

North Metro

Times

FALL 2009

RTD FASTTRACKS NORTH METRO QUARTERLY NEWS LINK

In This Issue

Where to View Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Document 1

Overview of Build Alternative Alignment, Station Locations and Technology 2

Keeping FasTracks Moving Forward 2

What You'll See at the Public Hearings 3

Next Steps 4

Ways to Comment

Comments will be accepted until Jan. 15, 2010 and can be submitted in the following ways:

At Public Hearings

Web site: www.RTD-FasTracks.com
Click on North Metro Corridor

Email: Comments@RTDNorthMetro.com

Mail: FTA Region 8
Attn: David Beckhouse
C/O North Metro Project
999 18th St., Ste. 900
Denver, CO 80202

For More Information

Contact: Kristi Estes
RTD-FasTracks Public Involvement Liaison
(303) 299-6921

Nanci Regnier
Public Involvement Lead
(720) 306-8039

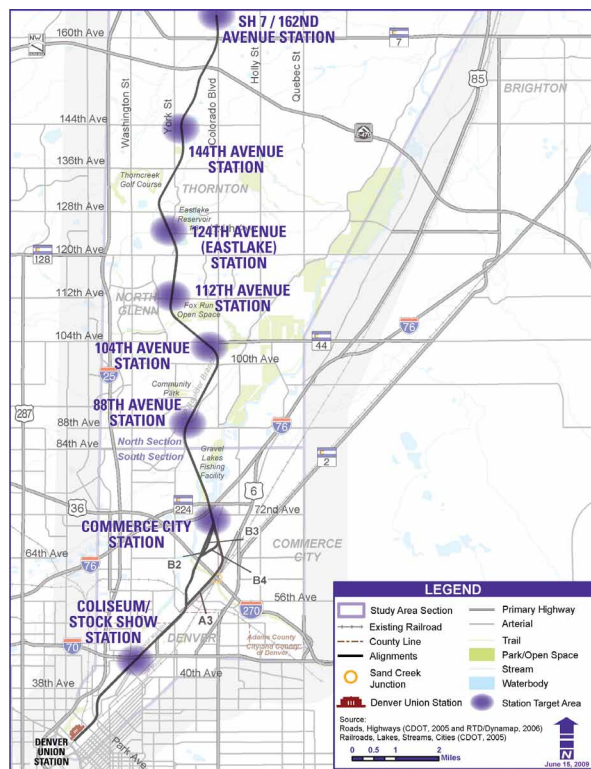
Hotline: (303) 299-2000
Follow the prompts

The North Metro Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is Now Complete and Available for Review!

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the North Metro Corridor Team are proud to announce the availability of the North Metro Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) document, marking a major milestone in the project's approval process. This document is the culmination of three years of alternatives development and screening, detailed alternatives evaluation, and public participation. The North Metro DEIS analyzes the potential impacts and benefits of the Build Alternative compared to the No Action Alternative in the North Metro Corridor study area.

The document is available for public review and comment between Nov. 20, 2009 and Jan. 15, 2010. Additionally, a summary will be presented for comment at Public Hearings scheduled for Dec. 9 and Dec. 10, 2009 (see the "What's Happening" on page 4 for location and times).

We encourage you to attend the Public Hearings and provide feedback on the alternatives evaluation. The public's continued participation and input is important to us. You can view the Draft EIS online at www.RTD-FasTracks.com (click on North Metro Corridor) and at the libraries listed below.



View the North Metro Draft Environmental Impact Statement at one of the following libraries:

- Central Public Library
Denver Public Library
10 West 14th Ave. Pkwy.
Denver, CO
- Brighton Branch Library
327 E. Bridge St.
Brighton, CO
- Commerce City Branch Library
7185 Monaco St.
Commerce City, CO
- Northglenn Branch Library
10530 N. Huron St.
Northglenn, CO
- Perl Mack Branch Library
Thornton Rangeview Library District
7611 Hilltop Cir.
Denver, CO
- Rangeview Library
Rangeview District Adm.
11658 Huron St.
Northglenn, CO
- State Library
201 East Colfax Ave.
Suite 314
Denver, CO
- Thornton Branch Library
8992 N. Washington St.
Thornton, CO
- Valdez-Perry Branch Library
Denver Public Library
4690 Vine St.
Denver, CO

Overview of Build Alternative Alignment, Station Locations and Technology

North Metro's Build Alternative will feature RTD's recommended alignment, stations, vehicle technology and service plan. These recommendations have been made after considering public and agency input and further technical evaluations. Here are the highlights of the Build Alternative.

- **Alignment** – Approximately 18 miles of new passenger railway will be provided on the BNSF/UP Boulder Branch alignment between Denver Union Station (DUS) and SH 7/162nd Avenue in Thornton (see map on pg.1). A portion of the BNSF/UP Boulder Branch alignment is still dependent on the selection of one of the four Southern Section alignment options in the corridor (Options A-3, B-2, B-3 and B-4). The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and RTD will select a preferred alignment in the Southern Section after taking into consideration public and agency comments on the DEIS.
- **Stations** – North Metro includes eight new stations (plus DUS) at the general locations shown on the map. A preferred station site is recommended for all station areas except in Denver where the preferred site will be identified after consideration of input from the City and County of Denver and the public. The recommended stations will be further refined in the FEIS process. Parking will be available at all stations and approximately 3,100 spaces will be provided for the entire corridor in 2015.
- **Rail Vehicle Technology** – Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) and Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) technologies were evaluated. EMU has been recommended due to overall cost effectiveness and environmental and public considerations.
- **Service Plan and Travel Time** – Weekday service will be every 15 minutes each direction during peak travel periods, and every 30 minutes during off-peak hours (early mornings, mid-day and late evenings). Weekends and holidays will be more limited than weekday service. The North Metro train will take 27 minutes to travel between 162nd Avenue/SH 7 and Denver Union Station (DUS). By 2030, ridership is estimated to be 14,300 per weekday.
- **Cost and Financing** – North Metro's expected capital cost for the 2015 year of expenditure with EMU technology is anticipated to be \$1,066 million. The project will be financed with a combination of federal loans supported by the RTD sales tax.

Keeping FasTracks Moving Forward

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) continues to make progress on all of the FasTracks projects. Several projects, including the North Metro Corridor, are wrapping up their planning processes, and some projects are now in construction -- visible signs of your FasTracks tax dollars at work. The West Corridor is in full construction, and the Elati Light Rail Facility along Santa Fe is being expanded to accommodate the growth through FasTracks. A pedestrian bridge and bus ramps are being built on U.S. 36, and we have begun construction on the transit elements to support FasTracks at Denver Union Station. The light rail vehicle fleet, which will support future FasTracks light rail corridors and support current needs, is beginning to arrive as well.

All of this means progress for FasTracks and a boost to our local economy as FasTracks puts people to work. At the height of construction, FasTracks is estimated to create more than 10,000 construction-related jobs.

However, like everyone, RTD and the FasTracks program struggle with the economic situation that agencies,

businesses, government and individuals face nationwide. For RTD, that means working with less tax revenues and increased costs while developing cost containment strategies. As a result, FasTracks faces a \$2.2 billion budget gap to complete the program by 2017. The RTD Board decided not to seek an additional sales tax increase in 2009 to fund that gap but will continue to evaluate the options for implementing FasTracks and when would be a prudent time to seek a sales tax increase.

The FasTracks Team is working to get all projects "shovel-ready" in the next year so that once funding is in place, each project is ready for construction. While there are challenges on the FasTracks program, the RTD Board of Directors and the FasTracks staff remain committed to delivering a high quality transit system to the North Metro area including the cities of Denver, Commerce City, Northglenn, Thornton and Adams County.

What You'll See at the Public Hearings...

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluated how well the alternatives met project goals such as mobility and identified potential beneficial and adverse impacts associated with transportation, social, economic, and environmental resources within the corridor. The basic engineering (10% design) process incorporated measures to avoid and minimize adverse impacts. Through input at our previous public meetings, we heard that residents were most concerned with impacts to property and businesses due to right-of-way acquisition, safety at schools and trail crossings, and noise and vibration. A brief summary of potential benefits, adverse impacts and mitigation is shown below.

BENEFITS			
Mobility		Economic and Land Use	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster travel time than auto from to SH7/162nd Avenue to Denver Union Station (27 minutes vs. 62 minutes) • Improved travel time reliability • Increase in overall regional transit users • Reduced vehicle miles of travel (VMT) and hours of travel (VHT) • Improved regional connectivity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs for construction and operations • Improved access to other jobs within the region, especially for transit dependent populations • Improved access to education, entertainment, recreation and shopping • Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities at stations • Support for regional and community land use plans 	
IMPACTS			
Social/Economic	Property Acquisition	Noise/Visual (EMU in 2030)	Transportation
<p>Social Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier effect from new alignments • Barrier effect from increased train frequency <p>Mitigation: Maintain pedestrian connections through rerouted or grade-separated trail crossings</p> <p>Environmental Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property acquisitions in low income and minority communities <p>Investigations: Business surveys to be conducted in Final EIS process</p> <p>Mitigation: Strive to further minimize impacts as design advances</p> <p>Economic Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential job losses from acquisitions <p>Investigations: Business surveys to be conducted in Final EIS process</p>	<p>Property Acquisitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 80 properties impacted <p>Potential Relocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 to 3 potential residential relocations • 13 to 17 potential businesses relocations <p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive to further minimize impacts as design advances • Comply with Uniform Relocation Act 	<p>Noise Impacts (prior to mitigation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 1,200 impacted sites (600 of which are severe impacts) <p>Mitigation: Quiet Zones and Noise Walls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 140 impacts post mitigation (of which 4 are severe impacts) • Evaluation of additional noise mitigation measures <p>New Visual Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise Walls (8 feet high and approx. 37,200 to 39,600 linear feet) • Overhead Catenary (Electrification – length of corridor) • Bridge Structures • Fencing (6 feet high – length of corridor) <p>Mitigation: Consult local jurisdictions on design</p>	<p>Crossings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion and delays for high volume roadways • Increased potential safety conflicts for at-grade crossings <p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New grade separations at 104th and 120th Avenues • Improved safety measures (gating and signals) for at-grade crossings <p>Roadway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brighton Boulevard (SH 265) northeast of National Western Stock Show within direct impact area • Congestion at some station intersections <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust Brighton Boulevard alignment and reconstruct as necessary • Provide turn lanes or signals at intersections
Cultural Resources	Wetlands/Other Waters	Parks, Open Space, & Trails	Railroad Impacts
<p>Paleontological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 site due to alignment <p>Archaeological (adverse effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quimby Railroad Stop • Eastlake Railroad Stop <p>Historic (adverse effects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmstead at 124th Avenue <p>Mitigation: Memorandum of Agreement with Consulting Parties</p>	<p>Wetlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.6 to 3.0 acres <p>Other Waters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3 to 3.8 acres <p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigate avoidance and minimization of impacts • As specified in permits 	<p>Parks & Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globeville Landing Park (Denver) • Yucca Way Property (Thornton) • Grandview Ponds (Thornton) <p>Mitigation: Coordinate with local jurisdictions</p> <p>Trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 trails impacted <p>Mitigation: Coordinate with jurisdictions and schools to re-align or grade separate</p>	<p>Freight Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commuter rail and freight operations conflicts <p>Mitigation: Freight rail delivery to existing customer near 112th Avenue only at night when commuter rail is not operating (per agreement with the UP railroad)</p>

Next Steps

Following the public hearing, the project team will consider input received and complete the following steps:

- Select the Preferred Alternative
- Refine stations and alignment
- Prepare the Final EIS and Advanced Basic Engineering
- Obtain Record of Decision (ROD) from the Federal Transit Administration

After the ROD, the project is “shovel ready” for construction.

WEB/PHONE:

For questions and/or to be notified of future public meetings, visit our project Website at www.RTD-FasTracks.com and click on North Metro Corridor, or call (303) 299-2000 and follow the prompts.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The North Metro Corridor DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement is Now Available for Review!

Please join us for these Public Hearings.

The North Metro Corridor Team is proud to present the North Metro Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement document, which is now available for public review and comment. The public hearings will include a brief presentation of the environmental evaluation findings, and opportunities to submit verbal, written or electronic comments. The comment period ends Friday, Jan. 15, 2010. Your input is important to us!

Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2009

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Adams 12 Conference Center

1500 E 128th Ave

Thornton, CO 80241

Thursday, Dec. 10, 2009

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Adams City High School (New Location)

7200 Quebec Parkway

Commerce City, CO 80022

The same information will be presented at both meetings. Spanish translation and light refreshments will be provided.

COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

The following communication assistance is available for all RTD public meetings/hearings: language interpreters, sign-language interpreters, assisted listening devices, alternate formats such as large print or reasonable accommodations for special needs. Contact RTD at (720) 306-8039 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to discuss your special needs and request for accommodations.



RTD - FasTracks
1560 Broadway, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80202