



FasTracks *Yes!*

Then and Now Transit Alliance Transit Academy

April 8, 2008



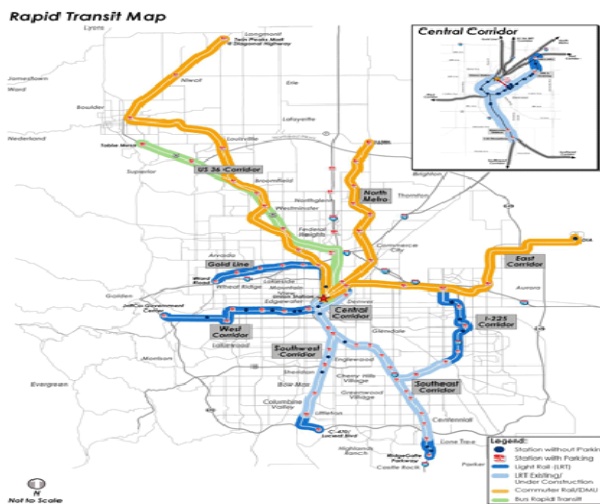
Background

- RTD created by legislature in 1969
- Regional authority to plan/build public transportation system for six county area (and portion of 7th county)
- Citizens approved funding in 1973
- Continued growth through 70's & 80's
- First LRT corridor opened in 1994
- Two additional corridors opened since 1994

Background

- Proposed expansion failed in 1997 (58%-42%)
- RTD began extensive outreach to develop new plan – “FasTracks”
- Legislature granted authority to go to ballot, by petition, in May 2002
- Formal review and approval of plan by DRCOG (Regional MPO)

FasTracks Plan Map





Research, Research, Research

- Goals:
 - Start early
 - Avoid “talking to ourselves”
 - Listen!
- Research:
 - 4 baseline surveys
 - 20+ Focus groups
 - Tracking polls



What We “Expected”

- Transit riders most likely to support
- Higher income less likely to support
- Republicans would never vote to increase taxes for transit
- Common perception:
 - It won't make a difference in “my life”



Key Findings from Research

- Wanted something done now to address traffic – 12 years is too long
- Highways alone would not solve congestion – all about “the trains”
- General awareness of the success of light rail
- Voters did NOT know about the FasTracks “plan”



Key Findings from Research

- Once citizens learned about the plan, they overwhelmingly supported it
- Perception that good transit equates to more prosperity, higher property values, etc.
- Choices vs. actual transit use
- Guilt doesn't work
- Be specific



Key Messages

- The time is now
- Translate the cost – 4 pennies on a \$10 purchase
- The Map is key
- Can't stop growth – need to plan for it
- FasTracks provides “choices”



Election Results (2004)

YES: 590,673 (57.2 %)

NO: 428,915 (42.8 %)

County	Yes	%	No	%
Adams	55,588	47.2%	62,093	52.8%
Arapahoe	116,729	56.2%	90,822	43.8%
Boulder	93,247	64.7%	50,950	35.3%
Broomfield	11,816	53.9%	10,112	46.1%
Denver	127,875	65.2%	68,374	34.8%
Douglas	42,530	55.1%	34,598	44.9%
Jefferson	142,888	56.1%	111,966	43.9%
Weld	617	50.2%	612	49.8%
TOTALS	618,168	57.2%	449,142	42.8%



Keys to Successful Campaign

- Started early
- Research
- All volunteer petition drive
- Built coalitions
- Voter contact and education
- Timely purchase of television



Program Challenges

- Projected costs up 47% since 2004
 - Key commodities (steel, concrete, copper)
 - Railroad right-of-way
- Projected revenues down 31% since 2004
- \$2.2 billion funding gap (based on 2008 APE)

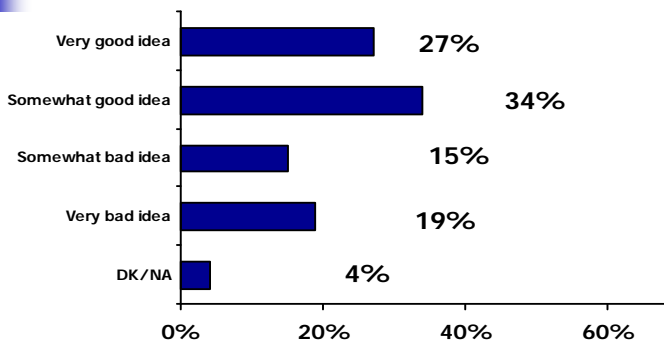
“Looking back to the Election in 2004, do you recall if you voted for or against FasTracks?”

	2004	2007	2009
Voted For	57.8%	62%	66%
Voted Against	42.2%	10%	9%
Didn't Vote		8%	9%
Can't Recall		18%	14%
Refused		2%	2%

Today, more people rate FasTracks as a “good decision” than the number that voted for it in 2004

County	2004 Election		2007 Survey		2009 Survey	
	Yes	No	Good Decision	Bad Decision	Good Decision	Bad Decision
Adams/Weld	47%	53%	73%	16%	73%	15%
Arapahoe	56%	44%	80%	8%	83%	10%
Boulder	65%	35%	75%	9%	84%	12%
Broomfield	54%	46%	76%	6%	60%	40%
Denver	65%	35%	86%	5%	84%	9%
Douglas	55%	45%	85%	4%	84%	14%
Jefferson	56%	44%	76%	12%	85%	8%
TOTAL	58%	42%	79%	9%	83%	11%

October 2008 Poll: Build the complete original plan by 2017 – and pay for est. \$3.2B additional costs with additional revenues – including sales tax increase up to 2-tenths of one-percent



Good idea: 61% | Bad idea: 34%

Program Options

Build scaled-down version that we can afford, complete by 2017—and end program

Good idea: 44% | Bad idea: 47%

Build the entire lengths in original plan, but slow pace to complete in 2034.

Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%

Build it all on by 2017 by obtaining more revenues, which could include sales tax increase of up to 4-tenths of one percent.

Good idea: 57% | Bad idea: 38%

Build the NW line, the North metro line, and I-225 as only single track lines.

Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%

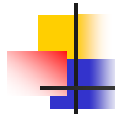
Complete the West Corridor line under construction—and cancel the rest of FasTracks

Good idea: 20% | Bad idea: 74%

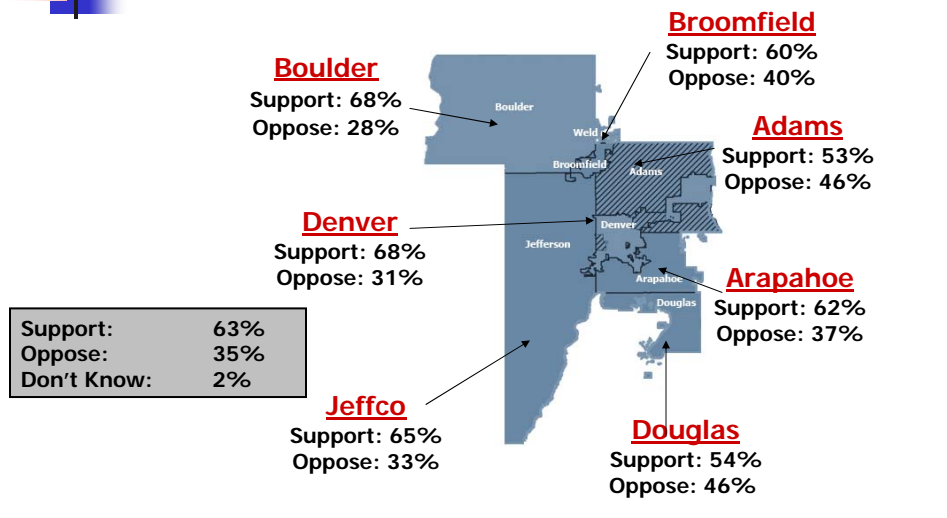


January 2009 Poll Question:

“Although there are currently no specific plans or funding proposals from RTD. . .and of course your personal position would be based upon the ultimate details of any proposal. . .based upon everything you have just heard about the budget challenges facing RTD and FasTracks. . .would you generally support or oppose an increase of up to four-tenths of one percent in the sales-tax rate—that’s four pennies on every ten dollars worth of purchase, in addition to the current four-tenths of one percent in sales tax approved by voters in 2004 for FasTracks—with the goal of complete the FasTracks system in the original proposed timeframe of 2017?”



“To complete the full FasTracks plan by 2017, would you generally support or oppose an increase of up to four-tenths of a percent in the sales tax rate – that’s four pennies on every ten dollars?”



Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas show the lowest intensity in levels of support, and the highest intensity of opposition

	Strongly support	Somewhat Support	<i>NET Support</i>	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	<i>NET Oppose</i>
Adams	24%	29%	53%	11%	34%	44%
Arapahoe	32%	30%	62%	14%	23%	37%
Boulder	42%	26%	68%	11%	18%	29%
Denver	41%	27%	68%	11%	20%	31%
Douglas	26%	28%	54%	18%	28%	46%
Jeffco	40%	25%	65%	10%	23%	33%
Broomfield	20%	40%	60%	20%	20%	40%

Support/Opposition among various demographics

	NET SUPPORT	<i>Difference</i>	NET Oppose
Democrat	72%	46%	26%
Republican	53%	7%	46%
Right Track	71%	43%	28%
Wrong Direction	47%	-6%	53%
< \$25,000	51%	6%	45%
\$26-55,000	69%	39%	30%
\$56-100,000	63%	36%	27%
\$100,000<	69%	39%	30%
< 34 years	62%	25%	37%
35 – 54 years	63%	28%	35%
55 – 64 years	70%	40%	30%
65+ years	57%	16%	41%



For the 63% of respondents that “support,” the top reasons centered on the need for more transit

“And, in your own words, what is the primary reason you would vote this way?”

Top Responses – Support

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Need mass transit | 24% |
| 2. Pollution/congestion | 13% |
| 3. Good for region/growth | 7% |
| 4. Need to finish system | 6% |
| 5. Worth the extra tax | 6% |



For the 28% of respondents that “oppose,” the top reasons centered on tax concerns and the management of RTD

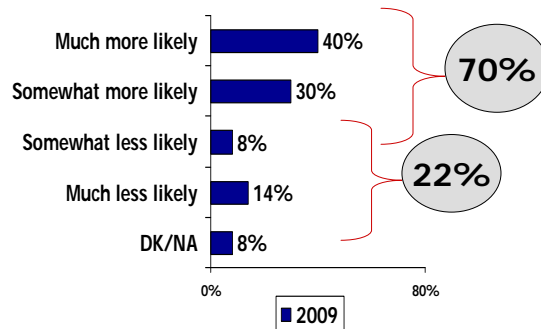
“And, in your own words, what is the primary reason you would vote this way?”

Top Responses – Oppose

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Taxes too high | 12% |
| 2. No confidence in management/RTD | 6% |
| 3. Poor economy | 3% |
| 4. Too expensive | 3% |

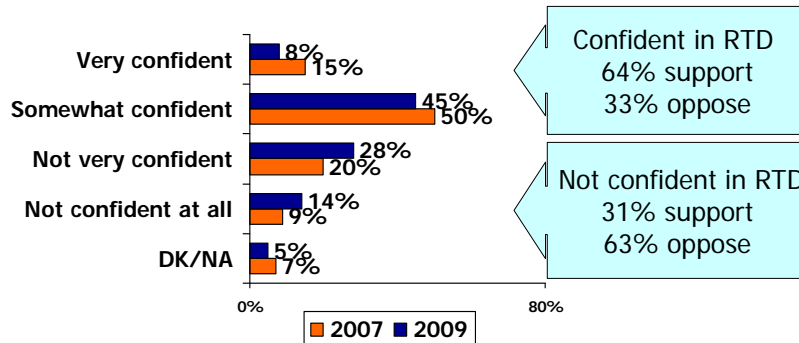
A sunset provision or expiration provision generates a positive response

If I told you that the additional tax would expire when the bonds for construction of all projects are paid off. . . would that make you more likely or less likely to support?



Confidence in RTD to overcome budget challenges provides a strong contrast in support vs. opposition to additional FasTracks tax

"How confident are you that RTD can overcome these challenges of rising costs and deliver FasTracks as approved by voters?"





Summary

- No buyer's remorse:
 - FasTracks is viewed as a good decision;
 - People want all of it to be built; and
 - They want it sooner (2017) not later (2034)
- BUT if cuts have to be made to the system:
 - Use rational, data-driven fiscal & ridership criteria
- Support for additional revenues through sales tax increase crosses all demographics and the region



Summary

- However, responses show some vulnerabilities:
 - "Soft" support for additional FasTracks sales tax in some areas
 - Confidence in RTD, especially as FasTracks financial plan is revised, is connected to support/opposition to additional FasTracks tax



Key Findings

- Respondents are very negative on options to truncate lines, or extend construction of system to 2034
- Most positive view is of building the full system by 2017—even if that means going to voters for additional taxes
- If there are going to be cuts to the original plan, decisions should be made according to fiscal & ridership criteria



Progress since January

- FASTER legislation gave RTD ability to raise sales taxes without first going to the legislature
- Metro Mayors Caucus recommendation supporting full build out option and tax increase
- Board adopted financial plan that includes 0.4% sales tax increase
 - Timing of election to be determined



MMC Task Force Recommendations

- Any solution must be equitable to all corridors
- Entire system must be built out as promised
- Build out will be completed by 2017
- New revenue must have a sunset provision
- All possible revenue strategies should be used
- RTD should go to the ballot in 2009 for a 0.4% sales tax increase
- Elected leaders should join with RTD to lobby Congress for additional funding



What's Next?

- Research, research, research
 - Additional polling
 - Survey of coalition partners and major backers
 - Analysis of election turn out data
 - Fundraising capacity analysis
- Discuss findings with key stakeholders
- Maintain grasstops consensus
- Develop plan (timing, messaging)
- Mobilize interested grassroots groups
- Building momentum



A Call to Action...

- LTE's, BLOGS, "Rapid Response Team", etc.
- Attend public meetings and speak up for FasTracks
- Share your support with regional grasstops leaders
- Help identify grassroots groups to expand support for completing FasTracks on schedule
- Implement your Actions Plans