



Transportation Transit

Client
Regional Transportation District

Location
Denver, Colorado, USA

Transportation Corridor Study

Project Highlights

- 8.7-mile light rail transit system designed to alleviate congestion and increase economic development
- Fast-track environmental impact statement evaluated environmental and socioeconomic impacts of both the build and no-build alternatives
- Extensive public involvement program, including National Environmental Protection Agency regulated public hearings and community meetings

Project Description



CH2M HILL prepared a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and developed a fast-track final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) by working closely with the design consultant and incorporating environmental work previously done by other subcontractors. The document evaluated the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of both the build and no-build alternatives.

Based on coordination with the public and government agencies, combined with the evaluation of technical considerations, RTD identified a light rail transit (LRT) system as the preferred alternative to serve the Southwest Corridor of Denver, Colorado. The 8.7-mile project was constructed from Mineral Avenue in the City of Littleton to the existing I 25/Broadway Station, which is the end of the line for Denver's Central Corridor LRT system. The LRT project alleviates congestion, provides a reliable travel time for commuters in the Southwest Corridor, attracts commercial and retail opportunities that would increase economic development within the area, and provides an alternative to the single occupant vehicle. Additionally, the LRT contributes to the region's improved air quality.

The EIS described the environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Southwest Corridor LRT, as well as the impact of a no-build alternative. The effects of the LRT and no-build alternatives were evaluated and compared across a broad range of considerations for both natural and man-made environments.

These included:

- Transportation systems land use
- Neighborhoods and historic properties
- Air quality
- Noise and vibration
- Ecosystems, wetlands, and floodplains
- Mineral and water resources
- Parklands and open space



- Hazardous materials

Critical environmental issues included air quality impacts, avoidance of wetlands during construction, transportation impacts, visual impacts of two major flyovers and pedestrian bridges, and the socioeconomic impacts on the neighborhoods surrounding the LRT stations. This assignment also included one of the first comprehensive evaluations of environmental justice issues associated with implementing the project.

As well as preparing the EIS, CH2M HILL assisted RTD with the public involvement process, which included the formal National Environmental Protection Agency regulated public hearings as well as numerous community meetings.