



E-NEWS



Community

Information Line:

303-299-2401

rtd-fastracks.com



The \$511.8-million FasTracks West Corridor project consists of constructing a new 12.1-mile, double-track light rail line, extending west from the existing light rail line at Auraria West Station in downtown Denver, through Lakewood along 13th Avenue, continuing along 6th Avenue (U.S. 6) and ending at the Jefferson County Government Center.

## WELCOME!

April was a great month, as we continued to evaluate some of the Value Engineering proposals that are important to you, along with your feedback. The special series of *Coffee with Dennis* meetings provided a forum to discuss the Sheridan Station, Federal Boulevard bridge and other design elements. In addition, the Noise Demonstration provided you with the opportunity to find out just how the light rail will sound in your neighborhood. We're looking forward to the final approval of the Value Engineering proposals in May, along with the beginning of early construction action items on the West Corridor. As always, we are excited to share with you information related to recent project developments and hearing your thoughts related to all of these milestones.

### May 2007

In this issue you will find:

[Save the Date](#) - Mark your calendars for several upcoming events and meetings.

[Pullin' Up the Rails](#) - Find out about the early stages of construction set to begin May 16.

[West Corridor Budget](#) - Read about how the West Corridor stays on track despite challenges to the whole FasTracks program.

[Noise Study and Noise Walls](#) - Find out details about the Noise Barrier Change Policy.

[Environmental Assessment Update](#) - Learn about the current status of the project's Environmental Assessment.

[How Can I Get \(or Stay\) Involved?](#) - Find out where to get more information on meetings and events, and the best ways to have your questions answered.

### *Save the Date*

*Start of Construction Event:* RTD will begin pulling up the old Associated Railway rails on Wednesday, May 16, making way for construction on the West Corridor. Join us at 13th Avenue and Quail Street in Lakewood at 1 p.m. to commemorate the beginning of a decade of construction on FasTracks!

*Environmental Assessment Public Meeting:* The West Corridor will hold an Environmental Assessment Public Meeting in early July. We'll keep you posted as more details become available.

### *Pullin' Up the Rails*

As planned, RTD contractors will begin to remove the old trolley tracks along the Associated Railway on 13th Avenue beginning May 16. The track removal will start at Quail Street and move east. This process will take approximately four months.

About one month later, in mid-June, Xcel Energy will begin relocating utility lines. Xcel Energy will contract with private companies to do the actual construction along the West Corridor. Like the track removal, they will start at Quail Street and work east to Eaton.

The vast majority of the utility relocation construction will take place during daylight hours. There may be some outages as the project takes place. The contractor for Xcel Energy will contact residents if outages are planned or if access to property is needed. There will be approximately two days' notice for outages from Xcel Energy, but we will do our best to keep up-to-date information on the Web site. Xcel Energy is just the first of many companies that need to move their utilities to new locations to make way for the light rail. Qwest and Comcast will be following soon.

If you live adjacent to the light rail alignment, [click here](#) to provide us with your most up-to-date contact information so we can keep you informed.

For more information on the track removal and utility work, please [visit this link](#).

### ***West Corridor Budget***

As many of you know, the entire FasTracks program has encountered several budget challenges. Costs for materials like concrete and copper have skyrocketed since earlier projections, while tax revenues, a main source of funding for the project, are coming in lower than projected. In spite of these challenges, the West Corridor Project team is moving forward as planned to complete the light rail project by the end of 2012.

You may have read in your local papers about various cost-cutting measures that the FasTracks program may employ, but because the West Corridor is already in the final design phase, there are certain items that will not change. We will be building light rail; no other train technologies are under consideration for this corridor. In addition, privatization (where a private firm could propose to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the line) is also not an option for the West Corridor. However, a variety of other options are being considered to ease the budget strains on the West Corridor. These include looking at alternate sources of funding and adopting cost-cutting measures recommended by the Value Engineering (VE) proposals.

Several VE proposals on the West Corridor were reviewed and discussed further with our agency stakeholders during the month of April. We gathered public feedback regarding the Sheridan Station and Federal Boulevard bridge proposals during several *Coffee with Dennis* meetings. The Federal Boulevard bridge VE item has been removed from the list since it is not possible to construct it as we had hoped. Comments on the Sheridan Station proposal leaned heavily toward keeping the original design, but will require looking for additional funding for this item. In addition, we continue to review the VE proposal for drainage improvements along the corridor. At this point, there are four VE items that need further discussion with the agency stakeholders: Sheridan, Single Track to Jeffco, Auraria Station and Drainage. The remaining 37 items will be reviewed by the RTD Board of Directors and action will be taken at the May 15 RTD board meeting. The remaining four items will be postponed to the June 19, 2007, board meeting.

[The VE final recommendations are available online.](#)

### ***Noise Study and Noise Walls***

Nearly 200 people attended our Light Rail Noise Demonstration at three locations along 13th Avenue on Saturday, May 5. Noise expert Richard Letty demonstrated light rail audio as it would sound with no barrier and with varying barrier heights. The demonstration was held to ensure that property owners adjacent to the light rail have a clear idea of the noise impacts so in areas where noise barriers are planned, the residents can determine whether they want the walls or not.

The noise consultant is in the process of finalizing noise wall locations and heights along the corridor. All noise walls will be directly adjacent to the light rail tracks. RTD is planning to organize small group meetings with affected property owners to discuss options. The objective of these meetings will be to get a quality and reasonably consistent noise mitigation treatment through the neighborhoods. Affected property owners can work with their neighbors to determine whether they want the wall as planned or would rather use the new Noise Barrier Change (opt-out) Policy. The Noise Barrier Change (opt-out) Policy provides a procedure for interested parties to request changes to the noise walls by raising them, lowering them, eliminating them or enhancing them.

The West Corridor team will also present planned noise wall heights and locations to the public in conjunction with the Environmental Assessment public meeting in July. Specific dates and locations for this meeting will be included in our next e-newsletter and on the project [Web site](#).

### ***Environmental Assessment Update***

Completion of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been postponed to allow the team to evaluate the impacts that the accepted VE proposals might have on the project. If VE recommendations are accepted that may have impacts (either negative or positive) to the surrounding area, the EA needs to address these impacts and recommend appropriate mitigation before the document can be finalized. Once RTD identifies the impacts and mitigation, the Draft EA will be completed and, in conjunction with the FTA, RTD will hold a public hearing to solicit public comments on the document. That public hearing will be scheduled within the next few months.

### ***How Can I Get (or Stay) Involved?***

One of the best ways to get the information that will help you stay involved in the West Corridor design process is to ensure we have your e-mail address. Our periodic e-mails will provide you with information essential to being an active participant. Especially as the project continues to evolve and develop, it will be important to keep all members of the community up to date and informed on findings, decisions and achievements. Tell your friends and neighbors to sign up on our e-mail list to receive up-to-date information.

Don't forget to visit our new Web site, where information is constantly being updated.

Where can I get more information?

Web site: [http://rtd-fastracks.com/wc\\_1](http://rtd-fastracks.com/wc_1)

E-mail: [rtdwestcorridor@praco.com](mailto:rtdwestcorridor@praco.com)

Phone: Kim Podobnik, 303-779-3392

Brenda Tierney, 303-299-2401

Mail: RTD West Corridor

c/o PRACO

5460 S. Quebec St., Suite 330

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

### **Communication Assistance Available**

The following communication assistance is available for all Regional Transportation District public meetings: language interpreters, sign-language interpreters, assisted listening devices, alternative formats such as large print, or reasonable accommodations for special needs. **Contact RTD at 303-299-2401 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to discuss your special needs and request for accommodation.**

