

# DUS News Digest

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August 9, 2010

By Mark Shaw and Melissa Leslie, MountainStatesConstruction.com

### Riding the Rails: FasTracks Program Achieves Major Milestones

Denver's light rail system, already a hit with local commuters and topping its ridership projections, gained more momentum this summer. Several key pieces of the FasTracks project came together recently, starting with the signing this month by officials from the Regional Transportation District and the Union Pacific Railroad for RTD's purchase of railroad property and the construction and relocation of UP facilities for the FasTracks transit expansion.

The agreements total \$78 million and provide property needed to build the East Corridor (from Denver Union Station to Airport Boulevard), the Gold Line (from Pecos Junction to Ralston Road), and the West Corridor (relocation of UP's Burnham Yard Lead to the south).

This is the second property transaction between RTD and UP for FasTracks. The first transaction, which totaled \$118 million to purchase the right-of-way to build the North Metro Corridor, occurred in 2009.

In June, RTD selected the Denver Transit Partners to build and operate the commuter rail lines to Denver International Airport, Arvada-Wheat Ridge and south Westminster.

Denver Transit Partners' proposal came in at \$2.085 billion—\$300 million lower than RTD's budget estimate of \$2.385 billion. The proposal also included opening the central line between Denver and DIA by January 2016, 11 months ahead of RTD's deadline. The first stages of construction, which include relocation of utilities and freight tracks along the DIA route, are slated to begin soon.

In July, world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava unveiled his designs for a 500-room Westin Hotel, a commuter train station, and a rail bridge at Denver International Airport. The bridge, which will be located about a mile and a half from the airport, is a 720-ft-long, steel-and-concrete suspension bridge with a 620-ft span. All components of the project total \$650 million and will, in Calatrava's words, "create a kind of link between the city and the airport. We are almost exporting the urban quality of Denver into the airport."

In all, FasTracks will build 122 miles of commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid transit service, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver Union Station and redirect bus service to better connect the 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.

## Union Station Update #29

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August 11, 2010

By Rick Anstey, Denver Infill Blog

Here is the scene at the Union Station redevelopment site at about 8:00am today.



This is the first pour of concrete for the bus terminal floor. It is something akin to a practice run in preparation for a larger scale effort on Friday. As I write this, a second concrete pumper is being set up on the opposite side of the hole.

I expect to get some on-site, ground-level photos on Friday and post another blog around the middle of the day.