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**Media Contact:**  
Pauletta Tonilas  
Public Information Manager  
303-299-2469 (office)  
303-461-2021 (pager)

## **RTD's West Corridor Light Rail Project awarded \$308 million in federal funds**

### **FUNDING MARKS NEXT STEP TOWARD MAJOR FASTTRACKS CONSTRUCTION**

**Denver, Jan. 16, 2009** – The Regional Transportation District (RTD) commemorated a major milestone today for the FasTracks transit expansion program, specifically the West Corridor Light Rail Project. At a special ceremony this morning at the Jefferson County Government Center in Golden, RTD and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) signed a \$308 million Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) to help fund the West Corridor Project.

West Corridor is the first of the FasTracks corridors to begin construction. While early construction activities on the 12.1-mile light rail project have been underway since mid-2008, this agreement is the trigger that will allow RTD to issue a Notice to Proceed for major construction on the project. These are the first federal funds awarded to the FasTracks program, bringing FasTracks one step closer to the completion of a world-class transit system for the Denver metro region.

"This is an enormously important milestone for the entire region and for FasTracks, as federal money is a critical part of funding FasTracks," said RTD General Manager Cal Marsella.

"Through the federal funding process, projects are rigorously evaluated by FTA on a number of complex criteria, namely cost-effectiveness. We are, once again, proud to be partners with FTA in providing efficient, safe, convenient transit for the metro area, and our indebtedness to FTA cannot be overstated."

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## **West Corridor Full Funding Grant Agreement**

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FTA's New Starts program monitors projects all over the nation to determine which ones are the best candidates for federal funding. In FTA's Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report on Funding Recommendations, the West Corridor was one of two projects shortlisted to receive funds.

"FTA is pleased and proud to participate with RTD on this project," said Acting FTA Administrator Sherry Little. "This is the third grant agreement we have signed together in recent years, and we would not keep returning to the table if we did not have great confidence in the agency's ability to make these projects successful."

The West Corridor line will operate between Denver Union Station in downtown Denver and the Jefferson County Government Center in Golden; serving Denver, Lakewood, the Denver Federal Center, Golden and Jefferson County. The corridor is scheduled to open to the public in 2013, one year ahead of schedule.

FasTracks is RTD's 12-year program to expand rail and bus service throughout the RTD service area. Scheduled for completion in 2017, FasTracks will create six new rail corridors, extend three existing corridors, build 18 miles of bus rapid transit service, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver Union Station and expand bus service across the eight-county District.

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