

# INSIDE

The logo for RTD FasTracks, featuring the word "FASTTRACKS" in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a white outline. To the left of "FASTTRACKS" is the letters "RTD" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font. Below the text is a red horizontal bar with several white diagonal lines on the right side.

**March 31, 2010**

***Welcome to Inside FasTracks - a monthly e-update for key stakeholders and community leaders, designed to keep you informed about the progress of the program, upcoming events and meetings, and most importantly, FasTracks news. Your FasTracks e-news will arrive the last Monday of each month. If you know additional community leaders who would be interested, please contact Liz Viscardi, 303-299-6908, or e-mail [liz.viscardi@RTD-FasTracks.com](mailto:liz.viscardi@RTD-FasTracks.com).***

## **Latest News**

### ***RTD and BNSF Railway Sign \$144 Million Property Agreement***

RTD has accomplished yet another major milestone on the FasTracks program - the closing on agreements with BNSF Railway Company for the property and relocation of BNSF facilities necessary for the Gold Line, Northwest Rail Corridor and access in and out of Denver Union Station and the commuter rail maintenance facility. Today, RTD and BNSF officials held a signing ceremony executing the agreements.

At the Board meeting on Tuesday, March 23, the Board approved the agreements in the amount of \$144 million. The agreements include:

- A Purchase and Sale Agreement for acquisition of property from DUS to approximately 71st Avenue in Westminster
- A Relocation and Construction Agreement for relocation and construction of BNSF facilities required to make the acquired property available to RTD for use on the Eagle P3 and other commuter rail projects
- A Joint Corridor Use Agreement with the BNSF governing ongoing operations between the two entities in the shared corridors

The signing of the agreements culminates a collaborative five-year negotiation process between RTD and BNSF, and is a big step forward in building out FasTracks.

### ***RTD Meets with White House Officials***

RTD Board members and the General Manager met with White House officials on March 17 to discuss the FasTracks program, including a presentation on FasTracks that focused on the economic, livability and sustainability benefits that FasTracks will foster for the Denver metro area. RTD Board Chairman Lee Kemp, 2nd Vice Chair Noel Busck and RTD General Manager Phil Washington met at the White House with Adolfo Carrión, President Obama's Director of Urban Affairs for the White House Office of Urban Policy. Also during the visit, the three RTD officials met with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Administrator

Peter Rogoff at FTA offices in Washington regarding FasTracks.

Chairman Kemp said, "This was a great opportunity to tout the benefits of FasTracks, and what a strong economic engine the full program offers. Our presentation at the White House was very well received. We appreciate very much the excellent ongoing working relationship we have developed with FTA, and the strong support for FasTracks we have received in the President's budget."

The Washington visit was part of RTD's continuing efforts to maximize federal funding opportunities.

### ***New District C Board Member***

The RTD Board of Directors swore in its newest Board Member, Angie Malpiede, at a special Board meeting held on Tuesday, March 9. Angie was appointed by Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper and confirmed by the Denver City Council to succeed Juanita Chacon, who resigned her seat in January 2010.

Director Malpiede lives in northwest Denver and is Director of the Stapleton Area Transportation Management Association, which involves managing the Sustainable Development initiative that includes advocacy and programs promoting alternative transportation methodologies for the Stapleton Foundations servicing the Stapleton urban redevelopment and the existing neighborhoods which surround the old airport site.

### ***West Corridor Team to Roll Out 6th Avenue Bridge***

The West Corridor construction team will use an innovative bridge placement technique to "roll out" the light rail bridge over 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue over the weekend of April 23-26. Crews will close down 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Kipling and Simms/Union from Friday, April 23 at 8:00 p.m. through Monday, April 26 at 5:30 a.m. to put the massive bridge into place. The bridge will move up to 25 feet per hour for a total of 18-30 hours to completely roll the structure across the highway. This technique minimizes the impacts to the driving public. By fabricating the bridge on the side of the highway over the past several months and closing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue for one full weekend to place the bridge saves months of individual lane closures that would have been necessary to build the bridge over the highway.

### **FastFacts**

#### ***Denver Union Station Construction***

- The U.S. Department of Transportation approved two federal loans totaling \$304 million to help complete the financial plan for Denver Union Station. These two loans are through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program (RRIF).
- The approval of these two loans paved the way for construction to begin at DUS. The construction contractor, Kiewit, has already begun some early construction activities.
- The site has been cleared and pavement removed.

- Utilities are being removed and relocated.
- Traffic has been shifted on Wewatta to one lane in each direction on the northbound side of the street. It will be in this configuration for 18-24 months to accommodate construction of the underground bus facility, which has now begun.
- Demo and removal of old track will begin in early April.
- The Denver Union Station Project Authority will be planning a ceremony for later this spring to mark the kick-off of the DUS project redevelopment

## **Project Progress**

### ***Central Corridor Extension***

- The Final Environmental Evaluation (EE) was approved was approved by the RTD Board of Directors on Feb. 16, finalizing the environmental phase of the project.
- The Final EE was released to the public on Feb. 26.
- The project team has completed all tasks associated with the EE and Advances Basic Engineering.

### ***Denver Union Station (DUS)***

- Construction work is underway. Utilities have been moved and traffic shifted to one lane in each direction on the northbound side of Wewatta between 16th and 19th Streets. RTD bus stops have been moved to accommodate the new traffic pattern. The traffic shift will be in place for about two years to give crews the access they need to begin construction on the underground bus facility.
- For a third time, a U.S. District Court judge has denied a request by the Colorado Rail Passenger Association for a Temporary Restraining Order to halt work at DUS. This latest ruling was handed down March 18.

### ***East***

- With the completion of the EIS and ROD, the project team is preparing the necessary documentation to proceed with right-of-way procurement, utility relocation and other activities.
- RTD is seeking a Letter of No Prejudice from the FTA that will permit the Eagle P3 project to move forward with phase 1 of the project prior to award of federal funds.
- The East Corridor project team presented Project Update Workshops in March for elected official and agency staff regarding the property acquisition process.

### ***Gold Line***

- The project team has completed the environmental work and 30 percent engineering.
- With the passing of the Board resolution on January 19 to move forward with the Eagle P3 ROW acquisition, the property acquisition process has begun on the shared Gold Line/Northwest Rail corridor. The first group of Letters of Intent (LOIs) went to impacted property owners in the segment from DUS to the Commuter Rail

Maintenance Facility the week of March 8. The project team continues to meet with property owners as needed and has met with City and County of Denver staff and City Council aides to discuss property impacts and the process going forward.

- The project team is currently working with FTA to obtain permission to enter final design (the next required step in the federal funding process).

### ***I-225 Corridor***

- The final design efforts for Segment 1 of the I-225 Corridor continue. Additionally, on March 17 the System Security and Safety process was kicked off with a Fire Life and Safety Committee Meeting. In attendance were representatives from the City of Aurora fire and police departments, Public Utilities Commission and the RTD Safety and Security department.
- The I-225 Consultant team continues to progress the corridor aesthetics workshops. Concepts for visioning and themes for the corridor are being developed for upcoming workshops schedule for April.

### ***North Metro***

- The project team is refining the Preferred Alternative. The FEIS is scheduled to be released in May.
- The project team is holding public meetings to present the refinements to the Preferred Alternative since the release of the DEIS. The following are the meeting locations. The project team
  1. Wednesday, April 7, Rocky Top Middle School, 14151 York St., Thornton, 6 to 8 p.m.
  2. Thursday, April 8, Adams City High School, 7200 Quebec Parkway, Commerce City, 6 to 8 p.m.
- Workshops have begun with local jurisdictions on fencing and station design templates.

### ***Northwest Rail***

- Public meetings were held March 11, 17 and 18 to gather input on the Northwest Rail corridor Draft EE. The 30-day formal comment period ends March 29.
- The Final EE will be released in late April with presentation to the RTD Board scheduled in May.

### ***Southeast Extension***

- The Final EE was approved by the RTD Board of Directors on Feb. 16, finalizing the environmental phase of the project.
- 30 percent design plans have been received from the project consultant and comments are being addressed.

### ***Southwest Extension***

- The Final Environmental Evaluation was approved by the RTD Board of Directors on Feb. 16, finalizing the environmental phase of the project. 30 percent design plans have been received from the project consultant and comments are being addressed.
- Coordination with CDOT regarding the alignment for a planned CDOT flyover over C-470 highway remains ongoing. Recently, CDOT secured funding for the flyover and is going forward with this project in 2010.

### ***U.S. 36 BRT***

- The project was awarded a \$10 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant in February. RTD is working with CDOT and local jurisdictions to determine an appropriate local match.
- The project was selected as one of six projects in the nation to be considered for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) funding.

### ***West***

- Wall and bridge construction continue throughout throughout the corridor. Girders have been set on the light rail bridge over Wadsworth and the west side of the Sheridan Blvd Bridge. Cables are being hung on the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge (just east of Union) in preparation for a 'rollout' over 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue the last weekend in April.

### **Board Action Items**

The following items were approved at the March 23 RTD Board Meeting:

1. North Metro Corridor - Release of Final Environmental Impact Statement
2. Authorization to Execute Agreements for Property Acquisition, Relocation and Construction and Joint Corridor Operations with the BNSF Railway Company
3. Smart Media Technology Contract Award-revised
4. Modifications to Investment Policy
5. Legacy UniVerse Developer Consulting
6. Revised Fiscal Policy Statements 2010
7. Local Match for Hop Buses
8. FasTracks Citizens Advisory Committee Appointments
9. Denver Union Station Project Authority Appointment

10. Contract award to supply two (2) 45' mall shuttle buses to accommodate the 16th Street Mall extension at DUS

### **Upcoming Meetings & Events**

*All Board Meetings and Study Sessions are held in the R, T & D Rooms, located at 1600 Blake St., Denver, CO 80202*

- Tuesday, April 6 - Planning and Development Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m. start Board Chambers, 1600 Blake St., Denver, CO 80202
- Tuesday, April 6 - FasTracks Monitoring Committee Meeting, following P&D Committee, 5:30 p.m. start, Board Chambers, 1600 Blake St., Denver, CO 80202
- Thursday, April 15 - Executive Committee, 12:00 p.m., 1600 Blake Street
- Tuesday, April 20 - Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., 1600 Blake Street, Rooms R, T & D
- Tuesday, April 27 - RTD Board Study Session, 5:30 p.m. start, Board Chambers, 1600 Blake St., Denver, CO 80202