

SOUTHWEST CHIEF THRU-CAR SERVICE TO COLORADO SPRINGS FEASIBILITY STUDY



CONSOLIDATED RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

TRACK 1 - PLANNING

OCTOBER 18, 2019

*Submitted By: Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
in partnership with the Colorado Department of Transportation*



COLORADO
Department of
Transportation

1. COVER PAGE

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Application	
Project Information	
Project Title	Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study
Applicant	Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission
Project Track	Track 1 – Planning
Was a Federal grant application previously submitted for this project?	No
Is this a Rural Project? What percentage of the project cost is based in a Rural Area?	No, 33%
Cities / States where the project is located	La Junta, Pueblo, and Colorado Springs, Colorado
Urbanized Area where the project is located	Pueblo and Colorado Springs, Colorado
Population of Urbanized Area	Pueblo – 136,550 Colorado Springs – 559,409
Is the project currently programmed in the: State Rail Plan, State Freight Plan, TIP, STIP, MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, State Long Range Transportation Plan?	Yes, included in 2018 Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

Table of Contents

1.	Cover Page	ii
2.	Project Summary.....	1
3.	Project Funding	1
4.	Applicant Eligibility.....	3
5.	Project Eligibility	4
6.	Detailed Project Description	5
A.	Project Background	6
B.	Challenges the Project Aims to Address	11
C.	Anticipated Outcomes.....	13
D.	Expected Users and Beneficiaries	13
E.	Specific Components and Elements of the Project.....	14
7.	Project Location	15
8.	Evaluation Criteria.....	16
A.	Project Benefits	16
B.	Project Costs.....	19
C.	Technical Merit.....	20
9.	Selection Criteria	22
10.	Project Implementation and Management	24
11.	Conclusion	25

Table of Figures

Figure 5-1: La Junta Amtrak Station.....	5
Figure 5-2: Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor.....	7
Figure 6-1: Project Location Map.....	15

Table of Tables

Table 2-1: Project Funding	2
Table 2-2: Non-Federal Funding Sources.....	3
Table 5-1: Annual Southwest Chief Ridership, FY 2012 to 2018	9
Table 5-2: Projected Annual Southwest Chief Ridership, FY 2019 to 2024.....	9
Table 5-3: Annual Boardings at Southwest Chief Amtrak Stations in Colorado	10
Table 5-4: Amtrak Thruway Connecting Bus Service Denver, CO to Raton, NM	10
Table 7-1: Summary of Statement of Work.....	20

Appendices

Appendix A: Letters of Funding Commitment and Letters of Support

Appendix B: Statement of Work

Appendix C: Letter from the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail
Commission



COLORADO
Department of
Transportation

2. PROJECT SUMMARY

The Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (the “Commission”) in partnership with the Colorado Department of Transportation (“CDOT”) is requesting \$225,000 in federal funding under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (“CRISI”) program to perform a feasibility study analyzing the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta, Colorado on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. The reactivation of passenger rail service along this historic railroad alignment will provide national and regional transportation linkages and social and economic benefits to Colorado communities on the Front Range. The extension of service will also benefit the financial viability of the Southwest Chief by adding significant ridership and revenue to the long-distance service, while supporting the incremental development of a new passenger rail network along the Front Range of Colorado from Pueblo to the south, to Denver and Fort Collins to the north.

3. PROJECT FUNDING

The total project cost of the Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study is estimated to be \$450,000. As described in Table 3-1, the non-Federal cash funding match will be \$225,000 or 50 percent of the total project costs. The Federal share will not exceed \$225,000 or 50 percent of the total project costs.

The proposed thru-car service will serve residents of Rural Areas of Colorado, including the City of La Junta. Approximately 75 percent of the total track miles connecting La Junta and Colorado Springs would travel through Rural Areas (see Figure 7-1) and the Amtrak station at La Junta is also located in a Rural Area. However, it is anticipated that the planning analysis would be performed by staff (agency and consultant) located in both urbanized and rural areas in the US, including Denver, Pueblo and La Junta. Thus, approximately 1/3 of the incurred cost of the feasibility analysis is anticipated to be performed by staff within a rural area.

The non-Federal cash funding match is being provided by the Commission, CDOT, Pueblo County, the City of La Junta, and the Colorado Rail Passenger Association (“ColoRail”) as shown in Table 3-2. Amtrak is anticipated to contribute in-kind services (assistance with ridership forecasts) in support of Task 2 - Operational Scenarios, Ridership and Revenue Forecasts. The statement of work (SOW) is described under the *Technical Merit* section and included, with more detail and in accordance with FRA guidance, as **Appendix B**.



Table 3-1: Project Funding

Task	Task Name	Cost	Percentage of Total Cost
1	Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule	\$13,500	3%
2	Operational Scenarios, Ridership, and Revenue Forecasts	\$85,500	19%
3	Station Area Analysis	\$67,500	15%
4	Assessment of Current Infrastructure Conditions	\$45,000	10%
5	Develop and Simulate Infrastructure Improvements	\$90,000	20%
6	Cost Estimates	\$36,000	8%
7	Preliminary Environmental Screening	\$36,000	8%
8	Assessment of Community Support	\$36,000	8%
9	Draft and Final Report	\$22,500	5%
10	Administrative Oversight and Quality Control	\$18,000	4%
Total Project Cost		\$450,000	100%
Federal Funds Received From Previous Grant		0	0
CRISI Federal Funding Request		\$225,000	50%
Non-Federal Funding/Match		\$225,000	50%
Portion of Non-Federal Funding from Private Sector		\$1,000	0.5%
Portion of Total Project Costs Spent in a Rural Area		150,000	33%
Pending Federal Funding Requests		0	0

Table 3-2: Non-Federal Funding Sources

Non-Federal Funding Source	Contribution	Percentage of Total Non-Federal Funding
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%
Total Non-Federal Cash Funding/Match	\$225,000	100%
Portion of Cash Non-Federal Funding from Private Sector	\$1,000	0.5%

Written correspondence outlining their support and funding commitment have been received from Pueblo County, the City of La Junta and the Colorado Rail Passenger Association. Letters of support from CDOT, Amtrak and the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments have also been received. All six letters are included in **Appendix A**. In addition to their support letter, CDOT has pledged a financial contribution.

This feasibility study has the wide support of elected officials. The following Senators and Congressmen have indicated that they will provide letters of support to USDOT:

- US Senator Cory Gardner
- US Senator Michael Bennett
- US Congressman Doug Lamborn
- US Congressman Scott Tipton
- US Congressman Ken Buck

4. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The CRISI grant applicant is the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (the “Commission”), a legislatively established body with eleven voting members, created in 2017 in the Colorado Department of Transportation by the enactment by the Colorado General Assembly of Senate Bill 17-153 (Colorado Revised Statutes, 43-4-1001 et seq.¹). As a “publicly chartered authority” within the CDOT, which in turn is a public agency of the State of Colorado, the Commission meets the requirements of an eligible applicant under the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued on August 18, 2019.

The mission of the Commission is to preserve existing Amtrak Southwest Chief rail line service in Colorado and explore the expansion of passenger rail service to Pueblo and elsewhere. The

¹ This legislation replaced the Southwest Chief Rail Line Economic Development, Rural Tourism, and Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Commission created by the Colorado General Assembly in 2014 with the Commission.

Commission is also charged with the development of a commuter or intercity passenger rail corridor from Fort Collins to Pueblo (including Denver and Colorado Springs) as a well-integrated component of a modern, efficient, and cost-effective multimodal transportation system. Future passenger rail extensions to Wyoming and New Mexico may also be explored by the Commission. Potential implementation of rail service to other cities along the I-25 Corridor could further leverage the investments requested in this CRISI grant application.

Voting member organizations of the Commission include Union Pacific Railroad (UP); BNSF Railway; ColoRail; a representative from the following counties: Huerfano, Las Animas, Otero, and Pueblo; Pueblo Area Council of Governments; South Central Council of Governments; Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments; Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG); the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD); and the North Front Range MPO. CDOT, Amtrak and a representative from Wyoming are non-voting members of this body.

Senate Bill 17-153 repurposed the previous Southwest Chief Rail Line, Economic Development, Rural Tourism, and Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Commission to become the Commission. It also maintained Southwest Chief Rail Line, Economic Development, Rural Tourism, and Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Fund (“Fund”) (Colorado Revised Statutes 43-4-1002). The Commission is expressly empowered to accept contributions to and expend moneys from the Fund. The Fund is authorized to receive both state and federal grant moneys, as well as appropriations and contributions from other sources, including public-private partnerships.

The Commission legislation has no statutory sunset date, which exemplifies the long-range nature of the Commission’s mission. In addition to the roll over funding from the prior Southwest Chief Commission, the Commission received \$2.5 million from the 2018 State Legislature. The Commission has the authority to raise and expend additional funds from any legal source to carry out its mission.

5. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

This project is an eligible rail planning project under Track 1 – Planning. The technical analyses of this feasibility study will analyze and develop service planning documents for initiating passenger rail service on the corridor between La Junta and Colorado Springs, Colorado. These technical analyses will include ridership, revenue and cost forecasting; railroad operations analysis and simulation modeling; conceptual engineering; and a preliminary environmental analysis to examine the feasibility of adding a new branch to the Southwest Chief at La Junta to provide intercity passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. This segment of the rail network would carry travelers destined for Pueblo and Colorado Springs with the potential of adding significant ridership to the existing Southwest Chief.

The operation of the branch service will be developed without impact to existing or future freight rail flows and will not alter the current schedule of the Southwest Chief between Los Angeles and Chicago. Thus, a rail planning project on this segment demonstrates operational independence from the rest of the rail network.

6. DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Commission requests \$225,000 in Federal funding to support the performance of a feasibility study to analyze the efficacy of adding a new branch to the Amtrak Southwest Chief at La Junta, Colorado to provide thru-car service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs for long-distance trains originating in Chicago and Los Angeles.

Figure 6-1: La Junta Amtrak Station



The new branch of the Southwest Chief will begin at La Junta, Colorado, where the Southwest Chief currently stops, and provide thru-car service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs for trains originating in Chicago and destined for Los Angeles. The potential service extension would utilize the BNSF Pueblo and Pikes Peak Subdivisions and potentially the Union Pacific Colorado Springs Subdivision. Current planning envisions that several westbound cars would detach at La Junta and join a dedicated

locomotive to make stops at Pueblo and Colorado Springs. The consist would potentially turn using a rehabilitated wye in northern Colorado Springs and return to Pueblo and La Junta to rejoin the cars to the Southwest Chief. This potential service scenario will allow one round-trip train per day to make stops at Pueblo and Colorado Springs.

A 2016 Amtrak study found that an additional stop at Pueblo could attract 14,000 new riders annually and generate \$1.45 million in annual fare revenue to the Southwest Chief. Extending the service beyond Pueblo to Colorado Springs, with a population over 700,000 in 2017 and the second largest city in Colorado after Denver, has the potential to add significantly more ridership and revenues to the Southwest Chief.

Colorado Springs, with its proximity to multiple military sites—Fort Carson Army Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base, and the US Air Force Academy—and its position as a center for the defense and technology industries, would also attract additional significant ridership. Colorado Springs is also home to major medical facilities and hospitals, including UCHealth Memorial Hospitals (Central and North) and the St. Francis Medical Center, which are the nearest major medical facilities for rural communities to the south of Colorado Springs.

Although the new passenger rail branch would terminate at Colorado Springs, the planning and implementation of the service extension would be designed to not preclude a future connection to Denver by way of planned Front Range Passenger Rail Service, which is currently under study by the Commission.

The Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs is included in the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan and is under active consideration by Amtrak, the State of Colorado, and local communities along the route. Adding stations in Pueblo and Colorado Springs is anticipated to attract in-state and out-of-state travelers and improve safety on US 50 from Pueblo to La Junta and on Interstate 25, which stretches north-south between Colorado Springs and Pueblo and on to the north to Denver, Fort Collins and Cheyenne, Wyoming.

A. Project Background

In 2011, Amtrak informed Colorado communities, CDOT, and transportation advocates that the operating and maintenance contract between Amtrak and BNSF Railway for the Southwest Chief was due to expire in 2015, and that upon expiration Amtrak would be responsible for a significantly larger share of the operating and maintenance (O & M) costs for the segment of the Southwest Chief between Newton, Kansas and Madrid, New Mexico. The increase in O & M costs was estimated to be significant – approximately \$111 million over ten years – and an additional \$94 million in capital costs over the same timeframe.

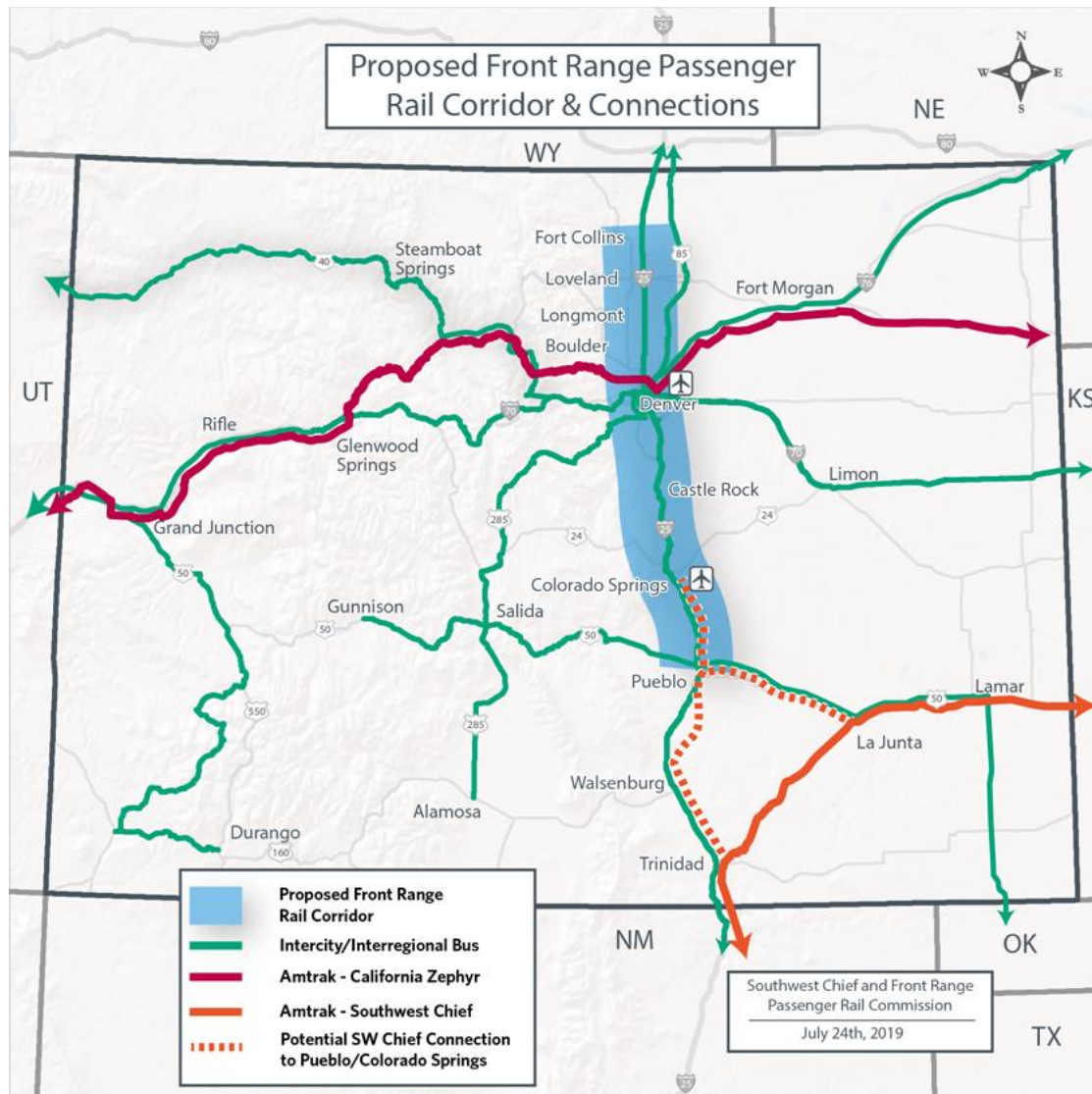
As an alternative, Amtrak considered rerouting Southwest Chief service over the BNSF Transcontinental route. Rerouting service would have resulting in an elimination of Amtrak service to western Kansas, southeastern Colorado (including Lamar, La Junta and Trinidad), and northeastern New Mexico. The use of the Transcontinental route had the potential to interfere with BNSF Railway's existing and growth freight traffic, requiring line capacity to be added, and would result in costs equal to or exceeding the costs required to maintain and upgrade the current Southwest Chief route.

In Spring 2012, the Colorado state legislature passed a resolution in support of preserving Southwest Chief service. Following passage of this resolution, Colorado, Kansas, and New Mexico formed a three-state coalition. A few years later, in 2014, Colorado state legislation created the Southwest Chief Commission to advocate for preservation of the Southwest Chief and investigate a possible reroute from La Junta. The Southwest Chief Commission was successful in its mandate to save the Southwest Chief and led multiple fundraising efforts.

Given the success of the 2014 Southwest Chief Commission, the Southwest Chief and Front Range Commission was created in 2017. Building on the work of the 2014 Southwest Chief Commission's work, the new Commission was charged with presenting a plan to the Colorado Legislature to evaluate Southwest Chief service preservation and route extension to Pueblo and elsewhere. In 2018, the Commission initiated studies to update planning-level estimates for capital and operating costs, positive train control (PTC) support needs, local issues, and station

area design and updates on the Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor. A map depicting the Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor and Connections is included in Figure 6-2.

Figure 6-2: Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor



Building from these efforts, the Commission has prepared this grant application for Federal funds to conduct a study of the feasibility of adding a new branch to the Amtrak Southwest Chief connecting Pueblo and Colorado Springs at La Junta to the existing long-distance service.

Prior Federal Grants in Southwest Chief Operating Territory

Since 2014, USDOT has awarded several grants to rehabilitate and upgrade track infrastructure in the operating territory of the Southwest Chief in New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas.

In 2014, a coalition including Amtrak, the Kansas DOT (KDOT), BNSF Railway and 14 communities and organizations in Kansas and Colorado, applied for Federal Transportation

Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) VI funding for the Southwest Chief Route Improvement Project. The \$24.3 million project was awarded \$12.5 million in federal funding and included improvements to existing BNSF track infrastructure, including new rail, turnouts, and grade crossings.

In 2015, a TIGER VII grant application for the Southwest Chief Route Advancement and Improvement Project was awarded to a coalition led by the City of La Junta, Colorado. Federal funding of \$15.2 million was awarded with additional state, local, and private matching funds, for an estimated total project cost of \$24.4 million. This project served to rehabilitate the infrastructure of the BNSF La Junta Subdivision, enabling Amtrak to continue service along the Southwest Chief route in Colorado.

In 2018, KDOT, CDOT, BNSF, Amtrak and the 2017 Commission were awarded \$9.2 million in federal funds through a CRISI grant for the installation of PTC signaling between Dodge City, KS, and Las Animas, CO.

In 2018, Colfax County, New Mexico was awarded \$16 million in TIGER IX funding as the sponsor of the Amtrak Southwest Chief Route Stabilization Project. Non-federal funding matches were provided by three states - New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas - and local communities and organizations along the route. Significant financial support was also provided by BNSF and Amtrak for a total project cost estimated at \$26.7 million. This project also improves the New Mexico Rail Runner Route, which operates on state-owned trackage in New Mexico over which the Southwest Chief also operates.

These railroad projects demonstrate the consolidated effort of a wide variety of public and private sponsors to improve passenger rail service throughout the region and bring improved mobility, transportation network connectivity and safe transportation options. Continued support for track improvements and potential extension of Amtrak's Southwest Chief route are critical to supporting communities in southeastern Colorado, western Kansas, and northern New Mexico.

Current Southwest Chief Service Frequencies, Travel Times, and Ridership Trends

Amtrak provides daily service on the Southwest Chief between Chicago and Los Angeles. Train No. 3 travels westbound, departing Chicago at 2:50 PM, arriving in La Junta the following day at 7:49 AM, and arriving in Los Angeles the next day at 8:00 AM. Train No. 4 travels eastbound, departing Los Angeles at 6 PM, arriving in La Junta at 7:19 PM the following day and arriving in Chicago at 2:50 PM the next day. These trains serve the following cities:

- Chicago, Naperville, Mendota, Princeton, and Galesburg in Illinois
- Fort Madison in Iowa
- La Plata and Kansas City in Missouri
- Lawrence, Topeka, Newton, Hutchinson, Dodge City, and Garden City in Kansas
- Lamar, La Junta, and Trinidad in Colorado



- Raton, Las Vegas, Lamy, Albuquerque, and Gallup in New Mexico
- Winslow, Flagstaff, and Kingman in Arizona
- Needles, Barstow, Victorville, San Bernardino, Riverside, Fullerton, and Los Angeles in California

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, the Southwest Chief served a total of 331,239 passengers. As shown in Table 6-1, Amtrak Southwest Chief ridership has generally been declining since FY 2012 except for an increase in ridership between FY 2014 and 2015.

Table 6-1: Annual Southwest Chief Ridership, FY 2012 to 2018²

Fiscal Year	Ridership
2018	331,239
2017	363,272
2016	364,748
2015	367,267
2014	352,162
2013	355,815
2012	355,316

Amtrak's Service Line Plans for FY 2019 to 2024 indicate that ridership on the Southwest Chief is expected to rise (see Table 6-2). Ridership is projected to steadily increase from the 2018 level and reach 348,100 by FY 2024.

Table 6-2: Projected Annual Southwest Chief Ridership, FY 2019 to 2024³

Fiscal Year	Projected Ridership
2019	329,600
2020	335,000
2021	337,500
2022	340,700
2023	344,000
2024	348,100

In Colorado, the Southwest Chief has stations in Lamar, La Junta, and Trinidad, Colorado. In 2018 14,596 passengers boarded or alighted in Colorado, up from 13,272 in 2012. This service operates on track owned by BNSF and provides key rail connections linking rural southeastern Colorado communities with Chicago to the east and Los Angeles to the west. Southwest Chief ridership in Colorado has generally remained steady since 2012 (see Table 6-3).

² Amtrak Fiscal Year Ridership Reports

³ <https://www.amtrak.com/content/dam/projects/dotcom/english/public/documents/corporate/businessplanning/Amtrak-Service-Line-Plans-FY20-24.pdf>

Table 6-3: Annual Boardings at Southwest Chief Amtrak Stations in Colorado

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
La Junta	6,566	6,711	6,918	7,256	7,080	7,009	7,373
Lamar	1,936	1,823	1,812	1,928	1,879	1,673	1,588
Trinidad	4,770	4,765	4,592	5,158	5,747	5,415	5,635
Total	13,272	13,299	13,322	14,342	14,706	14,097	14,596
Annual Change	2%	0.2%	0.2%	8%	3%	-4%	3.5%

Amtrak Thruway Connecting Bus Service

To extend the reach of Amtrak service to communities without rail service and offer a wider selection of destinations, Amtrak provides thruway service with guaranteed connections to Amtrak trains. Eight (8) scheduled buses (four each direction) operated by Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma Coaches travel daily between Denver and Raton, New Mexico, serving Colorado Springs and Pueblo. Buses meet Amtrak's Southwest Chief at Raton and the California Zephyr at Denver. The bus service provides a connection between Front Range communities Denver south and the Chief for points west of Raton. Scheduled service and the train connections in 2019 are shown in the table below.

Table 6-4: Amtrak Thruway Connecting Bus Service Denver, CO to Raton, NM

Denver - Colorado Springs - Pueblo, CO - Raton, NM

Thruway Bus Number	6003	8004	8305	8306
Connecting Train			R5	R6
Denver, CO	6:00a	6:45a	11:10a	11:50p
Colorado Springs, CO	7:45a	8:40a	1:05p	1:25a
Pueblo, CO	8:35a	9:40a	2:00p	2:20a
Raton, NM	10:25a	11:40a		
Connecting Train	R3	R4		

Raton, NM - Pueblo, CO - Colorado Springs - Denver

Thruway Bus Number	8405	8003	8406	6004
Connecting Train		R3		R4
Raton, NM			12:07p	6:00p
Pueblo, CO	4:05a	2:10p	2:20p	8:10p
Colorado Springs, CO	5:00a	3:10p	3:15p	9:00p
Denver, CO	6:25a	5:10p	5:10p	10:25p
Connecting Train	R5		R6	

Trains 3 and 4 connecting at Raton are the [Southwest Chief](#).
Trains 5 and 6 connecting at Denver are the [California Zephyr](#).

Source: Amtrak

B. Challenges the Project Aims to Address

A key component of the feasibility analysis will be to identify physical, financial, or operational constraints to service expansion on the Southwest Chief. This process will be informed by the collection of information, stakeholder discussions and the development of methodologies to address the following planning challenges.

Improve ridership and revenues on the Southwest Chief

In recent years, ridership between Chicago and Los Angeles on the Amtrak Southwest Chief has been declining. While Amtrak’s forecasts estimate that ridership will once again begin to rise in 2020 (see Table 6-2), ridership is not expected to reach previous levels for some time. On the other hand, ridership on the Southwest Chief within Colorado has remained steady since 2012, indicating that there is consistent demand in the region for rail.

This feasibility analysis will build off a 2016 Amtrak study that found a Pueblo stop on the Southwest Chief could attract 14,000 new riders annually and generate approximately \$1.45 million in ticket revenues. Adding a new branch to the Southwest Chief that connects to the educational, military and employment centers and tourism destinations in Pueblo and Colorado Springs is anticipated to further build ridership into and out of southeastern Colorado and improve revenues

The feasibility analysis will also consider ridership gains that would accrue from out-of-state travelers. Existing Southwest Chief stations in La Junta, Lamar, and Trinidad served approximately 3,200 out-of-state leisure travelers during FY 2013. This is about 24 percent of the total ridership of these stations.⁴ Providing a fixed connection to the urbanized areas and tourist attractions of Pueblo and Colorado Springs for these travelers and others with similar trip purposes could boost ridership and revenues.

Balance improvements with operating limits of a shared passenger/freight corridor

The Southwest Chief will share track with BNSF operations and potentially with UP operations on the new branch between La Junta and Colorado Springs. Improvements to mobility for

PUEBLO

Population growing

- 2000: 102,121
- 2010: 106,595

Employment stable

- One of the largest steel producing cities in the United States, called “Steel City”
- Home to one of six production sites for Evraz Rocky Mountain Steel. Evraz is the largest North American producer by volume of rail and other steel products for the US railroad industry.

⁴ Duncan and Wakefield (2015). “The Economic Impact of Amtrak’s Southwest Chief Rail Service on the Colorado Economy. Available at: <https://www.csupueblo.edu/news/2014/doc/southwest-chief-economic-impact-duncan-and-wakefield.pdf>

communities in the region must be balanced by the growing freight demand, both related to population and employment growth in Colorado. Maintaining the existing dialogue among the Commission, CDOT, BNSF, UP and Amtrak will contribute positively to the development of a feasible solution for this rail connection. The study will focus on identifying the physical and operational improvements, and the related costs, necessary to accommodate the addition of daily passenger trains without impairing existing and future freight train operations.

Develop approaches to maximize operational efficiencies on the new branch

Establishing a successful thru-car service will hinge on developing an efficient train turn operation at both ends of the branch at La Junta and Colorado Springs, as well as connections with the existing Southwest Chief at La Junta. The operation at Colorado Springs also must be designed to not preclude future through service to Denver and to accommodate a new station site and building.

This feasibility study will build off the conceptual planning of the daily rail operation at Colorado Springs, which has already commenced. Passenger trains are anticipated to be able to utilize an existing wye, following rehabilitation, north of the Colorado Springs depot along trackage owned by Union Pacific. The feasibility study will investigate the additional infrastructure that would be needed at this location to efficiently turn passenger trains and identify requirements for a layover track.

Improve mobility of rural communities in southeast Colorado and along the route of the Southwest Chief

The establishment of a passenger rail connection between Colorado Springs and La Junta via Pueblo would improve the mobility of rural communities in southeast Colorado in two ways.

- 1) Improve the ability of rural communities to access facilities and amenities in the urbanized areas of Colorado Springs and Pueblo, and
- 2) Improve the ability of these communities to access destinations to the east and west via the connection at La Junta to the Southwest Chief.

The proposed Southwest Chief thru-car service would provide residents of the Front Range communities south of Denver easy and reliable access to key destinations, including major medical facilities in Colorado Springs, to employment centers in Pueblo and Colorado Springs, and to military facilities in Colorado Springs.

Front Range communities south of Denver would receive improved access to the Southwest Chief for both western and eastern points. The proposed Southwest Chief thru-car service would provide a connection between Front Range communities south of Denver and La Junta, thus filling in the eastern side of the Southwest Chief's service area with the proposed service.

The proposed Southwest Chief thru-car service would also benefit the many other rural communities in states outside of Colorado along the Southwest Chief territory route including Kansas, Missouri, and New Mexico, providing them with new destinations and connections.

The feasibility study will examine and assess the potential ridership that would accrue from these communities, the support of these communities for improved service, transit plans that would support these improvements, and an analysis of ridership trends and lessons learned from Amtrak Thruway connecting bus service.

C. Anticipated Outcomes

Through the development of this feasibility study on the Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs, the Commission will:

- Define the purpose and need for improved intercity rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs and determine appropriate goals and performance measures for future service.
- Consider alignment and equipment improvements to support the new branch service and facilitate connections to future passenger rail service to other cities along the Front Range. Investigate strategies, including service and scheduling improvements, to improve ridership and revenue on the Colorado segment of the Southwest Chief.
- Investigate strategies and approaches to reduce capital project and operational and maintenance costs.
- Evaluate the potential to reduce traffic fatalities by taking planning steps to increase ridership and the use of rail as a travel mode in the corridor.
- Determine potential quantitative and qualitative benefits to surrounding communities including the rural communities along the new branch of the Southwest Chief.
- Perform a high level environmental screening of reasonable conceptual alternatives.
- Examine station locations, including considerations of station access, to determine an optimal location for the Colorado Springs station. (The location of a passenger rail station in Pueblo is currently under study by Pueblo County).
- Prepare high level capital cost estimates for conceptual alternatives.
- Support ongoing Front Range Passenger Rail planning efforts.

D. Expected Users and Beneficiaries

The development and completion of the feasibility study will benefit the residents, visitors and business owners in the region by ensuring the future passenger rail investments are planned and implemented in a coordinated fashion among rail service providers, operators and local agencies and in accordance with a comprehensive set of goals and performance measures. The use of a feasibility study to guide investment decision-making will lead to the most efficient use of taxpayer and stakeholder dollars and farebox revenues and may be useful for outlining opportunities and benefits that could attract private funding to the corridor.

The project will benefit the residents, visitors, and employers of the region by improving the connectivity of the rail network. Users of the rail system between La Junta, Pueblo, and Colorado Springs will be the primary beneficiary. Adding a new branch to the Amtrak Southwest Chief will increase the attractiveness of rail for business, military, student and leisure travelers as compared to other existing travel modes. With a station stop already in La Junta, the cities of Pueblo and Colorado Springs will see the most benefits from the Project.

Travelers that currently journey to and from Pueblo and/or Colorado Springs would be the primary beneficiaries of this project and of projects to follow that utilize the analysis and information to improve traveling opportunities and conditions. Beneficiaries will also include out-of-state users as these are one of the sources of new ridership cited in a 2014 report on the Pueblo station. The passenger rail service would build off the connections to rural communities and to long distance rail service established by Amtrak Thruway Connecting Bus service and provide a fixed connection to the Southwest Chief.

Through development of the thru-car service plan by Amtrak and the service/capacity modeling effort potentially performed by BNSF, as discussed with and in response to Amtrak, the final service plan for the Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs will reduce the potential for conflict between new passenger rail and existing, as well as future, freight rail operations, protecting service quality for all users.

COLORADO SPRINGS

Population growing

- 2000: 360,890
- 2010: 416,427

Employment diverse

- Air Force Academy with approximately 4,400 cadets and more than 300 Air Force and civilian support personnel
- Fort Carson, located near Colorado Springs, is 137,000-acre installation with a total population of 13,813
- Major medical facilities, including UC Health Memorial

E. Specific Components and Elements of the Project

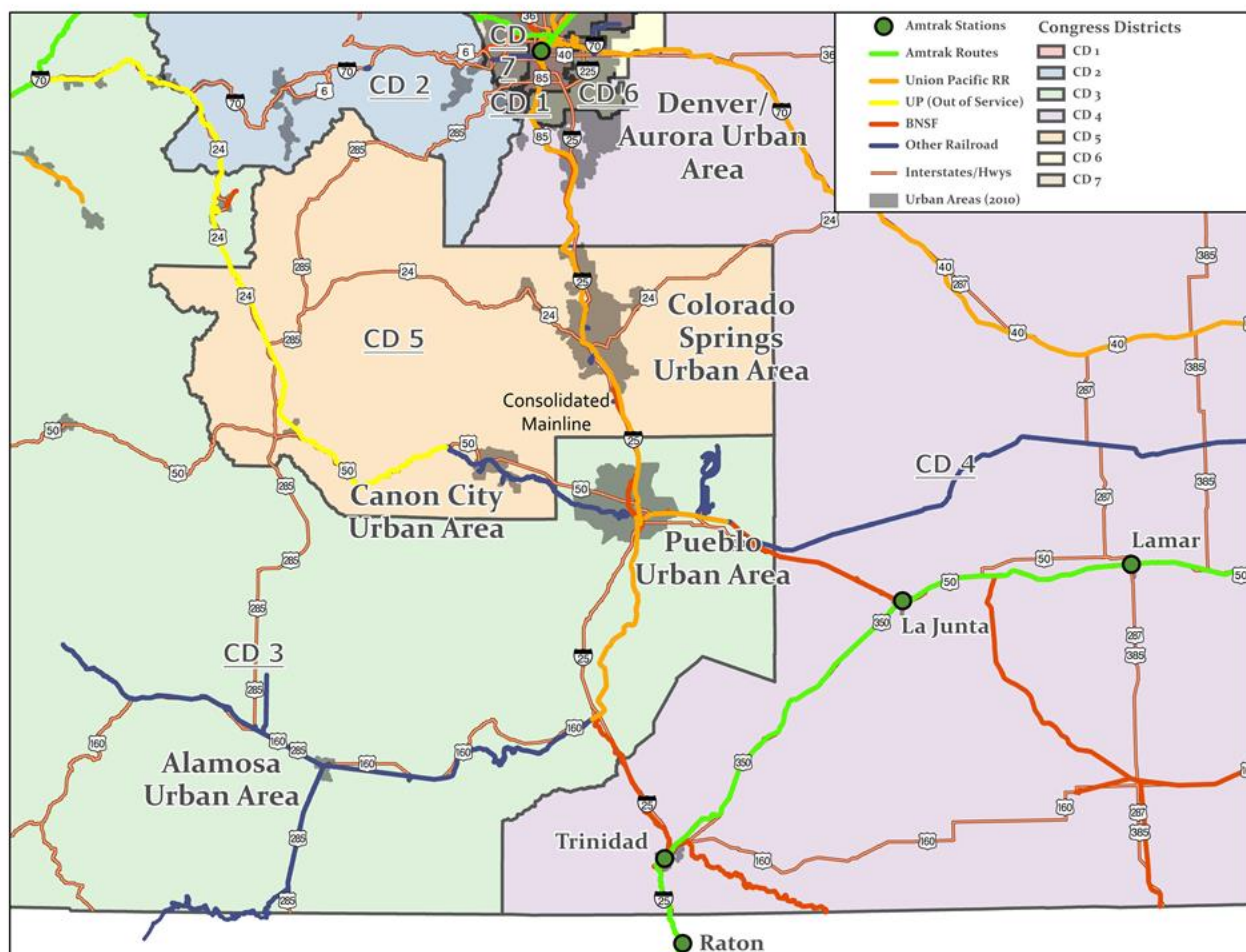
The feasibility study will consist of a series of technical tasks and deliverable documents and ongoing coordination with stakeholders and partners. Study tasks include information gathering and review of existing conditions and reports, development of operational scenarios, concept development, cost estimating and simulation modeling, followed by recommendations. The flow and content of project tasks are summarized under Technical Merit, and the Statement of Work is included as **Appendix B**.

7. PROJECT LOCATION

The study area of the Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study is located southeast of Denver along the existing, approximately 110-mile long, freight rail right-of-way connecting the La Junta Amtrak Station at the southern end, Pueblo, and the former Denver and Rio Grande Depot and Roswell Wye in Colorado Springs at the northern end.

The alignment within the study area consists of two freight rail segments: (1) the BNSF Pueblo Subdivision, which provides a freight rail connection between La Junta and Pueblo, and (2) the BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad alignments, which connect Pueblo and Colorado Springs. The locations and ownership of the freight rail lines, the state of Colorado passenger stations currently served by Amtrak, the route of the current Southwest Chief service, and Amtrak long-distance trains in the study area are shown in Figure 7-1.

Figure 7-1: Project Location Map



The project area crosses through three Congressional Districts in Colorado (03, 04, and 05).

The geospatial data for the corridor end points are as follows:

Colorado Springs, Colorado (Roswell Wye):	Latitude: 38°52'00.90" N Longitude: 104°49'52.20" W
La Junta, Colorado (Amtrak station):	Latitude: 37°59'18.30" N Longitude: 103°32'35.30" W

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study is a rail planning project that will be used to gather, generate and analyze information to evaluate the costs and benefits of extending the current long-distance passenger rail service in Colorado. As such, insufficient data and information is available at this stage before the preparation of the analyses to provide a robust set of quantifiable benefits and cost estimates. An overview of anticipated benefits is provided below:

A. Project Benefits

Improved and expanded passenger rail service in Colorado would generate economic benefits related to USDOT's five merit criteria, namely: Quality of Life, Economic Competitiveness, Safety, State of Good Repair, and Environmental Sustainability. Improved service would generate economic benefits for existing rail users; for new users who mode shift from air, bus and private vehicles; and for all travelers. Specifically bringing passenger rail service to this segment is likely to result in the following outcomes and associated economic benefits:

- Provide improved convenience for travelers
- Provide additional (alternative) transportation choices
- Increase safety through improved infrastructure
- Reduce safety costs by reducing highway VMT
- Contribute to economic growth and tourism in Colorado
- Strengthen military readiness nationally and in Colorado
- Maintain capacity for present and future freight flows along the Front Range
- Provide an equitable and accessible transportation option between communities, with a focus on rural communities in Colorado
- Serve as an impetus for public/private development opportunities along the corridor
- Promote multimodal connectivity with and the use of other transportation modes, including intercity bus and other long-distance rail passenger services.

Public benefits

Public benefits represent economic values resulting from rail service improvements and can be experienced by current or future users of passenger rail service or the public at-large. The benefits derived involve a reduction in the costs associated with transportation activities, and can be broken down into following categories:

1) *Benefits to passenger rail users*

- Transportation cost savings to new users
- Productivity gains

2) *External benefits*

- Travel time savings for highway users resulting from reduced congestion
- Reduced vehicle crashes generating safety benefits
- Pavement maintenance savings
- Reduced emissions from highway and air users who mode-shift to rail
- Increased economic activity resulting from improved connections to employment nodes and enhanced goods movement

Benefits to passenger rail users

Riders on the improved intercity passenger rail service may experience travel time savings compared to their previous travel mode. Riders might also be motivated by changes in the comfort and reliability of the system, or reductions in their trip expenses. Passenger rail as a viable option also provides users an opportunity to be productive during travel time. The availability of transportation at a more affordable price and an opportunity to be productive (work or leisure) will encourage users to travel more, increasing the total number of trips.

1) *Transportation cost savings to new users*

Historical data demonstrates generally that as service becomes more frequent or more reliable, more intercity travelers have elected to travel by rail instead of by air, bus, or private vehicle. The economic benefits these users realize should be considered separately from those generated for existing users and should consider the overall set of effects that results from their mode shift.

Any additional service improvement in the future will increase ridership and attract passengers from other modes or induced new travelers; and those new riders will benefit from travel time savings compared to their previous travel modes. These benefits can be estimated through projecting the diverted or induced numbers of riders and considering the corresponding change in trip time to new users compared to their previous modes, and the value of travel time. Detailed benefit analysis will be conducted as part of the feasibility study process.

2) *Effects on system and service performance*

To accommodate growing demand, Amtrak has developed long-term capital project programs to expand the capacity and frequency of service within the network. At the same time, the US trade engine continues to generate an increasing demand for freight movement by rail. Understanding the growth of demand for regional freight and passenger rail services will inform time-sensitive capital planning. Upon and as requested by Amtrak, those demand scenarios will be modeled by BNSF in conjunction with the desired passenger service contemplated in this feasibility study to identify capital improvements that will be required to accommodate passenger service on the study route without negatively impacting present and future freight traffic flows.

3) *Effects on safety*

As the core of a system-wide rail safety technology, the locomotive-based PTC systems can be combined with real-time monitoring capabilities to increase the efficiency of line utilization, schedule reliability and locomotive performance. Additionally, computer-based operations control incorporates into a system of safety measures and technologies designed to minimize injuries, fatalities and damage caused by preventable incidents. During the feasibility study, potential benefits resulting from additional safety measures beyond PTC will be assessed to the extent possible. These benefits will include safety benefits associated with the elimination of crashes (and associated injuries and/or fatalities).

External benefits

External benefits represent a source of potential benefits beyond those experienced directly by users of an improved rail facility or service. When current highway users mode-shift to rail, the associated reductions in regional VMT produce improved outcomes, and associated economic benefits, for those users who continue to use the highway network. The improved flow conditions that result can generate additional economic benefits associated with enhanced goods movement and better connectivity for workers to employment nodes. In addition, safer operations on the Southwest Chief will reduce (or possibly eliminate) the potential for highway collisions causing injuries or fatalities.

1) *Benefits for highway users resulting from mode shift to rail*

Travelers switching from automobile to passenger rail mode will result in reduced VMT on the regional roadway network. Reduced VMT can generate external benefits to the roadway users and the society at large through reduced roadway congestions, reduced incident costs, savings in pavement and bridge maintenance costs, and reduced emissions.

2) *Increased competitiveness, reliability, and resilience*

Enhanced service along the route of the Southwest Chief would create the potential for substantial economic benefits resulting from facilitating better connections between workers and key employment nodes. These benefits can include a range of outcomes. For example, fast, reliable intercity rail service between the region's fast-growing economies can create opportunities for firm creation or expansion, generating additional well-paying jobs for the region. In addition, a diverse range of transportation options would enhance the region's ability to attract and retain highly skilled workers in industries that generate substantial second-order economic impacts.

Anticipated monetized benefits

The feasibility study will generate a series of quantified, monetized benefits. These benefits will be aggregated into several broad categories that align with USDOT's five merit criteria, and include:

- **Travel time savings** for a range of user types, monetized using the appropriate values of time as defined by USDOT
- **Reductions in VMT** for a range of user types, converted to monetized benefits related to vehicle operating costs, fuel savings, emissions, reduced pavement damage, and reduced noise costs
- **Reductions in safety incidents**, including crashes on the regional highway network, converted to monetized benefits associated with reduced injuries and values using the appropriate value of a statistical life (VSL) metrics as defined by USDOT

Analyses conducted in conjunction with the feasibility study will also consider the project's potential to support employment and wage growth in the region. Along with any temporary job impacts associated with construction activity, these impacts will be quantified and described to the extent practicable.

B. Project Costs

For cost estimates, the following cost categories will be considered in this rail planning project:

Capital Expenditures

The Commission will estimate the capital costs, including project planning and design, environmental reviews, land or real estate acquisition, direct construction costs, and equipment acquisition, including rolling stock.

Operating and Maintenance Costs

The Commission will estimate the ongoing O&M costs for the proposed service improvement, including train staff and crews, energy, equipment maintenance and overhauls, station services, and long-term maintenance programs.

C. Technical Merit

Statement of Work

The Statement of Work (SOW) includes the development of a conceptual operating and infrastructure improvement plan, including station area analysis and simulation modeling, for the extension of Southwest Chief passenger rail service to Colorado Springs. A high-level analysis of the benefits and costs of implementing the new service, including a review of potential ridership, an environmental scan and an evaluation of community support are also included.

The study effort is conceived as a series of tasks that build upon one another. The planned deliverables are listed by task in Table 8-1. The approach of each task will be developed by the study team to provide results that address each of the expected outcomes described in Section 6-C of this application.

Table 8-1: Summary of Statement of Work

Task	Task Name	Deliverable
1	Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule	Work plans by task, budget by task, and milestone and deliverable schedules
2	Operational Scenarios, Ridership and Revenue Forecasts	Draft technical memorandum presenting the operational scenario, Draft ridership and revenue forecasts, description of the potential incremental ridership gain and market capture
3	Station Area Analysis	Draft technical memorandum presenting the operational requirements and assumptions of station areas
4	Assessment of Current Infrastructure Conditions	Assessment of current infrastructure conditions
5	Develop and Simulate Infrastructure Improvements	Recommended Infrastructure Improvements, Simulation modeling results
6	Cost Estimates	Cost estimates for infrastructure improvements and equipment, O & M cost estimates for the new service
7	Preliminary Environmental Screening	Preliminary environmental screening results, Classification of future actions
8	Assessment of Community Support	Technical memorandum outlining the outreach effort and findings
9	Draft and Final Report	An annotated outline for FRA review and approval. A draft and final report using work products and findings from Tasks 2 through 8.
10	Administrative Oversight and Quality Control	The Commission will have primary oversight, including the review of monthly progress reports and regular status updates with the study team and FRA.

The Commission will also deliver a Final Performance Report within 90 days of the end of the grant's period of performance, describing the cumulative activities of the project, including a complete description of the Grantee's achievements with respect to objectives and milestones.

Project readiness under Track 1

CDOT has completed their 2018 Colorado Freight and Passenger Rail Plan. This plan provides key data and information that will be referenced in the feasibility study to identify a wide range of reasonable operating strategies and investment options, including anticipated freight demand on the corridor and planned improvements that may impact Southwest Chief service.

Pueblo County has commenced their analysis of sites for a Southwest Chief Pueblo Station, including potential use of the historic Santa Fe Pueblo Depot. Finding from this site analysis will be coordinated with the thru-car service feasibility study of infrastructure and alignment needs.

The Commission has commenced the Front Range Passenger Rail Project. This project is developing a rail passenger service plan linking Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Fort Collins to Denver—a 173-mile corridor that contains 85 percent of Colorado's population. The passenger rail line would serve as the transportation "spine" along the Front Range, with multimodal systems east and west of the I-25 corridor integrated into Front Range Passenger Rail.

Technical qualifications and experience of key personnel

The Commission supported by CDOT brings a team of experienced, qualified personnel to lead the feasibility study. In addition, the Commission and CDOT have internal qualified resources available to perform the management functions, including the oversight of external technical consultants, as needed to fully and successfully execute the proposed project within the proposed timeframe and budget.

Members of the Commission, Commission staff, CDOT and BNSF Railway have experience working together on the North I-25 EIS Commuter Rail Update. Randy Grauberger, Commission Project Director, was the consultant team Project Manager on this 2015 CDOT study and worked closely with BNSF Railway. Commissioners Becky Karasko, David Krutsinger and Pete Rickershauser were also involved in this 2015 CDOT study.

Private sector participation

This feasibility study has received financial support from the Colorado Rail Passenger Association as outlined in Table 3-2 and Appendix A. The Commission will coordinate with stakeholders, operators and businesses in the region as the study progresses to gather information, seek input on priorities, and achieve local and regional buy-in. Willingness of key stakeholders to engage throughout the planning and implementation process could represent significant private-sector contributions that are foundational to the overall success of the regional rail system, the future success of the passenger rail extension, and the ongoing operation and maintenance of the Southwest Chief.



Legal, financial, and technical capacity

The Commission is providing financial contribution to this project in the amount of \$159,000, or 35.3 percent of the total project cost. The Commission and CDOT have the legal, financial, and technical capability to carry out the proposed project. CDOT has successfully performed multiple rail planning projects, including completion of the following planning documents:

- 2012 State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
- 2014 Interregional Connectivity Study
- 2015 North I-25 EIS Commuter Rail Update
- 2018 Colorado Freight and Passenger Rail Plan.

Planning consistency

The project is consistent with guidance and documents set forth by USDOT. The Commission has followed USDOT planning requirement required by law or State rail plans developed under Title 49, U.S. Code, Chapter 227.

The Commission is familiar with Federal Reporting requirements and commit to conform to Federal requirements for project progress reporting as identified in the CRISI NOFO link to the FRA site (<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0274>).

9. SELECTION CRITERIA

Federal share

The proposed Federal share of the total project costs of the feasibility study is 50 percent.

Net benefits

The development of this proposed feasibility study in conjunction with the Front Range Passenger Rail Project, already in process, is a crucial step toward achieving a comprehensive understanding of the rail network system in Colorado. Given the ongoing population and economic growth in southeastern Colorado, involving a growing, diversified urban and rural region and a nationally vital freight network that links international and domestic cargo from both coasts through the US Midwest, the estimated rail planning project cost of \$450,000 would be superseded by the benefits to the region, nation, and its private and public stakeholders.

Support Economic Vitality at the National and Regional Level

On the national level, a key outcome will be a plan that improves the ridership and revenue of the Amtrak long-distance Southwest Chief. Supporting this service through the addition of a regionally important branch will bring improved mobility and transportation options for communities from Chicago to Los Angeles.



Also on a national level, maintaining the fluidity of freight flows, including the movement of unit trains between Colorado and Texas, along the Front Range rail system will be crucial for economic vitality. The passenger and freight rail systems involve and rely on connections both within and beyond the urban and rural areas of the corridor. Promoting the growth and reliability of both systems will be crucial for the realization of widespread economic integration and vitality in the Colorado Front Range region and the nation.

On the regional/state level, a study performed by Colorado State University-Pueblo in 2014 determined that the Southwest Chief contributed an economic impact of \$1.8 million in direct spending, followed by an additional \$1.1 million in related economic activity for a total impact of \$2.9 million for the state of Colorado. This study also calculated that extending the Southwest Chief service to Pueblo would generate an additional \$2.1 million in direct spending and \$1.3 million in related economic activity for a total economic impact of \$3.4 million per year for the state of Colorado⁵.

Leveraging Federal funding

This feasibility study continues the trajectory of improving the infrastructure and operations of the Southwest Chief that began with the 2014 TIGER VI federal funding award to improve reliability and add capacity. The Commission will continue its collaboration with BNSF Railway, Amtrak and CDOT to improve rail as a viable mode of transportation for travelers in the region. This phase of planning will also look at improving station access to reach more customers and improved economic development in the corridor. Federal funding of the feasibility study will ensure that improved mobility and economic development throughout Colorado will continue. Life cycle costs will be accounted for in subsequent planning and engineering phases.

Using innovative approaches

The Commission will make use of innovative modeling techniques and ArcGIS data viewing to identify and evaluate a range of reasonable infrastructure and service alternatives.

The Commission will work with Amtrak to develop draft service schedule scenarios and reasonable ridership forecasts based on those draft schedules. Amtrak will work with BNSF Railway as required to perform the technical analysis process. Willingness of BNSF Railway and potentially Union Pacific Railroad to engage throughout the planning and implementation process could represent significant private-sector contributions that are foundational to the overall success of the regional rail system, the future success of the passenger rail extension, and the ongoing operation and maintenance of the Southwest Chief.

⁵ https://www.csupueblo.edu/news/2014/_doc/southwest-chief-economic-impact-duncan-and-wakefield.pdf

Performance accountability and measurable outcomes

CDOT, through its Division of Transit & Rail has (DTR) delivered many successful rail planning projects, including the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (2012), the State Management Plan (2016), CDOT Rail Relocation Implementation Study, and the Interregional Connectivity Study (2017). The Commission will make use of experienced CDOT staff to manage and perform technical tasks on this feasibility study. DTR also has a Grants Unit which will assist the Commission in meeting all USDOT reporting requirements. Performance accountability and reporting will be based on the program management approach and utilize the mechanisms outlined by DTR in the State Management Plan.

10. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

Commission Structure, Staffing, and CDOT Assistance

The Commission is a legislatively established body created in 2017 in the Department of Transportation by the enactment by the Colorado General Assembly of Senate Bill 17-153. As a “publicly chartered authority” within CDOT, a public agency of the State of Colorado, the Commission meets the requirements of an eligible applicant under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued on July 19, 2019.

The Commission’s Project Director provides executive leadership for the promotion, planning direction and implementation of the Commission’s mission for both the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail elements. The Project Director manages Passenger Rail Commission activities and operations and oversees the work of Commission consultants. The Project Director also interacts regularly with CDOT’s Executive Director, the DTR Director as well as other divisions of CDOT as required and appropriate, and the numerous stakeholders interested in the Commission’s mission. Reporting to the Project Director is the Commission Liaison. The Liaison provides support in the areas of research, stakeholder and public involvement, special projects and administrative functions. The Project Director of the Commission, while being a CDOT employee, reports directly to the Commission through February 2021.

CDOT, through DTR, will provide additional assistance as needed for carrying out the project. DTR is responsible for the planning, development, operation, and integration of transit and rail into the statewide transportation system. DTR works in coordination with other transit and rail providers to plan, promote, and implement investments in transit and rail services statewide. To accomplish this, DTR developed the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan approved by the Colorado Transportation Commission in August 2018. The State Rail Plan includes extensive discussion of the mission of the Commission to preserve and extend the Southwest Chief in Colorado and develop the Front Range Rail System.

Staffing and Reporting

The Commission anticipates the involvement of Commission staff and DTR staff, in addition to external experts and consultants, for the duration of the project. The Commission will provide project-specific reporting by recording costs and outcomes quarterly in a manner that meets or exceeds federal reporting standards. The quarterly report will include quantitative and narrative outcomes and is designed to keep stakeholders apprised of project successes and challenges, and accomplish a proactive approach to reporting.

Commission Day to Day Roles and Responsibilities

The Commission coordinates and oversees efforts by state and local governments—and cooperates with Kansas, New Mexico, Amtrak and the BNSF Railway to ensure completion of track repairs and upgrades required to continue Southwest Chief Rail service in Colorado. The Commission also facilitates the development of a Front Range Passenger Rail system, as well as legislation for rail service in and along the I-25 corridor that is a well-integrated component of a modern, efficient and cost-effective multimodal transportation system.

11. CONCLUSION

Colorado has been at the forefront of supporting Amtrak Southwest Chief rail passenger service through its continued support and capital improvement grants over the past eight years. This Track 1 CRISI grant application for \$225,000 in Federal funding for the Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study represents the next critical step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and onward to Colorado Springs, thereby unlocking significant benefits for rural and urban residents and travelers from across the region and indeed the entire nation. This feasibility study would complement the Front Range Passenger Rail Study currently underway. The Commission and the CDOT are preparing the region for first-ever Front Range rail passenger service along a 173-mile corridor from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. Providing through-car service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is an essential next logical step that would connect the Southwest Chief and its passengers to the future Front Range rail passenger network.

This CRISI grant funding will enable the Commission to develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. The study will also include an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates. With significant community support, a substantial financial match from a variety of public and private sources, as well as a focused and deliberate scope of work, this application should merit serious consideration by USDOT. The Commission looks forward to working with USDOT on this effort.



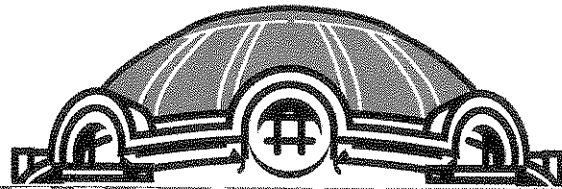
APPENDIX A

Letters of Funding Commitment

Letters of Support



COLORADO
Department of
Transportation



PUEBLO COUNTY

C O L O R A D O

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Terry A. Hart
District 1

Garrison M. Ortiz
District 2

Chris Wiseman
District 3

October 17, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to support the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (the Commission's) application for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the *Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study*. This project represents a critical first step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and onward to Colorado Springs, and thereby unlocking significant benefits for residents and travelers from across our region and indeed the entire nation.

Extending passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range – from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review of alternatives. Providing through-car service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is an essential next step that would connect the Southwest Chief and its passengers to the future Front Range rail network.

The Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study will analyze the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. With CRISI grant funding, the Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. Among the important activities that the study will complete are an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates.

Through-car service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would greatly enhance the opportunities for tourism in this area of the state and provide our constituents with additional options for transportation, whether for commuting or leisure. Pueblo County fully supports the Commission and CDOT's efforts to complete the

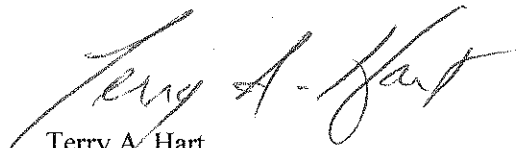
The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
October 16, 2019
Page 2

Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study, which would also complement Pueblo County's recent undertaking to create a station area plan that will determine the station and trackage improvements necessary to accommodate reinstatement of passenger rail services in Pueblo.

Pueblo County joins our partners and is pledging a \$10,000 grant match to further demonstrate the County's support of the Commission's application for the Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study.

I urge you to give this application your full and fair consideration, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Terry A. Hart
Pueblo Board of County Commissioners



City of La Junta

SIXTH AND COLORADO - P.O. BOX 489
LA JUNTA, COLORADO 81050
PHONE 719-384-2578
FAX 719-384-7231

October 18, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing to you in support of the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (the Commission's) application for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the *Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study*. This project represents a critical first step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and onward to Colorado Springs, and thereby unlocking significant benefits for residents and travelers from across our region and indeed the entire nation.

Extending passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range – from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review of alternatives. Providing Through-Car service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is an essential next step that would connect the Southwest Chief and its passengers to the future Front Range rail network.

The Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study will analyze the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. With CRISI grant funding, the Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. Among the important activities that the study will complete are an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates.

The citizens of the City of La Junta and surrounding communities need this rail service to assist and serve them in reaching destinations for doctor appointments and life events, as well as vacations, etc. that they otherwise may not be able to do. The City of La Junta will do everything possible to support the Commission and CDOT in completing this important study and we believe that the project represents an important opportunity to demonstrate to our citizens that their wellbeing is of the utmost of importance not only on a local level, but also State and National levels.

The City of La Junta hereby pledges \$5,000 match towards the Through-Car from La Junta to Pueblo/Colorado Springs. The City of La Junta has lead and participated in Tiger's 6,7,9 and Build II Grants to improve the infrastructure along the Southwest Chief route in Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico.

This Through-Car will help rural Southeast Colorado be connected to the Front Range where we do business, have families and for leisure activities.

Please give this application full and fair consideration, and don't hesitate to contact me at 719-384-2578, with any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rick Klein".

Rick Klein
La Junta City Manager



P.O. Box 9613

Denver, CO 80209 EIN: 32-0366581

October 18, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Colorado Rail Passenger Association (ColoRail) supports the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (the Commission's) application for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study. This project represents a critical first step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and onward to Colorado Springs, and thereby unlocking significant benefits for residents and travelers from across our region and indeed the entire nation. Our all-volunteer, non-profit organization pledges \$1,000 in matching funds for this project.

Extending passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range – from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review.

The Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study will analyze the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. With CRISI grant funding, the Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta to be operated by Amtrak off the Southwest Chief. Among the important activities that the study will complete are an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates.

ColoRail began its support for the Southwest Chief in 2011 when the train was first threatened with the relocation out of service out of Southeast Colorado communities. Our support has helped lead to strong support for the train.

I urge you to give this application your full and fair consideration, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Jim Souby
James M. Souby

President



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of the Executive Director

2829 W. Howard Place
Denver, CO 80204-2305

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

October 18, 2019

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to support the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (the Commission's) application for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study. This project represents a critical first step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and onward to Colorado Springs, and thereby unlocking significant benefits for residents and travelers from across our region and indeed the entire nation.

Extending passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range - from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review of alternatives. Providing through-car service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is an essential next step that would connect the Southwest Chief and its passengers to the future Front Range rail network.

The Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study will analyze the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. With CRISI grant funding, the Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs via La Junta on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. Among the important activities that the study will complete are an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates.

I urge you to give this application your full and fair consideration, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Shoshana M. Lew
Executive Director





October 10, 2019

BYRON S. COMATI
Vice President

CORPORATE PLANNING

The Honorable Ronald Batory
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY19 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) Program

Dear Administrator Batory:

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) extends its support for the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (Commission) grant application submitted in response to the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY19 CRISI discretionary grant program. CRISI grants fund capital investments that improve safety, efficiency and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail.

Amtrak's support relates to the following project:

Feasibility Study of Amtrak's Southwest Chief New Branch Service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs,
Colorado (CO)

The Commission's CRISI application is for a planning study that will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs and potential constraints of providing intercity passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs through a new branch of Amtrak's Long-Distance Southwest Chief service.

The results of this study will help Amtrak determine if this concept will improve the economics and viability of the Southwest Chief.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Byron S. Comati", with a stylized, flowing script.

Byron S. Comati
Vice President, Corporate Planning



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

October 17, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to express the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments' support of the Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission's (the Commission's) application for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study. This project represents a critical first step towards providing passenger rail service from La Junta to Colorado Springs, and thereby unlocking significant benefits for residents and travelers from across our region and indeed the entire nation.

Extending passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range – from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review of alternatives. Providing through-car service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is an essential next step that would connect the Southwest Chief and its passengers to the future Front Range rail network.

The Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study will analyze the efficacy of extending passenger rail service on the Amtrak Southwest Chief to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. With CRISI grant funding, the Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs, and potential constraints of providing passenger rail service to Colorado Springs via La Junta on a new branch of the Southwest Chief to be operated by Amtrak. Among the important activities that the study will complete are an assessment of current infrastructure, ridership and revenue projections, and preliminary environmental screening and cost estimates.



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments

Communities Working Together

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments sees this potential rail as a great economic driver that will serve citizens across regional lines. Our organization believe that through-car service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs critical because it would connect important corridors while addressing traffic congestion from growth. PPACG will provide assistance to support the Commission and CDOT in completing this important study and we believe that the project represents an important opportunity to advance our region and national priorities.

I urge you to give this application your full and fair consideration, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Gunning', is written over the printed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Andrew Gunning
Executive Director

APPENDIX B

Statement of Work

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF WORK

Feasibility of Amtrak Southwest Chief Thru-Car Service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs, Colorado

Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Fiscal Year 2019

I. BACKGROUND

In partnership with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (the Commission or Grantee) is requesting federal funding to perform a feasibility study analyzing the efficacy of adding a new branch to the Amtrak Southwest Chief (defined as the “Project”). The new branch will start at La Junta, Colorado to provide through service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs for trains originating and destined for Chicago, with potential for a connection to Los Angeles.

Amtrak’s Southwest Chief currently operates daily between Chicago and Los Angeles. In the westbound direction, train No. 3 leaves Chicago during the afternoon, stops in La Junta the following morning, and arrives in Los Angeles the next morning. Traveling eastbound, train No. 4 leaves Los Angeles in the evening, stops in La Junta the following evening, and arrives in Chicago the next afternoon.

The potential new branch of the Southwest Chief under study would utilize the BNSF Pueblo Subdivision and potentially the UP Colorado Springs Subdivision. To make stops at Pueblo and Colorado Springs, several cars of the Amtrak Southwest Chief westbound train would detach at La Junta in the morning, and travel to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. The consist would turn at Colorado Springs, making stops at Colorado Springs and Pueblo and rejoin the eastbound Southwest Chief at La Junta. Passengers could remain in the railcars and head to points east or make a connection at La Junta to the next westbound Southwest Chief.

Understanding the feasibility of adding a new branch to the Southwest Chief will support ongoing network planning efforts. Although the branch under study would terminate at Colorado Springs, the planning and implementation of the new branch would not preclude a future connection to Denver by way of Front Range Passenger Rail. Additionally, the Southwest Chief branch to Pueblo and Colorado Springs is already included in the 2018 CDOT State Rail Plan and is under active consideration by Amtrak, the State of Colorado, and local communities along the route.

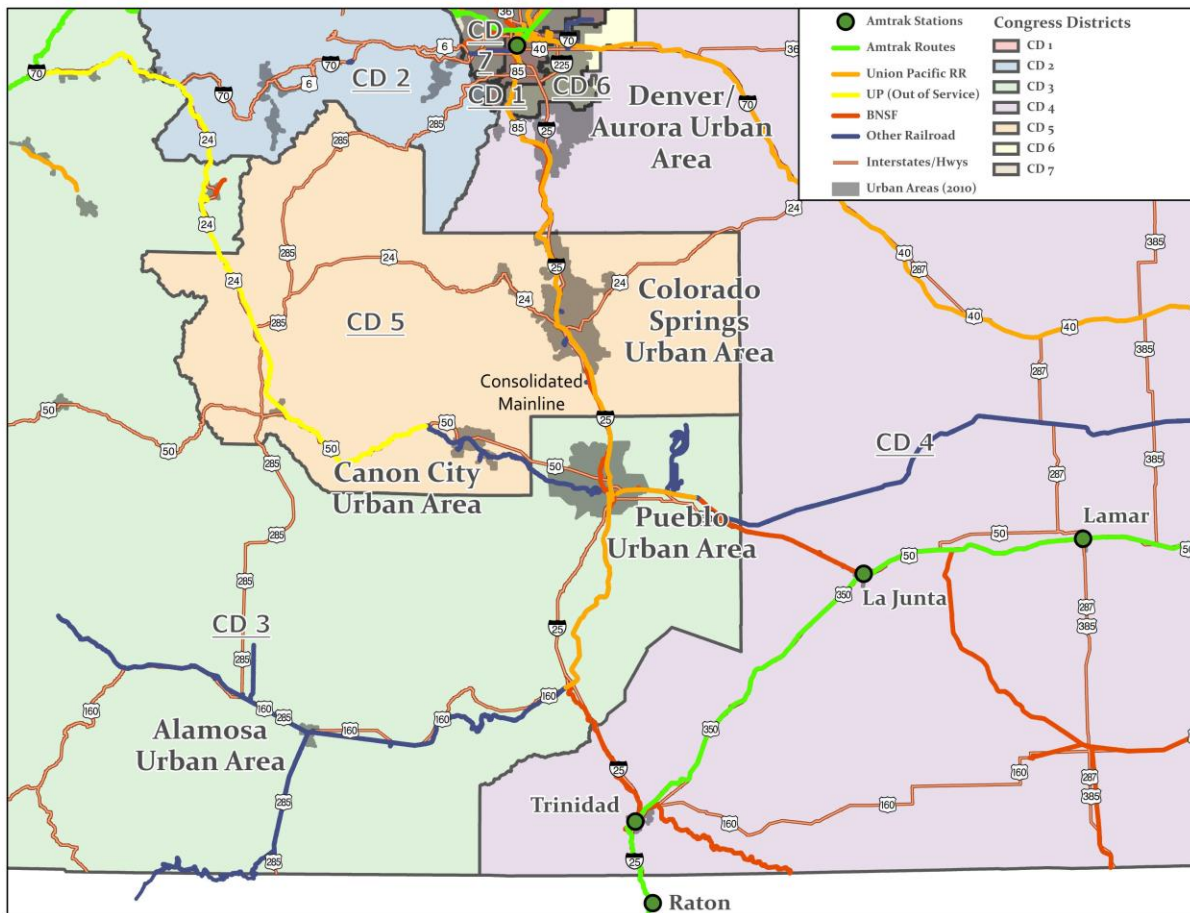
II. OBJECTIVE

The Commission will develop an analysis that identifies the key economic benefits, costs and potential constraints of providing intercity passenger rail service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs through a new branch of the Southwest Chief operated by Amtrak.

III. PROJECT LOCATION

The study area will be focused on two freight rail segments: (1) the BNSF Pueblo subdivision, which provides a freight rail connection between La Junta and Pueblo, and (2) the BNSF and UP alignments, which connect Pueblo and Colorado Springs. The locations and ownership of the existing freight rail lines, the Colorado passenger stations currently served by Amtrak, the route of the current Southwest Chief service and Amtrak long-distance trains in the study area are shown in Figure III-1.

Figure III-1: Project location



IV. DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Task 1: Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule

The Commission will refine the project's scope of work and prepare a Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule for the Project. The Detailed Project Budget will be consistent with the Approved Project Budget but will provide a greater level of detail. The Detailed Project Work Plan will describe, in detail, the activities and steps necessary to complete the tasks outlined in this Statement of Work. The Detailed Project Work Plan will also include information about the project management approach, including team organization, team decision-making, roles and responsibilities and interaction with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), as well as address quality assurance and quality control procedures. In addition, the Detailed Project Work Plan will include the Project Schedule (with Commission and agency review durations) and a detailed Project Budget. The Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule will be reviewed and approved by the FRA.

The Commission acknowledges that work on subsequent tasks will not commence until the Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule has been completed, submitted to FRA, and the Commission has received approval in writing from FRA, unless such work is permitted by pre-award authority provided by FRA. The FRA will not reimburse the Commission for costs incurred in contravention of this requirement.

Task 1 Deliverables:

- Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule

Task 2: Determine Operational Scenario and Schedules, Review Ridership Projections, and Forecast Revenue

The Commission will determine and describe an operational scenario for a new branch of the Amtrak Southwest Chief service connecting La Junta, Pueblo, and Colorado Springs, Colorado that utilizes through cars to/from Chicago. The scenario will serve as the basis for assessing the infrastructure and equipment needs described in Task 3. The recommended scenario will include information on the number and timing of departures per day, approximate schedules, and rolling stock requirements.

The Commission will review projections of potential ridership for this new branch developed by CDOT and Amtrak. The projections will provide a reasonable range of ridership potential for the identified operational scenario. The projections will be broken down by segments and/or potential station locations and will also include how the new branch would or would not benefit the overall ridership volumes and market capture of the Southwest Chief. To support this work, the Commission will review the ridership and revenue forecasts performed by Amtrak in June 2016 for a new branch between La Junta and Pueblo. Based on ridership projections, the Commission will provide estimates of revenues from ticket sales.

Task 2 Deliverables:

- Draft technical memorandum presenting the Operational Scenario and describing how and why it was selected

- Draft Ridership and Revenue forecasts for the identified Operational Scenario, including description of methods and assumptions
- Description of the potential incremental ridership gain and market capture for the Southwest Chief by providing through service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs

Task 3: Station Area Analysis

The Commission will develop a station location analysis for Colorado Springs that includes:

- a. Determination of the operational requirements of stations, layover facilities and station access for the new passenger rail service on the branch with focus on the requirement to turn trains at Colorado Springs without precluding future through service to Denver.
- b. Development of an alternatives analysis for the location of a Colorado Springs station.
- c. Discussion of the economic development potential (commercial/residential) at each station area due to improved ridership/new station location.
- d. Development of a conceptual engineering layout for each of the stations and layover facilities required to deliver the operational scenario identified in Task 2, including station area and track improvements at La Junta to accommodate the proposed thru-car service.

Pueblo County is currently performing a Pueblo Station Area Analysis to assess potential locations for a new or improved rail station in Pueblo. The Commission's study will coordinate with Pueblo County's findings for the Pueblo Station.

Task 3 Deliverables

- Draft technical memorandum presenting the operational requirements and assumptions of station areas
- Technical memo describing the preferred station location for Colorado Springs
- Draft conceptual engineering diagrams of recommended new station areas, layover facilities and improvements to existing facilities

Task 4: Assessment of Current Infrastructure Conditions

The Commission in coordination with BNSF and UP will assess and document the condition of current infrastructure along the corridor. The assessment will evaluate the following items:

- a. Existing track conditions, segment capacity, and need for rail and tie replacement or installation of additional main tracks, crossovers, and/or sidings
- b. Grade crossings evaluated for safety and operation efficiency
- c. Signal systems and traffic control, including PTC.

Task 4 Deliverables:

- Assessment of Current Infrastructure Conditions

Task 5: Develop and Simulate Rail Operations and Test Potential Infrastructure Improvements

In coordination with BNSF and UP, the Commission will develop, on a conceptual engineering level, the infrastructure improvements necessary to extend Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger service to Colorado Springs under the operational scenario recommended in Task 2. In December 2016, a study to understand the infrastructure needs to support a new Amtrak train proposed to operate between La Junta and Pueblo was prepared by BNSF. This task will review and build on that work and determine potential additional infrastructure needs for the rail segment between Pueblo and Colorado Springs.

The Commission in coordination with BNSF will utilize rail simulation modeling to examine existing rail operations with the new service to determine what areas on the line may need additional infrastructure to accommodate existing and planned rail freight and passenger operations. Then various scenarios will be developed to test the capacity of the proposed additional infrastructure. Based on this simulation modeling, a list of recommended infrastructure improvements will be identified.

Task 5 Deliverables:

- Recommended Infrastructure Improvements
- Simulation modeling results

Task 6: Cost Estimation

The Commission will develop high-level capital cost estimates for station and infrastructure improvements, additional equipment, and the purchase of new capital rolling stock to add a new branch of Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger service under the operational scenario recommended in Task 2. In coordination with Amtrak, high-level operational and maintenance costs assigned to the extension of passenger rail service will also be developed.

Task 6 Deliverables:

- Cost Estimates for infrastructure improvements, station and access construction and equipment, including description of methods and assumptions
- Operational and maintenance costs for the new branch service, including description of methods and assumptions.

Task 7: Preliminary Environmental Screening

The Commission will prepare a high-level preliminary environmental screening using publicly accessible data to identify the potential for significant environmental impacts resulting from extending Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger service along the existing rights-of-way to Colorado Springs. A preliminary environmental screening provides a key input to the feasibility study and will inform the classification of action and formal environmental review process.

Task 7 Deliverables:

- Preliminary environmental screening results
- Classification of future actions

Task 8: Assessment of Community Support

To successfully implement new passenger rail service along the corridor between La Junta, Pueblo, and Colorado Springs, the support of those communities served by the new branch is needed. The Commission will assess community support by engaging with elected official and other community leaders in La Junta, Pueblo, and Colorado Springs. Engagement could occur through surveys, semi-structured interviews, or focus groups. The assessment included in this task will summarize this engagement, provide information on the level of support for the new passenger rail branch, and include recommendations for how the community might support the effort through local investment around station stops or promotion of the service.

Task 8 Deliverables:

- Technical memorandum outlining the outreach efforts and findings

Task 9: Draft and Final Report

The Commission will prepare a draft report of the feasibility study that includes an Executive Summary highlighting the benefits, costs and constraints of the new service.

The report will include a summary of the operational scenario, infrastructure conditions and needed improvements, operational costs, capital costs, and an estimate of direct revenues resulting from operation of the service. The report will also describe any additional analysis that may be useful to conduct in the future such as an assessment of the economic benefits of extending Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger service through to Denver.

Task 9 Deliverables:

- Draft Report
- Final Report

Task 10: Administrative Oversight and Quality Control

The Commission will have primary oversight over the feasibility study. Oversight will include the review of monthly progress reports and regular status updates with the study team.

Task 10 Deliverables:

- Monthly Progress Reports
- Host Railroad Reports
- Final Performance Report

V. PROJECT SCHEDULE AND DELIVERABLES

The period of performance for all work will be approximately 12 months, from February 2020 to February 2021. The tasks associated with this Grant Agreement are listed below.

<u>Task #</u>	<u>Deliverable Name</u>	<u>End Date</u>
1	Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule	April 2020
2	Draft technical memorandum presenting the operational scenario	May 2020
2	Draft ridership and revenue forecasts	June 2020
2	Description of the potential incremental ridership gain and market capture	July 2020
3	Draft technical memorandum presenting the operational requirements and assumptions of station areas	May 2020
3	Technical memo describing the preferred station location for Colorado Springs	September 2020
3	Conceptual engineering diagrams of recommended station areas and yards.	October 2020
4	Assessment of current infrastructure conditions	July 2020
5	Recommended Infrastructure Improvements	November 2020
5	Simulation modeling results	November 2020
6	Cost estimates for infrastructure improvements, station and access construction and equipment,	November 2020
7	Preliminary environmental screening results	December 2020
7	Classification of future actions	December 2020
8	Technical memorandum outlining the outreach effort and findings	January 2021
9	Draft Report	January 2021
9	Final Report	February 2021
10	Monthly Progress Reports	Various
10	Host Railroad Reports	Various
10	Final Performance Report	March 2021

VI. PROJECT ESTIMATE/BUDGET

The total estimated cost of the Project is \$450,000, for which federal funding awarded under this grant application will contribute up to 50% of the total cost. Any additional expense required beyond that provided in this grant to complete the Project shall be borne by the Commission.

Project Estimate by Task

Task #	Task Name	Total Cost
1	Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule	\$13,500
2	Determine Operational Scenario, Ridership and Revenue Forecasts	\$85,500
3	Station Area Analysis	\$67,500
4	Assessment of Current Infrastructure Conditions	\$45,000
5	Develop and Simulate Rail Operations and Test Infrastructure Improvements	\$90,000
6	Cost Estimates	\$36,000
7	Environmental Screening	\$36,000
8	Assessment of Community Support	\$36,000
9	Draft and Final Reports	\$22,500
10	Administrative Oversight and Quality Control	\$18,000
Total Project Cost		\$450,000

Project Estimate Contributions

Funding Source	Project Contribution Amount	Percentage of Total Project Cost
FRA Grant	\$225,000	50%
Commission (Grantee), CDOT, Pueblo County, City of La Junta, and ColoRail	\$225,000	50%
Total Project Cost	\$450,000	100%

VII. PROJECT COORDINATION

The Commission shall perform all tasks required for the Project in a coordinated process that will involve affected host railroads, operators, and funding and regulatory partners, including:

- **Amtrak:** Amtrak owns the equipment that will be used to service the corridor between La Junta and Colorado Springs under Amtrak Southwest Chief service. Amtrak will also be responsible for operation of any additional rail equipment needed to extend service.
- **BNSF Railway:** BNSF Railway owns the Pueblo Subdivision that the new service would utilize. An agreement will be needed to implement the new branch service and determine the needed infrastructure improvements.
- **Union Pacific Railroad (UP):** UP owns the Colorado Spring Subdivision that the new service would utilize. An agreement will be needed to implement the new branch service and determine the needed infrastructure improvements.
- **FRA:** The Commission will ensure that the Project complies with all applicable FRA requirements.

VIII. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Commission is responsible for facilitating the coordination of all activities necessary for implementation of the Project. Upon award of the Project, the Commission will monitor and evaluate the Project's progress through regular meetings scheduled throughout the Project Performance Period. The Commission will:

- Participate in a project kickoff meeting with FRA
- Complete necessary steps to hire a qualified consultant/contractor to perform required Project work
- Hold regularly scheduled Project meetings with FRA
- Review and approve work as it is completed
- Review and approve invoices as appropriate for completed work
- Perform Project close-out audit to ensure contractual compliance and issue close-out report
- Submit to FRA all required Project deliverables and documentation on-time and according to schedule, including periodic receipts and invoices
- Comply with all FRA Project reporting requirements, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Status of project by task breakdown and percent complete
 - b. Changes and reason for changes in and updated versions of Detailed Project Work Plan, Budget, and Schedule
 - c. Description of unanticipated problems and any resolution since the immediately preceding progress report
 - d. Summary of work scheduled for the next progress period
- Read and understand the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement
 - Notify FRA of changes to this Agreement that require written approval or modification to the Agreement.

APPENDIX C

Letter from the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission



COLORADO
Department of
Transportation



October 18, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (the Commission) is pleased to apply for \$225,000 in Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Track 1 funding for the *Southwest Chief Through-Car Service to Colorado Springs Feasibility Study*.

Extending Southwest Chief Amtrak passenger rail service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs would not only create a new safe and reliable rail connection and new destinations for travelers to and through our region, but it also capitalizes on the ongoing efforts that the Commission and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) are making to prepare for first-ever passenger rail service up and down the Front Range – from Pueblo to Denver, and north to Fort Collins. The Front Range Passenger Rail Study is currently underway, evaluating the feasibility of rail service along this 173-mile corridor and initiating a streamlined environmental review of alternatives.

Also, getting the Southwest Chief into Colorado Springs would mean that two of Amtrak's long distance trains, the Southwest Chief and the California Zephyr, would only be 70 miles apart from being able to connect in Denver. This eventual connection, when Front Range Passenger Rail service is implemented from Fort Collins to Pueblo, will create a broad range of new origin/destination city pairs for Amtrak riders between northern and southern California and Chicago which will greatly benefit ridership and revenues for both of these long distance trains.

The \$225,000 in CRISI funding will be matched by \$225,000 in contributions from the Commission, CDOT, Pueblo County and La Junta, Colorado and the Colorado Chapter of the Rail Passengers Association. Future partners in this planning effort will also be Amtrak, BNSF Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad.

We thank you for your consideration of the Commission's application. Please contact me with any questions you may have!

Sincerely,

Jill Gaebler, Chair – Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission