

News First KOAA: Story by: Susan Davies

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Rail relocation plan chugs slowly forward

Imagine hopping into a passenger train in Pueblo or Colorado Springs and riding to Denver or even Ft. Collins. That's the dream of R2C2, or "Rail Relocation for Colorado Communities."

Working with the railroads and regional transportation district, CDOT is studying the feasibility of relocating the coal trains from the front range to the eastern plains of Colorado.

A series of open houses explaining the project ended Tuesday night in Castle Rock. R2C2 will compile public comments and add them to the finished study. Between \$500 and \$800 million will be required to build a new track and move the coal trains east.

Supporters say a private partnership will be necessary if the project is to move forward. Monument Town Manager Cathy Green attended the presentation and says, "this will be the most exciting project in the first half of the century. This is huge." CDOT's Executive Director Russell George and Governor Bill Ritter back the R2C2 project.

Additional open houses will be held in late August and early September.