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   Thursday, March 4, 2010

## [RTD is Committed to Completing FasTracks North](#)



*by Director Noel Busck, RTD Board of Directors, District K*

As RTD Director for the district that encompasses most of the RTD FasTracks North Metro Corridor, I know of the concerns on being able to complete the rail line. Residents in the northern communities want FasTracks soon, and I hear you loud and clear.

Let me assure you, no one is more committed to doing everything we can to build out all of FasTracks than RTD. FasTracks is a critical investment that will keep our region strong – both now and in the future. It is no secret that we have been facing one of the most challenging economic times in history. Like all cities, agencies and businesses in the country, the economy has impacted us, first with rising costs and now with shrinking revenues. Despite the challenges, we are working with our regional partners to complete the program.

Just last month, we received great news on the federal funding front. The Federal Transit Administration announced \$120 million for FasTracks is included in the President's 2011 Budget, and Denver Union Station is approved for more than \$300 million in federal funds. FTA also stated their strong intent to approve \$1 billion in federal funds for FasTracks. All of this highlights the federal commitment to helping

fund transit expansion in the Denver metro area. We will continue to seek every possible federal dollar.

While we continue to aggressively pursue all funding opportunities, we also recognize that at some point we will need to go back to voters for a sales tax increase to complete the program sooner rather than much later. The choice will ultimately be up to voters, but we know people want their FasTracks. With additional voter approval, we can get all of FasTracks completed in seven years. I personally think the economy needs more time to recover before we can seek an additional tax increase. In the meantime, we are doing all we can to make sure that all of our projects, including North Metro, are ready to go as soon as additional funding becomes available. We are making progress on each FasTracks corridor, and keeping all of FasTracks on track for all of us.

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