

19th Annual RMLUI Conference

“An Emerging Sustainable Transit Corridor: The Future of a Suburban City”

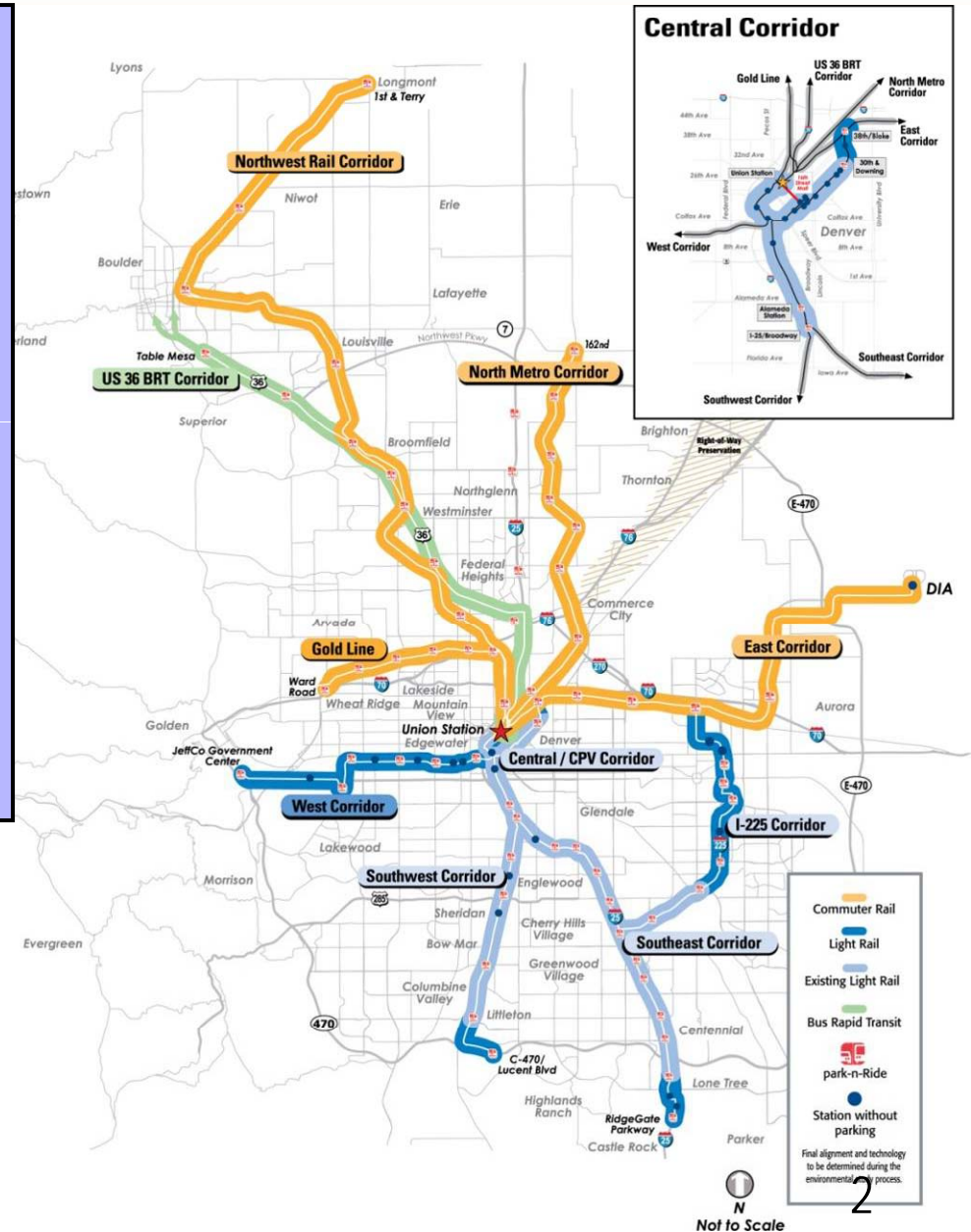
**RTD-FasTracks I-225 Corridor
Planning Process**

March 5, 2010

The RTD FasTracks Plan

FASTTRACKS
RTD

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



I-225 FasTracks Corridor Overview



- 10 ½ mile light rail transit extension
- 8 stations
- Starts at existing Nine Mile Station
- Serves the Aurora City Center
- Serves the Anschutz / Fitzsimons Campus
- Provides a transfer to the planned East Corridor at a station near the intersection of Peoria Street and Smith Road

Corridor History



- 2000 – Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) I-225 EA/FONSI completed
- 2001 – RTD Major Investment Study completed
 - Identified a light rail alignment and station locations
 - Alignment serves Aurora City Center & Anschutz/Fitzsimons
- Nov. 2004 – FasTracks Initiative Approval
 - Established a 0.4% sales tax to fund FasTracks
- Nov. 2006 – T-REX Light Rail line opened to revenue service
 - I-225 end of line at Nine Mile Station
 - Parking at Nine Mile at capacity after Opening Day
- Sept. 2007 – Began FasTracks I-225 Planning phase
- Oct. 2009 – Completed FasTracks I-225 Planning phase

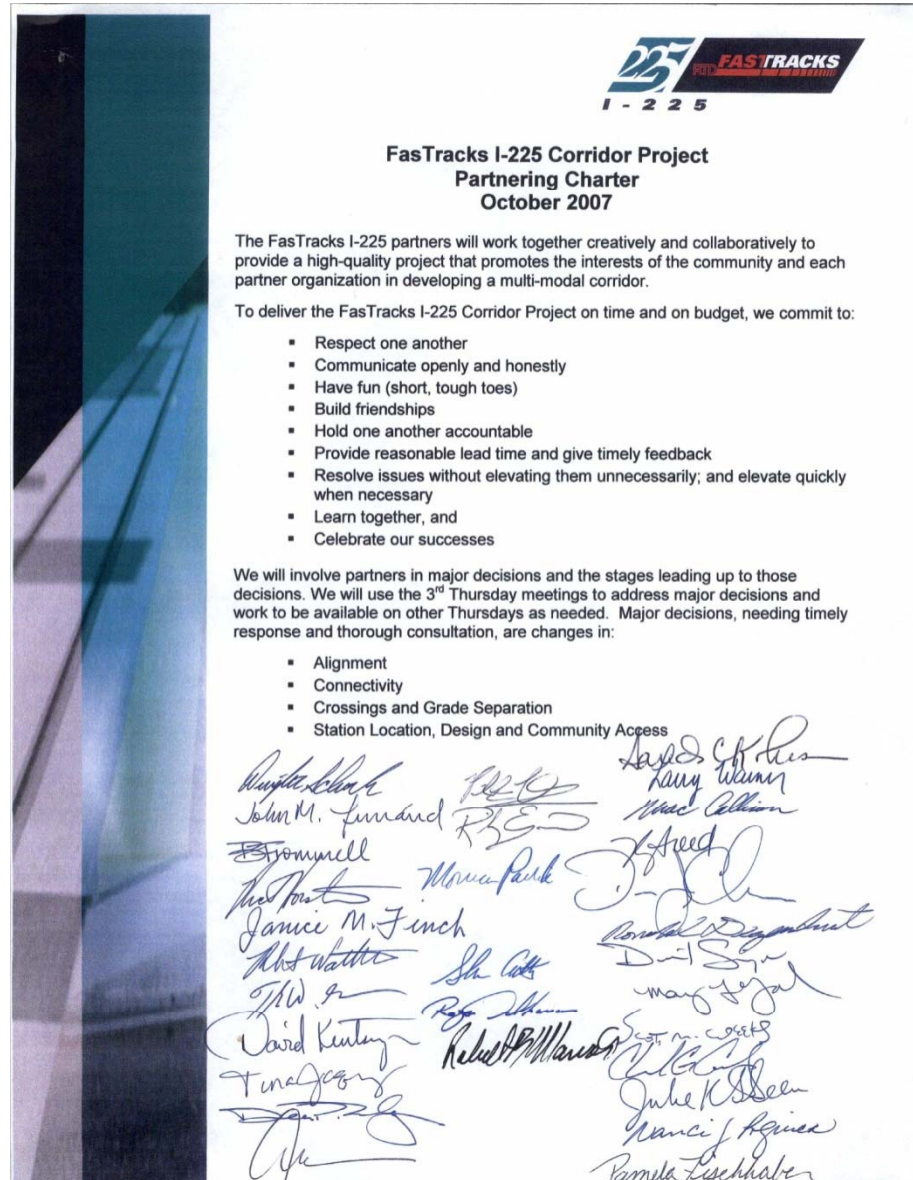
Project Goals for Planning Phase



- Obtain an environmental decision document that:
 - Does not preclude CDOT's ability to widen I-225 to 8 lanes
 - Meets RTD, CDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and City of Aurora needs
- Obtain 30% Prel. Engr. level design plans & cost estimate
- Keep the project within the established FasTracks budget
- Complete the work in 27 months
- Conduct an open public involvement process

Partnering Charter

Partnering Charter
Developed with
RTD Project Team,
City of Aurora,
CDOT, FHWA,
CCD & PUC in
Oct. 2007



Planning Challenges

- Constrained budget
- Aggressive 27-month schedule
- CDOT requirement not preclude future 8-lane typical section
- Parking Challenge
 - Adopted FasTracks Plan “capped” parking spaces
 - RTD updated model reflected more parking would be needed
 - City of Aurora coordinated own Strategic Parking Mgmt. Plan
- Managing expectations – cannot say “yes” to every good idea

Identification/Refinement of Preferred Alternative



- South segment – shifted from median I-225 to east side I-225
 - City of Aurora triggered by agreeing to give up a travel lane on Abilene (adjacent frontage road)
- Determined alignment on City Streets around City Center
 - Compromises reached with City and adjacent landowners
- Eliminated long bridge flyover over I-225
 - Utilized existing 13th Ave. underpass – cost savings

Identification/Refinement of Station Locations



- Iliff Station – identified location on SE quadrant of interchange
- Florida Station – moved from Exposition Station to serve Aurora Medical Center
- 13th Avenue Station – added station to help resolve parking at Colfax Station and for potential Transit Oriented Development
- Colfax Station – identified location over Colfax (grade separated)

Public Involvement and Community Outreach



- Goal – Maximize public involvement during planning phase
- Regular scheduled meetings with Partners – City of Aurora, CDOT, City & County of Denver, FHWA, FTA, Public Utilities Commission (PUC)
- Quarterly Elected Officials Briefings (9 held)
- Public Meetings (4 held)
- Stakeholders meetings (31 held)
- Small group/special presentation meetings (32 attended)
- Community meetings (15 attended)

I-225 Corridor Newsletters



Project updates were documented in 5 newsletters which were distributed through our project mailing list and available on our project website.



I-225 CORRIDOR Times

FALL 2009

RTD FASTRACKS QUARTERLY NEWS LINK

WHAT'S INSIDE

Summary of Comments and Responses	2
City of Aurora Project Updates	2
Message from RTD Board of Directors	3
Where to view Final Environmental Evaluation (EE) Document	4

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Online: www.RTD-FasTracks.com
Click on I-225 Corridor

Email: I-225@RTD-FasTracks.com

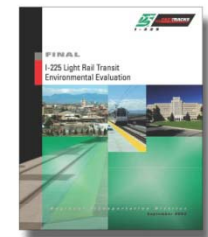
Contact: Tina Jaquez
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Denver, CO 80202
(303) 299-6902

Summary of the Environmental Evaluation Process

The Final I-225 Light Rail Transit Environmental Evaluation (EE) was completed in September 2009, after a 30-day public comment period from July 10 to August 10, 2009. All comments received from the public and agencies were given consideration. Responses were incorporated into the Final EE.

The Final EE includes the following updates:

- Refinements to station areas based on information from the City of Aurora's station area planning process
- Addition of Opening Day 2015 operating frequency information
- Incorporation of "Appendix C-Responses to Comments," containing comments received during the 30-day public comment period including changes made in the EE
- Updates of "Appendix A-Preferred Alternative Detail," to provide the latest engineering design detail



The Final EE is available online and at local City of Aurora and Denver libraries for reference (see page 4 for list of locations). Updated I-225 corridor project information will be available on the project Web site.

The Final EE containing the Preferred Alternative alignment and eight stations as well as potential impacts and mitigation measures was presented to the RTD Board of Directors for adoption on October 20, 2009. Adopting the Final EE allows final design, right-of-way acquisition and construction to proceed in accordance with the FasTracks financial plan.

Next Steps

RTD is exploring funding and phasing options to move forward with implementation of the FasTracks Program. Construction for the I-225 Corridor will be scheduled in accordance with the FasTracks financial plan. RTD is committed to implementing the whole FasTracks Program.

The RTD Board has approved this project to move forward into final design for the segment from the Nine Mile Station to Iliff Station. There are several key issues to be resolved, including:

- Final design engineering, including mitigation measure design

- Identifying and obtaining the appropriate permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Coordination with the City of Aurora, City and County of Denver, Public Utilities Commission, and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Phase II studies for hazardous materials
- Additional noise analysis
- Environmental documentation for use of CDOT right-of-way

Partnership with City of Aurora



- Commitment by City to be active participant in the process
- City sponsored studies
 - Station Area Planning efforts
 - Strategic Parking Management Plan
 - Fitzsimons Multi-modal Study
- Developed City approval process with Project Team
 - Monthly presentations to Council Transportation & Airport Policy Committee (TAPC) – input & approval
- Active participant at Stakeholder and Public Meetings

How Station Area Plans Impacted Final Preferred Alignment



- Iliff Station – worked with property owners to seek consensus on location
- 13th Avenue Station – shifted alignment to maximize future TOD
- Colfax Station – shifted alignment & finalized station location based on Station Area Planning efforts

Lessons Learned

- T-REX Project
 - Constructed in 2001 – 2006
 - Design-Build Lump Sum contract
 - Not the best time for Station Area Planning efforts
 - Implementing changes to original contract – by negotiated Change Order
 - Resulted in higher costs
- Station Area Planning efforts
 - Optimal time is in parallel with Corridor NEPA level planning efforts
 - Requires cooperation from all parties

Summary of Planning Phase



- Met project goals
 - Oct. 2009 – RTD Board of Directors adopted the Final Environmental Evaluation document
 - Preferred alternative met expectations of partners and stakeholders
 - Refinements improved overall quality of project
- Current status
 - FasTracks Program has budget shortfall due to recession & other factors
 - I-225 Corridor – implementation has been delayed from the original 2017 completion date