



Lee Gibson
*
Executive
Director

ENHANCING MOBILITY

The concept known as complete streets has the potential to improve economic development and the quality of life for neighborhoods in the region. A complete street is one that has been designed with the needs of all users of all ages and abilities in mind. Whether they are cyclists or motorists, pedestrians or wheelchair users, bus riders, residents or businesses, people in communities are impacted by how a road fits into their neighborhood.

More and more, people are making their choices on where to buy or rent a home or locate a business based on livability and connectivity. Can they make trips they need to make easily? With the complete street concept, the answer is yes, many times without a car. There might be sidewalks, improved lighting and landscaping, a cycle path, well placed transit access and more to enhance mobility.

(continued on page 4...)

RTC-5 2010 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Veterans Parkway Extension to Geiger Grade Road** — \$8.2 million
- **Sparks Consolidated Group** — \$5 million
Crane Way, Frazer Avenue, Hymer Avenue, Pacific Avenue, Pittman Avenue, Shaber Street, S. 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 21st Streets
- **Parr Boulevard Virginia Street to U.S. 395 Ramp** — \$2.3 million
- **York Way 18th Street to 4th Street** — \$1.4 million
- **Reno Consolidated Group** — \$6 million
Ampere Drive, Brookside Court, Edison Way, Energy Way, Equity Avenue, Joule Street, Reactor Way
- **Silver Lake Road** — \$924,000
- **Robb Drive and Sharlands Avenue** — \$1.4 million
- **I-580 Meadowood Interchange** — \$31 million



Kicking off connectivity at the new Meadowood Interchange — from left: Paul Schneider, Federal Highway Administration; Ashley Carrigan, Rep. Dean Heller's office; Gov. Jim Gibbons; Susan Martinovich, Nevada Department of Transportation; Lee Gibson, Regional Transportation Commission; Michele Dennis, RTC Project Manager; Bob Herbert, Sen. Harry Reid's office; Chairman David Aiazzi, RTC; Robert Russell, RTC; Jade Thomson, Meadow Valley Contractors.

MEADOWOOD INTERCHANGE A PRODUCT OF PARTNERSHIP

On the freeway and surface streets near Reno's S. McCarran Boulevard, Virginia Street and Kietzke Lane, making connections is tough. Officials from the Nevada Department of Transportation broke ground in June on the Meadowood Interchange on U.S. 395/I-580, a partnership with RTC.

(continued on page 2...)

RTC-5 PUTTING PEOPLE BACK TO WORK

RTC has helped create even more jobs in 2010 while investing \$90 million in the largest road improvement program in RTC's history. Two major road projects are being built in partnership with NDOT. The Meadowood Interchange and the Northbound U.S. 395 Project from Plumb Lane to the I-80 Spaghetti Bowl began in spring. RTC-5 investments in these projects total nearly \$25 million. Other projects will impact more than 50 streets in the region.

In 2009, RTC-5 funding helped create hundreds of jobs through road construction and improvement projects in Washoe County while investing \$41 million in the community. The work included 28 road projects and the preventive maintenance program for patch and slurry sealing of streets and highways in Reno, Sparks and Washoe County.

The estimated RTC-5 investment in roads to date totals \$130 million.

NEARLY THERE — RTC 4TH STREET STATION MARKS MAJOR PROGRESS DOWNTOWN

As **RTC 4TH STREET STATION** takes shape in downtown Reno, a webcam marks its progress for all to see at rtcwashoe.com. The \$13 million construction project at 4th and Lake streets is well on its way to completion with grand opening expected in fall. Paid for with 95% federal dollars, the new center created 350 jobs since groundbreaking in April 2009.

After building 23 bus bays, two buildings, sidewalks and connecting canopies, crews are working inside and outside now, painting and installing roofing, walls, tile and more. The 9,200-square-foot north building houses passenger services and retail space. A passenger waiting area and room for driver and support services staff are featured in the 5,700-square-foot south building.

Chris Tschirhart is project manager for RTC on the facility built by West Coast Contractors and designed by Parsons Brinckerhoff.



VISTA BOULEVARD NEARING COMPLETION



Construction continues on the \$10 million widening of Vista Boulevard with concrete intersection paving and landscaping well underway. The RTC-5 funded project began in 2009 and is expected to be complete in September. The work under the direction of RTC Project Manager Doug Maloy also includes a 10-foot-wide path for pedestrians and bicycles. It was designed by PBS&J and built by Q&D Construction.

MEADOWOOD INTERCHANGE A PRODUCT OF PARTNERSHIP

(...continued from cover)

"The project is an example of how people can really have an impact on their community," said RTC Executive Director Lee Gibson. In the late 1990s, an RTC advisory committee observed how densely developed the area was becoming and that started the ball rolling. The South Virginia Street at McCarran Boulevard intersection experiences some of the heaviest traffic in the region. Many large commercial and retail centers in the vicinity draw traffic and provide local jobs. Rapid growth in the residential areas, especially in the south Truckee Meadows, had further burdened an already overloaded roadway network.

RTC began looking at the whole area to see how the intersection could function better and get people to their residences, businesses and nearby activities more quickly. Because the freeway is central to the area, the RTC knew it was important to work with NDOT and the Federal Highway Administration, as well as the City of Reno, to find a solution. Fast forward to 2010, NDOT is awarding a \$22 million contract to Meadow Valley Contractors, and construction on the Meadowood Interchange is underway, providing much needed jobs in the economic recovery.

SOUTHEAST CONNECTOR

Plans to move forward with the SouthEast Connector between Sparks Boulevard and Veterans Parkway in south Reno were approved by the Regional Transportation Commission in April. The board's action directed RTC staff to retain Stantec Consulting for continued public outreach, permit applications and preliminary design. The agreement also calls for development of a strategy that would make it possible to use techniques that design and build the project concurrently, saving time and reducing costs.

The board selected an alignment for the project in November 2008. Further analysis has looked at how the project could best fit into its environment and how regional changes in flood planning, traffic congestion and development might impact the proposed route.

"Moving the project through the next phase as soon as possible may allow the public to save construction dollars realized in the favorable bidding climate we are experiencing," said RTC Project Manager Garth Oksol.

The connector is in addition to a separate project that would expand Southeast McCarran Boulevard. Without the SouthEast Connector, lanes on Southeast McCarran would need to be increased to as many as 12 to accommodate future traffic projections. Both projects are needed to serve the region's long-term needs. Approval by the board provides that RTC will continue to move forward, refining opportunities for mitigation and possible partnering with other agencies on optimal use of limited resources.

Work includes a new bridge structure and extension of Meadowood Mall Way under the freeway to connect Kietzke Lane and South Virginia Street. New on and off ramps at Meadowood Mall Way will be constructed and frontage roads will connect to Neil Road. Construction is expected to take about two years. The work will improve freeway access and circulation on surface streets, really helping traffic move more smoothly.

Federal stimulus funding gave the final boost. Developer-paid impact fees and RTC-5 funds were also used for project design and right-of-way acquisition. The project, designed by CH2MHill, was essentially "shovel ready" when the stimulus program was announced. In partnership with NDOT, a portion of state's share of the stimulus funding was dedicated for construction of the interchange, putting the project on the fast track.

"We plan for decades out," said RTC Project Manager Michele Dennis. When completed, the project will provide additional freeway access to the regional hub; reduce traffic congestion at the South Virginia freeway ramps and at the intersection of South McCarran and South Virginia; and improve traffic circulation at several key intersections in the project area. "The economic health of the community depends in part on that improved circulation. Our commission, NDOT and the community are all working together to maintain our high quality of life in the Truckee Meadows and a good transportation system is very important part," Dennis said.

COMPLETE STREETS SERVE ALL USERS



Celebrating Bike to Work Week, RTC Chairman David Aiazzi is a blur, speeding along the new bike lane on Victorian Avenue built by RTC in coordination with the City of Sparks. Bike facilities are one element of complete streets, a concept that designs roads for users of all abilities, ages and modes.

PARTNERS JOIN RTC AT SENIOR FAIR



Helping seniors remain active and mobile could improve everyone's quality of life. RTC sponsored the Senior Adventures Fair in May at RTC CENTENNIAL PLAZA. Partners from more than 20 community agencies and businesses provided valuable information in just one convenient place. With strained resources this year, many community agencies are limited on outreach, so partnering with RTC helped make it easy to reach seniors with news and opportunities.

NEW VIRGINIA STREET STATIONS RAPIDLY APPROACHING

New transit stations created specifically for the limited-stop service known as **RTC RAPID** are being designed by Stantec Consulting for RTC. **RTC RAPID** is the sleek, new, faster transit service that debuted on Virginia Street in October 2009 along with **RTC RAPID CONNECT**, which links all stops on the corridor.

The RTC Board has directed staff to move forward with up to 14 stations that will feature raised platforms, eliminating the need to climb stairs to board the bus. Fares will be paid before boarding using kiosks at the stations. These and other features will help the service save time, an all important element that makes a bus rapid transit system competitive with driving a car.

"We expect construction to begin in December 2010 and the stations to be ready to go sometime in April 2011 depending on favorable weather," said Project Manager Howard Riedl. Separate, short, bus only lanes called transit queue jump lanes are also part of the project. They allow transit vehicles to bypass waiting traffic at stop lights, along with traffic signal technology improvements that help the bus keep on schedule, Riedl said.

The \$5.94 million station project uses federal funding that cannot be used for existing service. It is a major investment into improvement of the Virginia Street corridor and a step forward for the Reno City Council's goal of transit oriented development on the busy route.



Several artistic designs will influence the final look of RTC RAPID stations.

ENHANCING MOBILITY

...continued from cover

Planners look at expected growth for communities over 30 years or more when we design roads. As we move forward, RTC's goal will be working to help different modes coexist and build on each other. We are looking at a number of projects and determining where the complete street concept makes sense, both in rural and urban settings. We will involve the public and the nearby neighbors to develop projects that improve the way we get around while building up the places in which we live.

THE ROAD AHEAD
is a publication of the
**Regional Transportation
Commission**
rtcwashoe.com
775-348-8990

Lee Gibson
Executive Director

Angela White
Director of Marketing and
Communications

Felicia Archer
Editor

Nancy Mues-Thomas
Graphic | Web Designer

To contact THE ROAD AHEAD
staff, change an e-mail address, or
be placed on the e-mailing list, please
write, call, fax or e-mail:

RTC Marketing and Communications
PO Box 30002
Reno, NV 89520-3002

Telephone:
(775) 348-8990

Fax:
(775) 348-8999

e-mail: Deborah Hollis
dhollis@rtcwashoe.com