

Presentation to the RMLUI Conference: Denver 3/12-13, 2015

A decorative graphic consisting of a solid teal horizontal bar at the top, followed by a white horizontal bar, and then three thin, parallel teal horizontal lines on the right side of the white bar.

Presenter- Clarence W. Marsella

General Manager and CEO- Denver
Regional Transportation District 1995-2009

40 year Transportation Manager

The Regional Transportation District

- Created in 1969
- Eight county service area
 - 31 municipalities
- Service area: 2,410 square miles
- 2.5 million population
- 1,071 buses
- 83 light rail vehicles
- 175 routes
- 66 park-n-rides
- 10,366 bus stops
- 2,510 employees
- 35 miles of light rail
- 36 light rail stations
- 99-million+ annual boardings
- 8 operating and admin. facilities
- Total 2008 Operating Budget:



RTD Districts

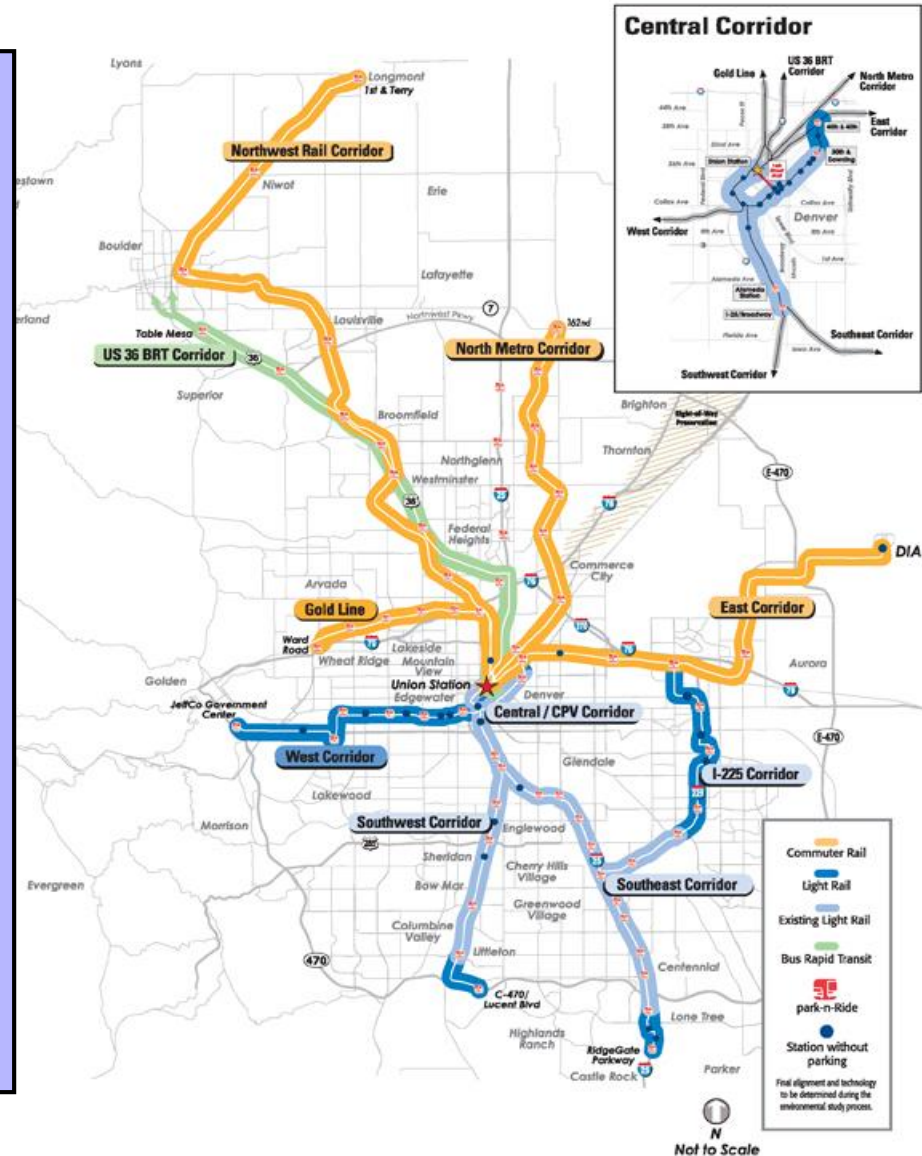
- 1980 – Elected Board Began

Board of Directors District Boundaries



The RTD FasTracks Plan

- 122 miles of new light rail and commuter rail
- 18 miles of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- 31 new park-n-Rides with over 21,000 new spaces
- Enhanced Bus Network & Transit Hubs (FastConnects)
- Redevelopment of Denver Union Station



The T-REX Project

- Partnership between RTD, CDOT, FTA, FHWA

- \$1.67 billion design/build project

- On time, on budget

- 19 miles of new light rail

- 13 stations

- 17 miles of highway expansion

- Feeder bus system

- 6,000 parking spaces



The Evolution of Fastracks, 1997-2004

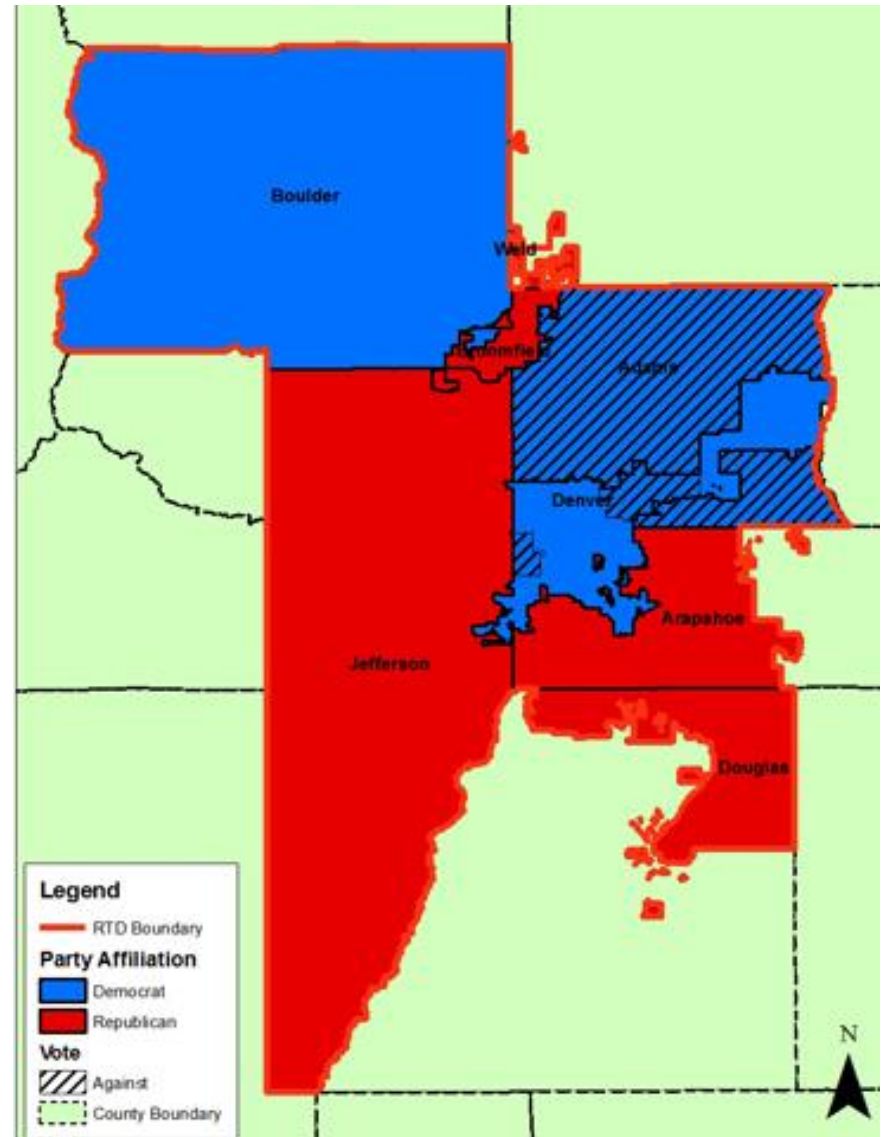
- Guide the Ride Fails in 1997
- RTD Board turns against the plan well before the election
- Board prohibited any staff presentations or explanations of the plan before the vote
- Off year election
- Board misbehaved very publicly to erode support for the Agency and the Board

Fastracks-2004

- Debacle of the dysfunctional RTD Board gives rise to a new Board that was vetted and supported by the Chamber, the Mayors and a grass roots group- the Transit Alliance
- Fastracks very similar to Guide the Ride
- Staff directed to educate the public on the Plan throughout the District- No restrictions-hundreds of presentations, debates etc.
- Professional campaign team hired- real money raise and strategically expended
- Denver Union Station and 19.5 acres purchased as future intermodal hub amid much criticism- A “Boondoggle, a White Elephant, Staff attempting to be Developers”

Election Results

- All the registered Republican majority counties voted for FasTracks
- One out of three registered Democratic counties and two of the most ethnic city council districts in the City and County of Denver voted against FasTracks
- Final results:
 - YES – 58%
 - NO - 42%





Comparison of RTD and Private Contract Costs 2009



1. Private contractors pay fuel tax, sales tax, property tax, and vehicle registration fees which RTD does not pay.
2. RTD total costs include all variable costs, fixed costs, and depreciation on operating facilities and support equipment.
3. RTD has statutory limitation on insurance liability. Private carriers do not have statutory limitation on insurance liability.

Lessons Learned

- **Great City and Region**
 - Need desire and political will to be a Great City and Region
- **Vision**
 - Should be lofty, but attainable
 - Should capture the region's imagination and be embraced throughout the transit district
- **Policy Board to Set Vision**
 - Need policy board that sets visionary policy and musters political support but lets professional staff manage the operation
- **Solid Budget & Revenue Plan**
- **Solid Existing System**
 - This will establish public's trust in system