



Policy Brief

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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CDOT Plans First-Ever State Operated Interregional Express Bus Service

In an effort to further develop and connect the statewide transit network, CDOT has proposed establishing an Interregional Express (IX) bus service for the I-25 Front Range and I-70 Mountain Corridor. The IX would connect major population and employment centers and local transit entities with Colorado's first-ever state owned and operated bus system. The IX proposal helps further CDOT's multi-modal mission and fulfills a key responsibility outlined in the 2009 FASTER legislation, which established CDOT's Division of Transit and Rail. In addition, the IX helps accomplish transit-related action items recommended by the I-25 North and I-70 West environmental studies.

Background

The purpose of the IX is to provide an interregional element to the local transit network, to connect population and employment centers, and to provide a peak period express service that enhances the capacity of the existing transportation system without major infrastructure costs. CDOT proposes providing service along the I-25 corridor connecting Fort Collins, Denver and Colorado Springs; and on the I-70 mountain corridor connecting Glenwood Springs, Eagle, Vail, Frisco, and Denver.

Over the last year, the Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) has been working with corridor stakeholders, including a special IX Subcommittee, to seek input on the IX concept. DTR also conducted a peer review of similar state-run services. This outreach provided critical feedback and helped inform many important details of the service, including linkages with local transit systems, fare structure and ticketing, and bus procurement.

Status and Timing

This fall, CDOT is conducting another round of outreach to key stakeholders along the two corridors. DTR plans to seek final approval to initiate the service from the Transportation Commission at their December 2013 meeting. The goal is to establish service along both corridors in late 2014.

Finance/Budget Plan:

Capital and start-up costs will be funded by existing unallocated FASTER Transit Statewide funds and remaining SB 1 funds dedicated for transit. The on-going operating and maintenance, and future year capital requirements will be programmed to not exceed a budget of \$3M/year to be funded out of the annual FASTER Transit Statewide pool. Fare box revenues would be used to supplement the \$3M/year budget or to expand service if desired.

Frequency of Service

Along the I-70 mountain corridor, 1 round trip will operate per weekday between Glenwood Springs and Denver Union Station. Along, I-25, 6 round trips per day (5 peak, 1 off-peak) are proposed from Colorado Springs to Denver and 5 round trips per day (4 peak, 1 off-peak) from Fort Collins to Denver.

Rolling stock/vehicles:

13 over-the-road buses will be acquired by CDOT and leased to the contract operator.

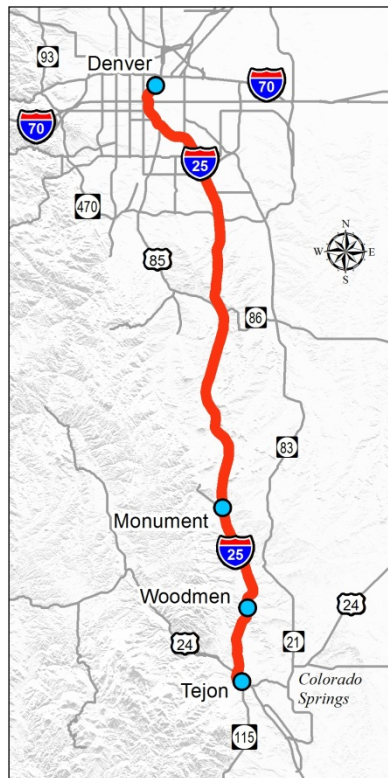
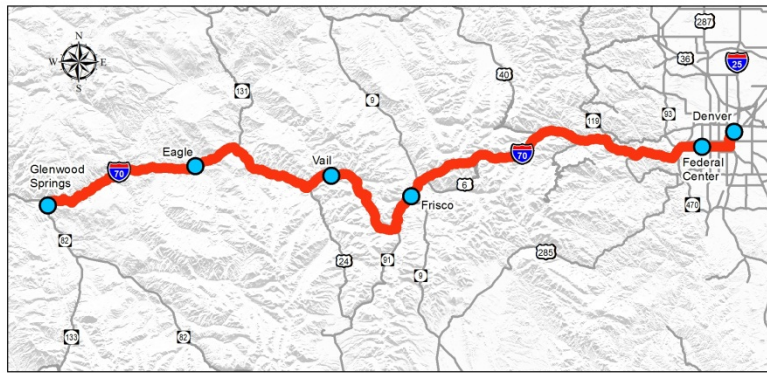
Park and Rides:

All of the necessary park and rides exist in the I-25 corridor, but need some improvements for opening day to accommodate buses and expansion where near capacity. Future capital improvements will be programmed as budget allows. The I-70 corridor has existing bus accessible park and rides, and will need no capital improvements. Park and ride needs will be programmed for initial start-up and future years as part of the Interregional Express Financial Plan.

Fare Structure:

The fare structure concept being considered is based on \$0.17/mile for a single ticket purchase with significant discounts for multiple ride packages.

Service Maps:



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