

# West Corridor LRT

## Denver, Colorado

(November 2009)

The Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) is constructing a 12-station, 12.1-mile light rail transit (LRT) line extending from RTD's existing LRT system near Colfax Avenue and Interstate 25 (I-25), and following the former Associated Rail right-of-way and US 6, to US 6/US 40 in Jefferson County, Colorado. The proposed project connects with the Central Platte Valley light rail extension and the Central Corridor LRT line at the existing Auraria station adjacent to downtown Denver where it interlines to Denver Union Station (DUS). The project scope includes 32 light rail vehicles. Service would operate at five-minute peak-period headways between DUS and the Federal Center station in Lakewood and 15-minute peak-period headways between Federal Center and Jefferson County Government Center during weekday peak periods. The project is expected to serve 29,700 average weekday boardings in 2030.

The total project cost under the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) is \$709.83 million. The Section 5309 New Starts funding share is \$308.68 million.

### Status

The West Corridor has been the focus of study for over 30 years. Recognizing its strategic importance to the region, RTD purchased the rail right-of-way in 1988. RTD, in cooperation with the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), completed a major investment study on the corridor in July 1997, which resulted in the selection of a locally preferred alternative that included both LRT and roadway transportation management improvements. The selection of LRT was partially based on the inability to widen West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to respond to ongoing population and employment growth within the corridor. FTA approved RTD's request to enter preliminary engineering on the West Corridor LRT project in March 2001. A Final Environmental Impact Statement was completed in October 2003, and a NEPA Record of Decision was issued in April 2004. In November 2004, Denver area voters passed RTD's FasTracks funding plan, which increased RTD's sales tax revenues to support the construction of over 100 miles of new rail transit (including the West Corridor LRT project) and a 24 percent increase in local bus service. FTA approved the project into final design in August 2005. During final design, RTD implemented a series of value engineering and cost containment measures to control cost growth. An Environmental Assessment was completed in August 2007. FTA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact in November 2007. RTD and FTA entered into an FFGA in January 2009, with revenue operations scheduled for May 2013. The construction contracts, including the construction management/general contractor (CMGC) and systems contract are underway and the project is progressing satisfactorily. In addition to four major steel bridge superstructures being procured and fabricated, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and procurement of long lead items are underway. Vehicles which were bought under exiting pre-award authority have been delivered.

SAFETEA-LU Section 3043(b)(7) authorized the Denver West Light Rail Transit project for final design and construction. Through FY 2010, Congress has appropriated a total of \$268.50 million for the project. This includes \$40.00 million in ARRA allocations.

<b>Reported in Year of Expenditure Dollars</b>		
<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funding (\$million)</u>	<u>Appropriations to Date</u>
<b>Federal:</b> Section 5309 New Starts FFGA Commitment Section 5307 CMAQ	\$308.68 \$9.50	\$268.50 million in total appropriations through FY 2010. This includes \$40.00 million in ARRA funds.
<b>Local:</b> Sales Tax Revenues and Local government contributions	\$391.65	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$709.83</b>	

**NOTES:** The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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