



COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis

January 22, 2021

Debra Johnson
Chief Executive Officer, General Manager
1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO 80202

Dear CEO and General Manager Johnson:

Thank you again for our recent meeting. We appreciate your willingness to engage in candid dialogue about the many challenges faced by the Regional Transportation District (RTD or District) and look forward to working with you to take these on in a serious way.

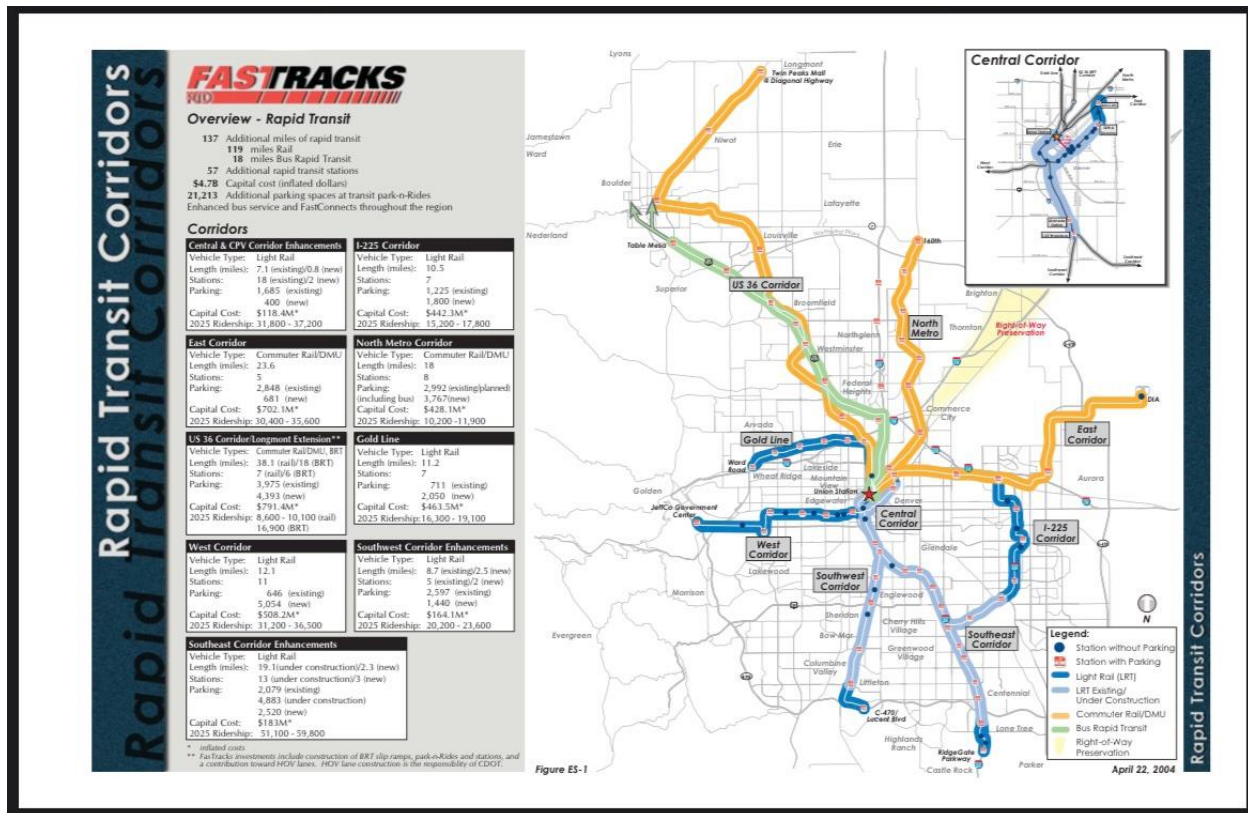
As we have discussed, it is imperative that RTD fulfill its binding promise codified by voters when they passed FasTracks, and complete the Northwest Rail Line. Prior to your tenure at RTD, Colorado voters in the RTD District approved an extra tax for an ambitious rail and bus system plan in FasTracks to connect Denver and its suburbs. While much of FasTracks has been completed, the Northwest Rail corridor is still incomplete. I write to remind you of RTD's responsibility of fulfilling their obligations to the taxpayers of the District and urgently request you begin the planning necessary to complete the construction of the corridor by 2025. Please keep this priority in mind, particularly, as the District evaluates how to spend significant additional dollars that have been unexpectedly provided directly to RTD via federal stimulus payments.

RTD has a statutory and ethical duty to the voters of its District to complete FasTracks. The state's economic vitality depends on our ability to connect all of our communities to affordable and efficient mobility options. And my administration is committed to seeing it completed by RTD. Most recently the completion of FasTracks NorthWest rail and the April 22nd plan projections of 8,600-10,100 rail riders by 2025 were incorporated in our state's [Greenhouse Gas Roadmap](#). I encourage you to immediately consider viable opportunities that can get this corridor operational by 2025.

I was extremely concerned when, at a recent event, it was reported that you questioned whether an extension of the B Line from Westminster to Longmont is the best option for the region. RTD was trusted in 2004 with additional taxpayer funds for the explicit purpose of building out FasTracks which included NW Rail. Only the voters, who have paid into this system for fifteen years, can modify the decision. As a reminder, the ballot initiative from 2004 read "SHALL REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED \$158.34 MILLION ANNUALLY AND BY WHATEVER ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS ARE RAISED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER . . . AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, SHALL REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT DEBT BE INCREASED \$3.477 BILLION, . . . WITH ALL PROCEEDS OF DEBT AND TAXES TO BE USED AND SPENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A FIXED GUIDE WAY MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM, THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL PARK-N-RIDE LOTS, THE EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING PARK-N-RIDE LOTS, AND INCREASED BUS SERVICE, . . . AS SPECIFIED IN THE TRANSIT EXPANSION PLAN ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DISTRICT ON OR BEFORE APRIL 22, 2004"

I have attached the [Transit Plan](#) adopted on April 22nd, 2004 as it is the relevant document governing the use of the proceeds from the voter-approved tax. I encourage you to look through this document, signed by all 15 RTD Directors on April 22nd, 2004. Voters know that this document describes how tax-payer funds would be used, and that certainty was a key component of the successful campaign to pass Fastracks. Indeed, absent a plan adopted by the board by April 22nd, 2004 the initiative would have been found inoperable because the very text of the initiative contemplates and requires such a binding adoption.

The adopted plan clearly states “The FasTracks Plan includes 119 miles of rail rapid transit in nine corridors and contributes to the construction of 18 miles of bus rapid transit. An overview of the rapid transit elements of the FasTracks Plan is shown in Figure 1, FasTracks Rapid Transit Corridors.” Below is Figure 1 from the April 22nd plan that was part of the ballot initiative.



Again, I urge you and RTD to move quickly and prioritize the construction and operation items committed to taxpayers as part of the April 22, 2004 plan specified directly in the ballot language. I am committed to ensuring that during my tenure as Governor and beyond, that sacred promise with taxpayers is kept. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis

Jared Polis
Governor