

## Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting date: July 22, 2024

Agenda Item #: 7 (Attachment E)

### Regional Bus Rapid Transit Update

Agenda item type: Discussion

#### Summary

This item discusses the region's collaborative efforts to plan for and implement the 11 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects included in DRCOG's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2050 RTP).

#### Background

Staff from DRCOG, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Regional Transportation District (RTD), City of Denver, City of Aurora, and Colorado State Highway 119 (CO-119) Coalition (represented by City of Boulder staff) established the Regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Partnership to address common funding, implementation, and coordination obstacles. This partnership is potentially unique nationwide, as it brings together multiple agencies to guide the implementation of several BRT corridors in various jurisdictions at different planning and project development stages simultaneously.

The Regional BRT Partnership is responsible for executing the regional BRT network outlined in DRCOG's [2050 RTP](#), CDOT's [10-Year Plan](#), and corresponding local plans. The region has committed to implementing 11 BRT corridors by 2050, and five of them by 2030, to help meet the region's mobility, equity, and other goals, as well as to help meet federal air quality conformity and state transportation greenhouse gas emission reduction requirements.

Senior staff from the participating agencies (along with the Federal Transit Administration – Region 8) have been meeting monthly to lead the implementation of the regional BRT network and to coordinate the work of individual BRT corridor planning and project development efforts. Key foundations of the Regional BRT Partnership are:

- Developing and implementing the regional BRT network is more than a single agency can lead or undertake alone;
- Different agencies will lead various individual BRT corridor planning and project development efforts;
- All stakeholders will have the opportunity to participate fully in each corridor, regardless of which agency is leading a particular corridor, and
- Regional BRT network implementation is not just a multi-agency planning partnership, but will also require a multi-agency funding partnership of federal, state, local, and other funding sources.

The Regional BRT Partnership is currently addressing the following three major issues:

- Developing a comprehensive and innovative funding and financing strategy for the "remaining" BRT corridors (see below).



- Defining the various components and elements of BRT and how those characteristics (design standards) should be consistent across the entire system as well as accounting for the unique context of each corridor.
- Leverage resources and efficiencies across multiple BRT corridors and projects, and how to evolve the Partnership's efforts, structure, and activities to support its work over time.

Of the 11 designated BRT corridors, two are nearing construction (East Colfax BRT and CO-119 BRT) and two are in the federal project development National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (Federal Boulevard BRT and Colorado Boulevard BRT). Additionally, DRCOG is completing a "first steps" corridor study for the Alameda BRT corridor, and is about to initiate a federally compliant Alternatives Analysis study for the East Colfax Extension BRT project. DRCOG has also applied for a United States Department of Transportation Build America Bureau [Innovative Finance and Asset Concession](#) grant on behalf of the Partnership to accelerate planning and project development work on several of the remaining BRT corridors.

At the July 22 TAC meeting, staff from DRCOG and other agency partners will provide an overview of the Regional BRT Partnership and status updates for the near-term BRT corridors.

**Action by others**

None

**Previous discussion/action**

None

**Recommendation**

None

**Attachment**

PowerPoint Presentation

**For more information**

If you need additional information, please contact Jacob Riger, Multimodal Transportation Planning Manger, at 303-480-6751 or [jriger@drcog.org](mailto:jriger@drcog.org).





# Bus Rapid Transit in the Denver Region

Transportation Advisory Committee – July 22, 2024

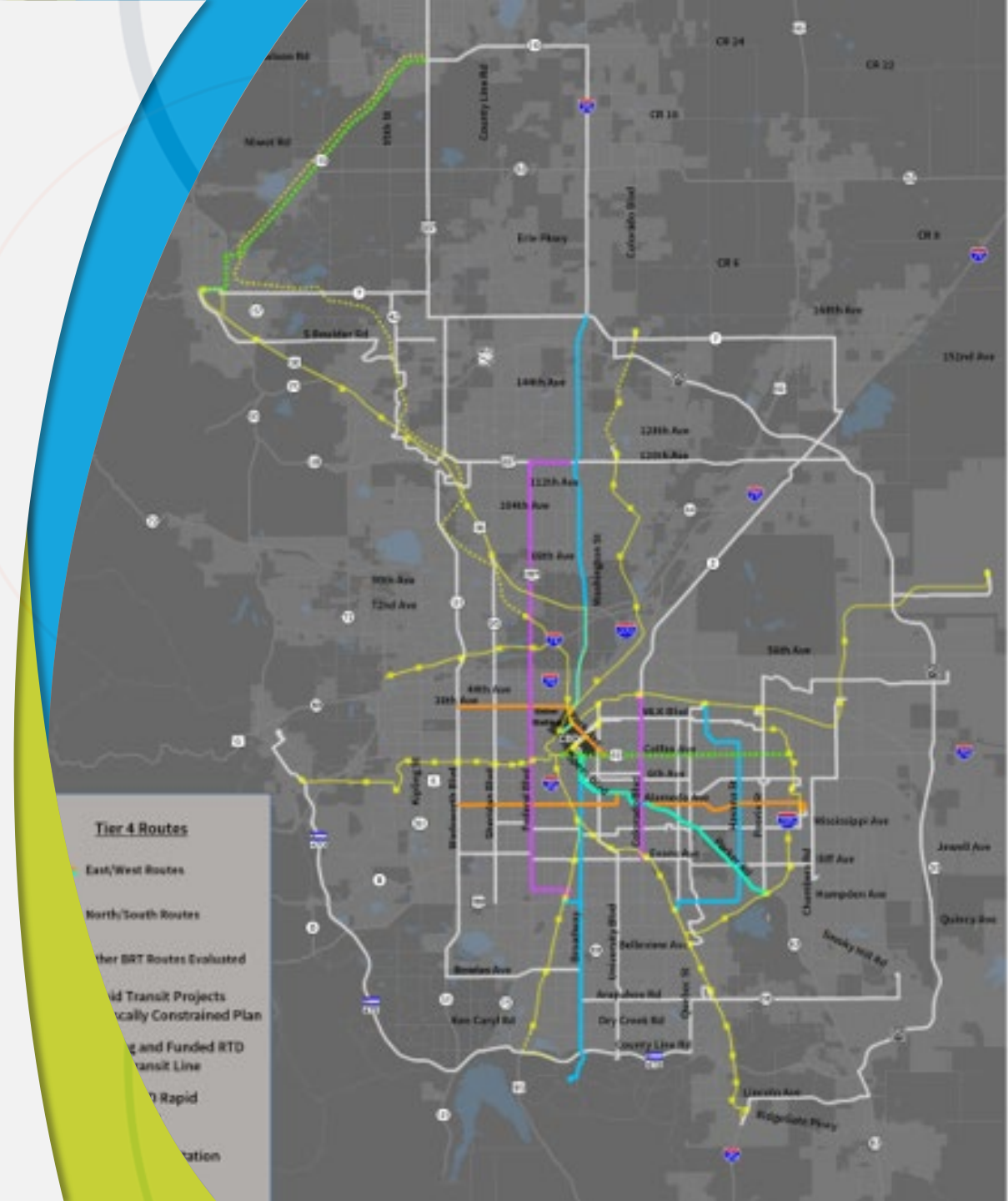
# Flatiron Flyer

- Region's first BRT service.
- Opened 2016.
- Frequent service.
- Semi-dedicated lanes/bus-on-shoulder.
- Off board fare collection.
- Transit signal priority.

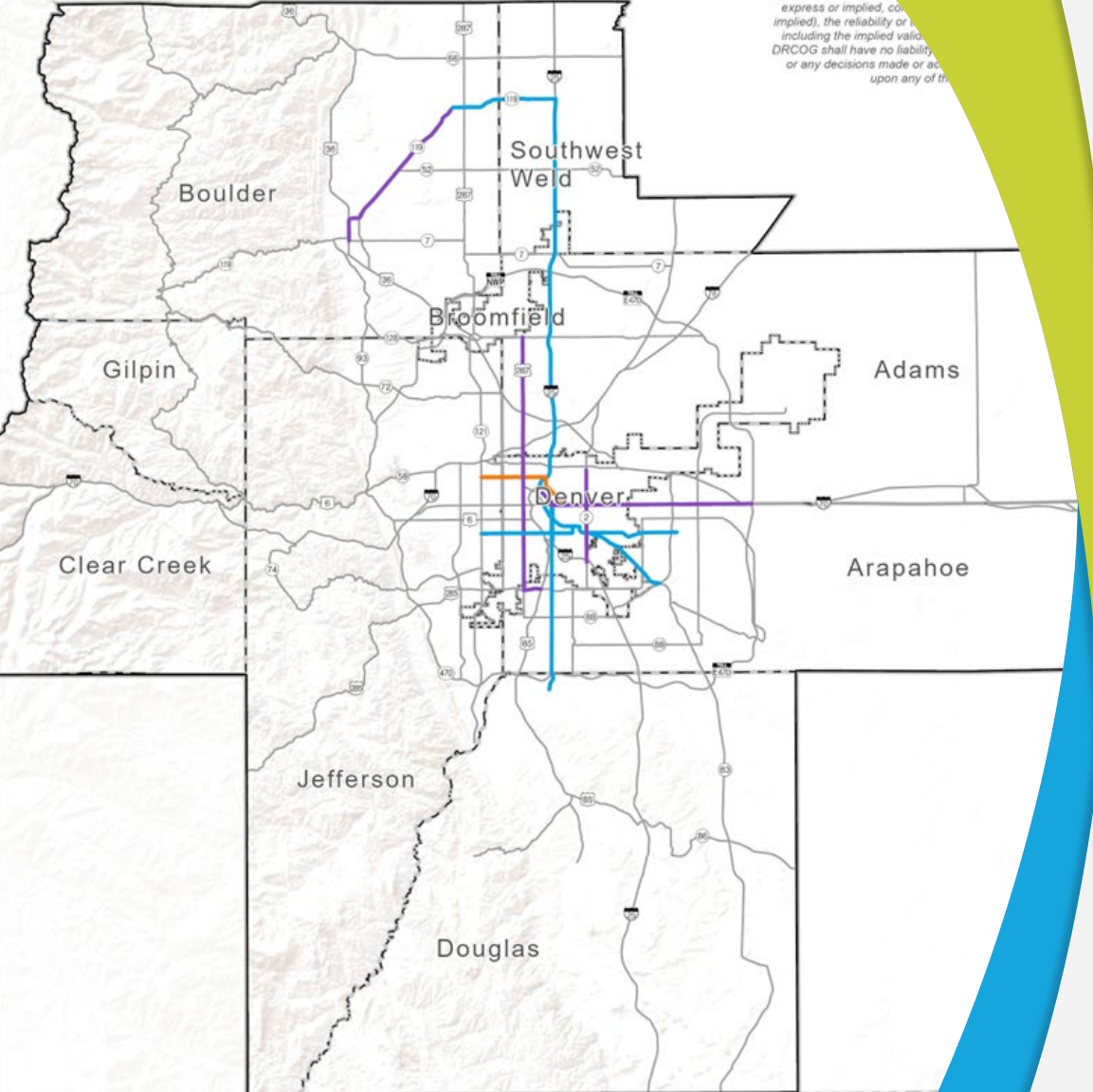


# Regional BRT Feasibility Study

- Completed 2019.
- Evaluated all major corridors.
- Identified 8 corridors for BRT.
  - 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Park Avenue.
  - Alameda Avenue.
  - Broadway/Lincoln.
  - Colorado Boulevard.
  - Federal Boulevard.
  - Havana Street/Hampden Avenue.
  - North I-25.
  - Speer Boulevard/Leetsdale Drive/Parker Road.



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# Regional Transportation Plan BRT network

2020-2030 (5 corridors).

- Colorado Boulevard.
- East Colfax & Extension.
- Federal Boulevard.
- Colorado State Highway 119.

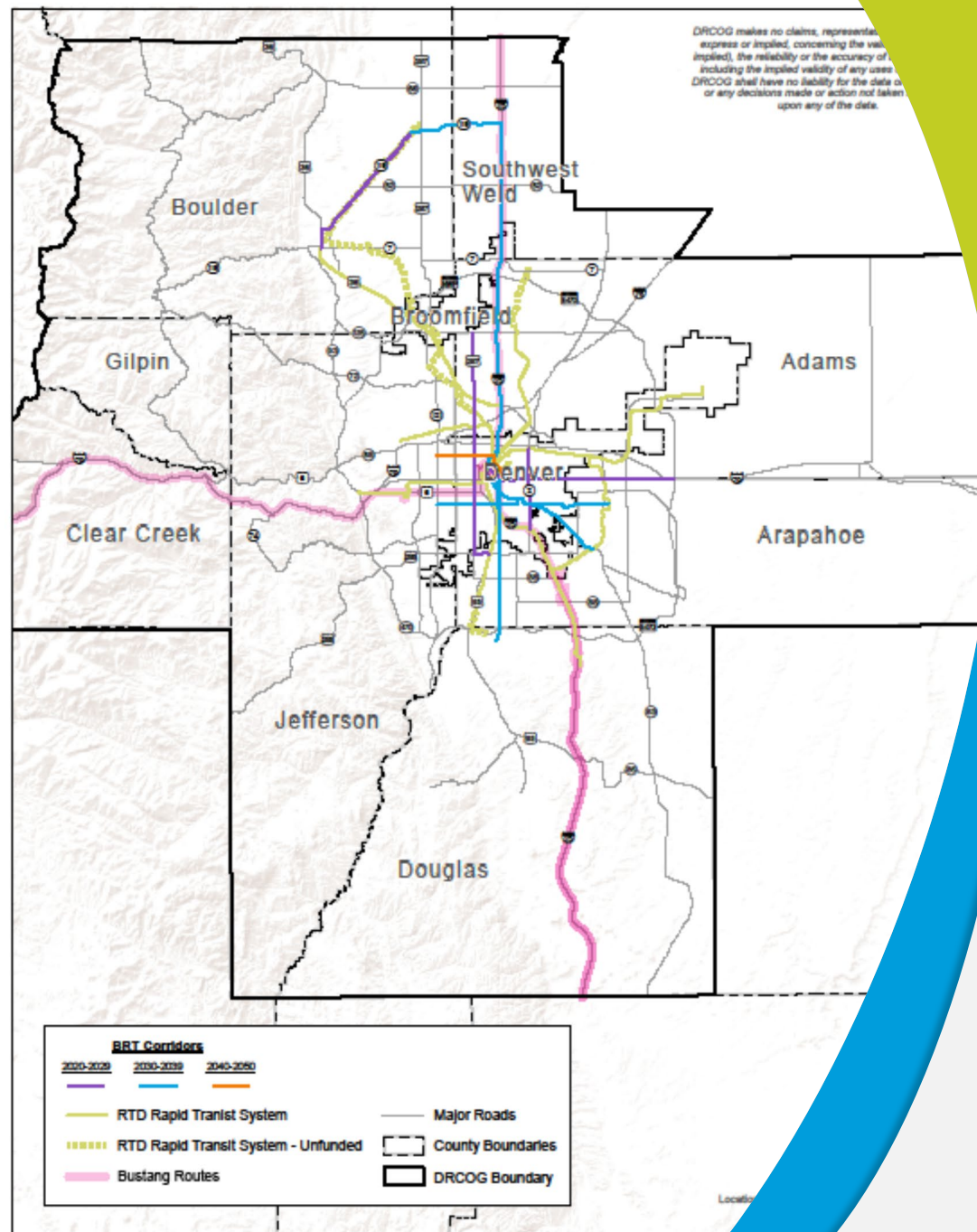
2030-2040 (5 corridors).

- Alameda Avenue.
- Broadway/Lincoln.
- I-25 North.
- Speer Boulevard/Leetsdale Drive/Parker Road.
- Colorado State Highway 119 Extension.

2040-2050.

- 38th Avenue/Park Avenue.

Bus Maintenance Facility.



## Overall transit network

- BRT network designed to connect with overall rapid transit network.
- Existing: light rail, commuter rail, BRT.
- Fiscally constrained: BRT, Northwest Rail peak service, mobility hubs.
- Future: FasTracks buildout, Front Range Passenger Rail, I-70 mountain rail, Northwest mountain rail.

# Regional BRT Network and Partnership

- BRT is important investment priority within the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan.
  - State Greenhouse Gas Rule and federal air quality conformity – especially implementation timing.
  - Also included in Colorado Department of Transportation, City of Denver, and other plans.
- Regional BRT Partnership: multi-agency planning, funding & implementation collaborative.
  - Unique - only multi-agency partnership in the United States?
  - More work (especially by 2030) than any single agency could lead or do alone.
  - Voluntary partnership and participation.
- Collaborate and assist multiple BRT corridors simultaneously.



# Regional Bus Rapid Transit Partnership Members



**COLORADO**  
Department of Transportation  
Region 1



**CITY OF AURORA**  
Colorado



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY



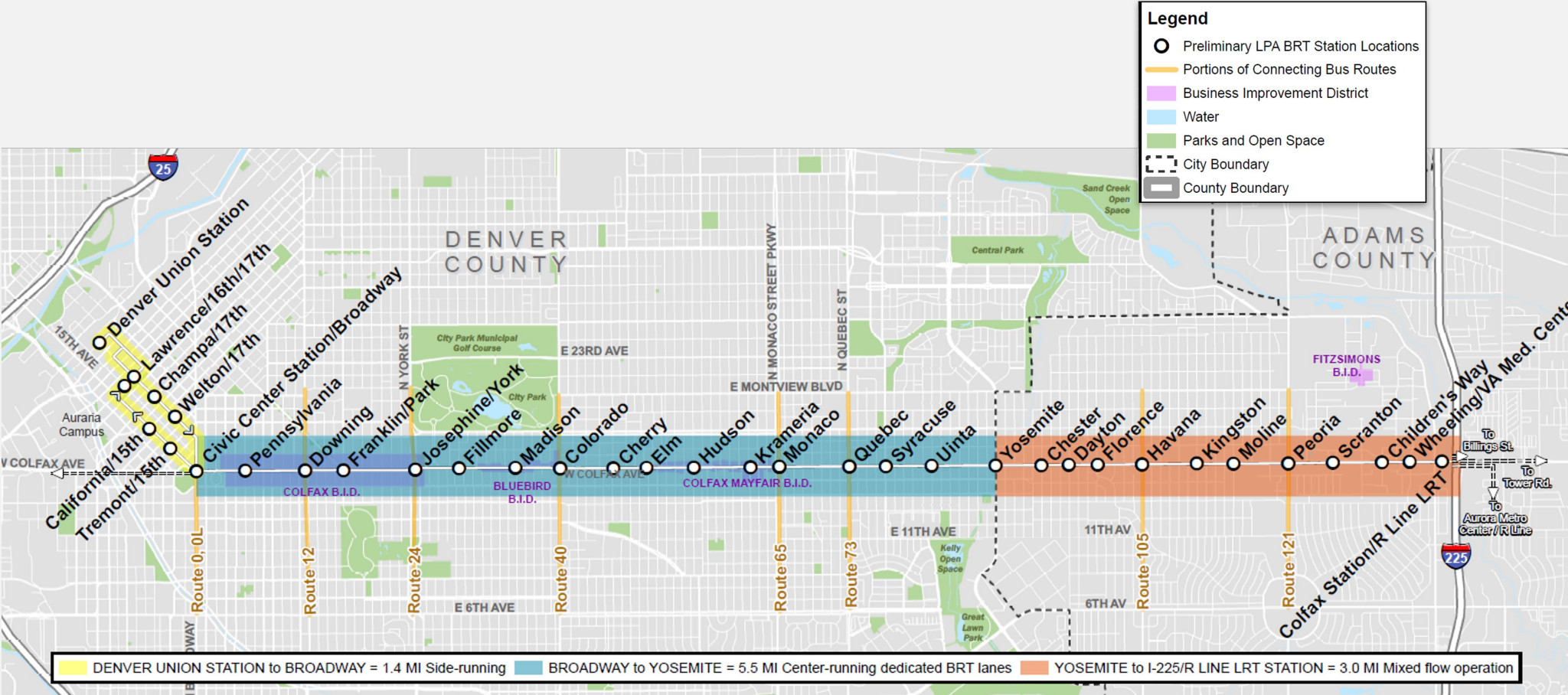
# The Regional BRT Partnership

- Accelerate project development & implementation for multiple BRT corridors simultaneously, leverage resources and efficiencies.
- Costs & funding: updating project costs, developing innovative funding/financing strategies.
- Design standards: defining BRT components/elements, how to apply at project and system levels.
- Partnership development: Exploring charter, management plan, other tools.
- Pursuing federal grant(s) and potential consultant assistance.
- “Building a regional network and system, not 11 individual BRT projects.”

# Bus Rapid Transit corridors status

Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Current Project Status	Staging Period	Current Lead Agency
East Colfax Avenue (Denver Union Station to Colfax Station)	Preparing for construction	2020-2029	Denver
Colorado State Highway 119 (Boulder to Longmont)	Preparing for construction	2020-2029	CDOT
Federal Boulevard (Wagon Road Station to Englewood Station)	Starting design, applying for FTA Small Starts	2020-2029	CDOT
Colorado Boulevard (40th/Colorado Station to Interstate 25/Colorado Station)	Starting design (Alternatives Analysis)	2020-2029	CDOT
East Colfax Avenue Extension (Colfax Station to E-470 Tollway)	Alternatives Analysis study starting 2024	2020-2029	DRCOG
Speer Boulevard/Leetsdale Drive/Parker Road (Colfax Avenue to Nine Mile Station)	Various partial corridor studies completed	2030-2039	TBD
Alameda Avenue (Wadsworth Boulevard to R Line)	Initial corridor study concluding summer 2024	2030-2039	DRCOG
Broadway/Lincoln (Colfax Avenue to Highlands Ranch Parkway)	Initial partial corridor study concluding summer 2024	2030-2039	TBD
I-25 North (Denver Union Station to Colorado State Highway 119)	Not yet started	2030-2039	CDOT
SH-119 Extension (Longmont to Interstate 25)	Not yet started	2030-2039	TBD
38th Avenue/Park Avenue (Wadsworth Boulevard to Colfax Avenue)	Corridor study starting 2024	2040-2050	Denver

# East Colfax Avenue BRT scope and alignment



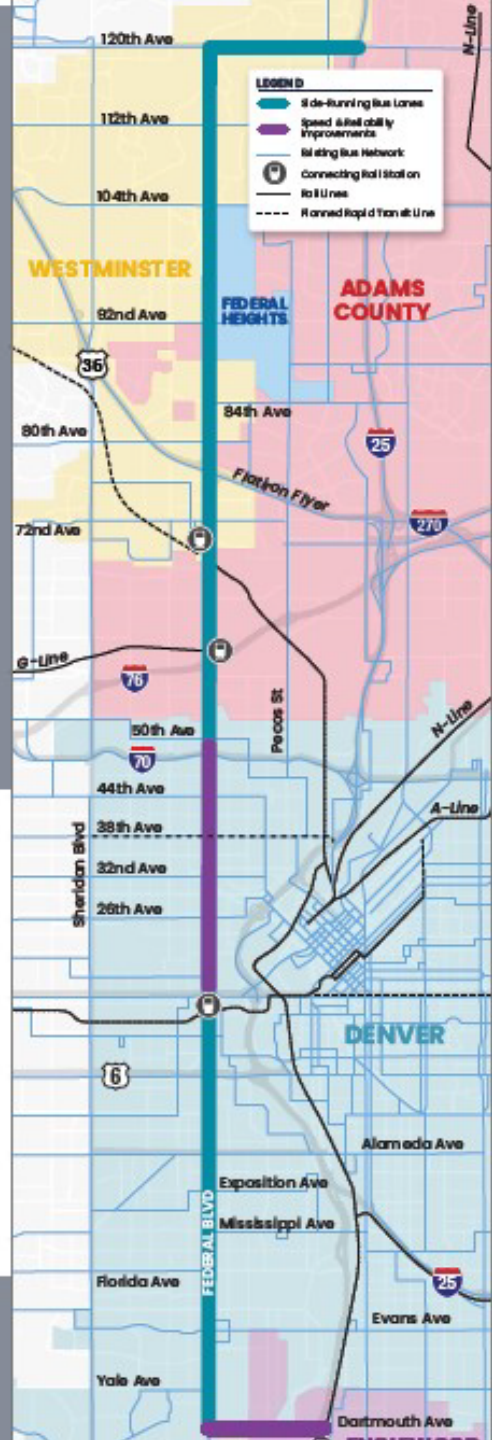
# BRT station design



# Project schedule

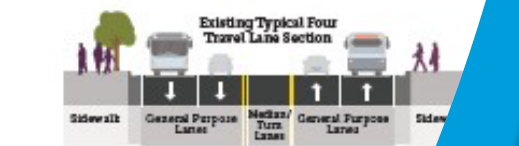
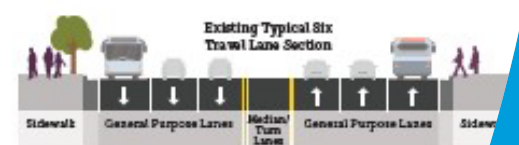


*Public Engagement continuous through design & construction phases*



### Side-Running Compared to Center Running BRT Configuration Considerations:

- The capital cost of the recommended alternative side-running BRT is 25% to less than center-running BRT configuration.
- The recommended alternative side-running BRT would require modification to the outside curbs and sidewalks, while much of the street would not require reconstruction. Center-running would require reconstructing the entire roadway section to account for the center stations increasing cost and construction time.
- Travel time estimates are comparable between the recommended side running configuration and a center running configuration.
- Center running and side-running BRT configurations would both require right of way acquisition at bus stations. The recommended alternative side running configuration would require less right-of-way and therefore cost less and have fewer impacts to adjacent properties.



# Federal Boulevard BRT

- Wagon Road Park and Ride to Englewood Light Rail Station.
- CDOT is lead agency with multiple project partners.
- Currently in preliminary design, engineering, and environmental review.
- Will connect with B Line, G Line, 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue BRT, W Line, Alameda BRT, and D Line.
- Open by 2030.



# Colorado State Highway 119 Bus Rapid Transit

- Boulder to Longmont, with later extension to Interstate 25.
- Two routes (blue and orange).
- Coalition partnership.
- Recipient of federal RAISE grant.
- Will include bikeway, bus queue bypass lanes, and other corridor improvements.
- Service start anticipated in 2027.



# What is DRCOG's MPO role?

- Leadership/collaboration in Regional BRT Partnership.
- Led 2 of 3 Partnership working groups.
- Defined BRT network in Regional Transportation Plan.
- Leading development of potential Partnership consultant SOW.
- Applied for federal grant (Build America Bureau).
- Led/funded “first steps” corridor study for Alameda.
- Transportation Improvement Program corridor and project funding.
- Leading/funding Alternatives Analysis (East Colfax Extension).

# Thank you!

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