Welcome to Inside RTD FasTracks — a monthly e-update to keep you informed about the progress of the Regional Transportation District's FasTracks program.

FasTracks News

East Rail Line construction improves 40th Avenue, community

After 19 months of construction and a closure of East 40th Avenue between Blake and York streets, the road and is now open again. As part of the Regional Transportation District’s (RTD) East Rail Line construction, many community improvements beyond RTD’s new rail tracks now benefit the neighborhood, providing safety and better quality of life. The finished product includes 8-foot-wide sidewalks where before there was just a gravel shoulder; brand new underground gas, water, electric and communications lines; full concrete construction, including curbs and gutters; plus a large underground drainage culvert that will contribute to solving chronic storm-water flooding in the neighborhood that has existed for many years.

Photo: RTD Director Angie Rivera-Malpiede (center), Denver City Councilwoman Judy Montero and Denver City Councilman Albus Brooks celebrate the reopening of East 40th Avenue.

Thousands participate in RTD’s 2014 telephone town halls

More than 54,000 residents of the Denver metropolitan region participated in live telephone town hall meetings hosted by the RTD Board of Directors. The meetings, which took place May 19 to June 18, gave all 15 RTD directors opportunities to interact with their constituents personally and to answer questions about RTD’s general operations and its FasTracks transit expansion program. This year, callers from across RTD’s eight-county district asked about bus route changes, the new bus concourse at Union Station, the agency’s efforts to ensure passenger safety, and the scheduled rollout of new commuter rail lines coming to Denver in 2016. Board Chair Chuck Sisk said the town hall meetings are an effective way to hear firsthand what RTD’s constituents are thinking and to glean invaluable insights into how the agency can serve them better in
the future. Read more about this year’s telephone town halls...

Photo: RTD Board Director Larry Hoy, right, and FasTracks staff respond to questions during a telephone town hall meeting.

**RTD Board supports outcome of Northwest study**

The Northwest Area Mobility Study concluded with elected officials, RTD staff, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and 13 area jurisdictions and agencies reaching consensus. The study’s goal was to determine transit priorities in the region. The consensus includes completing the U.S. 36 Bus Rapid Transit commitments; planning and implementing (as funding is identified) up to seven arterial bus rapid transit routes, the first being Colorado 119 and U.S. 287; and working with CDOT on improving the bidirectional commute on the I-25 HOV lanes during peak hours. The Northwest Rail Line remains in the FasTracks plan as a long-term project. The RTD Board of Directors adopted the study’s recommendations at its June meeting. RTD will continue to collaborate with local stakeholders on the transit priorities. The agency has applied for a federal grant to fund a more detailed study process for the Colorado 119 and U.S. 287 arterial BRT corridors. Read more about the Northwest Area Mobility Study.

**RTD, partners celebrate Peoria Crossing opening**

The partners of the Peoria Crossing project celebrated the opening of the bridge that takes traffic up and over RTD’s future East Rail Line and Union Pacific freight line at Smith Road and Peoria Street. RTD Board Member Barbara Deadwyler joined Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan, Denver City Councilman Chris Herndon and Union Pacific representative Sara Cassidy as speakers at the June 12 event. The new bridge will improve safety in the area by separating vehicle traffic from train traffic and will help create a seamless connection between Denver and Aurora. As a symbolic bridging of the two communities, the dignitaries marked the celebration by using brooms to sweep away a chalk line representing the barrier between the two cities. RTD contributed $20 million to help make the $50 million project a reality.

Photo: Left to right, Denver Mayor Michael Hancock; RTD Board Director Barbara Deadwyler; Union Pacific Director of Public Affairs Sara Thompson Cassidy; Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan; and Denver City Councilman Chris Herndon.

**RTD Board dedicates plaque at Union Station bus concourse**

The RTD Board of Directors dedicated a bronze plaque May 27 inside the new underground Union Station Bus Concourse that bears the names of past and present board members who were integral to the Union Station project during the design and construction process. The bus concourse opened for service on May
11, the same day RTD closed Market Street Station after 30 years of service. In mid-July, the Union Station building developers will reopen the historic train station as a boutique hotel with restaurants and retail establishments. In the photo above, 12 of the 15 board members pose with the plaque after the unveiling.

**Photo:** Left to right, Bill James, Bruce Daly, Paul Solano, Claudia Folska, Tom Tobiassen, Gary Lasater, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Jeff Walker, Lorraine Anderson, Chuck Sisk, Larry Hoy and Kent Bagley.

**2014: Peak construction year for Eagle P3 rail lines**

Three new commuter rail lines, a new light rail line through Aurora and a new bus rapid transit (BRT) line along U.S. 36 are on track to open in 2016. Just two short years from now, the Denver region will get its first commuter rail lines, which feature trains that are bigger, faster, carry more people and are better suited for longer distances. Eagle P3, the largest transit public-private partnership project in the nation, comprises the East Rail Line to Denver International Airport, the Gold Line to Arvada and Wheat Ridge and the first segment of the Northwest Rail Line to Westminster. This year will be the biggest construction year yet on this trio of important transit projects. Testing is scheduled to begin on the East Rail Line next year, which means installation of tracks and overhead electrical systems and construction of station platforms, bridges, flyovers and safety infrastructure must be completed this year. [Read more](#) about Eagle P3 construction targets for 2014.

**Photo:** Workers lay track along the East Rail Line to Denver International Airport.

**Safety a top priority during FasTracks summer construction**

RTD and its FasTracks program take the safety of workers and the general public seriously as they work to complete bus and rail lines around the Denver region. Warmer, longer summer days are always ideal for large construction projects, including the six FasTracks projects currently under construction across the metro area. As such, RTD and its contractors have implemented detailed processes, procedures and policies to ensure the safety of its employees, contractors and the general public. Pedestrians and motorists entering construction zones are encouraged to exercise caution, to slow down and to watch for important signs and detours. Worker safety initiatives include job site inspections, construction safety audits, project incident reviews and safety meetings. [Read more](#) about some of the measures RTD FasTracks has taken to ensure safety on its I-225 Rail Line.

**RTD to hold public meeting about Central Rail Extension**

RTD will host a second public meeting for the Central Rail Extension Mobility Study – an effort to identify the most feasible rail transit route and operating plan to provide a direct rail connection with no transfers between downtown Denver and the future 38th/Blake Station on the East Rail Line.
The public is encouraged to attend the meeting on Wednesday, July 16, at St. Charles Recreation Center, 3777 Lafayette St., and provide input. The meeting, which starts at 5:30 p.m., will focus on study progress to date, refinement of the near-term downtown loop options and exploration of longer-term expansion options for the Central Rail Line. As part of FasTracks, the Central Rail Extension will improve access between and among the northeast Denver neighborhoods, the downtown transit network and the full RTD transit system. The Central Rail Line, RTD’s first light rail line, debuted Oct. 7, 1994, and is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. It runs from 30th and Downing through the Five Points Business District and downtown Denver, and then passes the Auraria Campus before heading south to the I-25 and Broadway Station.

**FasTracks Feature**

**RTD stays ahead of curve with State of Good Repair program**

How many times a day does a single light rail train door open and close? As it turns out, about 400 times a day – day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year. Commuters might not think about these details when boarding light rail trains, but RTD rail managers do. Meticulous attention to the upkeep of buses and light trains is par for the course for RTD, but the burgeoning urban transit agency is taking it to an even higher level with its trendsetting State of Good Repair (SOGR) program. [Read more](#) about the agency’s efforts to keep its light rail trains and buses in good repair.

[Read all about at RTD’s “From the Blog” series.](#)

**Project Updates**

Read the latest news and updates about the [RTD FasTracks](#) rail and bus rapid transit projects:

- [Central Rail Extension](#)
- [Denver Union Station](#)
- [Eagle P3 Project](#)
- [East Rail Line](#)
- [Free MetroRide](#)
- [Gold Line](#)
- [I-225 Rail Line](#)
- [Maintenance Facilities](#)
- [North Metro Rail Line](#)
- [Northwest Rail Line](#)
RTD Board Meetings
The RTD Board holds regular meetings most Tuesdays. Learn more...

Calendar of Events
For a complete listing of upcoming events and activities, click here.

Now Presenting
To schedule a FasTracks presentation for your group or organization, contact the FasTracks Public Information Team today at 303-299-6990.

FasTracks is RTD’s voter-approved transit expansion program to build 122 miles of commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid transit service, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver’s historic Union Station and redirect bus service to better connect the eight-county district. For more information about FasTracks, visit www.rtd-fastracks.com.

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