



## **Transportation Background**

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- A safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system is essential to ensure a strong quality of life and continued economic vitality for Colorado and the United States. Furthermore, investments to transportation results in jobs now and in the future.
- According to a study by the U.S. Department of Transportation, for each \$1 billion of federal spending on highway construction nationwide, 28,000 jobs are generated annually. The same study found that every dollar invested in the nation's highway system yields \$5.40 in economic benefits in reduced delays, improved safety and lower vehicle operating costs.
- Sixty-nine percent of the \$93 billion worth of commodities delivered annually from sites in Colorado is transported by trucks on the state's highways. An additional 16 percent is delivered by parcel, U.S. Postal Service or courier, which use multiple modes, including trucks.
- Thirty-two percent of Colorado's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Driving on roads in need of repair costs Colorado motorists nearly \$1 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs – \$292 per motorist. Seventeen percent of Colorado's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Thirty-one percent of Colorado's major urban highways are congested. Traffic congestion costs American motorists \$78.2 billion a year in wasted time and fuel costs. Americans spend 4.2 billion hours a year stuck in traffic.
- Vehicle travel on Colorado's highways increased by 76 percent from 1990 to 2008. Colorado's population grew by 50 percent between 1990 and 2008. Vehicle travel on America's highways increased by 36 percent from 1990 to 2008, while new road mileage increased by only four percent. The nation's population grew by 22 percent from 1990 to 2008.
- Many of Colorado's local transit systems are unable to meet current demand. At the same time, our state faces declining federal and state revenue to support needed repairs to our transportation system.

### **I-225 and Colfax Avenue/17th Place Interchange Background**

- Thank you Congressman Perlmutter for your continued leadership with this interchange, as well as for working with our state's delegation and members of the Appropriations, Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committees to secure their support for this project.
- This project requires funding for the final two phases of construction of the new interchange at I-225 and Colfax Avenue/17<sup>th</sup> Place. The interchange received a total of \$13,825,000 in ARRA funding in for the first two stages of construction and requires \$21.9 million additional funds to complete (\$5.7 million for phase 3 and \$16.2 million for phase 4).
- This interchange has been a strong public/private partnership. The Anschutz/Fitzsimons Stakeholders Group has pledged a combined total of \$8-10 million in local matching funds

for the interchange. Stakeholders include the Aurora Economic Development Council, the city of Aurora, University of Colorado Denver, University of Colorado Hospital, The Children's Hospital, Forest City, Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Colorado Department of Transportation.

- This campus serves as the major component of Colorado's bioscience and health care industries and contributed \$3.5 billion dollars to Colorado's economy in 2008 with \$1.4 billion generated in personal income. The Anschutz/Fitzsimons site currently employs 15,900 and results in nearly 60,000 vehicle trips each day.
- There is also a deep concern for access for emergency vehicles – The Children's Hospital is the only pediatric Trauma Level I facility in the state.

### **I-225 Widening Background**

- Improvements in traffic flow on I-225 have been rated the highest priority in the Aurora/Denver metro region by the Denver Regional Council of Governments and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).
- I-225 serves as the primary roadway for traffic between DIA and the southern metro area, as well as the southern Front Range. Its average traffic volumes exceed 125,000 vehicles each day – well above the designed capacity of this facility.
- The next phase of construction of the widening of I-225 is from Mississippi Avenue to Second Avenue. This will result in three continuous through-lanes in both directions from I-70 to Mississippi Avenue. The project includes significant reconstruction of the highway beneath the Alameda interchange. CDOT will be announcing the winning bid in late April along with the corresponding budget (*most recent news at time of print*). Construction on this project is scheduled to commence this June and be completed in just over a year.
- The final phase of widening I-225 will be from Mississippi Avenue to Parker Road. This will result in three continuous through-lanes in both directions from I-25 all the way to I-70.

### **I-25 and Arapahoe Road Interchange Background**

- The interchange at I-25 and Arapahoe Road features heavily in the economic livelihood of our region. It serves an area that employs as many people as Denver's central business district and accounts for 25 percent of the State's gross domestic product. It serves Centennial Airport, the second busiest general aviation airport in the country, a regional multi-modal transportation hub, and emerging economic centers for Greenwood Village and Centennial.
- The interchange serves a rapidly growing area, with a population estimated to increase 45%, and employment to increase 47% by the year 2030. Traffic volumes have increased substantially since the mid 1980's when the last significant improvements were made to the I-25 and Arapahoe Road interchange. More than 90,000 vehicles per day enter the interchange from either Arapahoe Road or the I-25 ramps. This number is projected to increase to nearly 135,000 vehicles per day in 25 years. The interchange experiences the highest accident rate among the interchanges in the southeast corridor.
- The existing I-25 and Arapahoe Road interchange configuration causes severe congestion for more than four hours per day, and vehicles on the southbound I-25 off-ramp to back up onto the interstate, creating potentially hazardous conditions on I-25, the ramp and Arapahoe Road – and delays for emergency vehicles.

- In FY 2008/09, there was \$700,000 of STP-Metro federal funds awarded to the I-25 and Arapahoe Road interchange project via the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) to complete the NEPA process for this project, which will be an Environmental Assessment. In addition, a project level and system feasibility study was completed and approved by the Colorado Transportation Commission in 2008 utilizing STP-Metro federal funds from the FY05-010 Transportation Improvement Program by DRCOG in the amount of \$600,000.

### **FasTracks Background**

- FasTracks is the multi-billion (now \$6.7 billion as of 2010), 12-year Regional Transportation District (RTD) voter-approved transit program to expand rail and bus service throughout the RTD service area. Scheduled for completion in 2017, FasTracks will build 122 miles of commuter rail and light rail, build 18 miles of bus rapid transit, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver Union Station and expand bus service across the entire eight-county District. The FasTracks investment initiative is projected to create more than 10,000 construction-related jobs during the height of construction, and will pump billions of dollars into the regional economy over the next 20 years. In 2008, RTD carried over 102 million riders. Ridership on the current rail system has exceeded even the most optimistic projections, carrying more than 60,000 riders every weekday. FasTracks is funded through a combination of funding sources, including the voter-approved sales tax increase of 0.4 percent (4 pennies on every \$10), passed in 2004.
- In the short term the program will provide economic stability and job creation. At the height of construction in 2011/2012, FasTracks is expected to create more than 10,000 construction related jobs. Additionally every \$1 invested translates into \$6 injected into local economy. In the long-term FasTracks will provide a reliable and safe regional transit system with transportation options that provide environmental benefits and reduced emissions.
- The completion of FasTracks will greatly expand the region's transportation system, which is important for economic development efforts. As Colorado competes for jobs, a comprehensive public transportation system in the region will provide increased mobility for a company's employees, customers, goods and services.
- The federal contribution to the FasTracks project will amount to \$1.4 billion. The West Corridor is to receive \$308 million and the East Corridor and the Gold Line Corridor are slated to receive \$1.03 billion combined.
- Since November 2004, when FasTracks was approved by voters, significant progress has been made on the West Corridor, East Corridor and Gold Line, as well as the rest of the FasTracks Program. However, the downturn in the economy has drastically reduced RTD's sales tax collections and seriously strained the agency's budget. Federal funds are now even more critical for the completion of this world-class transit program, and regional economic driver.
- In April 2010, RTD Board of Directors decided not to pursue a 2010 sales tax election for the FasTracks transit expansion program. RTD has a \$2.4 billion budget gap to complete the FasTracks program, and has determined that a sales tax increase is needed to complete the program sooner rather than later. The RTD Board will likely continue to consider a sales tax increase as a funding opportunity necessary for the completion of the project until FasTracks is fully funded. If RTD does not secure additional revenues, current estimates indicate that the entire FasTracks system will not be completed until 2042.

### **Tower Road and Peña Boulevard Interchange Background**

- The requested funds will be used for the design of the missing on-ramp from southbound Tower Road to south/west bound Peña Boulevard.
- The Tower Road and Peña Boulevard interchange was planned in conjunction with the design and construction of DIA. Both the main roadway to the airport and the airport itself (Peña Boulevard and DIA) were constructed using federal funding. Completion of the last ramp to this interchange continues the federal commitment. The project fulfills the interconnection to the interstate highway system, contributes to the economic vitality of the region, and improves access to the airport, as well as access to and from the airport and other military installations.
- Peña Boulevard was constructed as the primary access to the Denver International Airport (DIA) in 1995. Along Peña Boulevard's 10½ mile length, there are five interchanges. All the other interchanges provide access in all directions. At Tower Road access is limited to a toll road (E-470) or to the next interchange ¾ miles away. When DIA was under construction, the interchange construction was not included. Commerce City paid for the construction of the two ramps leading to and from DIA. The third ramp from eastbound Peña Boulevard to Tower Road was added by the Metropolitan District located south from Peña Boulevard at Tower Road.

### **Powers Boulevard and Stewart Avenue Interchange Asks**

- The military is the top employer in the Pikes Peak Region. A new interchange at Powers and Airport Road will support and enhance long-term economic military benefits and commercial employment in the region.
- A new interchange is vital to stay consistent with future planned growth for Peterson Air Force Base which is made up of 1,294 acres of land adjacent to Powers Boulevard. The base has many office buildings which make up the Command/Wing and Group Headquarters, command Posts and Family Services. Peterson AFB is home to a multi-service workforce with a total of 11,520 personnel assigned which includes 6,145 military personnel, and 5,375 civilians. The base anticipates growth from the current population of 11,000 to potentially over 31,000 at build-out in 2030. In addition to serving Peterson's military personnel and their dependents, in 2009 Powers Boulevard will become Fort Carson's designated route for transporting its Rapid Deployment Force. Periodically, troops and heavy equipment will use Powers Boulevard between Fort Carson and their deployment facility located at Peterson AFB.
- The proposed interchange is also necessary to address access and mobility for several hundred acres of planned commercial development mainly on the west side of Powers Boulevard at Airport Road. Much of this development will provide hundreds of new jobs associated with office and retail that will service Peterson AFB.
- For design costs, CDOT is in the process of obtaining approximately \$2.3 million from a Public Lands Highways Discretionary Program. Right-of-way costs are currently covered by local funds from the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation which was passed by voters in 2006 for local transportation projects. Approval for early right-of-way acquisition for Airport and Powers has been obtained through FHWA as part of the Powers right-of-way preservation program for protecting the corridor from rapid development. Approximately \$2.5 million in

right-of-way has been spent or is designated for the Powers Airport Interchange as part of the right-of-way preservation project.

- By the year 2035, traffic volumes are expected to increase by an average of 88% corridor-wide. This will result in extremely congested conditions on the 11 miles between Woodmen Road and Milton E. Proby Parkway.
- I-25 in El Paso County, and the interchanges along the corridor are in strong need of improvement for safety reasons, traffic flow and congestion problems.