



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

I-70 Collaborative Effort Update

May 26th, 2021



Overview of Front Range Passenger Rail

The Project

To reduce pressure on key freight corridors by moving people off congested highways, a passenger service rail linking Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Fort Collins to Denver—a 173-mile corridor—is currently being planned. The project will be the transportation "spine" along the Front Range, with other multimodal systems east and west of the I-25 corridor integrated into Front Range Passenger Rail.

The People

The Front Range Passenger Rail project consists of a "blended team" led by the Rail Commission and CDOT. The team includes a range of specialized professionals with decades of experience in transportation and on Front Range projects.



Framework for Advancing Vision

Policy

- Governance Options
- Funding & Finance Options

Program

- Inclusion in Local, Regional and State Plans

Project

- Alternatives Analysis
- Advance to NEPA

Where We've Been

Status and Accomplishments

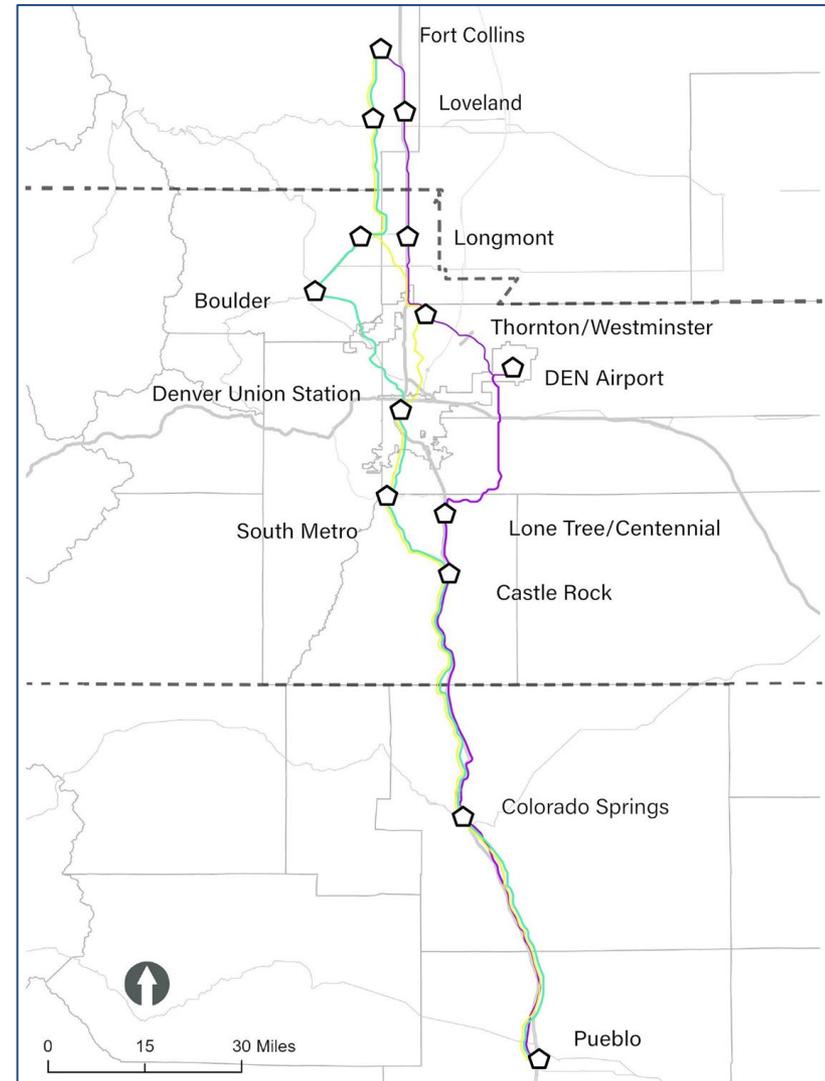
- ✓ Vision
- ✓ Environmental review
- ✓ Ridership modeling
- ✓ Speed profiles and travel time
- ✓ Conceptual design plans, standards & criteria
- ✓ Conceptual cost estimating
- ✓ Preliminary alternatives analysis
- ✓ Funding and Finance analysis
- ✓ Stakeholder coalitions engagement
- ✓ Public engagement via website, surveys and online meetings

FRPR: Long Range Vision (2045)

180 miles, double track

Three technically feasible alignments

- **Stations:** Nine with option for secondary stations
- **Round trips:** 24 weekdays/ 18 weekends
- **Ridership:** Up to 2.2m per year (2045)
- **Max Speeds:** 90-110 mph
- **Travel time:** 2.5-3 hours (end to end)
- **Conceptual Costs:**
 - **Capital:** \$7.8-\$14.2B
 - **Operating:** \$135-\$172M/per year



Where We Are - Commission Recommendations

Evaluation covered the full corridor and build out (24 round trips) from Pueblo to Fort Collins. Upon defining its scale and potential, the Commission now focuses on first steps.

Implementation: Analyze whether passenger rail starter service (3-7 rounds trips) can interoperate with railroads on freight alignment.

Why phased approach?

- Implement passenger rail quickly and efficiently
- Build on existing rail to develop a network
- Build ridership and a culture of passenger rail

Learned experience from other successful systems:

- Washington, Utah, Oregon

Rail Commission 2021-22 Work Plan

- Rail Simulation/Capacity Modeling to advance Service Development Plan
 - Goal is to define viable system and demonstrate NEPA readiness
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- Continue program outreach and collaboration (RTD, BNSF, Amtrak, FRA)
 - Governance (SB 21-238)
 - Short and long term funding



Previewing FRPR & NW Rail (RTD) Peak Service: Initial Technical Comparisons

Studies' Similarities

- Improve Mobility, Provide Mode choice, Econ Development, Reliable Trip
- Alignment/ Right of Way
- Longmont, Boulder, Denver
- Engineering
- Environmental Context

Critical Questions for Studies

- Operator?
- Technology?
- Train Schedule?
- Stations?
- Maintenance Yards?

SB 21-238: Creation of Front Range Passenger Rail District

- Powers: Finance, Design, Construct, Operate, Maintain Passenger Rail
- District Boundaries
- District Representation
 - Governor's Appointees
 - MPO/COG Representatives
 - DRCOG, PPACG, NFRMPO, PACOG South Central COG
 - CDOT
 - Non-Voting Members
 - BNSF Railway, Union Pacific, Amtrak, RTD, Wyoming, New Mexico
- Would repeal and replace Rail Commission
- Timing/Next Steps

