



SOUTHEASTconnections

February 2010



ROAD PROJECTS TO RESHAPE TRAFFIC PATTERNS

A handful of major road projects this year will create alternate routes for commuters and drastically reduce traffic congestion on the north end of Douglas County.

The addition of two east-west roadways between Interstate 25 and Parker will take thousands of cars off of Lincoln Avenue, a road that carries as many as 60,000 vehicle trips per day and becomes bogged down with traffic during morning and evening rush hours.

RidgeGate Parkway, which has a new interchange south of Lincoln Avenue and I-25, could be completed by the end of this year depending on weather. That is 20 years sooner than expected, and it's due in part to the diligence of two local officials who secured a grant that will pay for nearly one-third of the cost to build the \$8-million road.

Douglas County Commissioner Jack Hilbert and Lone Tree Mayor Jim Gunning, members of the South I-25 Urban Corridor Transportation Management Association, obtained a \$2.5-million transportation grant from the Southeast Public Improvement Metro District by detailing the potential benefits of the road to the region. Douglas County also put up \$2.5 million in matching funds. Coventry, the developers of RidgeGate, will reimburse the county for the remainder of the construction cost once development begins along the corridor.

RidgeGate Parkway will initially be built as a two-lane road and connect to East Mainstreet in Parker. The new thoroughfare is expected to take roughly 15,000 vehicles off of Lincoln Avenue. Mayor Jim Gunning said the road will be a "tremendous asset" to the city.

A large drop in the cost of construction projects due to the slowdown in work has reduced the price of the road by roughly 30 percent.

"It's so great that we have to strike now while the iron's hot, and while the economy needs it and while everything is perfect for it," Hilbert said.

Hilbert suggested that development in RidgeGate, a massive business and residential park that will be built southeast of I-25 and Lincoln Avenue, could be expedited by the presence of a new road.

The decision to build RidgeGate Parkway now was made on the condition that Douglas County continue work on Hess Road, which will connect Parker to I-25 at Castle Pines Parkway.

"Without Hess, there was a concern it would overload the [RidgeGate] interchange and have to expand it," said John Cotten, director of Lone Tree public works.

The Hess project has been slowed by permitting issues, but the county has already started grading work west of the existing end of Hess Road near Chambers Road. Hess Road could be completed by late 2011 or early 2012 and provide motorists traveling to and from the Pinery, Stroh Ranch and Elbert County with an alternate route.

Peoria Street, which now comes to an end south of the Wildlife Experience, will be extended south to RidgeGate Parkway and give drivers more options if an accident is blocking traffic on RidgeGate or Lincoln.

Lone Tree is excited by the prospect of improving traffic flow and building RidgeGate Parkway much sooner than anticipated.

"There were no active plans for it," Cotten said. "We were going to have it built as development progressed."

Another road improvement will decrease issues at the Lincoln Avenue interchange with I-25. Vehicles back up on southbound I-25 daily as commuters try to exit onto eastbound Lincoln Avenue, but the planned addition of a third left-turn lane could move traffic along much smoother. That construction project will begin in the spring.

-Provided by the Highlands Ranch Herald



FRONT RANGE EXPRESS SERVICE ENDING

Colorado Springs says it will end Front Range Express, or FREX, regional bus service between the city and Denver on Feb. 15 because of the failure to achieve an interim financing plan to continue the service this year.

Transit officials in the Springs had won support from the Colorado Department of Transportation to sell some buses to raise operating funds for FREX service in 2010.

With CDOT approval, Mountain Metro Transit tried to sell nine of the buses to raise operating funds. But Thursday, Colorado Springs said there were no bidders for the surplus buses and all FREX service will end Feb. 15.

-Provided by the Denver Post



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ON THE HORIZON: NEW TRANSIT SOLUTIONS IN THE SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR

THE TMA LAUNCHES AN EXTENSIVE SURVEY TO ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION

Employees are encouraged to take the South I-25 Urban Corridor Transportation Management Association's (TMA) public transportation survey. This short survey will provide insight into local commuting habits, and will assist the TMA in developing transit solutions and programs to benefit the entire Southeast Corridor. Employees can visit SOUTHEASTconnections.com to participate in the survey and enter to win one of five Apple iPod Touches. The survey will be available from February 1st through February 28th.

The TMA is researching the prevalence of public transportation usage among employees commuting into the Southeast Corridor. The transit survey will help the TMA uncover reasons for both using and not using public transportation, so that the TMA can increase the convenience and availability of transportation options. The survey is intended to find working solutions to transit issues in the Corridor.

Since the successful end of the Transit Rider Incentive Program (TRIP) at the close of 2009, the TMA has been committed to designing and implementing new programs to encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation. After analyzing the survey and research data the TMA believes it will have the ability to adequately develop new programs and services to improve mobility, maximize transit ridership and enhance the overall commute experience within the Southeast Corridor.

-Provided by 360 Media



RTD HOLDING PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR MAY 2010 PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) is holding a series of public hearings in February to answer questions and solicit public comments concerning the proposed service changes for May 2010. Staff members will be on hand to explain the proposed changes and to answer questions. Feedback from the hearings will be summarized and reported to the RTD Board of Directors at the regularly scheduled monthly February Board meeting, when final approval will be requested. Service changes are made three times per year to improve the overall quality and efficiency of the RTD system. To review the proposed service changes visit RTD's web site at www.RTD-Denver.com/ServiceChanges.

- Boulder
Monday, February 1
Boulder Senior Center
West Complex
909 Arapahoe
7:00 pm
- Downtown Denver
Thursday, February 4
RTD Administration Offices
Room T & D
1600 Blake Street
12:00 pm
- Golden
Thursday, February 4
Community Center
Beaver Brook Room
1470 10th Street
7:00 pm
- Green Valley Ranch
Friday, February 5
Recreation Center
Classroom 108
4890 Argonne Way
6:30 pm
- Louisville
Thursday, February 4
Recreation Center
Paramount Conference Room
900 Via Appria Way
7:00 pm

The May 2010 proposed services changes are available at www.RTD-Denver.com. Comments can also be faxed to 303-299-2227 or emailed to service.changes@RTD-Denver.com no later than February 8, 2010.

-Provided by the RTD

RTD Director Juanita Chacon Announces She is Leaving RTD Board of Directors

Regional Transportation District (RTD) Director Juanita Chacon announced today that she is leaving the RTD Board of Directors and vacating her seat as Director of District C. Director Chacon said that the increasing demands on her professional and personal life made this decision necessary.

Ms. Chacon is a realtor by trade, and the on-going economic downturn has required significant demands on maintaining her business. She said, "I am not independently wealthy, so balancing my family, my non-profit work and my real estate business now requires much more of my time to do each of them properly. I have loved every minute of my service to RTD, and I will continue to advocate for access to transit service for all." Director Chacon said that with the untimely passing of her father a year ago, she wants to be able to continue to be able to spend essential time with her mother.

Because District C is in Denver, the authority for naming a replacement falls to Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper. That selection will then require confirmation by the Denver City Council. Director Chacon was appointed to the Board of Directors of RTD in August 2005 by Mayor Hickenlooper, and she was elected in November 2006 to a four year term that expires the end of 2010.

RTD Chairman Lee Kemp said, "RTD and the entire community owe Juanita a big thank you for her dedication and hard work. She has been an excellent RTD Board member who has fought for improving transit services for all RTD passengers. We look forward to working with Mayor Hickenlooper's appointee to continue the great service Juanita has performed."

-Provided by the RTD

DO YOU STILL HAVE 2009 10-RIDE OR SKYRIDE TICKETS?

Don't let them go to waste! You can receive credit for expired 2009 tickets through June 30, 2010. Ticket-for-ticket exchange and cash refunds are not available. (Credit applies only to 2009 10-Ride tickets and skyRide round-trip tickets that expired on December 31, 2009.)

If you have any questions, please send an email to cis@RTD-Denver.com or call 303.299.6464 and press 3.

-Provided by the RTD

