

ADMINISTRATION MEMORANDUM
#11-01

February 10, 2011

TO: Honorable Mayor Joyce Downing and City Council Members

FROM: William A. Simmons, City Manager 

SUBJECT: CR-22 – Joint Resolution Supporting an RTD Tax Increase to Complete the FasTracks Project

BACKGROUND:

On February 22, 2011, the RTD Board of Directors is taking public comment on the Implementation Packages that have been presented by RTD staff to “Complete the Vision”. One of the packages includes a proposal to increase sales and use tax by four-tenths of a cent at an election in 2012. The revenues from this alternative would complete the entire FasTracks program by 2019.

The other two Implementation Packages, one-tenth of a cent election in 2011 or two-tenths of a cent election in 2011, would complete the entire FasTracks program by 2035 and 2027, respectively. Under both the one-tenth and two-tenth of a cent alternatives, the North Metro Corridor would be completed from the Denver Union Station to 72nd Avenue with the completion of the line to 160th Avenue relying upon obtaining New Starts Grant Funding.

This joint resolution of the City of Northglenn and the City of Thornton supports an increase in the RTD tax by four-tenths of a cent to complete FasTracks, including the North Metro Corridor from Denver Union Station to 160th Avenue, by 2019.

This joint resolution sets forth some additional considerations that are key to this support:

- The new sales taxes are used exclusively to complete the remaining corridors.
- The new sales tax would include a provision that one-half of the sales tax sunsets between 2033-2035 and the other one-half sunsets between 2041-2043.
- That RTD include language in the ballot question or in an intergovernmental agreement with all the jurisdictions that provides assurance the new revenues will be used exclusively to complete the remaining unfunded corridors and that individual corridors will receive their appropriate share of the revenues.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the resolution in order to put the North Metro Corridor in the best possible position of being completed by 2019.

STAFF REFERENCE:

Please contact William Simmons, City Manager at wsimmons@northglenn.org or 303-450-8709 with any questions or comments.

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR DOWNING

COUNCILMAN'S RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO.

No. CR-22
Series of 2011

Series of 2011

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF NORTHGLENN AND THE CITY OF THORNTON SUPPORTING AN INCREASE IN THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT (RTD) TAX BY FOUR TENTHS OF A CENT TO COMPLETE FASTRACKS, INCLUDING THE NORTH METRO CORRIDOR FROM DENVER UNION STATION TO 160TH AVENUE, BY 2019

WHEREAS, the 2004 FasTracks program included construction of passenger rail in six new corridors: West, Northwest Rail, North Metro, East, I-225, and Gold; as well as the extension of existing passenger rail in the Central, Southeast and Southwest Corridors; US 36 Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT); Denver Union Station; enhanced bus/rail connection service; and construction of commuter rail, light rail and bus maintenance facilities; and

WHEREAS, the FasTracks projects currently under construction or expected to be under construction over the next eighteen months include: West Corridor, East Corridor; Gold Line; Northwest Rail to the 71st Station in south Westminster; a segment of US 36 BRT-Phase 2; Elati Light Rail Maintenance Facility; Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility; and Denver Union Station; and

WHEREAS, the passenger rail corridors remaining to be funded include: the North Metro Corridor, the Northwest Rail Corridor from the 71st Station in south Westminster to Longmont; the US 36 Corridor BRT from Wadsworth to Table Mesa Drive; the I-225 Corridor from the Nine-Mile Station to the end of the line; and the extension of the existing Central, Southeast and Southwest Corridors ("Phase 2 Corridors"); and

WHEREAS, FasTracks has insufficient funds to construct these passenger rail corridors in accordance with the timeframe established in the 2004 Plan without additional revenues; and

WHEREAS, the RTD staff has presented an implementation package designed to complete the entire FasTracks program by 2019 based on the assumption that a new four tenths of a cent RTD sales tax is approved by the voters; and

WHEREAS, the new four tenths of a cent RTD sales tax would be allocated to the passenger rail corridors remaining to be funded as noted previously and the revenues from the new tax would be sufficient to complete the construction and not require additional funding through the New Starts Grant Fund program; and

WHEREAS, the new tax would include a sunset provision wherein half of the four tenths of a cent new tax would sunset between 2033 and 2035 and the remaining tax would sunset between 2041 and 2043; and

WHEREAS, the North Metro Corridor is an integral part of FasTracks and will provide a key transportation alternative for the north metro area to access the entire Denver metro area; and

WHEREAS, by 2035, over 24,500 riders per day are expected to use the North Metro Corridor and account for about 20-25% of the entire ridership expected per day on FasTracks; and

WHEREAS, the North Metro Corridor will also serve as the connection to link planned passenger rail service from Fort Collins into the Denver area; and

WHEREAS, the North Metro Corridor is planned to include transit stations in Northglenn and Thornton at: 88th Avenue, 104th Avenue, 112th Avenue, Eastlake, 144th Avenue and 160th Avenue which are logical locations for transit oriented development; and

WHEREAS, Northglenn and Thornton have designated these areas as transit oriented development sites, of which the 88th Avenue, Eastlake, and 160th Avenue already have approved transit oriented develop plans in place, with master plans proceeding on the remaining areas; and

WHEREAS, Northglenn and Thornton support for the completion of the entire FasTracks, in general, and the North Metro Corridor, in specific, by 2019; and

WHEREAS, RTD staff has indicated this can be accomplished with an additional new four-tenths of a cent sales tax; and

WHEREAS, Northglenn and Thornton desire to express their support for the four-tenths of a cent new sales tax to complete the entire system by 2019, including the North Metro Corridor from the Denver Union Station to 160th Avenue.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF NORTHGLENN AND THE CITY OF THORNTON, AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the cities will support an RTD proposal to submit a four-tenths of a cent new sales tax to the voters as early as November 2011 in order to complete the entire system by 2019.
2. That the new sales tax revenues and bonds supported by the tax be used exclusively to complete the remaining unfunded corridors which includes completing the North Metro Corridor from Denver Union Station to the end of the line at 160th Avenue.
3. That the proposed new sales tax include provisions which would sunset half of the tax (0.2%) between 2033 and 2035 with the remainder new tax sunsetting between 2041 and 2043.
4. That RTD include language in the ballot question and/or enter into an agreement with jurisdictions within the RTD District which provides assurance that the new revenues will be used exclusively to complete the remaining unfunded corridors and that the individual corridors within the Phase 2 corridors receive their appropriate share of these revenues to ensure the money is available to complete the improvement.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Northglenn, Colorado on _____.

CITY OF NORTHGLENN, COLORADO

JOYCE DOWNING
Mayor

ATTEST:

JOHANNA SMALL, CMC
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

COREY Y. HOFFMANN
City Attorney

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Thornton, Colorado on _____.

CITY OF THORNTON, COLORADO

MACK GOODMAN
Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

NANCY VINCENT, MMC
City Clerk