DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Executive Committee
John Diak, Chair
Ashley Stolzmann, Vice Chair
Kevin Flynn, Secretary
Steve Conklin, Treasurer
Bob Fifer, Immediate Past Chair
Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director

AGENDA

DRCOG Board Work Session
Wednesday, September 2, 2020
4 p.m.
VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment
   The chair requests that there be no public comment on issues for which a prior public hearing has been held before the Board of Directors.

3. Summary of July 1, 2020 Board Work Session
   (Attachment A)

4. Update on I-25 corridor planning and construction activities
   (Attachment B) Ron Papsdorf, Director, Transportation Planning and Operations

5. Update on the Front Range Passenger Rail planning process
   (Attachment C) Jacob Riger, Manager, Long Range Transportation Planning

6. Adjourn

Persons in need of auxiliary aids or services, such as interpretation services or assisted listening devices, are asked to contact DRCOG at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by calling (303) 480-6744.

ATTACH A

BOARD WORK SESSION SUMMARY
July 1, 2020
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToWebinar

Directors present:

Ashley Stolzmann, Vice Chair	Louisville
Steve O'Dorisio	Adams County
Jeff Baker	Arapahoe County
Elise Jones	Boulder County
William Lindstedt	City and County of Broomfield
Nicholas Williams	City and County of Denver
Kevin Flynn	City and County of Denver
Aaron Brockett	Boulder
Margo Ramsden	Bow Mar
Deborah Mulvey	Castle Pines
Tammy Maurer	Centennial
Randy Weil	Cherry Hills Village
Nicole Frank	Commerce City
Steve Conklin	Edgewater
Celeste Arner	Federal Heights
Jim Dale	Golden
Libby Szabo	Jefferson County
Stephanie Walton	Lafayette
Pamela Grove	Littleton
Wynne Shaw	Lone Tree
Collen Whitlow	Mead
Joyce Downing	Northglenn
John Diak	Parker
Herb Atchison	Westminster
Anita Seitz	Westminster
Bud Starker	Wheat Ridge

Others present: Doug Rex, Executive Director; Michael Bennet, U.S. Senator for Colorado; Amy Friedman, Santi Gonzales, Grishma Pradhan, James Thompson, Mike Washington, Office of Senator Michael Bennet; Christine Berg, Keith Hay, Colorado Energy Office; Chris Chovan, Adams County; Brad Bolad, Jason Gray, Castle Rock; Grace Rink, Denver; Lauren Pulver, Douglas County; Kent Moorman, Jon Whiting, Thornton; Danny Herrman, CDOT; Lauren McDonell, CDPHE; Charlie Anderson, Public Citizen; and DRCOG staff.

Board Vice Chair Ashley Stolzmann facilitated the work session. The session began at 4:01 p.m.

Public Comment
No public comment was received.

U.S. Senator Michael Bennet listening session with the DRCOG Board of Directors
Senator Michael Bennet provided a federal update to the Board and received questions from the directors regarding federal policy and legislative issues. Senator Bennet was adamant about assisting surrounding jurisdictions with needs in any way possible, including transportation funding and supporting vulnerable populations. Sen. Bennet also thanked the

entire DRCOG organization and Board for their successful work that has been provided around the region.

Director Jones asked the Senator what his thoughts were about getting a signature from the president in the next six months regarding stimulus packages. Senator Bennet felt optimistic that the administration would realize the need for a secondary bill to be passed to provide fiscal relief to the country and would likely see this in effect by early 2021.

Director Atchison wanted to know if there would be a second round of unemployment checks after July 2020. Senator Bennet stated there would be an extension of some kind to help continue promoting consumer spending and repair the economic damage caused by COVID-19.

Discussion of HB 19-1261: Concerning the reduction of greenhouse gas pollution
Keith Hay, Colorado Energy Office, provide a detailed summary of the bill and the work the state is doing to implement HB 19-1261. House Bill 19-1261 was signed into law on May 30, 2019. The bill concerns the reduction of greenhouse gas pollution and establishing statewide greenhouse gas pollution reduction goals. The Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) plans to consult with the public utilities commission regarding rules that affect the providers of retail electricity in Colorado. The Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) are currently developing scenarios of strategies to achieve the bill's greenhouse gas targets. Initial results from the modeling and policy development by CDPHE and CEO suggest that a 40% reduction in transportation-related GHG emissions by 2030 will be necessary to reach HB-1261's overall GHG targets.

The work session ended at 5:10 p.m.

ATTACH B

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
303-480-6747 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
September 2, 2020	Discussion	4

SUBJECT

Update on recent and upcoming planning and construction activities in the I-25 corridor.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Over the past several years, many significant planning studies and construction projects have occurred (or are occurring) in various segments of the I-25 corridor in the DRCOG region. CDOT staff will use a dynamic, interactive presentation to highlight recent and current planning studies; current, planned, and future construction projects; and emerging corridor issues.

The presentation will step through the I-25 Corridor from North to South, highlighting major activities including but not limited to: I-25 Gap; I-25 Douglas County PEL; Castlerock mobility hub, I-25 @Belleview; I-225 @ DTC; I-25 @ Alameda; Burnham and Valley Highway EIS; I-25 Central PEL; 23rd and Speer, Plenary Managed Lanes; I-270/I-25, 84th to 104th, I-25, E-470 to R4 border; SH 7 Mobility hub and other important efforts such as 6 inch lane striping.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

CDOT Project Fact Sheets

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6747 or drex@drcog.org; or Ron Papsdorf, Director, Transportation Planning and Operations, at 303-480-6747 or rpapsdorf@drcog.org.

FACT SHEET |

I-270 Widening from I-76 to I-70

Location

I-270 from I-76 near York Street to I-70 near the Shops at Northfield Stapleton

- Denver and Adams Counties
- Greater Denver Area Transportation Planning Region
- CDOT Region 1

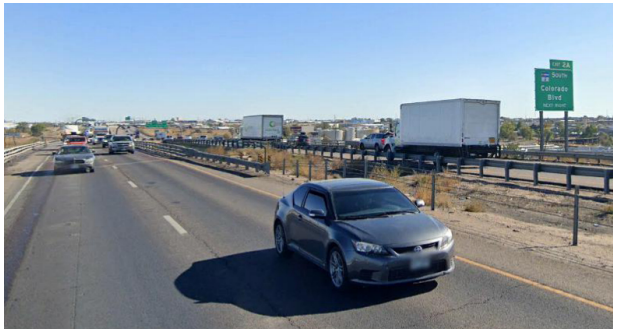
Description

A NEPA Environmental Assessment will evaluate new lane capacity, roadway widening and reconstruction, and interchange improvements. The purpose of the I-270 Corridor Improvements project is to implement transportation solutions that modernize the I-2700 corridor to accommodate transportation demands. Draft needs:

1. Improve safety by reducing the rate of vehicle crashes
2. Improve travel time reliability and reduce delays
3. Update obsolete and deficient bridges and highway infrastructure
4. Improve truck freight movement efficiency

Cost and Funding*

- $500 million total
- $200 million funded through SB 267
- Several BE eligible bridges within project limits



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

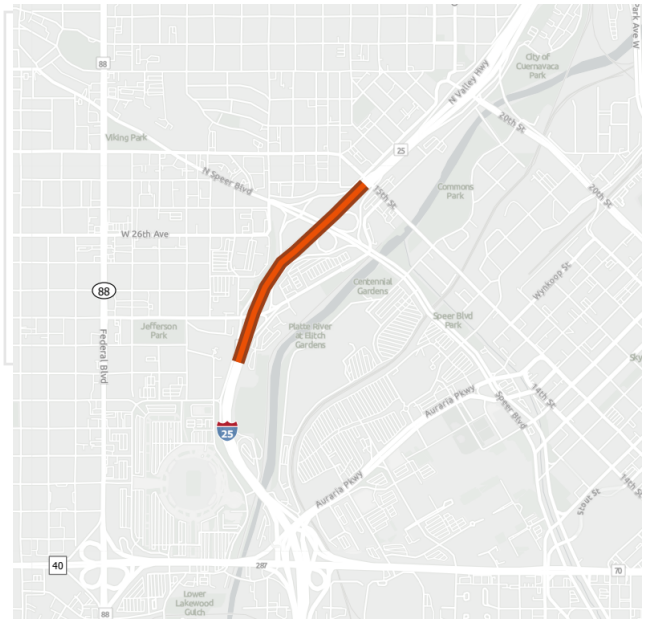
FACT SHEET |

I-25: SPEER AND 23RD INTERCHANGES

Location

I-25 from Speer to 23rd Ave

- Denver County
- Greater Denver Area Transportation Planning Region
- CDOT Region 1



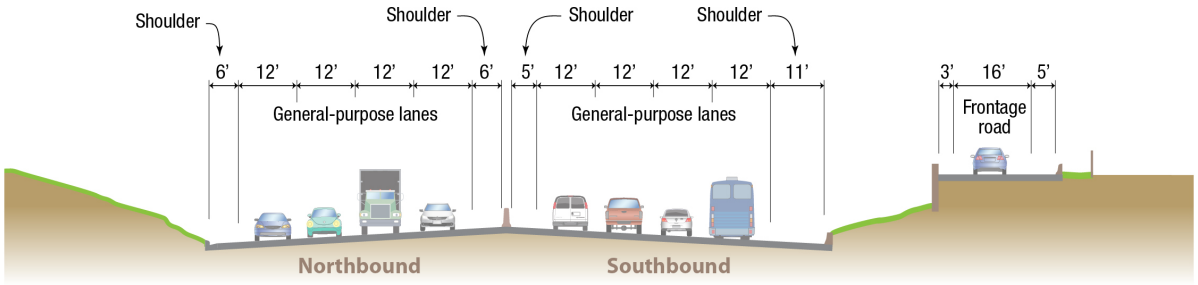
Description

Replacement of Speer and 23rd Ave over I-25, including ramp adjustments and mitigation of short weave conditions northbound between the two streets. This construction will address the findings from the I-25 Central PEL.

Cost and Funding

- $155 million total
- Currently, NEPA and 30% Design are being funded through a mix of SB-1 and BE funding.

I-25 between Speer Blvd and 23th Ave (looking southbound)



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

FACT SHEET |

I-25 Valley Highway Phases 3 & 4

Location

I-25 from US 6 to SH 26 through Denver

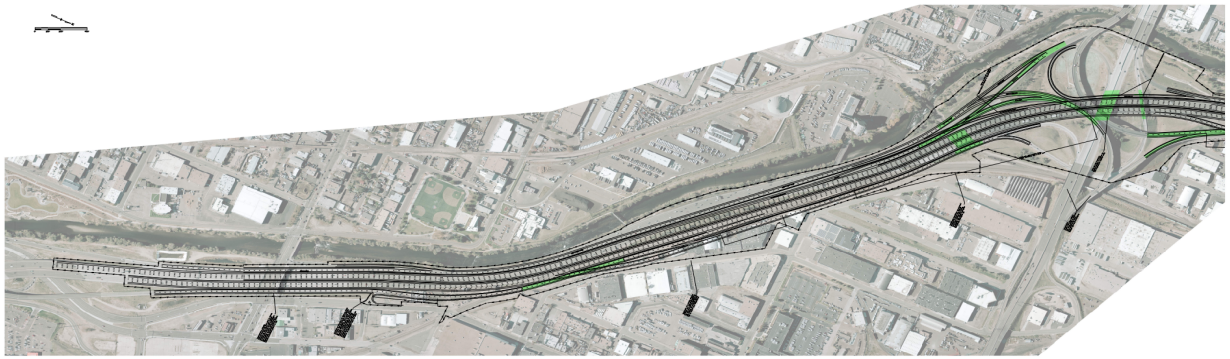
- Denver County
- Greater Denver Area Transportation Planning Region
- CDOT Region 1

Description

Improvements will consolidate heavy and light rail tracks away from I-25 to ultimately improve I-25 safety and congestion through geometric, access, and capacity improvements. Supplemental NEPA is required, as well as ROW, design, and an I-25 Corridor Traffic and Revenue Study.

Cost and Funding*

- $260 million total
- $60 million funded through SB 267
- Remainder expected from a combination off a Federal CRISI grant, RIFF loans, and/or other partnerships



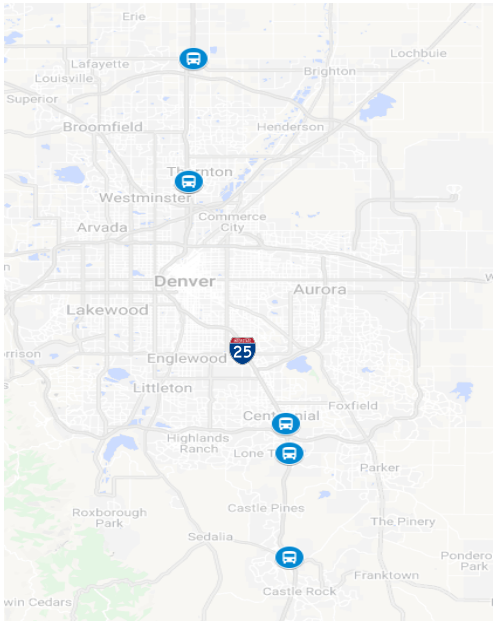
COLORADO
Department of Transportation

FACT SHEET |

I-25 Mobility Hubs

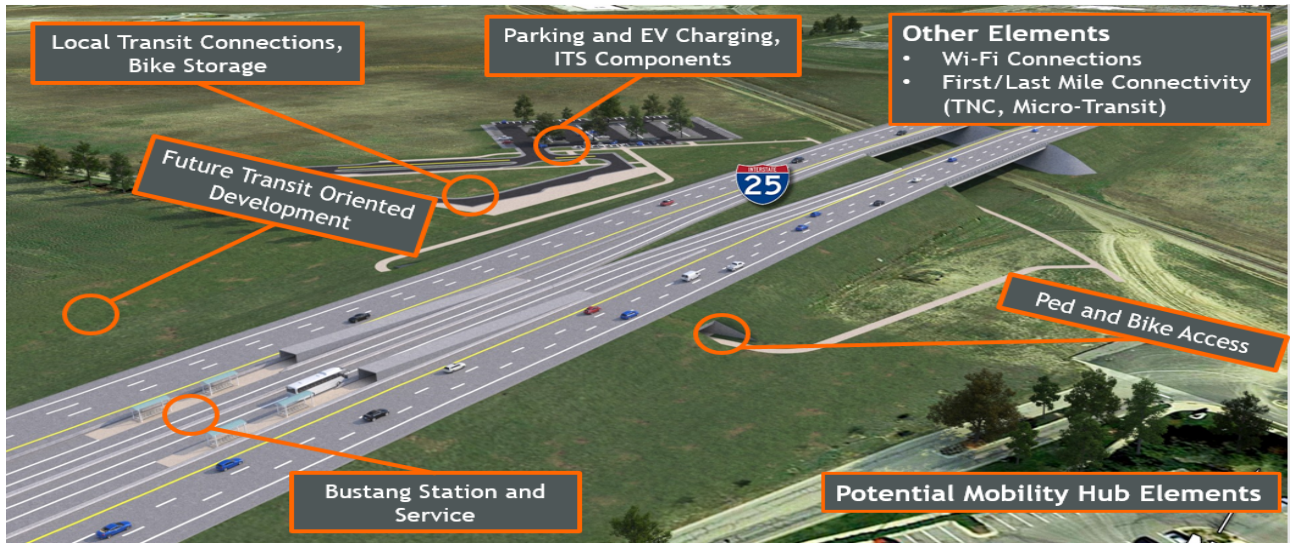
Location

- Greater Denver Area Transportation Planning Region
- CDOT Region 1



Description

Site selection, design and construction of several new transit stations along I-25. Full funding ultimate design would include a center-median station. A new transit station will connect residents, commuters, and visitors to cities along the I-25 corridor and will enable more people to utilize transit services such as Bustang and RTD services.



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

FACT SHEET |

I-25 South Gap

Location

I-25 from Monument to Castle Rock

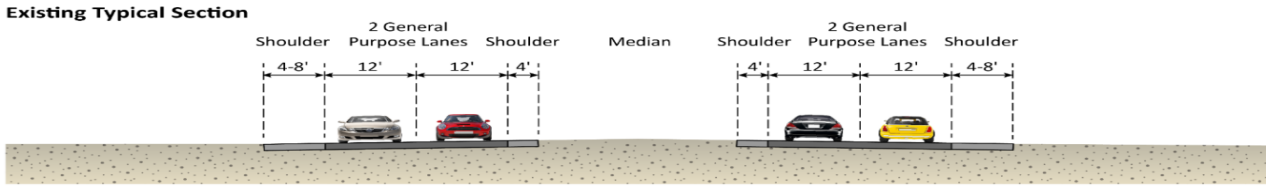
- Douglas County
- Greater Denver Area Transportation Planning Region
- CDOT Region 1

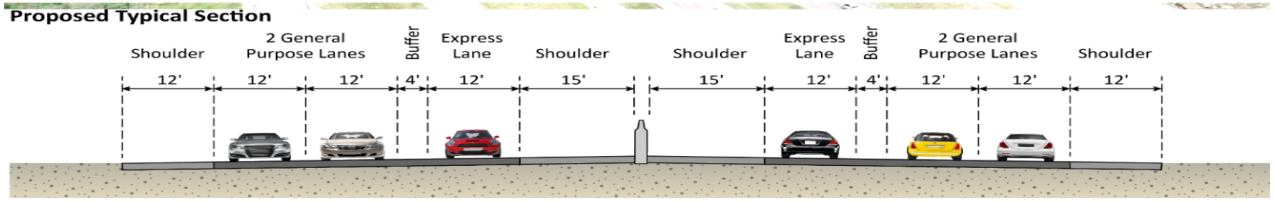
Description

Population growth has driven an increase in congestion, crashes and delays in this corridor, which was the only four lane section off I-25 connecting Denver and Colorado Springs. This multi-phase project will address safety and congestion concerns on the I-25 South Gap through the development off an Express Lane for both north and southbound travel directions, pavement resurfacing improvements, widening of shoulders for safety and incident issues, widening of bridges, wildlife fencing and bridge underpass crossings, new truck climbing lane, new chain up station for CMV's, added ITS cameras and equipment with fiber communication upgrades.

Cost and Funding

$350 million | Funded through SB 267, with contributions from Douglas and El Paso Counties, Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority, and a federal INFRA grant





COLORADO
Department of Transportation

ATTACH C

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
303-480-6747 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
September 2, 2020	Discussion	5

SUBJECT

Update on Front Range Passenger Rail planning process

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

For the past several months, the blended team of the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission ("Commission"), CDOT, and the Commission's consultant (HDR) have been working on the Front Range Passenger Rail project. The project includes significant technical, stakeholder, and public engagement tasks focusing on desired and feasible passenger rail service along the Front Range from Fort Collins to Pueblo/Trinidad. This process is addressing multiple topics, from travel markets and service/operating characteristics to alignment, technology, and funding options. Specific project tasks include an alternatives analysis, public and stakeholder engagement, and pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning activities.

The effort is now in Level 2 analysis that is comparing various possible alignments based on potential ridership, travel times, and benefits/impacts. Stakeholder engagement efforts continue to show a high level of support for Front Range Passenger Rail connecting Pueblo to Fort Collins through the Denver area. Engagement with the two Class I Railroads, BNSF Railway and Union Pacific, continue to be positive. Also, productive conversations continue with RTD regarding possible partnerships that would benefit both Front Range Passenger Rail and RTD. At the September 2nd, Board work session, staff from the Front Range Passenger Rail Commission will provide a project update on recent/current activities and next steps.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

September 4, 2019
November 6, 2019

PROPOSED MOTION

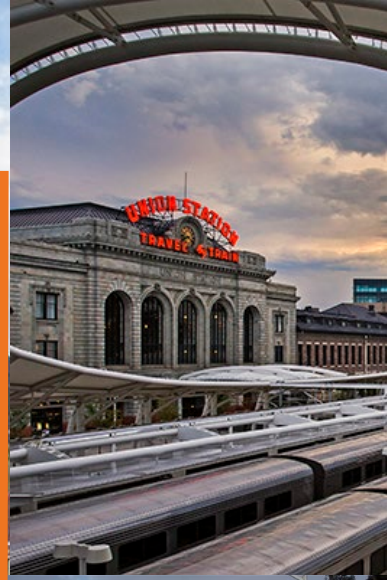
N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Staff presentation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6747 or drex@drcog.org; or Jacob Riger, Manager, Long Range Transportation Planning, at 303-480-6751 or jriger@drcog.org.



SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

DRCOG Board Work Session
September 2nd, 2020

Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Project Role	Current Commissioner	Organization	Notes
Public Rail Transportation Advocate	Salvatore Pace	Resident of Pueblo County	Appointment expires 7/1/2021
Public Rail Transportation Advocate	Jim Souby	ColoRail	Appointment expires 7/1/2022
Colorado Class I Freight Railroad Representative	Nathan Anderson	Union Pacific Railroad	Appointment expires 7/1/2021
Colorado Class I Freight Railroad Representative	DJ Mitchell	BNSF Railway	Appointment expires 7/1/2022
Resident of Huerfano, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, or Pueblo County	Richard Klein	City of La Junta	Appointment expires 7/1/2022
North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) Representative	Becky Karasko	NFRMPO	
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Representative	Jacob Riger	DRCOG	
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Representative	Jill Gaebler	Colorado Springs City Council	
Pueblo Area Council of Governments Representative	Terry Hart	Pueblo County	
South Central Area Council of Governments Representative	Phil Rico	City of Trinidad	
Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) Representative	Bill Van Meter	RTD	
Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Representative	David Krutsinger	CDOT Division of Transit and Rail	Non-voting Member
Amtrak Representative	Robert Eaton	Amtrak	Non-voting Member
Cheyenne, Wyoming Representative	Dale Steenbergen	Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce	Non-voting Member

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Commission's Purposes (SB 17-153)

- Work to preserve Amtrak's Southwest Chief service across southeast Colorado
    - Work with neighboring states of Kansas and New Mexico to upgrade rails, ties, signal systems and other rail infrastructure on BNSF's Amtrak Southwest Chief route across the three states
    - Pursue possible Amtrak Southwest Chief service extension into Pueblo and possibly Colorado Springs from La Junta
    - Consider re-routing the Southwest Chief service between La Junta and Trinidad by way of Pueblo and Walsenburg to better serve southern Colorado
- Facilitate the development of Front Range Passenger Rail service

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Passenger Rail Vision

Developing passenger rail that serves Front Range communities from Pueblo to Fort Collins is a critical component of Colorado's future.

Front Range Passenger Rail will provide a safe, efficient and reliable transportation option for travel between major population centers along the Front Range and create a backbone for connecting and expanding rail and transit options in the state and the region.

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Agency Coordination

Project team members have coordinated with federal agencies including Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and Federal Highway Administration.

Three meetings occurred on the following dates, as well as several coordinating phone calls:

- October 21st
- January 13th
- April 2nd

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

2019 CRISI Grant Award

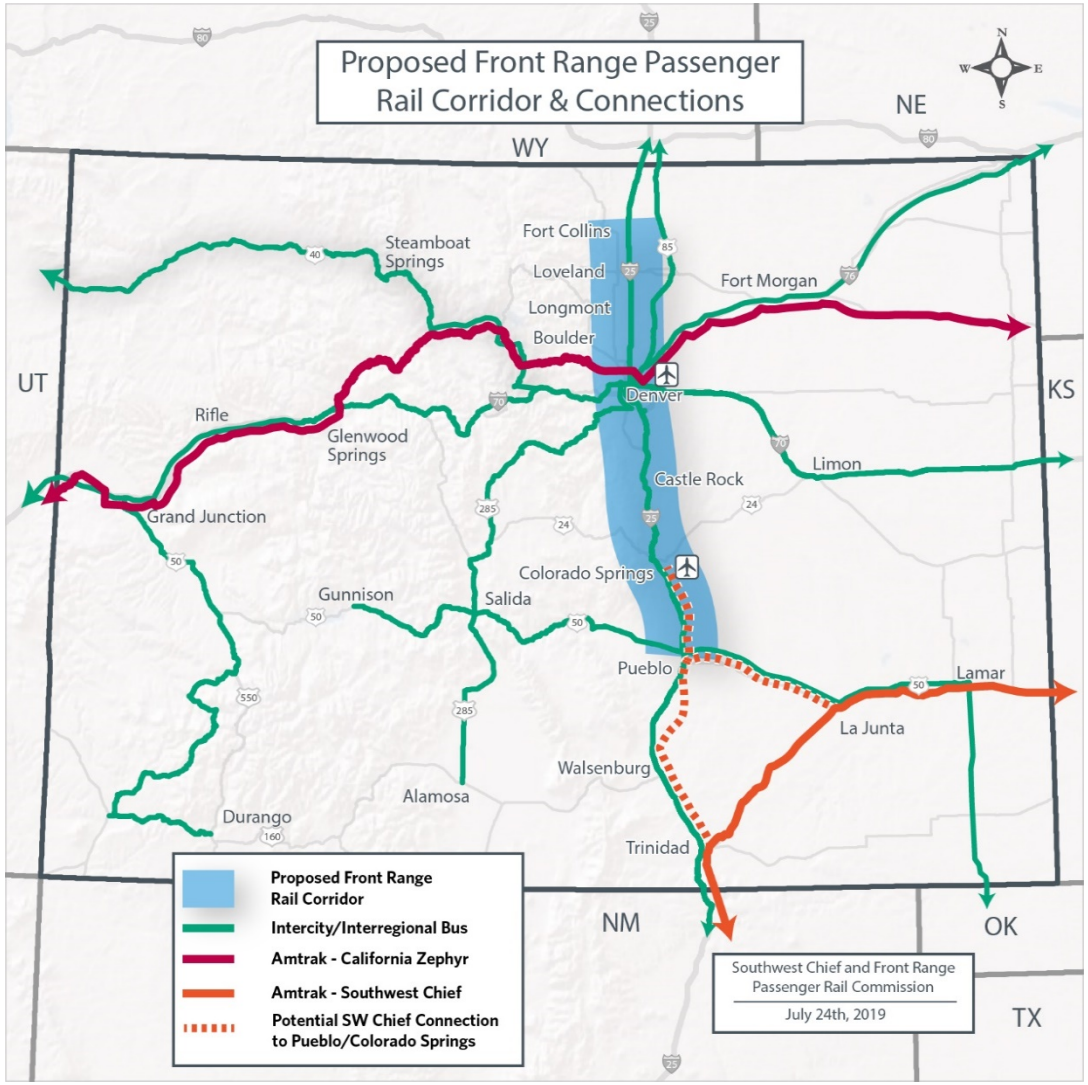
The Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission, in partnership with CDOT and other partners noted below, successfully applied for a $225,000 CRISI grant from the USDOT for the “Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study.”

Matching partners included:

- Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission: **$159,000** (70.7%)
- CDOT: **$50,000** (22.2%)
- Pueblo County, Colorado: **$10,000** (4.4%)
- City of La Junta, Colorado: **$5,000** (2.2%)
- Colorado Rail Passenger Association: **$1,000** (0.5%)

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Rail Interconnectivity



SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Passenger Rail Stakeholder Engagement

Segment Stakeholder Coalitions (North, Central, South)
Function: Provide project information to and obtain feedback at the local level
Members: Regional and local stakeholders
Responsibilities: Share project information with segment communities; Gather community input and share with Corridor Stakeholder Coalition
Meetings: November 2019, January 2020, April 2020, Sept. 15–17, 2020

Corridor Stakeholder Coalition
Function: Create stakeholder-based recommendations for cohesive, corridor-wide project decisions
Members: Segment Stakeholder Coalition representatives
Meetings: December 2019, *Early Fall 2020*

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Passenger Rail Process

We Are Here

STEP 1

PROJECT INITIATION & SCOPING

What do we want Front Range Passenger Rail to be?

STEP 2

LEVEL 1 EVALUATION

What are the possibilities for corridors and operations?

STEP 3

LEVEL 2 EVALUATION

How do alternatives compare?

STEP 4

ADVANCE TO NEPA

Federally required process to advance major infrastructure projects

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Passenger Rail
Level 1 Evaluation

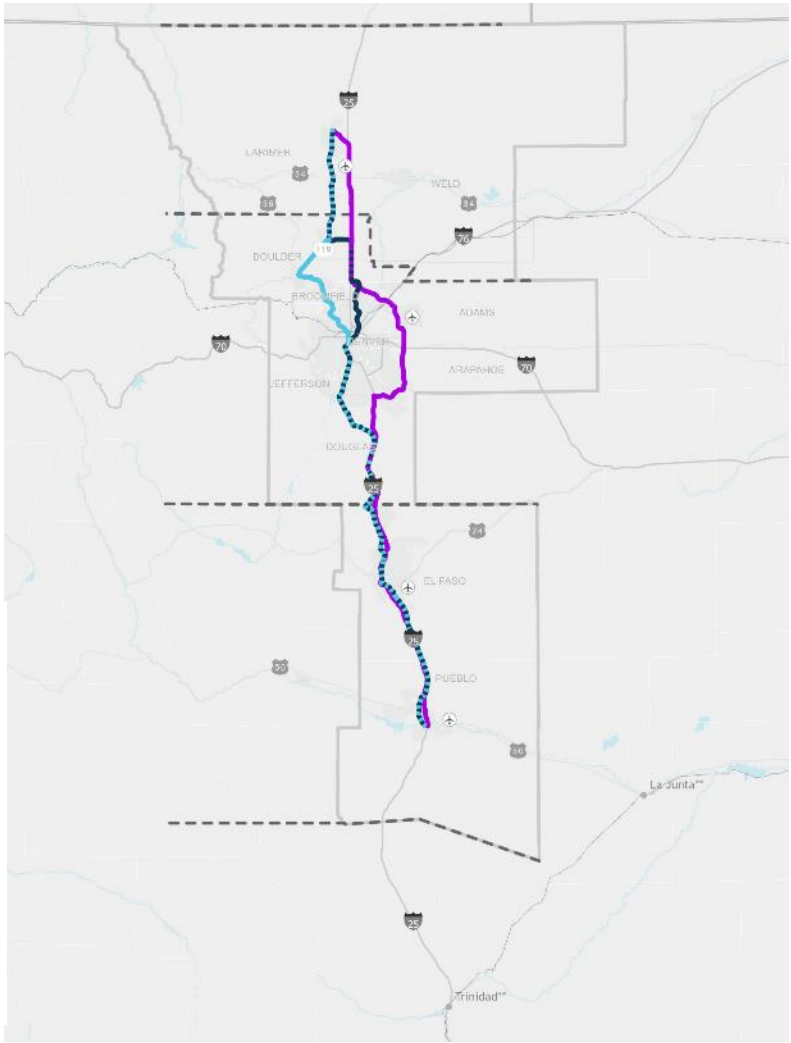
- Reviewed existing Studies of existing freight rail and highway rights-of-way (Corridors)
  - Freight Rail: Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railway
  - Highway: I-25, supplemented by E-470 and corridors adjacent to rail (US 85)

- Engineering is optimizing alignments to improve speeds or minimize impacts in Level 2 Evaluations.
- Goal is to understand how the existing freight rail and highway horizontal and vertical geometry, physical location, and right-of-way availability could interact with or support an adjacent passenger rail system.
- Corridor travel times will be broadly estimated considering existing & future population

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Front Range Passenger Rail Level 1 Alternatives Carried Forward

- Eight potential corridors to mix and match
  - Two in the South Segment
  - Four in the Central Segment
  - Two in the North Segment
- Optimization and Refinement
  - Geometric refinements such as smoothing out curves
  - Understanding of highest activity station areas and how to connect them



Airport
Front Range Counties
I-25/C-470 Highway Corridor
BNSF Rail Corridor
BNSF/RTD N Line Rail Corridor

*The State of Wyoming is examining potential passenger rail to Cheyenne and Wyoming (separate study)

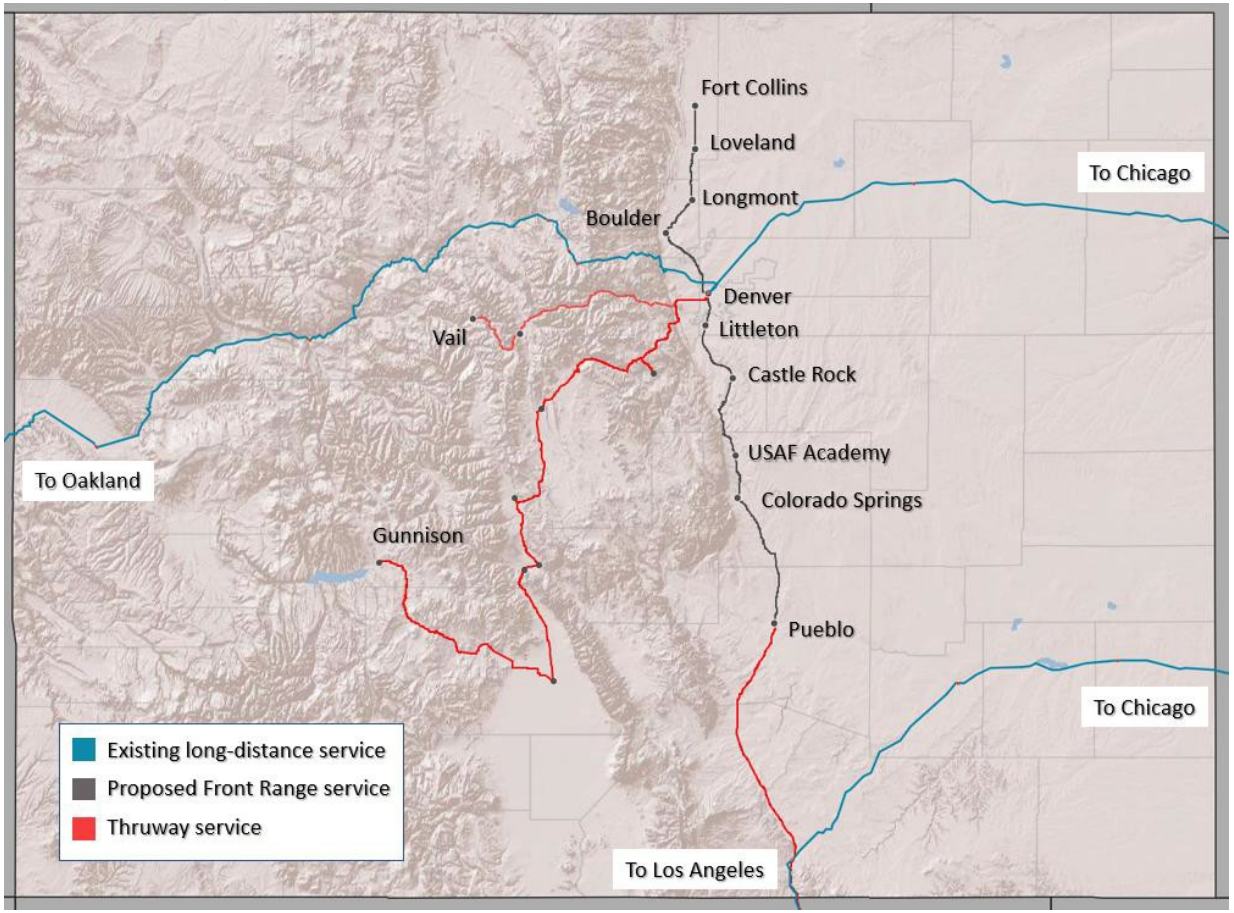
**The Rail Commission is developing a feasibility study to extend Amtrak's Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs; additional studies may examine extensions to New Mexico (separate studies)

0 50 mi

Proposed Service Improvements

Front Range Corridor: three round trips daily, **Fort Collins—Boulder—Denver—Colorado Springs—Pueblo***

* with intermediate stops



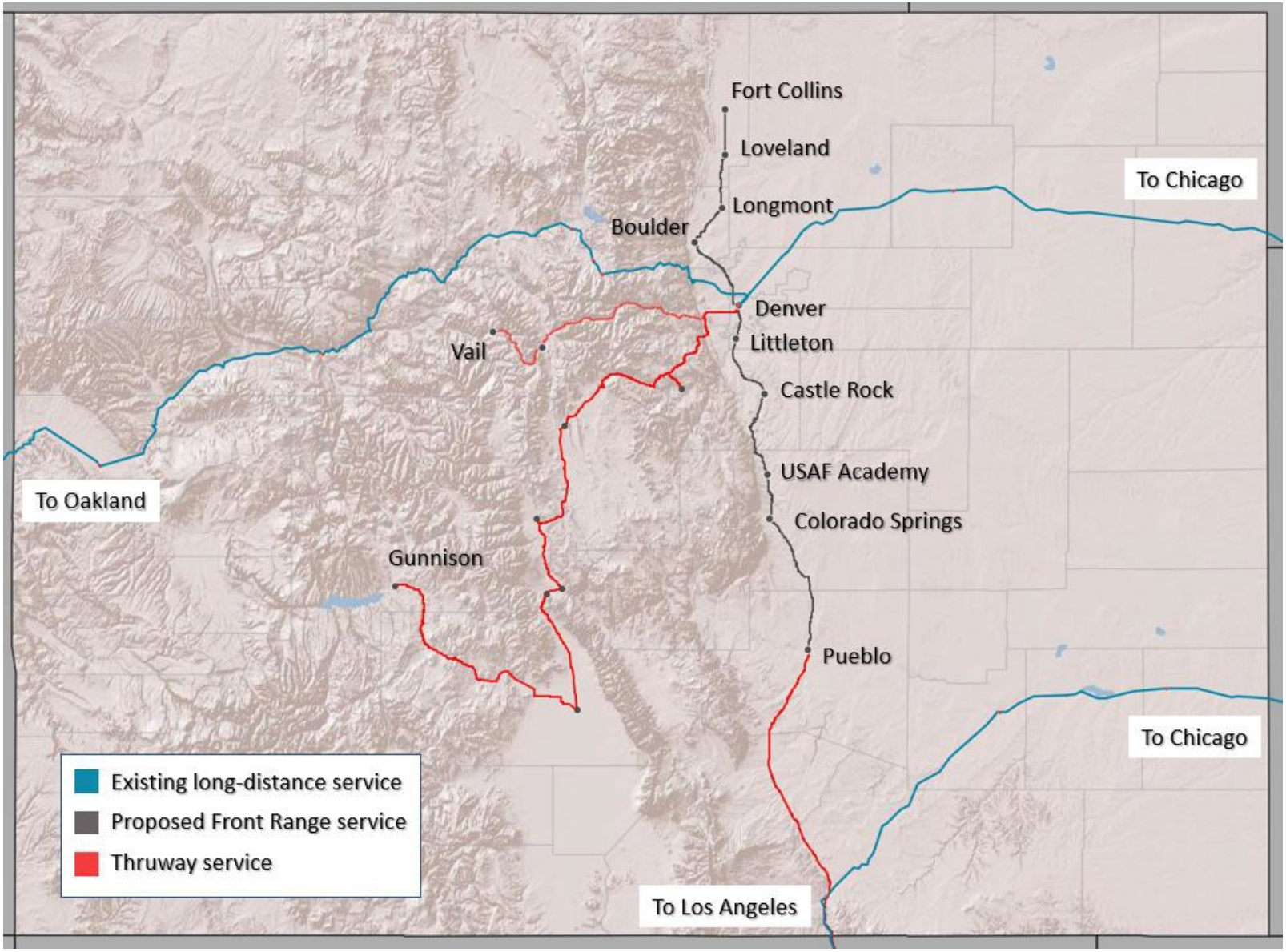
Proposed Grant Program Could Help Fund Front Range Service

Amtrak is proposing creation of a **Network Modernization Program** (NMP) as part of our reauthorization to support rail network evolution and expansion, including efforts to plan, develop, construct, and operate intercity passenger rail service in high-potential short-distance corridors like the Front Range.

As envisioned, the program would make federal grant funds available to Amtrak to cover up to 100% of the capital costs and initial operating costs of new corridor service; states would then gradually assume a greater share of operating costs over a five-year transition period. After this five-year period, if the states want to continue service, long-term costs would be allocated in accordance with the existing Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) Sec. 209 methodology as currently used by many states throughout the nation.

Existing Grants Continue

Amtrak intends for the NMP to supplement existing grant opportunities (e.g., BUILD, SQGR, CRISI, INFRA, & REG), and not to replace them.


Fort Collins
Loveland
Longmont
Boulder
To Chicago
Denver
Littleton
Vail
Castle Rock
USAF Academy
Colorado Springs
To Oakland
Gunnison
Pueblo
To Chicago
Existing long-distance service
Proposed Front Range service
Thruway service
To Los Angeles

PROPOSED AMTRAK SERVICE IN COLORADO

FRONT RANGE SERVICE® serving FORT COLLINS - DENVER - PUEBLO and intermediate stations

Amtrak.com
1-800-USA-RAIL

Southbound - Read Down			Mile	Station	Northbound - Read Up		
6 00A	11 30A	**5 00P**	0	**Fort Collins, CO**	10 30A	**4 00P**	**9 30P**
6 17A	11 47A	**5 17P**	13	**Loveland, CO**	10 13A	**3 43P**	**9 13P**
6 40A	**12 10P**	**5 40P**	31	**Longmont, CO**	9 50A	**3 20P**	**8 50P**
6 57A	**12 27P**	**5 57P**	43	**Boulder, CO**	9 33A	**3 03P**	**8 33P**
7 37A	**1 07P**	**6 37P**	72	**Denver, CO**	8 53A	**2 23P**	**7 53P**
7 47A	**1 17P**	**6 47P**			8 43A	**2 13P**	**7 43P**
8 16A	**1 46P**	**7 16P**	85	**Littleton, CO**	8 14A	**1 44P**	**7 14P**
8 46A	**2 16P**	**7 46P**	106	**Castle Rock, CO**	7 44A	**1 14P**	**6 44P**
9 18A	**2 48P**	**8 18P**	138	**USAF Academy, CO**	7 12A	**12 42P**	**6 12P**
9 42A	**3 12P**	**8 42P**	147	**Colorado Springs, CO**	6 48A	**12 18P**	**5 48P**
10 30A	**4 00P**	**9 30P**	191	**Pueblo, CO**	6 00A	11 30A	**5 00P**

N.B.—This is a high-level, conceptual schedule and has not been fine-tuned to account for special circumstances. Details are provided for illustrative purposes.

AMTRAK®

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Stakeholder Engagement

Online MetroQuest Survey

- 6,965 total respondents over 71 days; July 22nd—September 30th, 2019.
- **95%** of respondents believe that passenger rail service could help address transportation needs along the Front Range.
- **92%** would be interested in using the service if it were available.

RBI/Magellan Survey

- 600 responses across the 13 Front Range counties - October 4th-8th
- **81% total support** (12% total oppose) a Front Range Passenger Rail service project that would have regularly scheduled train service to major population centers from Fort Collins to Pueblo.
- **61% total support** (27% total oppose) a sales tax increase to fund a Front Range Passenger Rail Service project that would have regularly scheduled train service to major population centers from Fort Collins to Pueblo with an estimated cost of **$5 billion**.

www.frontrangepassengerrail.com

SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

Randy Grauberger, Project Director
Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
randall.grauberger@state.co.us
303-512-4005