



July 2007

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In our continued effort to keep you informed about on-going developments with the East Corridor Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), we want to make you aware of recent developments regarding the East Corridor and Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension.

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) recently concluded the 2007 Annual Program Evaluation of the FasTracks Program which found that the estimated cost of the total Program exceeds the budget established in 2004 by \$1.45 billion.

The staff and RTD Board have been evaluating a number of strategies for bridging the gap between the budget and the cost estimates. The East Corridor EIS team presented these strategies for the East Corridor and Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension during a series of public meetings held on July 18th and 19th, 2007. The information presented at these meetings is available on the project website.

### **East Corridor Update**

One of the strategies that the RTD Board considered for the East Corridor was recommending that diesel-powered commuter rail technologies like diesel multiple units (DMU) be reintroduced into the study process and studied along with electric-powered commuter rail (electric multiple unit [EMU]). In November 2006, staff recommended that only EMU move forward in the study process.

After three months of discussions about a possible change in commuter rail technology for the East Corridor, the Board decided during its July 24th meeting to support the findings of the EIS process that recommend EMU as the technology for the East Corridor.

The next step for the East Corridor will be to release the Draft EIS for public and agency comment in the first part of 2008. Public hearings will be held once the Draft EIS is released to provide an opportunity for public comment on the East Corridor.

### **Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension Update**

Recommended changes to the Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension include connecting it to the existing light rail system along California and Stout Streets rather than the direct connection to the Civic Center. In addition, single light rail vehicles will be used to provide the service along the Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension. These recommended changes allow the corridor to be built within its identified budget.

Next steps for the Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension include preparing an environmental evaluation report. Since the extension will not be built using federal money and it is not a candidate for a public private partnership opportunity, it will no longer be included in the EIS for the East Corridor. Instead, a separate environmental evaluation report will be prepared that summarizes all of the analysis that has been completed to date. That report is expected to be completed later this summer and will be posted on the project website. Future public meetings on the Central Corridor/Downing Street Extension will be conducted when the design phase of the project starts in 2010 or 2011.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the RTD Project Manager, Mike Turner at 303-299-2401, [mike.turner@rtd-denver.com](mailto:mike.turner@rtd-denver.com).

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