



newsrelease



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For immediate release
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RTD celebrates the successful grand opening of the West Rail Line

The first light rail line of the FasTracks project is now fully implemented into the existing light rail system, connecting Denver, Lakewood and Golden

Denver – The Regional Transportation District (RTD) celebrated the opening of the W Line this past weekend with a Grand Opening Ceremony attended by over 1,000 people at the Jefferson County Government Center•Golden Station. Crowds of people patiently waited in long lines to be amongst the first to ride the new W Line, which was free beginning about 11:30 a.m. following the Friday ceremony.

During the Grand Opening Ceremony, local dignitaries took part in a special ribbon cutting at three light rail stations in three different jurisdictions, as the Inaugural W Line light rail train made its way from Denver Union Station.

As the inaugural train approached its final destination at the Jefferson County Government Center•Golden Station, it drove through a banner commemorating the opening of the W Line. The RTD Color Guard and the Colorado School of Mines Marching Band kicked off the festivities, followed by a performance by the Ambassadors of Gospel. There was also a presentation of the commemorative plaque which will be permanently placed on the RTD parking structure at the Jefferson County Government Center•Golden Station.

Speakers at the event in Golden included RTD Board Chair Lorraine Anderson, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, U.S. Senator Michael Bennet, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region VIII Administrator Linda Gehrke, Jefferson County Commissioner Donald Rosier, the Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Denver Cary Kennedy, the Mayor of Lakewood Bob Murphy, the Mayor of Golden Marjorie Sloan, and RTD General Manager Phillip A. Washington.

During the ceremony, Governor Hickenlooper signed into law two transit-related pieces of legislation, one concerning third party management of RTD parking structures, and the other dealing with the use of a portion of the Highway User Tax Fund for the purposes of multimodal transit infrastructure.

Upon the conclusion of the ceremony, RTD hosted a celebration with live entertainment, free food and refreshments, light rail cake, free giveaways, and free rides on the W Line the rest of the day Friday.

On Saturday, April 27, thousands of passengers rode the light rail system to the West Rail Line station parties hosted by the local communities and municipalities to commemorate the individual Station's opening along the new W Line. Based on station counts, RTD estimates that total passenger trips on the West Line at 35,000. That 35,000 count was as of 6 p.m. and the trains ran until after midnight. RTD is projecting there will be about 20,000 passenger trips each weekday, so Saturday's ridership may have ended up about double that.

These parties included a chalk art demonstration at Denver Union Station, a meet-and-greet with the Denver Broncos cheerleaders at the Decatur/Federal Station, an interactive social media display at the Lakewood/Wadsworth Station, a celebration of health and wellness at the Federal Center Station, honoring education in Lakewood at the Red Rocks Community College Station, and a festive Western party at the Jefferson County Government Center-Golden Station, with the chance to explore local trails and meet pets that were up for adoption from the Foothills Animal Shelter.

To celebrate the much-anticipated addition of the W Line to the public transportation infrastructure in the Denver Metro region, all light rail service was free to all passengers the entire day on Saturday. Beginning on Sunday morning, the W Line entered revenue service and began charging fares to the general public.

For route and schedule information, please call RTD's Telephone Information Center at 303.299.6000 or call 303.299.6089 for the speech and hearing impaired. Visit RTD's website at www.rtd-denver.com.

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