

Aurora Sentinel 4-2-08

## **Project 225 points to widening of I-225 by 2010, sets study timelines**

**By Adam Goldstein**  
The Aurora Sentinel

Wednesday, April 02, 2008

**AURORA** | The city's planning department has mapped the major I-225 construction projects for the next five years, pointing to light rail construction, lane-widening and neighborhood development as the most significant updates to the Aurora corridor

In a March 25 memo addressed to the city's Transportation and Airport Policy Committee, city staff highlighted critical projects in an area from the Nine Mile light rail station to Smith Road.

The comprehensive timetable, dubbed "Project 225" in the document, includes partnership projects with RTD, property owners and the Colorado Department of Transportation, as well as other stakeholders in the city

The update pointed to an eventual widening of I-225 between East Second and Alameda avenues to a six-lane capacity by 2009 or 2010. The project will also replace the current Alameda Avenue bridge.

RTD's FasTracks project, which will add 10.5 miles of light rail track and seven new transit stations, figures foremost in the Project 225 update. The study cites a budget of approximately \$620 million for the line's construction and a deadline of November 2008 for the completion of the environmental evaluation and preliminary engineering.

The FasTrack project aligns with the city's Station Area Plans for the corridor, which would encourage a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented design for businesses and residences surrounding the future light-rail stations. The planning process is scheduled to be completed within the next five years.

The update also pointed to a strategic parking plan and program study for the corridor, which would analyze demand associated with the future light rail stations and suggest financing and funding sources for additional facilities to be built by the city. The update suggests an eight-month timeframe for the parking study.

Similarly, a Fitzsimons multimodal transportation study, which will look at the traffic impacts and infrastructure issues related to rapid growth at the medical campus, is also expected to be completed in eight months. The Fitzsimons study will analyze current and future traffic patterns, as well as suggest infrastructure improvements and funding options.

The Project 225 update will be detailed during the next Transportation and Airport Policy Committee meeting April 8 at City Hall.