



# Colorado Connector

Powered by the Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) District

## Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Discussion



# About Colorado Connector (CoCo)



Over 25,000 Colorado residents voted to name our train “Colorado Connector” (CoCo).

Colorado’s new passenger train service connecting Front Range cities stateline to stateline

A uniquely Colorado approach partnering with freight railroads to deliver service

Front Range Passenger Rail District is responsible for planning, funding, building, and operating Colorado Connector (CoCo)

# About the Front Range Passenger Rail District



Meeting of FRPR District Board of Directors

Created by the Colorado General Assembly in 2021

Empowered to refer tax question for voter approval

Statutory direction to plan, finance, construct and operate intercity passenger rail

# Intercity Passenger Rail vs. Regional/Commuter Rail

Compared to Regional Rail (RTD), Intercity Passenger Rail (Colorado Connector/CoCo) is designed for:

- ❑ Longer journeys (100+ miles) beyond the origin metro area
- ❑ Higher average speeds with fewer stops
- ❑ More comfortable, spacious, train interiors

Both modes are technically compatible.

- ❑ Capable of sharing track along with station infrastructure



Intercity Passenger Rail		Regional Rail / Commuter Rail
Serves 2+ metropolitan areas	Service Pattern	Serves 1 metropolitan area
100-500+ miles	Service Length	10-100 miles
10-25+ miles	Station Distance	2-10 miles
45-55+ miles per hour	Average Speed	30-45 miles per hour
Comfort	Interior Design Priority	Density / Seat capacity

# Phased Approach: Accelerates Service Delivery

Phase 1 - Funding already secured and term sheet signed with BNSF; starter services between Fort Collins and Denver starting in 2029

Phase 2: Extends service from Fort Collins to Pueblo, completing initial station buildout subject to voter-approved funding

Ballot funds go directly to service operations and expansion



# Joint Service At-A-Glance

**Starter service from Fort Collins to Denver funding already in place:**

**Frequency:** 3 round trips per day, 7 days a week

**Station Locations:** 8 stations

**Distance:** 69 track miles

**Travel Time (approx.):** 1 hour 48 minutes incl. station stops and recovery

**Cost Efficiency:** 60%+ lower cost vs. prior estimates

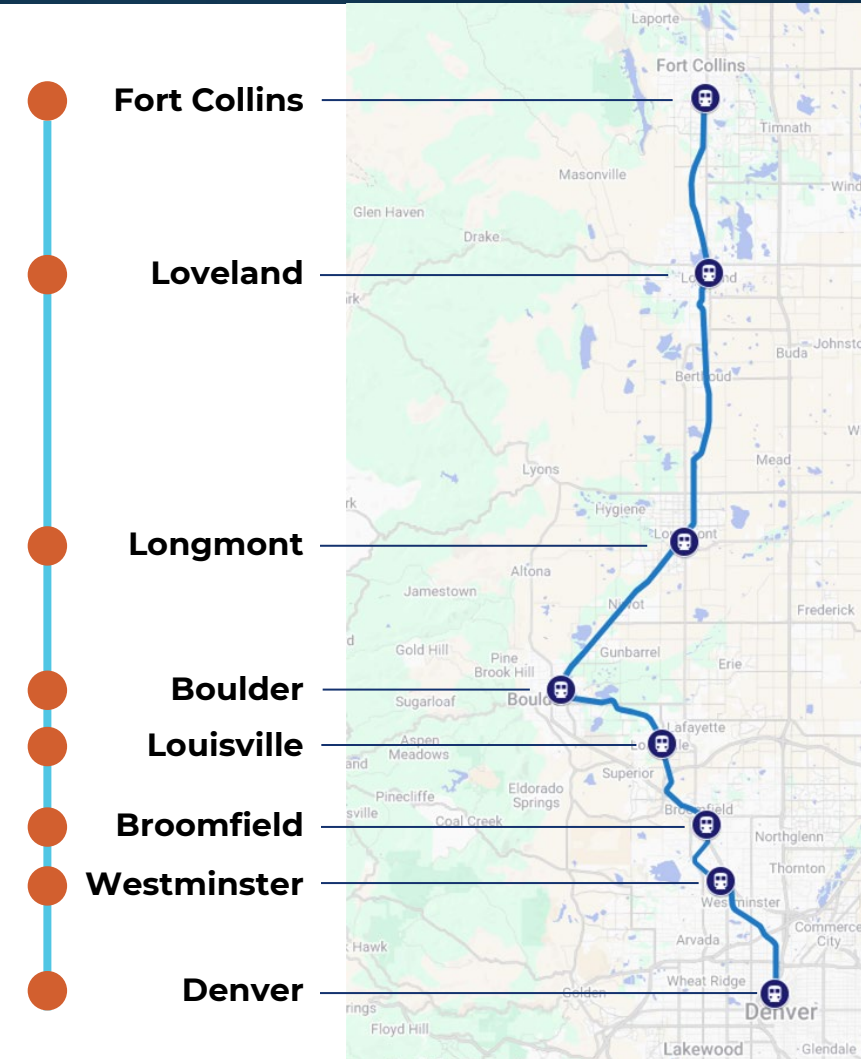
**Expedited delivery:** 2029 start vs. 2050+ from RTD alone, made possible by a direct access agreement with BNSF

**Host Railroads:**

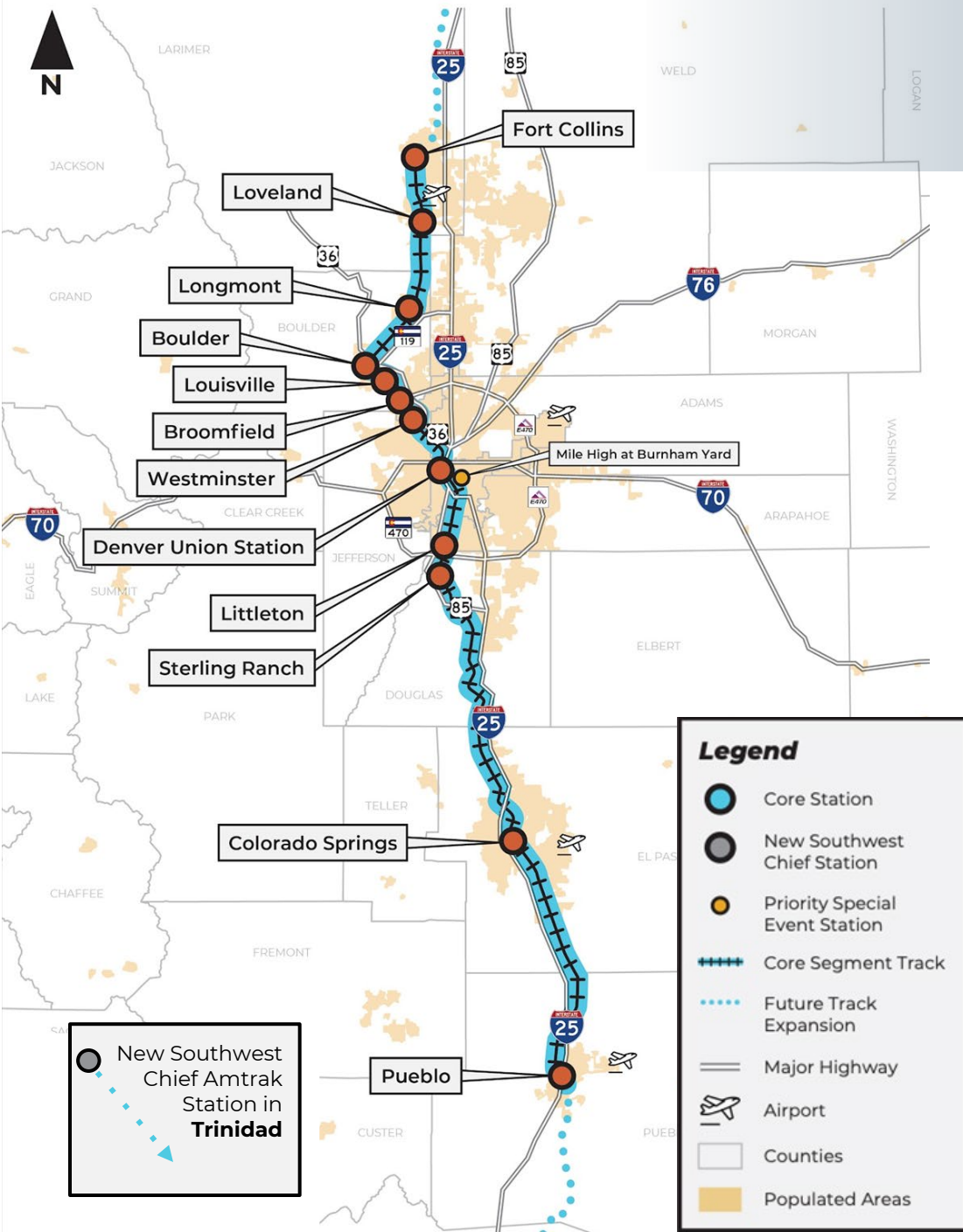


BNSF from Fort Collins to Westminster

RTD from Westminster to Denver Union Station



# Full Service Overview



## Full service from Fort Collins to Pueblo with additional local investment in Trinidad:

**Frequency:** Up to **10** round trips per day by 2045

### Station Locations:

- **12** CoCo stations
- **1** new Southwest Chief station in Trinidad

**Distance:** **190** track miles

**Top Speed:** **79** miles per hour

### Travel Time (approx.):

- **1h 40m** from Fort Collins to Denver
- **2h 40m** from Denver to Pueblo

**Equipment:** Most likely dual-mode (electric + low-emission diesel)

### Host Railroads:

-  **BNSF** from Fort Collins to Westminster
-  **RTD** from Westminster to Denver Union Station
-  **UP / BNSF** from Denver to Pueblo

# A Uniquely Colorado Approach to Delivery

## Partnership with Private Industry

### Direct collaboration with private freight railroads:

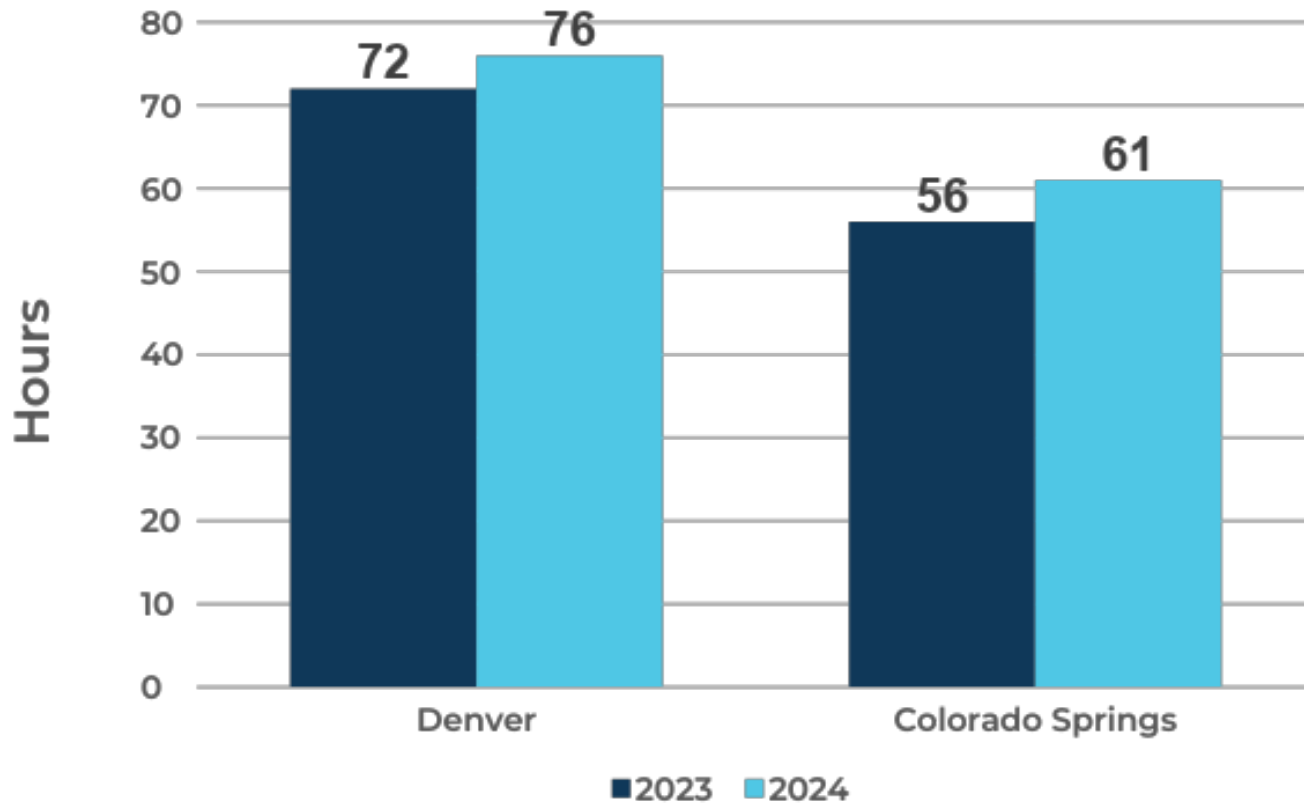
- ❑ Signed a term sheet with BNSF for the Fort Collins to Denver segment (April 2026)
- ❑ Infrastructure needs were jointly defined during the planning process with both Union Pacific (UP) and the BNSF Railway (BNSF)
- ❑ Ongoing partnership needed to deliver future phases of the project
- ❑ Approved a phased implementation model grounded in existing tracks



Train riders arriving at Union Station bound for Coors Field

# Why CoCo: Alternative to I-25

## Annual Person-Hours of Delay per Commuter



Commuter delays are **increasing year over year**. Denver metro commutes are delayed 76 hours - almost **two full work weeks**.

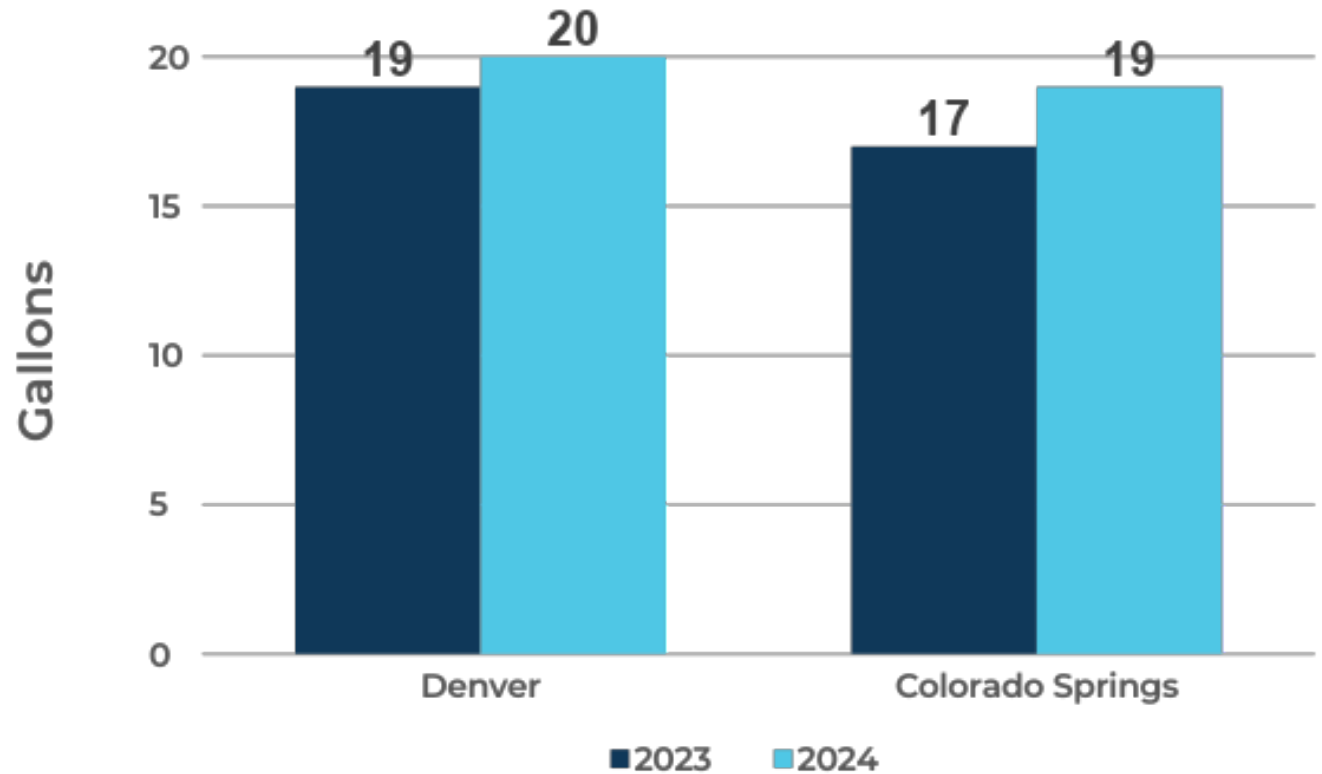


\*Source: 2025 Urban Mobility Report

# Why CoCo: Improve Air Quality

Fuel consumption is **increasing year over year**. In 2024, the average Denver metro commuter consumed an excess of 20 gallons just because of traffic delays.

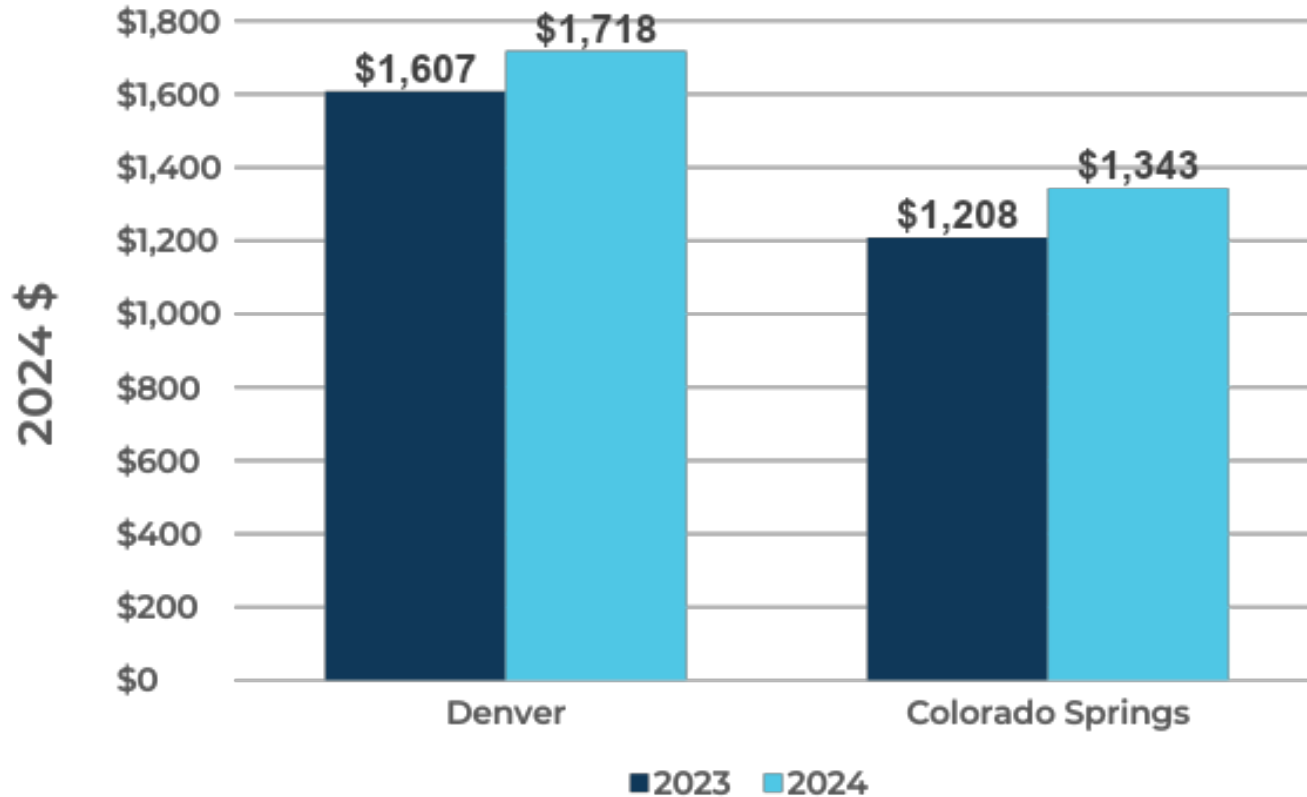
### Excess Fuel Consumed per Commuter



\*Source: 2025 Urban Mobility Report

# Why CoCo: Reduce Costs

## Annual Congestion Cost per Commuter



Congestion costs are **increasing year over year** for commuters. In 2024, the congestion cost on the average Denver metro commuter was \$1,718.

# Why CoCo: Comfort of Journey

FRONT  
RANGE  
PASSENGER  
RAIL



Intercity passenger rail equipment is designed for longer journeys with comfortable, spacious seating, cafes, and restrooms.

# Why CoCo: A Track Record for Rail

Across the U.S., Transit and Rail investment delivers:



## An alternative to highway congestion

- New traffic-free option for residents who drive
- New access for residents unable to drive



## A cleaner alternative

- Rail emits 80%+ less pollution vs. driving
- Rail is 50% more energy efficient than driving



## Affordable Transportation

- Driving is not getting cheaper
- Households with options to reduce from 2 cars to 1 car save ~\$10,000 per year



## Economic Multiplier Effect:

- Every \$1 of transit investment yields \$5 economic return
  - \$3 of this \$5 is local sales



## Household Value:

- Homes near transit worth up to 24% more



## New Jobs:

- Transit creates 50,000 jobs per \$1 billion
- Transit creates 30%+ more jobs than roads

# The Train to the Game





Discussions have commenced with **the Broncos** and host railroads to consider a special event station at their new stadium location.

# Special Event Stations

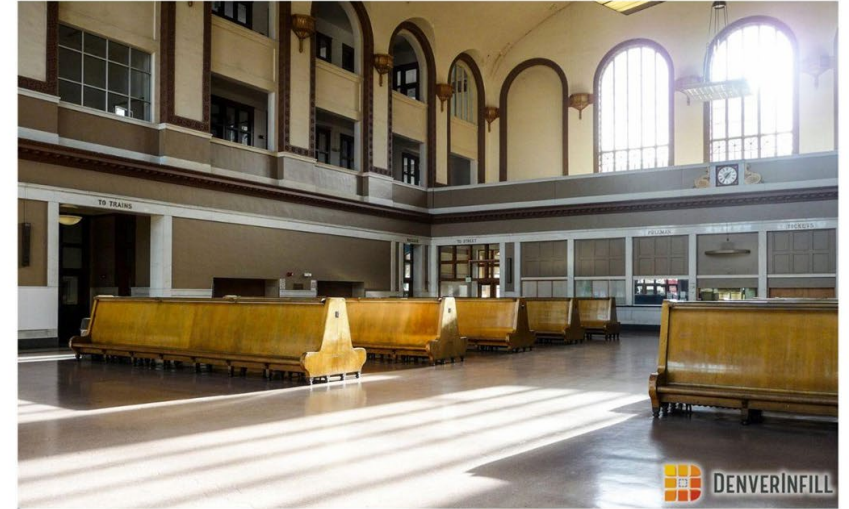
- Host railroad tracks pass through key regional sports and entertainment destinations
- The District is exploring partnership possibilities to serve special events
- Early prioritization placed on Broncos as the largest potential venue
- Future opportunities can be explored after successful launch of service

## Millions of Dollars Sent Annually to Municipalities

Funds for stations, local connections, sidewalks, bike access, transit and community improvements

Support local vision while strengthening downtown communities

Local communities maintain local control over station area ownership and management



**Denver Union Station**

*Circa 2000*  
Pre-Redevelopment



**Denver Union Station**

*Today*



## **Moving Forward: The Front Range Passenger Rail District is exploring a 2026 ballot question**

Next steps include...

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Complying with statutory mandate for outreach ahead of ballot referral

### **Development of Operational Plans**

Outlining how funding would be managed, safeguarded, and tied to clear service outcomes before any potential ballot consideration

### **Possible Ballot Referral**

In consideration for the November 2026 ballot

# Get Involved and Q&A

