

SoutheastCORRIDOR

WINTER 2010

RTD FASTRACKS SOUTHEAST QUARTERLY NEWS LINK

Times

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION READIES SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR EXTENSION FOR DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION

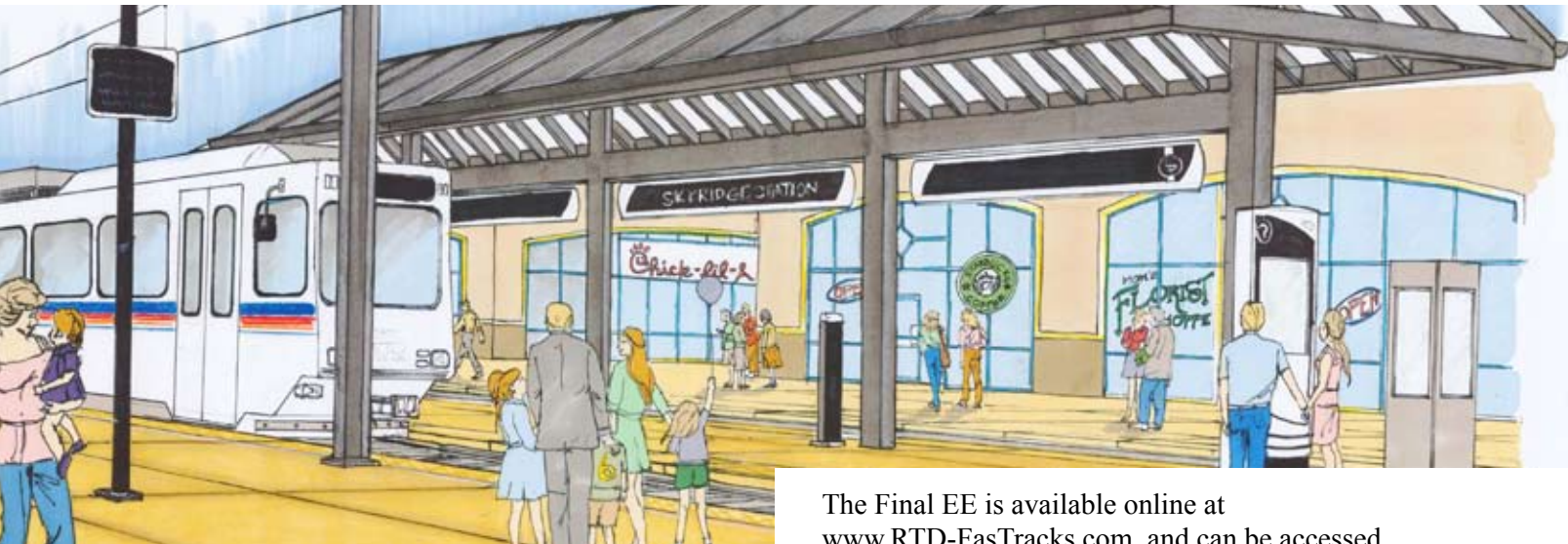
Following a 45-day public comment period that ran from Nov. 3 until Dec. 18, 2009, the Environmental Evaluation (EE) for the Southeast Corridor Extension has been completed and the final EE document has been approved and released. An EE is an environmental planning process that is undertaken by the Regional Transportation District to fulfill the RTD Board of Directors' commitment to perform the same level of environmental planning on all FasTracks corridors and projects. This is a significant milestone for each corridor project and must be completed before construction can begin.

On Feb. 16, 2010, the RTD Board of Directors approved the Final EE, which details the preferred

alignment for the 2.3 -mile extension of the Southeast light rail line and the station locations, as well as the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures. Comments received from the public and public agencies during the comment period have been addressed and are documented in the Final EE.

The Final EE did not include any substantive changes or updates from the Draft EE that was released in early November. Additions to the Final EE include:

- Summary of the final public meeting and outreach process
- Inclusion of all public and agency comments and responses



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The Final EE is available online at www.RTD-FasTracks.com, and can be accessed by clicking on the Southeast Corridor link. Our online map provides the public with a comprehensive, interactive, easily understood version of the EE. Hard copies are available for review at the libraries at the Douglas County Library in Lone Tree, 8827 Lone Tree Parkway, Lone Tree, CO, 80124.

We appreciate your input – a message from the Project Managers



Susan Wood
Project Manager, Planning

When we began the Southeast Corridor Extension Environmental Evaluation (EE) less than two years ago, we committed to a robust public engagement process to provide an opportunity for input and dialogue on this FasTracks project. Thanks to your involvement we have been able to complete this very important milestone for this corridor.

the City of Lone Tree and Douglas County. The planning and design efforts that have been accomplished in the EE will serve as a launching point for the remaining project phases, which are final design and construction.

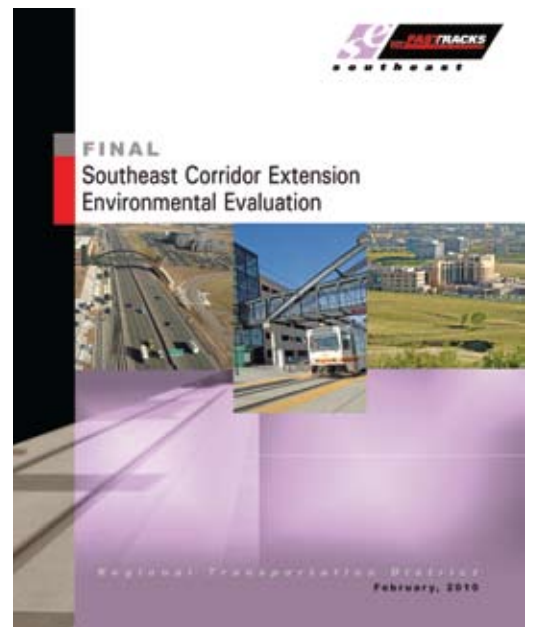
Thank you again for your interest and support in the project and we look forward to the next phase!

We greatly appreciate the time and energy that stakeholders including the public, Coventry Development, and SkyRidge Medical Center; CDOT; local jurisdictions, such as Douglas County and the City of Lone Tree; and homeowner groups such as Club Terrace, Muirfield, and RidgeGate West took to share their thoughts on this planning process.

During the EE process, we:

- Coordinated with Coventry Development as they continue to plan the RidgeGate Development, including the Lone Tree City Center.
- Worked closely with the management and staff at the SkyRidge Medical Center to ensure effective pedestrian access between the new SkyRidge Station and the hospital complex.

The Final EE is an important step that moves RTD closer to completing an extension of the Southeast Corridor light rail line that will serve the growing population in



Andy Mutz
Project Manager, Engineering

What we heard on the Draft EE

During the 45 day comment period, a total of 25 comments were received from the public and agencies such as Douglas County, Colorado Public Utilities Commission, Colorado Historical Society’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. All of the comments received and responses to them are included in their entirety in the Final EE and summarized below.

COMMENT TOPIC	RESPONSE
Visual Impacts	RTD explored options for underpasses at Lincoln and other locations to limit visual impact. However, the alignment needed to accommodate an underpass does not fit into the plans for the RidgeGate south of Lincoln and would result in serious utility conflicts. For these reasons, and its additional cost, an underpass was dropped from further consideration.
Operations	RTD has minimized to the number of at-grade crossings and will address the need for out of district patrons to pay for parking at the RidgeGate park-n-Ride exceed RTD’s usage requirements.
Area of Potential Effects	The defined Area of Potential Effects (APE) for impacts to cultural resources is based on the construction footprint for the proposed FasTracks line and associated facilities with respect to direct impacts, and includes areas beyond this boundary to include any eligible or potentially eligible properties that might be exposed to impacts to their visual setting.
Wildlife Impacts	RTD will coordinate with the Division of Wildlife regarding implementation of their raptor guidelines to avoid potential impacts to nesting raptors.
Public Safety at Light Rail Crossings	The Public Utilities Commission has jurisdiction on the number and configuration of light rail/ roadway crossings.
Wetland Impacts	RTD plans to mitigate for all wetland impacts from the proposed project, including impacts to non-jurisdictional wetlands.
Agency Coordination	RTD will coordinate with all local agencies and jurisdictions to minimize impacts of construction and to address final design, visual, aesthetic and other impacts.
Complementary Bus Service	RTD is committed to providing easy transfer between rail and bus service by integrating all new rail service into the existing system.
Support for Completing the Project	RTD will explore funding and phasing options to proceed with the implementation of the FasTracks program.

Directors Message



Jack O'Boyle
Director



Kent Bagley
Director

As we look forward to the year ahead, we can mark the completion of the Southeast Corridor Extension Environmental Evaluation (EE) as one of many milestones that continues to keep FasTracks moving forward. In addition, the team completed 30 percent design. Completion of these two tasks brings us closer to delivering the extension. RTD staff recently completed this year's Annual Program Evaluation (APE), which provided us with a complete picture of the current state of FasTracks and will help us determine next steps for the program. These steps will include adopting a 2010 financial plan and reviewing research that will help us determine the timing for a potential sales tax increase election. While we weigh the information available, the FasTracks team continues construction on the West Corridor, Denver Union Station, U.S. 36 Bus Rapid Transit and expansion of the Elati Light Rail Maintenance Facility. Additionally, the RTD Board of Directors is exploring opportunities for additional funding to complete all FasTracks projects -- including the Southeast Corridor Extension -- in a timely manner. To ensure we are ready to proceed with upcoming project phases per the FasTracks schedule, we will continue to conduct necessary preparatory work. This is part of an overall effort to have all FasTracks projects "construction ready" when funding sources are identified. This is in addition to previous work done, such as preliminary work with the Colorado Department of Transportation and others who will provide right-of-way for this project. We appreciate your support throughout the environmental phase of the Southeast Corridor Extension project and look forward to moving in to the next phase toward project delivery.



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