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## **RTD FasTracks Committee Majority Endorses Staff Recommendation of Phased Rail and Bus Rapid Transit for Northwest Service Area**

***Recommendation moves to full Board; final vote March 27***

DENVER, March 20, 2012—The Regional Transportation District (RTD) Board's FasTracks Monitoring Committee tonight endorsed the RTD staff's hybrid option recommendation on how to proceed with the FasTracks Northwest Rail Line. The vote was 13 – 2, moving the motion to the full RTD Board of Directors for a final decision next Tuesday, March 27.

The RTD staff recommendation keeps the Northwest Rail Line to Longmont in the FasTracks plan, but would phase in commuter rail while also implementing a bus rapid transit system. Under this option, RTD would build the Northwest Rail Line to Church Ranch Blvd. in Westminster by 2022 and implement bus rapid transit (BRT) service by 2020. The BRT will help meet the mobility needs of residents in the Northwest area in the short-term while the rail component is built in incremental stages as funding becomes available to fulfill the complete vision of the project.

The first segment of the Northwest Rail Line from Denver Union Station to south Westminster (71<sup>st</sup> Ave. and Lowell Blvd.) is already funded as part of the Eagle P3 project. This first segment is 6.2 miles and scheduled for completion in 2016. Eagle P3 is also building the East Rail Line to Denver International Airport and the Gold Line to Arvada and Wheat Ridge.

The segment from south Westminster to Church Ranch Blvd. would add another six miles and would be funded from a new 0.4 percent sales tax if RTD has a successful sales tax election in November. Between the two segments, RTD would complete 12 of the 41 miles of Northwest Rail by 2022, which is 30 percent of the rail line. The Northwest Rail Line will connect Denver Union Station with Longmont, passing through North Denver, Adams County, Westminster, Broomfield, Louisville and Boulder.

The RTD Board of Directors will take a formal vote on the 2012 FasTracks Financial Plan, which will include their decision on how to move forward with the Northwest Rail Line, at the March 27 regular Board meeting at 5:30 p.m. at the RTD administrative office, 1600 Blake St. in downtown Denver.

RTD's FasTracks transit expansion program will build 122 miles of commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid transit service, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver Union Station and redirect bus service to better connect the eight-county District.

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