



NATA Agenda




- Welcome by Chair Julie Mullica
- Approval of August 27th NATA Meeting Minutes
- Smart Commute update: Karen Stuart, Carson Priest, Tammy Herreid
 - Update on plans for 8th Annual TransForum (virtual event) October 22, 2020
 - Focusing on N-Line history, artwork/artists, construction highlights, opening celebrations and commemorative book
- RTD Directors Comments- Director Vince Buzek, Director Troy Whitmore, Director Judy Lubow, Director Lynn Guissing, Director Shelley Cook
 - N- Line Opening highlights
 - New GM update
 - District I Director update
- Front Range Rail Commission Update- Randy Grauberger
- HPTE/CDOT update on I-25 projects and funding opportunities- Nick Farber, Paul Jesaitis, Jessica Myklebust
- Photo collage from N-Line Opening Celebrations

Please sign in using the chat box



THE NEXT BIG THING

8th annual **TRANS FORUM**

 My Baby Takes the N Line Train



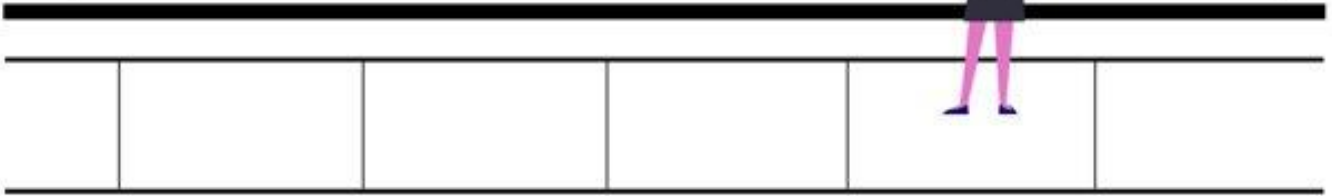
Thursday, October 22, 2020

Where: Virtual Event via Zoom

Keynote Speaker: Stay Tuned!



My Baby Takes the N Line Train





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SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

**North Area Transportation Alliance Meeting
September 23rd, 2020**





Southwest Chief and 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



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

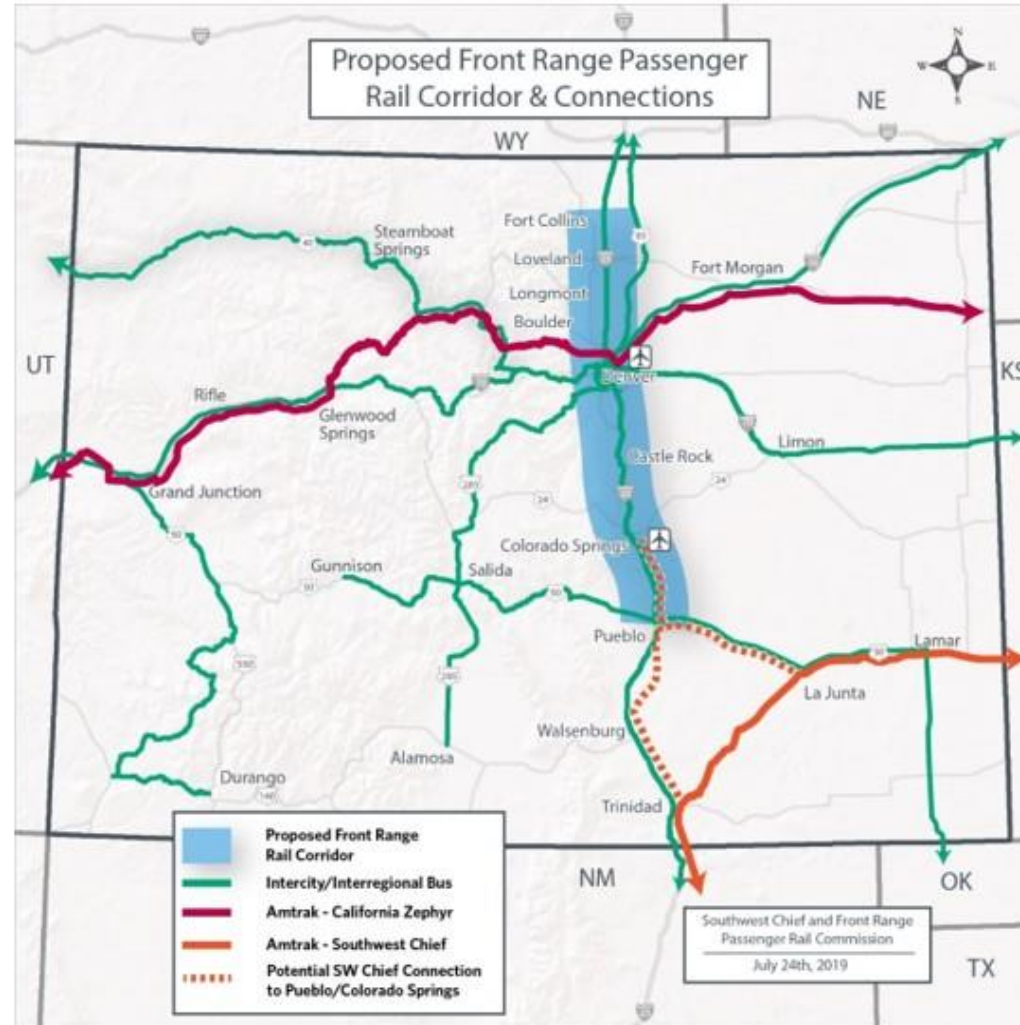


2020 CRISI Grant Award

- The Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission received a grant award for \$548,000 in federal funds to complete critical remaining service planning efforts prior to NEPA as well as Rail Traffic Control Simulation Modeling
- Efforts funded under this grant will position the Rail Commission to issue a Notice of Intent for the full NEPA process.



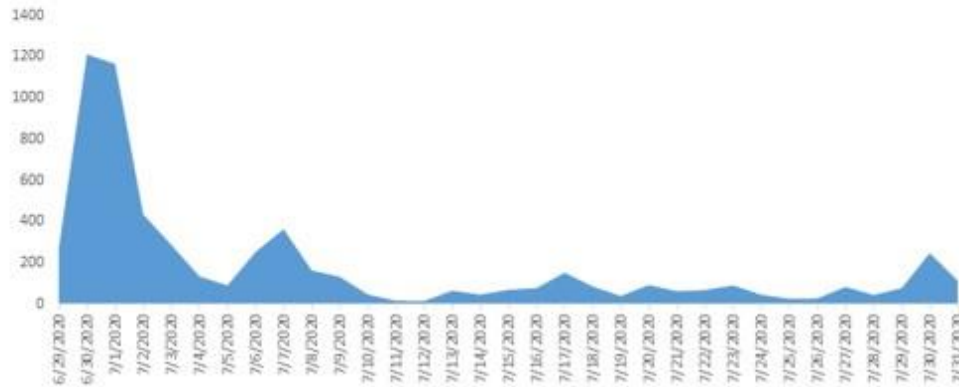
Proposed Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor, Amtrak, and Intercity/Interregional Bus Routes





Website Traffic: June 29 – July 31:

- Total Users: 8,279 (CO: 6,662)
- Total Sessions: 9,678 (CO: 7,834)



Session by Device (CO only):

Mobile: 4,424
Desktop: 3,021
Tablet: 389

Acquisitions by Session (CO only):

Referral: 2,821

- KRDO.com: 1,869
- Frontrangepassengerrail.com: 456
- Coloradoan.com: 177
- Denverpost.com: 140
- CoDOT.gov: 87
- Direct: 3,740

Social: 1,194

- Facebook: 882
- Twitter: 145
- Reddit: 92
- LinkedIn: 66
- Organic: 79

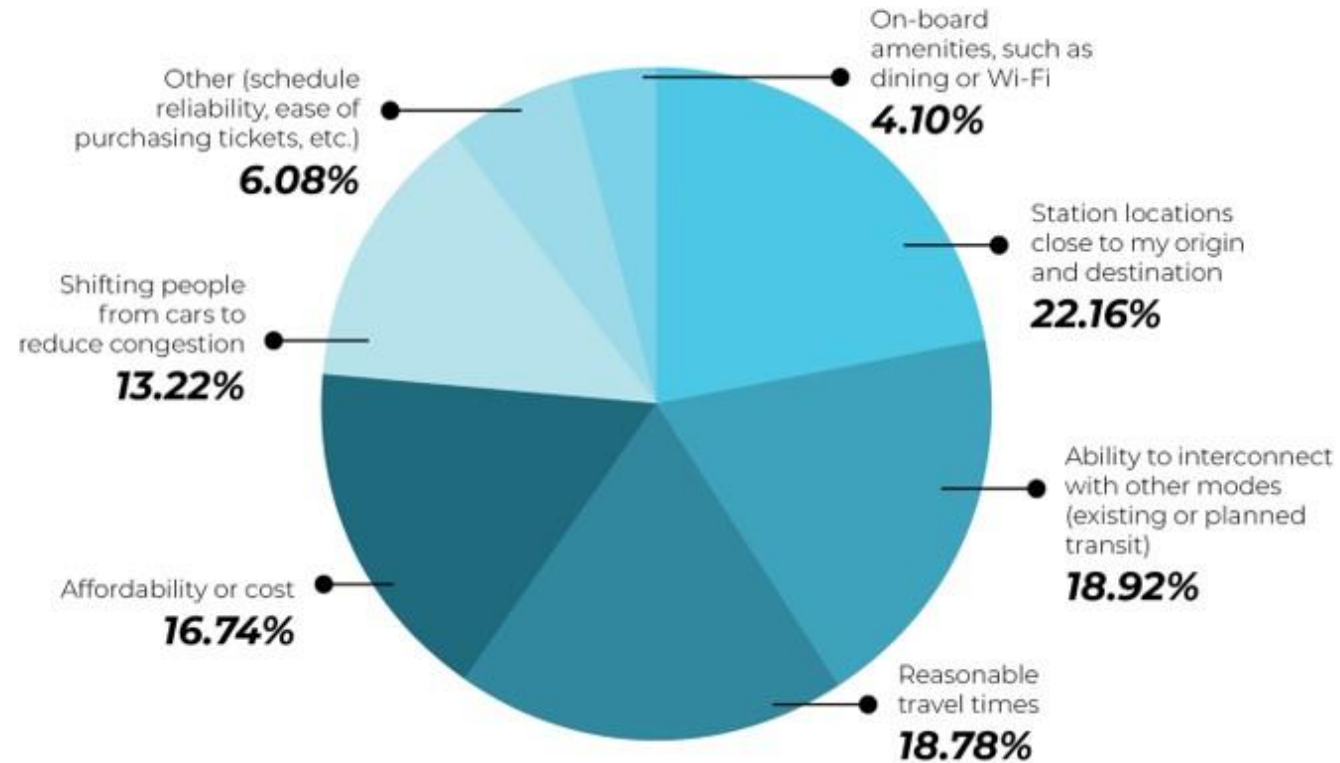
Average Time on Page (CO): 4 minutes, 26 seconds



Online Public Meeting Input Survey Question #1

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS TO YOU?

7,003 total selections



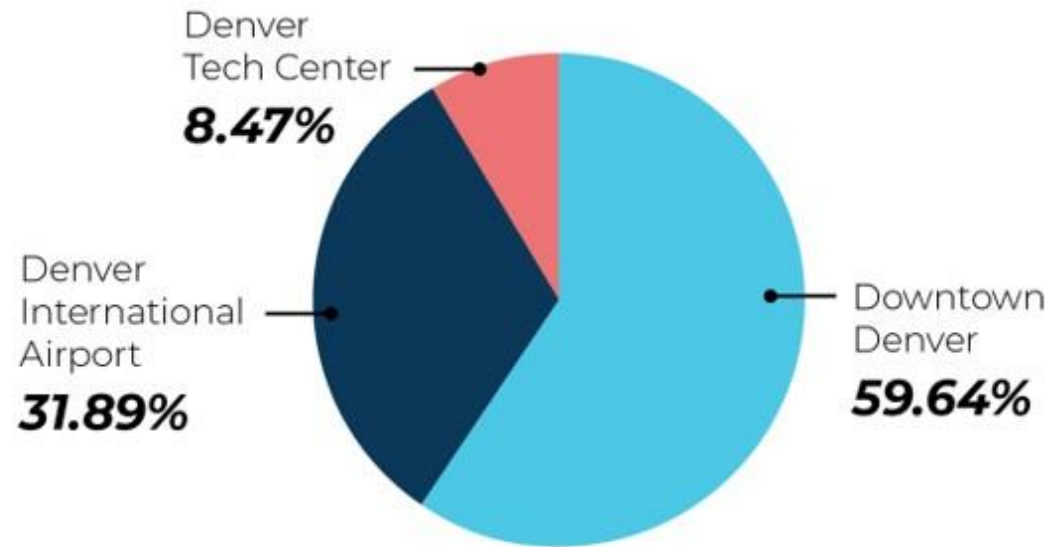


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Online Public Meeting Input Survey Question #2

*WHERE WOULD YOU MOST WANT THE
ALIGNMENT OF FRONT RANGE RAIL TO GO?*



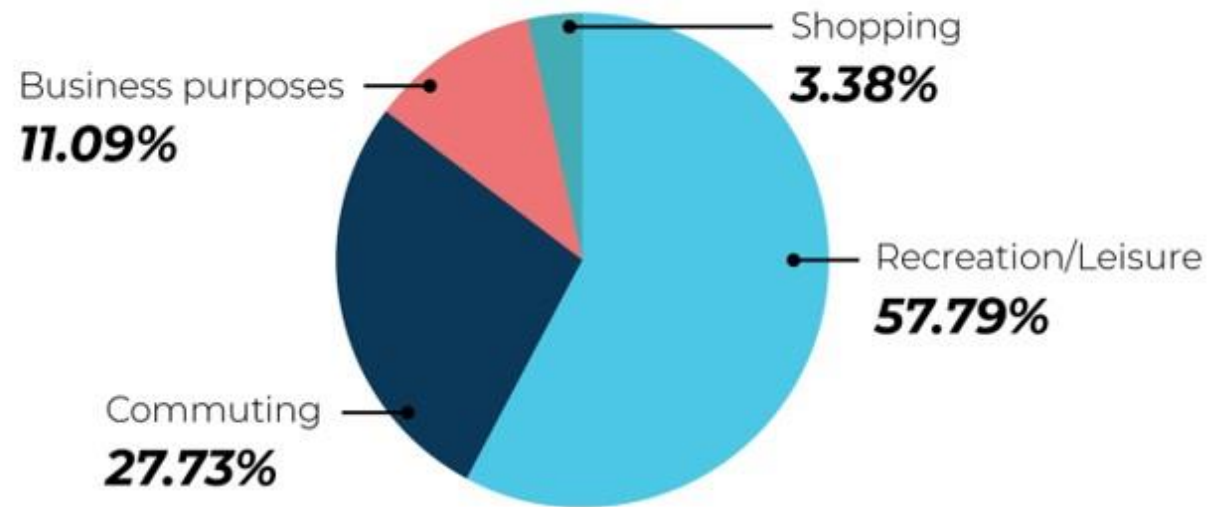


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Online Public Meeting Input Survey Question #3

**WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PRIMARY PURPOSE
FOR USING FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL?**



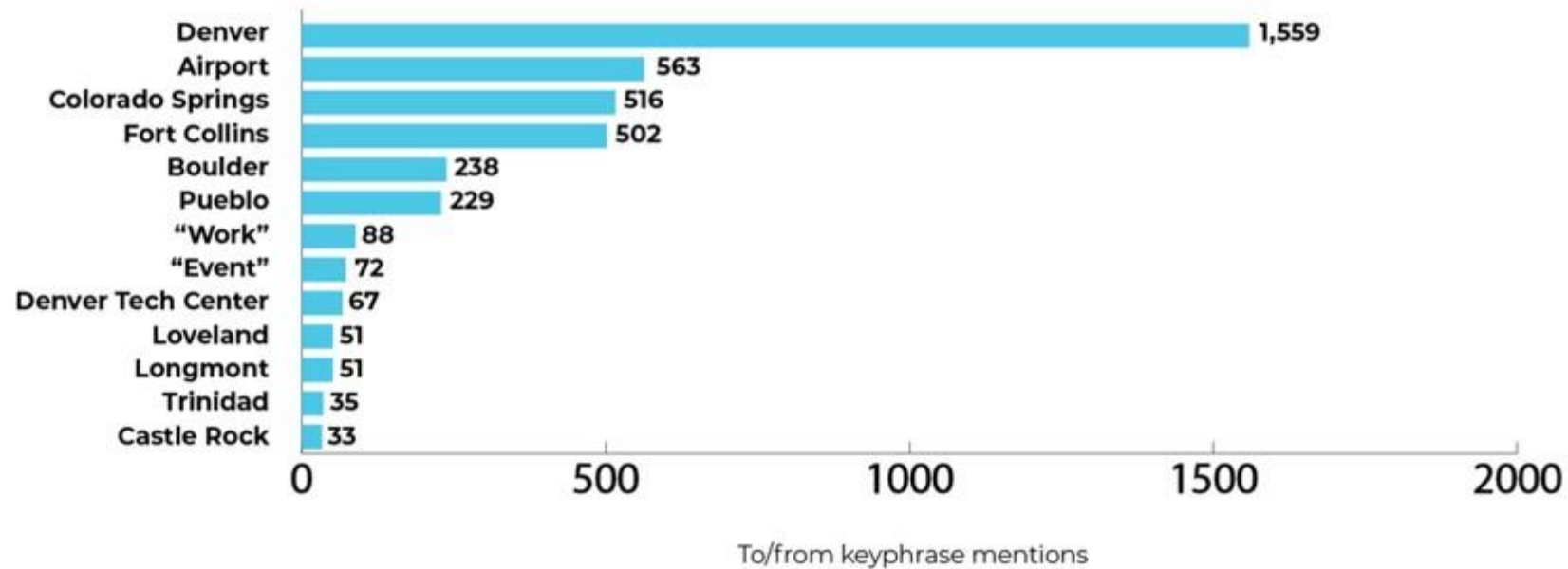


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Online Public Meeting Input Survey Question #4

WHERE WOULD YOU BE MOST LIKELY TO GO ON FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL?





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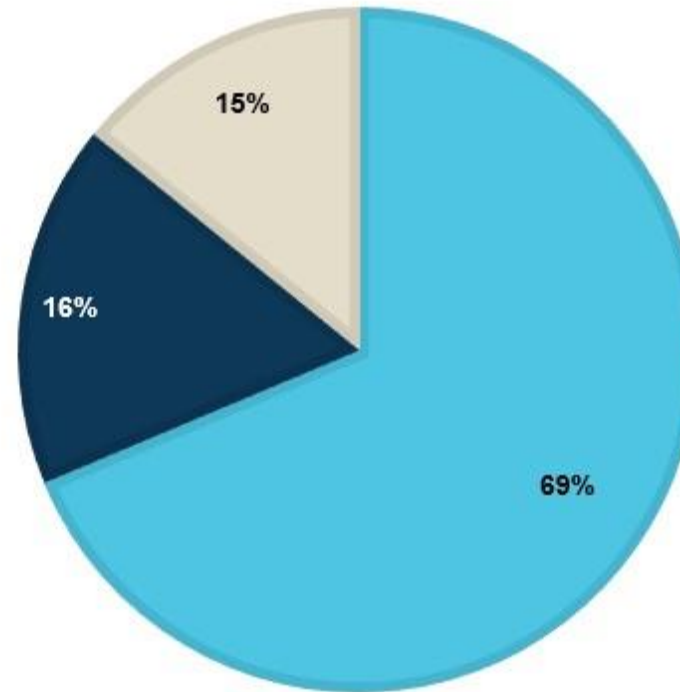


Online Public Meeting General Open Ended Comment Sentiment

The following graph reflects the sentiment of the open-ended comments provided.

GENERAL SENTIMENT OF OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

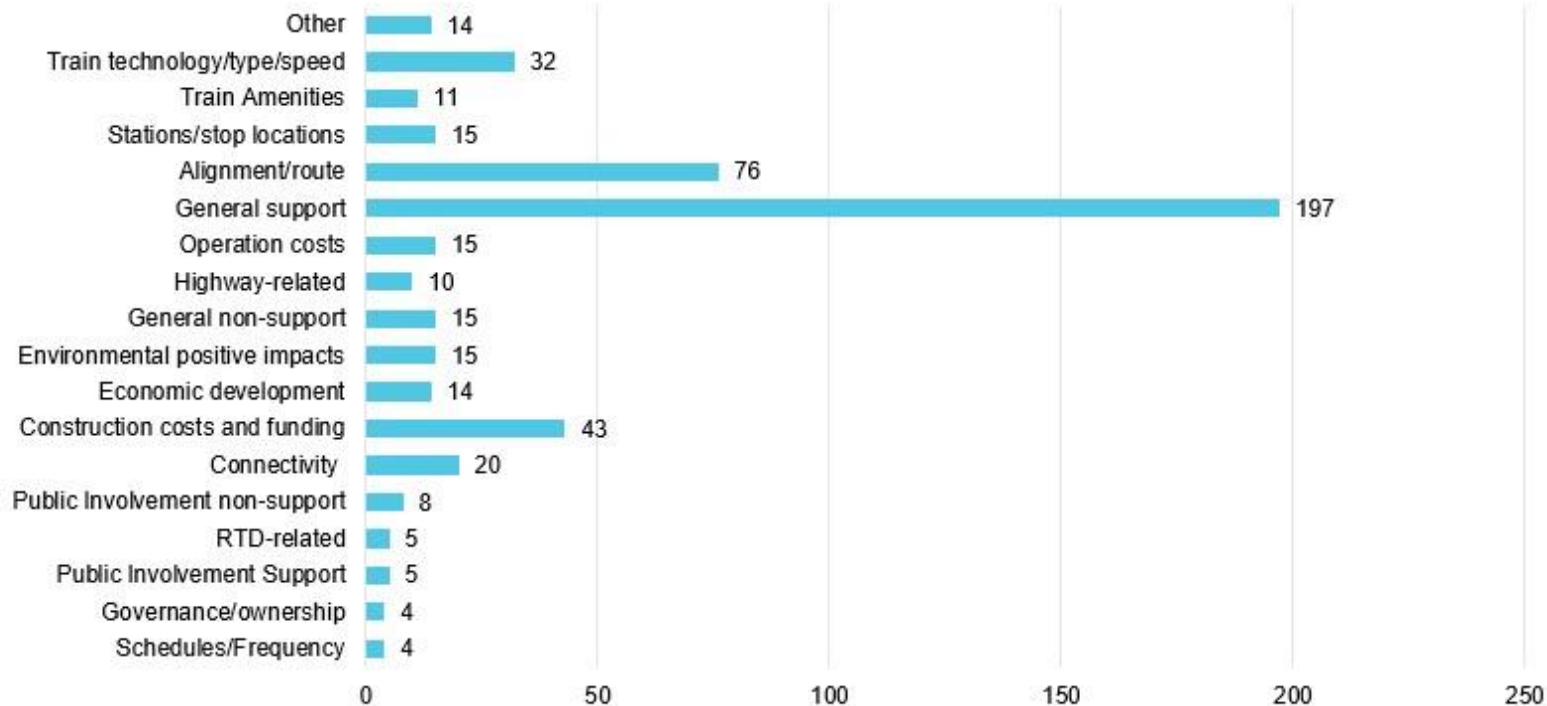
■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative





The following graph reflects the primary themes of the 503 open-ended comments provided.

Primary Theme of Comments





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Initial Ridership Modeling Results

Big Takeaway: Model Projects a Notable Demand for Rail

After months of data-intensive work and many simulated runs, we found:

- There would be notable demand for rail service all along the Front Range.
- Demand is highest for commuters, but there's also substantial demand for recreation and special events.
- Front Range Passenger Rail ridership projections fare well when compared to other successful intercity rail lines across the country.
- There would be real reductions in emissions and vehicle miles traveled.



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Initial Ridership Modeling Results

Results Show BNSF Alternative (through Boulder/Longmont) Produces High Ridership

System	Length	Population	Trains/day	Stations	Annual ridership	Weekday ridership
BNSF	191	7.0M	25 (In each direction)	14	2.9M	9,200

Model runs including secondary stations (Ft. Carson, Monument, Louisville and Berthoud) increased ridership nearly 20%



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Initial Ridership Modeling Results

BNSF Alternative Compares Favorably to Peers

System	Length	Population	Trains/day	Stations	Annual ridership	Weekday ridership
Frontrunner (SLC)	81	1.2M	28	17	4.9M	16,180
Sounder (Seattle)	82	3.7M	6	9	4.6M	15,488
Caltrain (San Fran)	77	4.6M	47	32	4.6M	15,437
South Florida (Miami)	72	6.0M	25	18	4.3M	14,291
South Shore (Chicago)	90	2.7M	17	19	3.4M	11,435
BNSF	191	7.0M	25 (In each direction)	14	2.9M	9,200
Capital (Sacramento)	168	6.9M	7	17	1.6M	5,447
Altamont (Stockton)	86	2.7M	4	10	1.32M	4,407
Orlando	62	2.5M	20	16	852k	2,840
Hiawatha (Milwaukee)	80	11.1M	7	5	836k	2,788



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Initial Ridership Modeling Results

- These original model runs were developed assuming 32c/mile fares. The models have been rerun with a 17c/mile assumption which is closer to the national average for rail service.
- These newer runs show ridership improvements of approximately 50%



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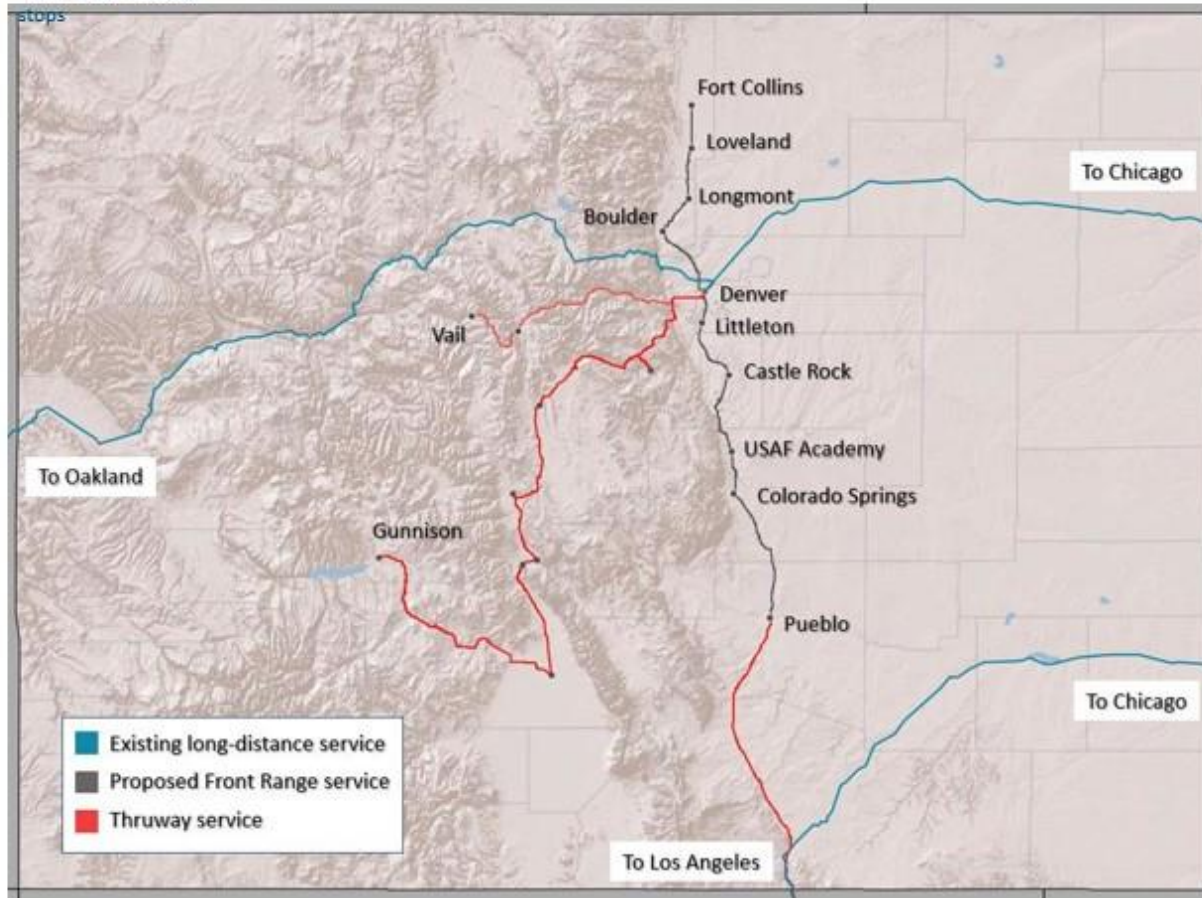
Initial Ridership Modeling Results

- Speed matters, but urban operation and some rural grades limit how fast we can go
- Connectivity and schedule can have an impact
 - because out-of-vehicle time is disliked more than in-vehicle time
- FRPR ridership much higher for a Denver Union Station stop versus Burnham Yard
- Few end-to-end trips by any mode
 - 2010 FRTC survey, Streetlight Data and Census Journey-to-Work all agree closely on this
 - Model results match all three data sets

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, SOGR, CRISI, INFRA, & REG), and not to replace them.

Project Updates

Level 2 Evaluation Process

Project Development: Schedule



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

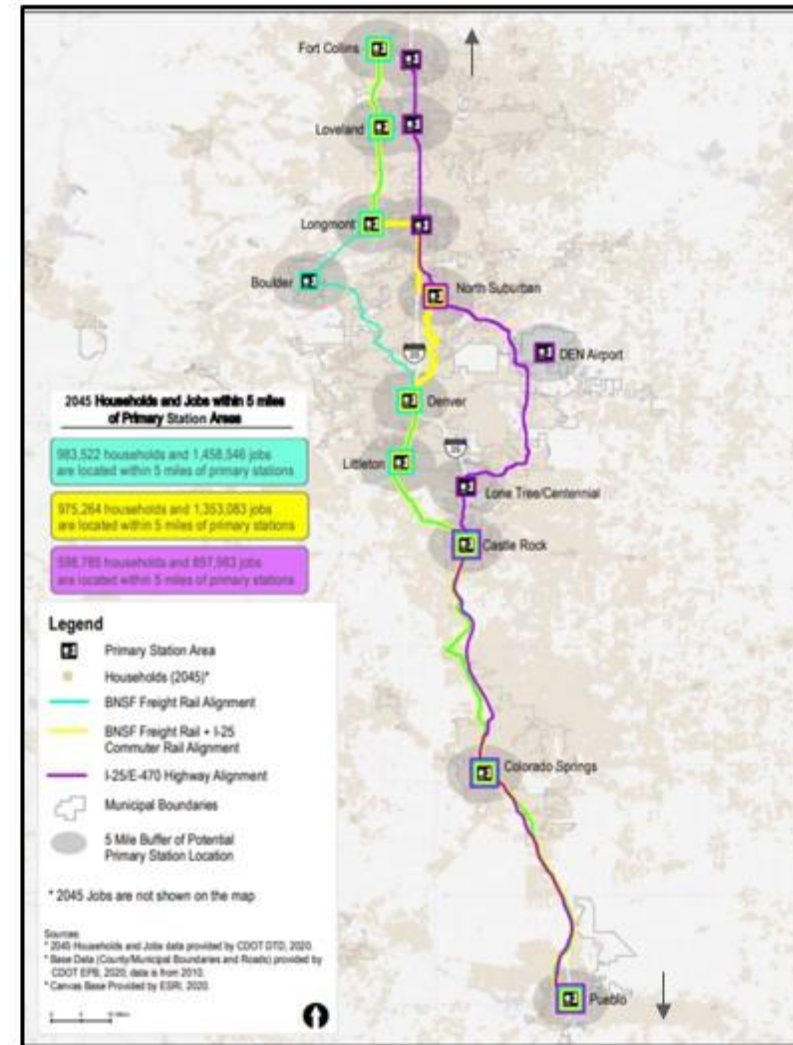
ADVANCE TO NEPA

Federally required process to advance major infrastructure projects

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

STEP 1: Developed Alignments from Corridors *Complete*

- Three “backbone” corridors carried forward as feasible from the first level of review (Level 1)
 - **BNSF Freight Rail Alignment**
 - **BNSF + I-25 Commuter Rail Alignment**
 - **I-25 + E-470 Highway Alignment**
- Corridors were refined and engineered as alignments
- Distinct alignments in three segments
 - Represent a range of options (needed for NEPA) that can be mixed and matched, to a certain extent



STEP 2: Performance and Operating Assumptions

- 24 trains per day, each direction
- One-hour headways (one train each hour) from 6am to 12am other than am and pm peaks (18 hours)
- 30-minute headways in the peak morning and evening commute periods (6-9am and 4-7pm)
- Nine primary stations, spaced from 12 to 43 miles apart
 - Secondary stations will be evaluated
- Max operating speed of 125 mph
- One-minute dwell time at most stations for passenger loading and unloading
- Two-minute dwell time at Denver Union Station, DEN Airport, and Colorado Springs stations
- Base fare of \$0.32 per mile
- Parking at \$2/day



STEP 3: Ridership Projections

Complete

- Use state-wide model
 - One of the most advanced in the US
 - “Activity based” to more accurately predict travel behavior
 - At the person-level rather than the zone-level
 - Adapted from DRCOG model that has been in use for 10 years
- Inputs
 - Each person in households and businesses modeled individually
 - Checked against US Census data, vehicle and transit ridership counts
- Outputs
 - Annual ridership
 - Weekday and weekend, including events
 - Station to station boardings and alightings

Broad Observations

Denver is a hub

Few end to end trips; generally strongest markets are between adjacent stations (less than 30 miles)

Strongest demand for commuting but also recreation and special events

Notable projected reductions in vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions

STEP 4: Cost Estimating *In Progress*



Capital (construction) costs

- Using FRA Standard Cost Categories (SCC) to allow for comparison to other passenger rail systems
- Estimates based on conceptual alternative alignments
- 2020 base year of estimate, escalated using 3% per year
- Estimating accuracy +/- 25% (based on advanced planning level of project definition)

Operating and Maintenance Costs

- Estimate based on review of other operating passenger rail services
- Yearly OPEX estimate is reported based on train miles per year
- Train miles per year = length of corridor x number of trains per year

STEP 5: Community and Environmental Impacts

- High-level review of environmental and community context
- Resources considered for Level 2
 - Potential historic sites and districts
 - Streams, floodplains, and wetland impacts
 - Parks, Open Space, and Trails
 - Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat
 - Noise and vibration impacts for residential receptors
 - Air emissions and greenhouse gases
 - Right-of-way
 - Hazardous materials (Superfund sites)
 - Minority and low-income populations



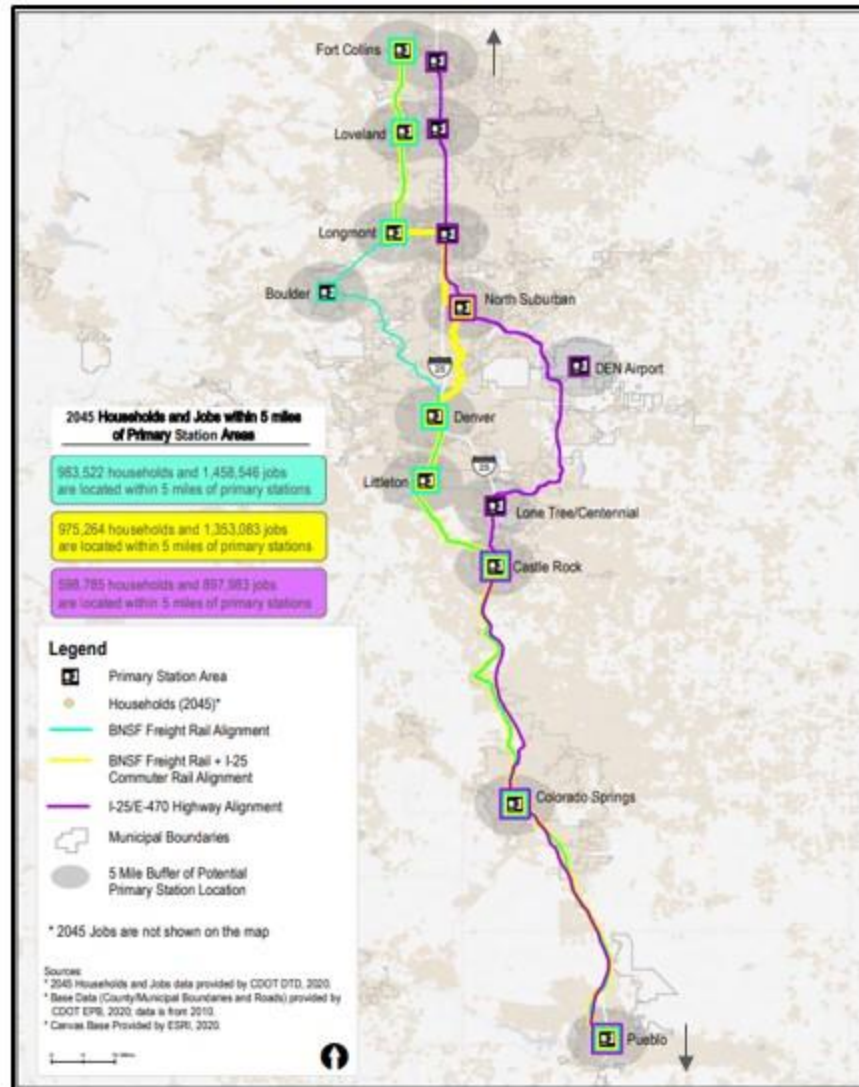
STEP 6: Comparative Evaluation

In Progress

Operational Considerations	Community / Environmental Impacts	Economic Considerations	Feasibility / Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Travel Time▪ Ridership▪ Operating Speed▪ Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)▪ Ability to Interconnect with Other Modes (Existing or Planned Transit)▪ 2045 Population Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community Disruption▪ Utilities and Energy▪ Air Quality▪ Natural Environment▪ Historic▪ Hazardous Materials▪ Recreational Resources▪ Noise and Vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Capital Cost▪ Operating Cost▪ Revenue Potential▪ Cost Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Interaction with Freight Railroad Operations /▪ Customer Access▪ Ease of Implementation▪ Constructability▪ System Flexibility▪ Public Support

ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES

Alignments Recommended for NEPA



- All are technically feasible
- Reasonable range
 - Differing partnership opportunities
 - Differing impacts and benefits
 - May present ability to mix and match best components/minimize impacts

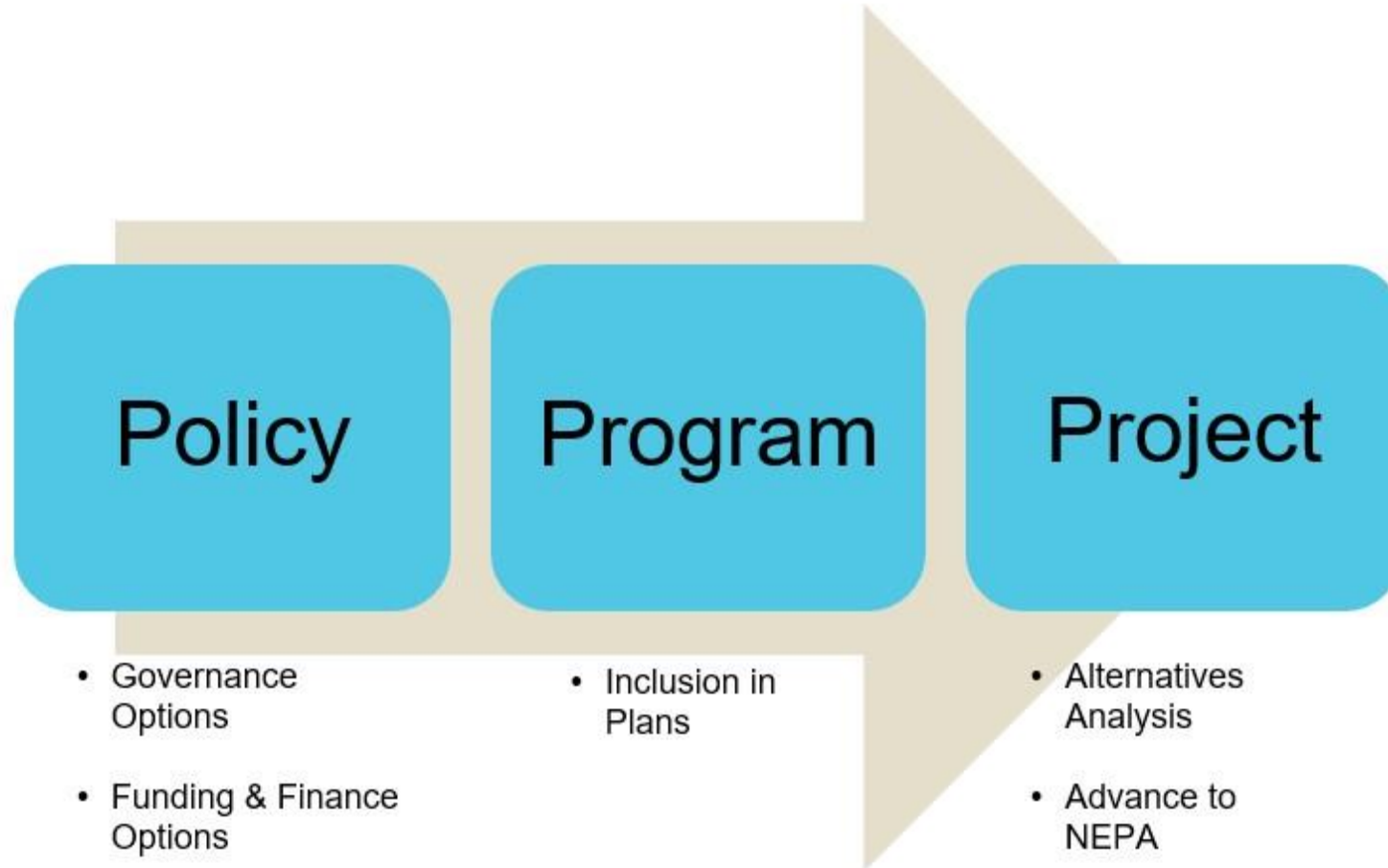
Advancing FRPR – Next Steps

FRPR Has Momentum!



- Three different survey mechanisms show measurable support for advancing FRPR
- Legislative and local elected interest
- Amtrak interest
- Class 1 RR interest
- Potential Partnership Opportunities

Framework for Advancing to Next Steps



Governance Options

Public Rail Authority:

- Legislatively created option to allow formation anywhere in the state.
- Provide the power to plan, design, fund, finance, build, operate and maintain a passenger rail system.
- Would require adoption and contracts among participating entities

Front Range Passenger Rail Authority (FRPRA):

- Legislatively create the Front Range Passenger Rail Authority
- Specific powers to plan, design, fund, finance, build, operate and maintain with preferred conditions for the Front Range Passenger Rail system including specific Board structure and boundaries
- **The Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission was leaning toward support of this approach.**

Expand Current Commission Authority:

- Amend the current statutory authority of the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission to expand its directive to further review the options above and allow more in depth evaluation before recommending an approach for advancing the implementation for Front Range Passenger Rail.

Near Term Strategies

- Initiate conversations with legislators in terms of FRPR Governance and funding for Rail Commission and its ongoing/future planning efforts.
- Continue to identify network of local elected officials along corridor
- Schedule updates/briefings on project status with stakeholder organizations
- Update corridor segment coalitions on status of project by end of 2020
- Continue regular meetings with Class 1 Railroads, RTD and Amtrak on technical issues
- Post online meeting results on stakeholder information pages or community update page
- Post study results by end of year on stakeholder information pages or community update page

www.frontrangepassengerrail.com

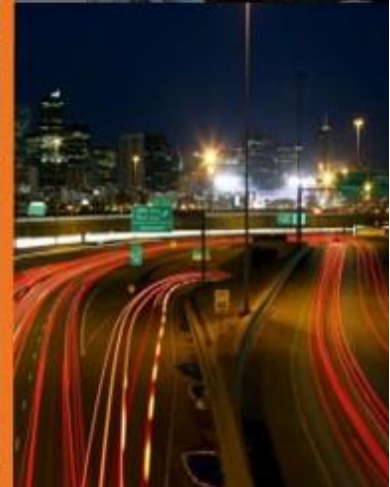


**SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION**

Randy Grauberger, Project Director
Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail
Commission

randall.grauberger@state.co.us

303-512-4005





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I-25 North Update
Nick Farber, HPTTE Director
Paul Jesaitis, CDOT R1 Director



Agenda

1. I-25 North - 84th to 104th History
2. I-270 Prelim Traffic Analysis Results
3. RTD Changes to Transit Service in Area
4. Direct Connects Development Plan Update
5. HPTE Update on I-25N Funding Opportunities
6. Next Steps for evaluating I-25 improvements



I-25 North: 84th to 104th

- ◆ \$65M investment completed in 2016 that added a tolled express lane using the existing roadway template
 - Project improved congestion but introduced safety issues with tight template
 - Implemented a series of operational changes to improve safety based on RSA

- ◆ CDOT also working on EA to evaluate future for this section of interstate based on PEL recommendations completed in 2012
 - \$230M solution that would double the width of the highway to accommodate a center-loading median bus station

- ◆ New factors require fresh look at area
 - COVID Funding Cuts
 - Opening of the N Line
 - Construction of I-270 improvements
 - Importance of further addressing safety concerns in the near term



Express Lanes
Direct
Connections
Development
Plan



I-25 North -
US 36 to 104th Avenue Project

I-270 EA -
I-70 to I-76 Project

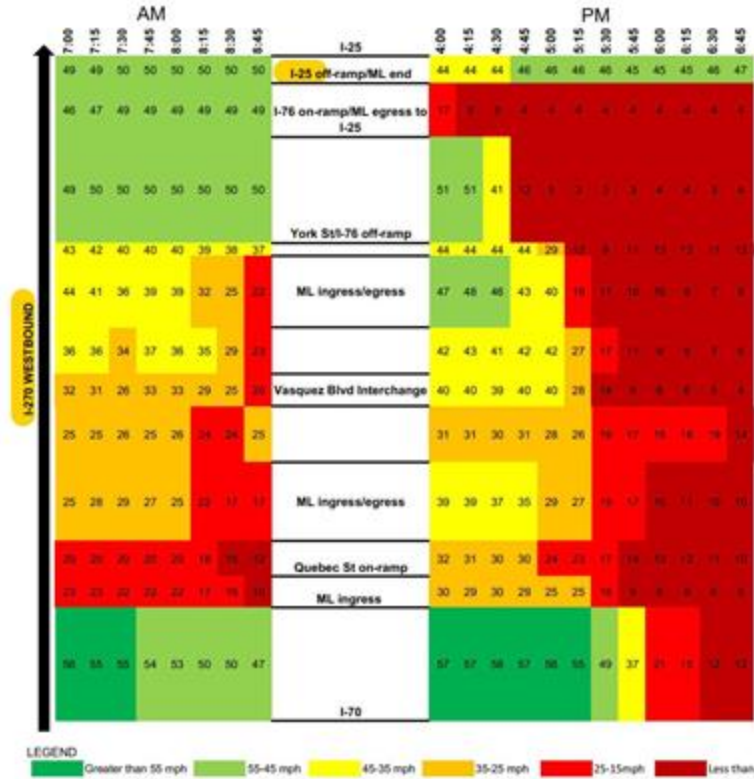


I-270 Corridor Traffic Modeling

ATKINS

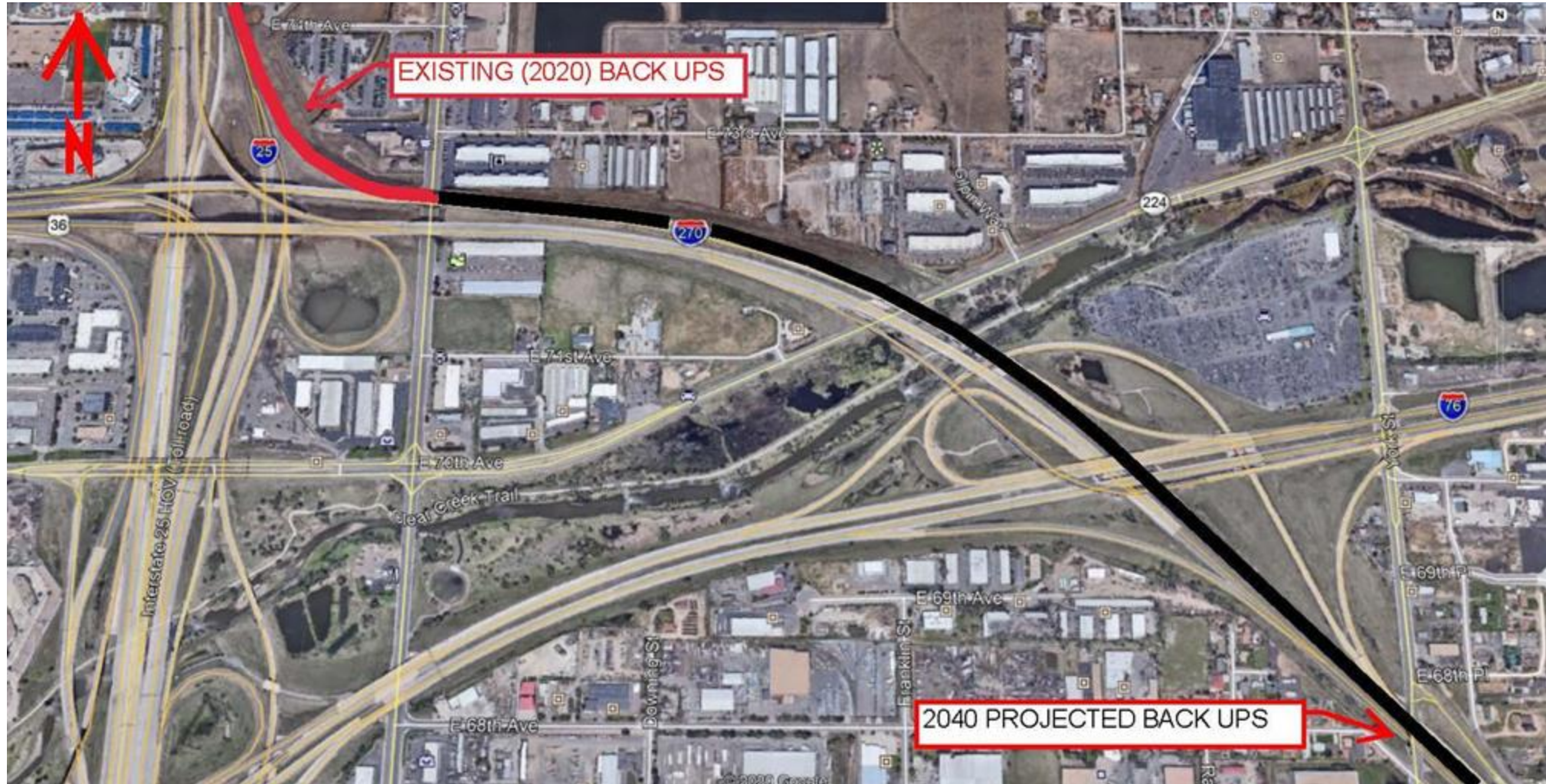
Member of the SNC Lavalin Group

2.3.6. Alternative 4b: 2GP+1ML with DC





I-270 Corridor Traffic Modeling





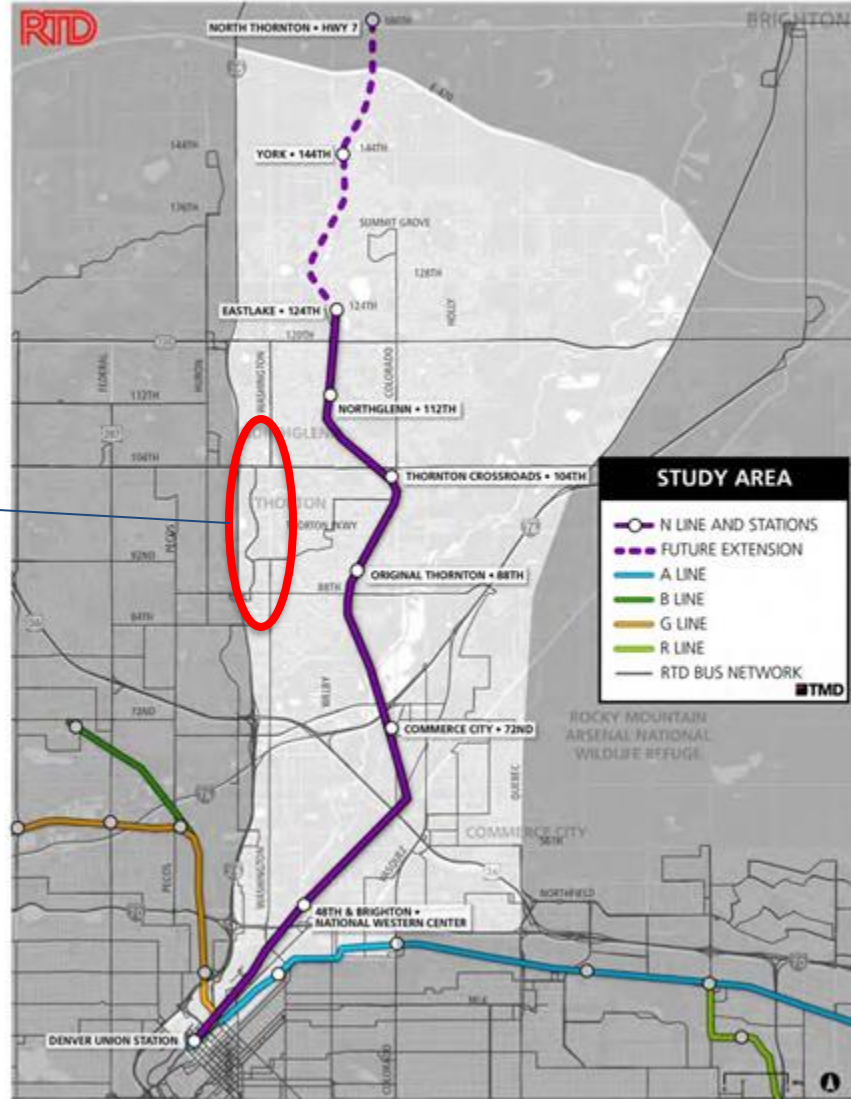
2040 Daily Traffic Volumes





RTD N-Line Begins Service

Map 1: North Metro Corridor Study Area



I-25: 88th
Project Area



ELMP Direct Connections





Corridor Funding Opportunities

1. I-25 North Segment 2 Intermediate T&R Analysis
2. I-270 Corridor T&R Analysis
3. I-270 Corridor on the SB 267 Year 4 Funding List for \$200M
4. I-25N TIFIA

- Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act or “TIFIA”
- Provides Federal credit assistance
 - Direct loans
 - Loan guarantees
 - Standby lines of credit





What is TIFIA?

- TIFIA Benefits:
 - Improved access to credit markets
 - Flexible repayment terms
 - Favorable interest rates (1.43% as of 9/21/20)
 - Leverage big projects
 - Springing lien
 - Huge appropriation from Congress





What is TIFIA?

- Submit a Letter of Interest (LOI)
 - Can be submitted at any time
- USDOT Build America Bureau will review the LOI and request further information as necessary.
- Upon completion of the review and a determination of eligibility, DOT will invite an application for credit assistance.





I-25 North and TIFIA



I-25 North TIFIA

- COVID-19 and SB-267
- Master Trust Indenture Structure (e.g. C-470 TIFIA loan) - incorporates toll revenue from Segments 2 - 8
- Near-Term Needs:
 - Refinance \$23.6M HPTE Segment 3 BAML construction loan
 - \$154M TIFIA Loan to support Segments 6, 7, and 8
- Long-term Needs: support work in the I-25N Comprehensive Plan



I-25 North and TIFIA



I-25 North TIFIA Next Steps:

- Submit LOI to TIFIA by end of this week
- TIFIA hires advisors (financial, legal, T&R) - 3 to 4 months
- Negotiate loan - 3 to 4 months
- Financial close: late spring / early summer 2021*



Next Steps

1. Understand I-270 Traffic Analysis further
2. Discuss with RTD Bus Service Plan changes based on N-Line
3. Complete T&R Studies for I-25 and I-270
4. Evaluate impacts of TEL Direct Connections at I-270 and I-25
5. Design Charrette to evaluate I-25 North improvements in early 2021



Questions???





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N-Line 112th Station



Video Credit: J Dopp / K2kidd.com





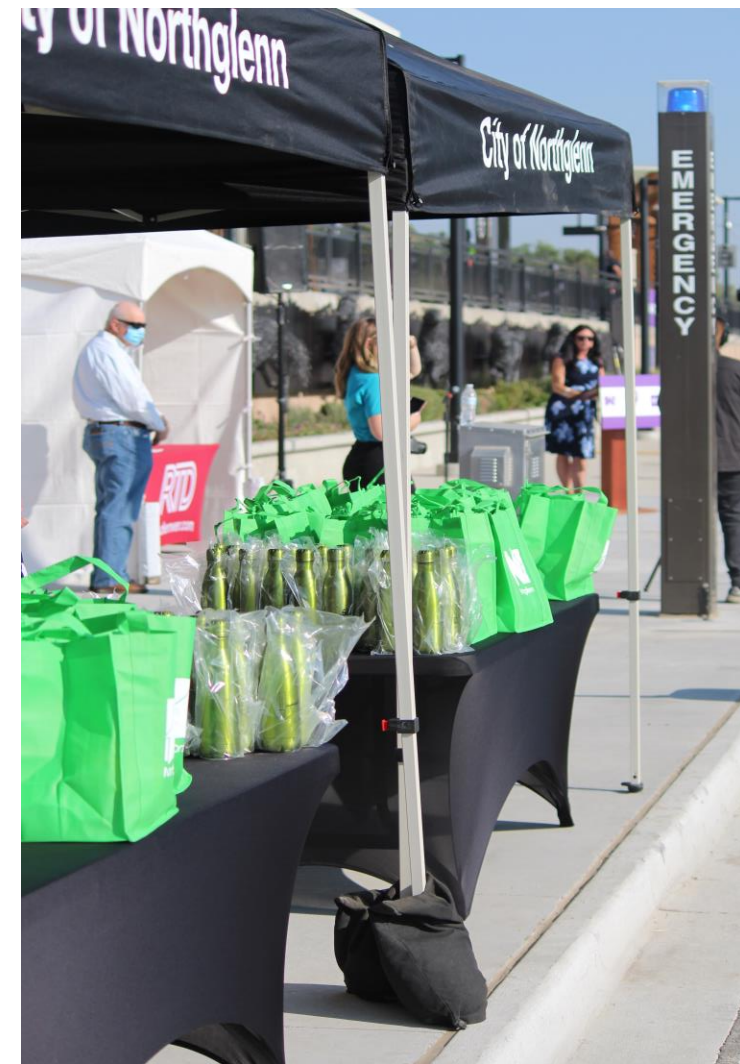
































NATA Next Meetings



- Coming up October 22nd
 - NATA Meeting 7:30AM -8:30AM featuring completed NATA Leave behind
 - 8th Annual TransForum (virtual free event) 8:30AM- 10:00AM
- December: Introductions to the new RTD General Manager Debra Johnson & the new District I Director
 - Review, I of Transportation related Ballot issues