have to have unanimous support from County Commissioners to cross county lines. This statue also requires humane methods if prairies dogs cannot be relocated (e.g., donation to raptor center or to save the black footed ferret).

Q: How will you access the 13th Avenue Station from Potomac?

A: 13th will be expanded between Sable and Potomac. The connection has not been made yet. Connection to the 13th Ave park-n-ride will be off of Sable. Aurora may choose to make that connection following project completion, it is part of their long range plan and will become more necessary once the station is in place. The roadway is planned as part of the underpass and so is a trail.

Q: What about stimulus money for FasTracks?

A: RTD did receive approximately \$90 Million in stimulus fund. About \$60 million went to Denver Union Station. We have been a recipient and we hope to continue to be a recipient. We are positioning ourselves to be "shovel ready" if and when more stimulus dollars become available.