



SOUTHEASTconnections

November 2009

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Customer Panel



GOVERNOR RITTER INCREASES TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter is asking state legislators for a 6 percent increase in transportation funding, one of the few bright spots in next year's budget plan. Ritter submitted the request to lawmakers Monday as part of his \$1.03 billion transportation budget proposal for next year.

Ritter says the additional money comes from new fees on vehicle registrations, which are producing an estimated \$161 million for bridge and roadway repair and safety work next year.

"As we all know, federal and state transportation revenue has been declining for years, while at the same time transportation demands and construction costs have been increasing. Our system of bridges, highways and roadways is rapidly deteriorating and becoming a greater and greater safety concern," Ritter said.

Democrats praised the increase in funding after years of underfunding for transportation projects. They credited Ritter's new fee program, called FASTER, or Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery.

"FASTER means shovels in the ground and an economic shot in the arm. The people of Colorado want us to make the tough decisions that lead to more jobs, a balanced budget and a strong economy. We're doing just that," said House Speaker Terrance Carroll, D-Denver.

House Minority Leader Mike May, R-Parker, said raising vehicle registration fees during the middle of a recession was a bad idea.

"That money comes from somewhere. It doesn't come from the tooth fairy," May said.

The new fees have angered many drivers and vehicle owners, especially owners of small trailers who got socked with huge fines for failing to register on time.

Ritter said Monday lawmakers will try to reduce the impact on trailers when lawmakers reconvene in January.

Under the new fee schedule, owners of cars and SUVs are paying an extra \$32 the first year, \$36.50 the second year and \$41 the third year.

Owners who fail to register on time saw the fine soar from \$10 to \$25 a month, with a one-month grace period and a \$100 cap. Owners of recreation vehicles were hit hard by the fines.

The governor was required by state law to deliver his proposed state budget Monday. Instead he gave lawmakers a down payment with the budgets for transportation, agriculture and public health. The rest of the budget will be delivered later this week as lawmakers prepare for budget hearings next week.

Lawmakers said the delay was needed because their budget analysts needed more time to deal with the latest round of budget cuts for the current fiscal year, which were announced by the governor just last week.

-Provided by The Denver Post



The RTD is looking for enthusiastic, interested RTD customers who are team players and want to make their ideas and opinions heard by actively participating on the RTD Customer Panel! If you ride RTD buses or light rail and want to share your ideas to help improve RTD, and if you can commit to attending four evening panel meetings a year, please apply! The RTD Customer Panel is a year-long discussion group on RTD policies, procedures, products and services. By joining RTD's 2010 Customer Panel, you can help us shape the future of public transit and allow our agency to respond more effectively to customer needs.

This year's panel members have learned about the RTD transit system and discussed a variety of topics, including marketing programs such as rider etiquette and bike-n-Ride, RTD's proposed new web site, the FasTracks project and customer survey results.

The 15-member panel meets four times a year for two hours on Wednesday evenings starting at 5:15 p.m. at the RTD Administration Building at 1600 Blake Street in Downtown Denver. In return for their participation, panel members receive a free buffet dinner at each meeting and a free Regional monthly pass for each month they attend a meeting. Panel members who attend all four meetings receive a free annual Eco Pass for the following year.

All applications must be received by December 15, 2009.
Visit www.RTD-Denver.com.

-Provided by the RTD





TRANSIT RIDER INCENTIVE PROGRAM (TRIP) DISCONTINUED FOR 2010: TMA WILL USE FUNDING TO FOCUS ON OTHER TRANSIT SOLUTIONS IN CORRIDOR

After two highly successful years, the South I-25 Urban Corridor Transportation Management Association (TMA) decided to discontinue TRIP for 2010. The TMA made the decision after evaluating the available funds for 2010 and the demand for other transportation projects in the Southeast Corridor.

“We regret to inform our loyal TRIP purchasers that the program will be discontinued in 2010, however we will work hard to ensure that the TMA’s funds are put toward other much needed transit projects in the Corridor,” says Transportation Manager, Lauren Hayutin.

“We strongly encourage commuters to continue using light rail while we work to improve transportation options in the Corridor.”

One of the proposed transportation programs involves implementing a bike or car share program in the Corridor that will streamline the process of getting from the light rail station to work.

Since its inception in January 2008, TRIP successfully gained a following of commuters in the Southeast Corridor. The program proved successful at attracting new riders to public transit, with approximately one-quarter of TRIP purchasers being new to public transportation.

TRIP is a program offered by the South I-25 Urban Corridor TMA to make public transportation more affordable by offering a 35% discount on monthly RTD passes. The program is available to any commuter working in the Southeast Corridor.

The South I-25 TMA is a coalition of local governments; Arapahoe County, Douglas County, City of Greenwood Village, City of Centennial, City of Lone Tree, The Southeast Public Improvement Metropolitan District (SPIMD), and the business community represented by the Southeast Business Partnership (SEBP), who joined together to provide political and economic resources to identify and meet the Southeast Corridor’s transportation needs. RTD is a partner in TRIP.

For more information visit www.SOUTHEASTconnections.com.

-Provided by 360 Media

WINTER TIPS FROM CDOT

- Be sure to carry plenty of windshield wiper fluid as liquid de-icers may stick to your windshield.
- Let the snowplow drivers do their jobs by giving them extra room and don’t pass on the right.
- Slow down! Even roads that have been treated with liquid de-icers may be slippery.
- Be prepared. Have a scraper, snow brush, coat, hat, gloves, blanket, first aid kit, flashlight, tire chains, matches and nonperishable food in your car.
- Make sure your tires have good tread.

-Provided by the CDOT

Public Meeting for Belleview Avenue Pedestrian Undercrossing Project

Monday, November 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., Curtis Arts Center Basement Classroom at 2349 East Orchard Road. The conceptual design for the project will be presented at the Public Meeting.

The goal of the project is to modify the existing Little Dry Creek box culvert to provide a pedestrian undercrossing between the north and south side of Belleview Avenue. The project will also provide a trail along the south side of Belleview Avenue that will travel westerly from the Little Dry Creek box culvert to Race Street. The construction of the recommended improvements is tentatively scheduled to begin in the summer of 2010.

The input received at the public meeting will be considered in finalizing the design of the project. If you cannot attend the meeting and have input or questions about the project, please call Kurt Kaufman at (303) 708-6154.

-Provided by Greenwood Village

Red-light Enforcement Cameras Installed

To reduce red-light running, the City of Lone Tree is installing red-light enforcement cameras at the I-25 and Lincoln Avenue intersection. The red-light safety cameras will begin taking photos of violators on October 6, 2009. There will be 30-day warning period in which red-light violators will be mailed a warning notice and not fined. Citations will begin to be issued after the 30-day warning period on November 5, 2009.

-Provided by The City of Lone Tree

Roadway Improvements on Parker Rd. near Orchard Rd.

Starting Monday, October 19 roadway improvements will be underway along the northbound right lane of Parker Rd., just south of Orchard Rd. These improvements will begin at Mile Post 65.8 north to Mile Post 67.

This project consists of installing concrete curb and gutter, concrete sidewalk, concrete pavement drainage pipe, pavement markings and signs.

Delays are to be expected. Motorists can expect single lanes closures as well as shoulder closures Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

These construction activities are anticipated to be complete by December 4, 2009.

This project is managed by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). For more information about this project contact Randy Kiser at 303-286-8500.

-Provided by The City of Centennial



South I-25 Urban Corridor
Transportation Management Association
304 Inverness Way South, Suite 315
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CDOT ANNOUNCES WINTER MAINTENANCE PLANS FOR THE DENVER METRO AREA

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) announced its plans for winter maintenance and snow removal in the Denver metro area. The plan includes the typical snow removal equipment and products that CDOT has used over the years.

"We will operate with the same number of employees and snow plows as we did last year so we can continue to provide the same level of service to the citizens of Colorado," said CDOT Executive Director Russ George. "Safety remains our number one priority and that means our crews will be working days, nights, weekends and holidays during inclement weather to help ensure motorists reach their destinations safely."

This winter, CDOT will have 245 employees battling winter conditions in the Denver metro area who will work in shifts from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. in order to keep 3,850 lane miles of highway clear of snow and ice. The maintenance crews will use a variety of equipment to apply solid and liquid de-icers. In all, 131 pieces of equipment will be used including 112 snow plows that apply liquid and/or solid de-icers, three 6,000-gallon tankers that apply liquid de-icers and 16 brooms to sweep up or pick up material after a storm.

In five of the snowplows, technology will help drivers determine the appropriate treatments for a roadway. The Maintenance Decision Support System (MDSS) combines advanced weather prediction, advanced road condition prediction and rules of practice for anti-icing and de-icing to generate road treatment recommendations on a route-by-route basis. The goal of MDSS is to provide more effective use of maintenance resources and increase safety, reliability and mobility on roadways.

This MDSS system allows crews to input real-time conditions, including road and ambient temperature, type of snow removal products being used and the application rate. After comparing the information to 15 weather reports, the system will then provide suggested treatments based on the information and models. The system may tell the operator to re-treat the road at a later time, apply different products at different rates or even to continue current procedures. The suggested treatment can then be followed or the operator can override the system.

Like in past years, CDOT will still continue to use liquid de-icers; Ice Slicer, a solid de-icer; and sand and salt. The two types of liquid de-icers that will be in used this winter are magnesium chloride and cold temperature magnesium chloride. Magnesium chloride* is effective at pavement temperatures above 16 degrees while cold temperature modified magnesium chloride* is effective for pavement temperatures below 16 degrees. Trucks are equipped with infrared sensors to monitor ambient and pavement temperatures throughout a storm.

"The use of our equipment, products and technology truly help us keep the roadways clear of snow and ice, but we still need the traveling public to do their part during a snow storm," said Roy Smith CDOT Acting Maintenance Superintendent for the Denver metro area. "It is impossible for us to be on every road at once, so it is important for motorists to slow down and drive appropriately for conditions. When you encounter a plow on the road, give plenty of room and don't pass on the right."

Last year, CDOT used approximately 916,000 gallons of liquid de-icer and over 10,000 tons of Ice Slicer in the Denver metro area while plowing, sanding and/or de-icing nearly 543,000 miles of road. CDOT spent just under \$4.7 million in the Denver area between July 2008 and June 2009, which was down 15% from July 2007 through June 2008 when CDOT spent \$5.5 million.

While CDOT is prepared for the winter ahead, it is also important for motorists to be prepared. CDOT strongly encourages motorists to plan ahead by visiting www.cotrip.org or by calling 511 anywhere in Colorado. Current road and weather conditions are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Web and phone.

-Provided by the CDOT

General Manager Search Update

The Executive Search Firm selected by the RTD Board of Directors to conduct the recruitment of a permanent RTD General Manager has had contact with over 600 individuals and received around 250 resumes. The RTD Board Executive Search Committee has developed a stakeholder input process to provide valuable and pertinent information to the Board for use in its decision, including an opportunity for stakeholders, staff, and contract employees to meet informally with the finalists. A Civic Leaders Panel will be also be established, consisting of five individuals to collectively represent many different constituencies across the regional community. The panel will meet with the finalists as part of the interview process to gain insight into the strengths and weaknesses of each and share these observations with the RTD Board prior to the Board's decision. The Board hopes to make a selection by the end of the year.

-Provided by the City of Centennial



FasTracks Update

Southeast Corridor Extension

- The team will be releasing the Draft Environmental Evaluation in early November with a public meeting scheduled for Nov. 19.

I-225 Corridor

- The RTD Board of Directors approved the Final Environmental Evaluation on Oct. 20. The project team will move into final design on the section of the Corridor from Nine Mile Station to the future Iliff Station.

-Provided by the FasTracks



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