



CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

FRONT RANGE CORRIDOR PROPOSAL

MARCH 27, 2023

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COVER PAGE

Front Range Corridor

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| Applicant: | Front Range Passenger Rail District |
| Was a Federal Grant Application Previously Submitted for this Corridor? | <p>Yes;</p> <p>CRISI FY 2020 – Front Range Passenger Rail Preliminary Service Development Plan and Rail Simulation Modeling</p> <p>CRISI FY 2019 – Southwest Chief Through-Car Alternatives Analysis</p> |
| Other sources of Funding for the Corridor? | <p>Yes;</p> <p>The Front Range Passenger Rail District's operating budget is currently funded through previous appropriations from the Colorado State Legislature (SB 18-001, SB 21-238, and SB 21-260).</p> <p>The Front Range Passenger Rail District has received a total of \$4.4 million in State funding to advance Corridor development activities.</p> |
| City(-ies), State(s) Where the Corridor is Located: | Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Castle Rock, Denver, Boulder, Longmont, and Fort Collins |
| Congressional District(s) Where the Corridor is Located: | Colorado 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 |
| Is the Corridor currently programmed or identified in: State rail plan, or regional or interregional intercity passenger rail systems planning study? | <p>Yes;</p> <p>The Corridor is included in 2018 Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan and the Colorado Long Range Transportation Plan.</p> |
| Is the applicant working with other entities in support of the Corridor? | <p>Yes;</p> <p>The Front Range Passenger Rail District is working with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD), and Amtrak.</p> |

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CORRIDOR SUMMARY

The Front Range Passenger Rail District (the District) proposes to work with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) through the Corridor Identification and Development Program to develop an intercity passenger rail service in Colorado’s Front Range Corridor (Corridor) connecting Denver with Pueblo and Fort Collins. Prior to the creation of the District, the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (Rail Commission), originally tasked with studying possible passenger rail scenarios along the Front Range, completed an initial Alternatives Evaluation Report in 2020. It outlined a preliminary corridor vision for service development planning to establish intercity passenger rail service from Colorado’s southern state border to its northern state border. This effort established a framework for future planning, engineering, stakeholder engagement, governance, and environmental analysis.

In 2021, the Colorado State Legislature passed SB 21-238, authorizing the creation of the Front Range Passenger Rail District. The District is tasked with planning, designing, developing, financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining a passenger rail system that serves the Front Range Region of Colorado. The District was created to oversee the development and implementation of the Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) concept. The District has strong partnerships with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and other stakeholders, including the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD), potential host railroads BNSF Railway (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP), potential operator Amtrak, and local governments across the Front Range. The District has collaborated with communities as far south as Trinidad, Colorado and as far north as Cheyenne, Wyoming to advance the vision.

The Front Range Corridor is well-positioned to capitalize on existing bodies of work, developed in coordination with FRA, Class I railroad representatives, Amtrak, local transit agencies, and communities within the District’s boundaries, many represented on the District’s board of directors. Development of the Corridor will facilitate new multimodal transportation connections that link education centers, employment hubs, and communities in one of the fastest growing mega-regions in the country.

CORRIDOR FUNDING

PROJECT BUDGET

The District understands that for each selected corridor, FRA will initially award \$500,000 for eligible Step 1 activities with no cost sharing requirements, and that any remaining funds following the completion of Step 1 may be carried forward to Step 2 for service development planning activities. The District further understands there is a minimum 10 percent cost share requirement for Step 2 activities and a minimum 20 percent cost share for Step 3 activities. Table 1 shows the anticipated Project Budget upon initial intake into the Program.

Table 1: Project Funding Table

| Step | Work activities | Award amount | Grantee minimum cost share (%) |
|---------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Step 1 | Scope, Schedule, and Cost Estimate for SDP | \$500,000 | 0% |
| Step 2 | Service Development Plan (SDP) | Remaining Step 1 balance of funds, pending FRA approval | 10% |
| Step 3 | Project Development | TBD | 20% |

The current and future availability and sources of the non-Program funding for the District include federal, state, and local funding. The District entered into a contract with CDOT and a consulting firm to begin the Service Development Plan (SDP) for the Corridor in November 2022. This service development planning effort is funded primarily with federal funding awarded through FRA's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program. The State of Colorado, through CDOT, also contributed state funding for the SDP.

Because the District has commenced service development planning, the initial \$500,000 for eligible Step 1 activities under the Corridor Identification and Development Program (Corridor ID Program) could be used to review and enhance eligible Step 1 activities and demonstrate capacity to move efficiently through corridor development in partnership with the FRA. For example, the District, in coordination with FRA, can enhance the current service development planning efforts, the scope of which predates Corridor ID Program guidance. Additional stakeholder outreach, labor analysis, and station area planning would better inform future policy. Further uses of the initial \$500,000 could be to add resources to iterate alternatives and identify a more nuanced recommended or preferred alternative route for the Corridor.

Finally, the District continues to work with state and local officials to identify existing and future matching funds for Corridor ID Program Step 2 and Step 3 activities. The Colorado State Legislature set aside matching funds dedicated for IIJA purposes, and the Corridor ID Program matches the intent of the available state funding. To date, there is \$40 million in matching funds available for federal discretionary grant purposes in Colorado. This year, the Colorado State Legislature is approving additional matching funds for federal discretionary grant purposes, and the District expects to have access to some of those state funds to satisfy future cost share requirements under the Corridor ID Program.

DEPENDENCIES OR RELATIONSHIPS OF NON-PROGRAM FUNDING

The District's budget is currently funded through previously appropriated dollars from the Colorado State Legislature (SB 18-001 and SB 21-260). The legislature dedicated \$2.5 million to FRPR in SB 21-260 using State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) funding. Other non-Program funding includes matching funds from local agencies and CDOT in support of the 2020 CRISI grant. FRPR is an expressed infrastructure priority at all levels of State of Colorado leadership and the District anticipates the possibility of additional state-level funding appropriations and dedicated matching funds for Corridor ID Program activities.

PREVIOUS OR CONCURRENT FUNDING REQUESTS

CDOT and the Rail Commission previously secured federal funding for intercity passenger rail service development planning within the Front Range Corridor via the FY 2019 and FY 2020 CRISI Program. The District has no concurrent pending funding requests at this time.

In 2019, FRA awarded CDOT and the Rail Commission a CRISI grant to develop the Southwest Chief Through-Car Alternatives Analysis project, which is intended to study an extension of Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. Outputs from the Southwest Chief Through-Car Alternatives Analysis will be integrated into the FRPR SDP as applicable.

In 2020, FRA awarded CDOT and the Rail Commission a CRISI grant (FRA grant number 69A36522403330CRSCO) to perform service development planning for the Front Range Corridor. These tasks are technical prerequisites to demonstrate a financially and operationally feasible passenger rail service along the Front Range between Pueblo and Fort Collins.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The Front Range Passenger Rail District is a special taxing district created by the Colorado State Legislature through SB 21-238 in 2021 for the purpose of planning, designing, developing, financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining a passenger rail system along the Front Range. A map of the District boundaries is included in **Appendix A**. The District, as the applicant, is eligible to submit this proposal under the eligibility criteria outlined in Section (C)(1)(g) of the Corridor ID Program Notice of Solicitation of Proposals and Funding Opportunity (Notice) as a Political Subdivision of the State of Colorado.

CORRIDOR ELIGIBILITY

Per section (A)(2)(a) of the Corridor ID Program Notice, and further defined in 49 U.S.C. 25101(h), the Front Range Corridor is an eligible intercity passenger rail corridor for the Corridor ID Program. Inclusion of the 180-mile corridor in the Corridor ID Program would facilitate the development of a much-needed intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles in one of the fastest growing mega-regions in the nation with no existing regional intercity passenger rail service. The geographic markets and segments of the corridor are located entirely within the territory of the United States. Further, the District anticipates the Corridor would operate with proven intercity passenger rail technology as a mixed-use freight and passenger rail corridor.

DETAILED CORRIDOR DESCRIPTION

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CORRIDOR

KEY TRAVEL MARKETS

Population and employment in the Front Range Region are expected to increase dramatically over the coming decades. Colorado is the seventh fastest-growing state in the country, and current projections indicate that Colorado will experience growth rates more than twice the national average in population, employment, and visitors.¹ The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) projects that by 2025, there will be more than 6 million people in Colorado; and more than 7.5 million people by 2050.² Employment in Colorado is projected to grow 28 percent by 2050. In addition, the cost of living in some of the major housing markets along the Front Range has increased to the point where workers cannot afford to live where the jobs are. This increase in population and employment will place a heavy burden on existing transportation systems and result in increased demand for travel up and down the Front Range Corridor from Pueblo to Fort Collins, exacerbating congestion and creating unpredictable travel times.

Colorado's population is concentrated in the Front Range, where 85 percent of the state's population resides today and is projected to live in 2050.³ Employment is also concentrated, with 86 percent of the state's jobs in the major urban markets along the Front Range. The Denver-Boulder area contains 71 percent of Colorado jobs. Population and employment growth will intensify congestion on major highways. In its 10-year transportation plan, CDOT notes that without significant technology or capacity improvements, the existing highway system cannot accommodate future travel growth. It also notes that alternatives to additional roadway capacity are needed to meet transportation demands, travel needs, and environmental policy objectives.⁴

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2021

² Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2023

³ Ibid.

⁴ Colorado Department of Transportation, 2022

Growing transportation system congestion, compounded by the unreliability of highway travel, increases the demand for alternative options, such as passenger rail, along the Front Range.⁵ FRPR presents an opportunity for Colorado to improve and expand mobility, relieve pressure on the state's existing transportation network, and provide travel options to meet future demand. New passenger rail service will expand the region's multimodal transportation system and relieve pressure from congested roadways. Passenger rail service also has potential to reduce demand for parking facilities in increasingly congested urban areas.

The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood and Colorado Springs metropolitan areas rank in the top 100 most populated metropolitan areas in the country. Fort Collins, Boulder, and Greeley are within the nation's top 160 most populated areas. Greeley was the sixth fastest growing metro area in the nation between 2010 and 2020; and Fort Collins (ranked 38th in growth), Denver-Aurora-Lakewood (51), Colorado Springs (62) were in the top 100 fastest growing metro areas during the same period. Boulder's population grew 10 percent between 2010 and 2020 and ranked 121st of the nation's fastest growing areas.⁶ One consequence of this growth is that housing prices in the metro areas are increasing. Homes in the Denver metro area, which comprises the bulk of the population in the region, are continuing to increase in price with shorter time on the market and fewer units being built. Linking these population centers through passenger rail provides choices for urban communities and supports sustainable land use and development, including leveraging local transit investments and policies that would be needed to distribute FRPR riders to and from their ultimate origins and destinations, but also to meet the riders where they are in the changing demographics within the region.

The Corridor also contains Colorado's two flagship universities, the University of Colorado at Boulder (CU) and the Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins, as well as satellite campuses of these institutions (CU Denver, CU Colorado Springs, and CSU Pueblo). The United States Air Force Academy is also located along the Corridor.

The Corridor has the potential to provide connectivity to Denver International Airport (DEN) – Colorado's primary commercial airport – via connection to the RTD A Line commuter rail service at Denver.

FRPR also provides the potential to enhance equity for rural areas, many of which are projected to lose population over the next 25 years, and to leverage and/or develop local and regional transit systems to connect with the nearby urban economies and amenities. Five rural counties (with no populated areas of 50,000 or more)—Las Animas, Huerfano, Custer, Teller, and Elbert—are adjacent to or within the District boundaries.

Lastly, a mature FRPR system can connect urban and rural areas in Colorado to the existing national intercity passenger rail network, linking the growing Colorado market to and from Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* (Chicago-Los Angeles) and *California Zephyr* (Chicago-San Francisco) long-distance intercity passenger rail services.

POTENTIAL SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

The District will develop an operating plan for a passenger rail service that focuses on meeting travel demand and customer experience expectations, while optimizing available federal and non-federal funding. The service will interoperate with existing freight rail operations along the Corridor. Additional decisions regarding detailed service characteristics are ongoing and will be part of the service development planning process and partnership building currently underway.

⁵ Colorado Department of Transportation, 2020

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, 2021

POTENTIAL GEOGRAPHIC ROUTES

The Level 2 alternatives identified in the FRPR Alternatives Evaluation Report (2020) presented a range of reasonable routes and offered different costs and benefits. One of the final decisions made by the previous Rail Commission was a recommendation to carry forward and prioritize the alternative referred to as the BNSF Freight Rail Alternative for further Corridor development. The state legislature also identified the BNSF Freight Rail Alternative as its preferred route.

The BNSF Freight Rail Alternative is a freight rail alignment that follows the existing BNSF freight rail right-of-way between Pueblo and Fort Collins. It uses the BNSF Pikes Peak Subdivision between Pueblo and Denver and the BNSF Front Range Subdivision between Denver and Fort Collins.

CORRIDOR READINESS AND PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Plans for intercity passenger rail service along the Front Range Corridor have been under consideration for decades both by interest groups and state and local government. In 2017, the Rail Commission was re-established and tasked with facilitating development of passenger rail along the Front Range.

FRA is funding a 2019 CRISI planning grant awarded to CDOT for the Southwest Chief Through-Car Alternatives Analysis Project to study a possible extension of Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* long-distance service from La Junta to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. Outputs from this study may be integrated into the Front Range Corridor SDP currently under development. Likewise, portions of the analysis undertaken by the Front Range Corridor SDP Project will also be applied to the 2019 CRISI Southwest Chief Through-Car Alternatives Analysis Project to have consistent outputs and to avoid duplication of efforts where the two projects overlap.

As discussed previously, in 2020, the Rail Commission, in partnership with CDOT, completed the first phase of work to develop a Corridor vision and lay the framework for preliminary service development planning. These initial steps focused on project definition, planning, engineering, stakeholder engagement, governance, and environmental analysis for a long-term vision. This work culminated in the final FRPR Alternatives Evaluation Report (2020). The Rail Commission determined that the best opportunity to initiate a new intercity passenger rail service in Colorado would be to operate along existing freight rail alignments. This alternative would present the best potential for partnership with other entities such as Amtrak, RTD, and the freight railroads that own the alignments.

In 2020, FRA selected CDOT and the Rail Commission to receive a CRISI grant award to develop a Preliminary SDP and to perform an alternatives analysis, including rail modeling, for the proposed Front Range Corridor. The District, in partnership FRA and CDOT, which is providing some technical analysis, is currently engaged in this process and completing the technical prerequisites to demonstrate a financially and operationally feasible service plan for a new intercity passenger rail system along the Front Range.

The District has strong support from the state with dedicated matching funds for use in Corridor ID Program activities, as well as a potential partnership with RTD, which could help leverage additional funding for the development of the Corridor.

INTENDED PASSENGER RAIL OPERATOR

The District has not yet determined which entity will be the intended passenger rail operator of the Front Range Corridor. However, it is important to note the ongoing involvement of Amtrak in

the development process. Due to the proximity of existing Amtrak long-distance routes (the *California Zephyr* and the *Southwest Chief*), a representative from Amtrak currently sits on the Board of Directors for the District and had voting members on the preceding Rail Commission. The District understands that because the Corridor is less than 750 miles in length, the service must operate as a state-supported route as defined by Section 209 of the Passenger Rail Improvement and Investment Act (PRIIA).

APPLICANT EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

The Front Range Passenger Rail District has the authority and responsibility for FRPR implementation.

Planning for FRPR service builds upon past studies and actions. In 2017, the Rail Commission, a previous entity, was established by the state legislature and tasked with studying the development and operation of a passenger rail service along the Front Range (SB 17-153). In 2018, the state legislature provided funding for the Rail Commission (SB 18-001) to hire staff and retain a consultant team to begin the FRPR project. With this state funding, the team began to consider conceptual route alternatives. In 2020, CDOT formally partnered with the Rail Commission and dedicated staff and resources for the FRPR project.

In 2021, Colorado SB 21-238 created the Front Range Passenger Rail District for the purpose of planning, designing, developing, financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining a passenger rail system along the Front Range. The District became a legal entity on July 1, 2022, with the powers and authority necessary to accomplish the stated mission of developing and operating a passenger rail corridor along the Front Range. During the initial phase of forming the District as an independent political entity, CDOT and former Rail Commission staff worked closely with one another to ensure a smooth transition for fiscal commitments, existing partnerships, and creation of a new board of directors. The District and CDOT also collaborated to establish the District's ability to hire a General Manager (GM). In November last year, the District hired a GM with more than two decades of state and local experience with building partnerships and advocating for local governments statewide and in the new District.

In early 2023, the District hired another staff member to coordinate the variety of committees, stakeholders, and timelines associated with moving the FRPR project forward. Additionally, CDOT transferred over all remaining funds associated with the prior Rail Commission to the District. The District created policies and procedures to ensure clear transparency and accountability of the federal funds it receives and works with the state and local governments on encumbering and spending these funds to further the FRPR project.

The District hired strong legal representation to make sure it is in compliance with all funding and legal requirements placed on it as it continues to grow and establish further administrative policies and procedures for accountability. Furthermore, the District has a wealth of information, knowledge, and experience on the board of directors. CDOT, Amtrak, BNSF, UP, RTD, and various local governments and metropolitan planning organizations represent their interests in the District's board providing clear direction to the District as the staff continues to develop the next steps in coordination with the FRA.

The state legislature (through SB 21-260) also provided funding for the District to undertake the necessary steps towards implementing the vision of passenger rail. The legislation requires the District to work collaboratively in partnership with RTD to ensure interconnectivity with any passenger rail system operated by or for the RTD, and instructs the District to continue to work with Amtrak on interconnectivity with Amtrak's *Southwest Chief*, *California Zephyr*, and *Winter Park Express* trains. The District must coordinate with CDOT to ensure that any system is well-

integrated into the state's multimodal transportation system and does not impair the efficiency or safety of or otherwise adversely affect existing transportation infrastructure or operations. All of these requirements, coupled with the inclusion of these key stakeholders on the board of directors, results in a District that has the experience and capability to implement passenger rail along the Front Range.

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO SOV TRAVEL

Highway congestion and climate targets necessitate travel options that reduce Colorado's reliance on single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel. The lack of reliable and time-competitive alternatives to SOV intercity travel in the Front Range contributes to regional traffic congestion and lost productivity and stresses the region's economic competitiveness and quality of life. For instance, CDOT data show that I-25 averages eight hours or more of congestion during most weekdays. Crashes, incidents (such as disabled vehicles), and special events further contribute to the unreliability of trip times.⁷

A customer-focused FRPR service would offer a reliable, enjoyable, and efficient alternative to SOV travel. An attractive starter service would be responsive to existing travel demand.

As part of CDOT's statewide planning and public outreach conducted in 2019, participants identified the lack of travel options as one of the highest priority transportation issues facing the state. In the Front Range, about one-quarter of respondents identified the lack of transit and rail options as the top transportation issue. Surveys and outreach conducted for FRPR in 2019 and 2020 showed substantial interest and support for developing FRPR to address transportation needs along the Front Range.

ADD TRAVEL CAPACITY IN THE FRONT RANGE REGION

In its 10-year transportation plan, CDOT notes that without significant changes from future technology or capacity improvements, the existing highway system cannot accommodate future travel growth, and that alternatives to expanding roadway capacity are required to meet transportation demand, travel needs, and environmental policy objectives.⁸

Growing congestion, compounded by the unreliability of highway travel, increases trip time and the demand for alternative options, such as passenger rail, along the Front Range.⁹ FRPR is Colorado's most immediate opportunity to improve and expand mobility, relieve pressure on the state's existing transportation network, and provide alternative travel options. Passenger rail provides an opportunity to decrease dependency on congested roadways.

CONNECT COMMUNITIES

Connecting communities with an efficient and reliable non-SOV alternative would provide an attractive mobility choice to residents, students, tourists, workers, and visitors along the Front Range Corridor. An efficient, integrated FRPR service as part of the state's core transportation network would be the backbone of Front Range connectivity and mobility; enhance intercity and interregional travel throughout the state; and facilitate economic and social opportunity. FRPR would enhance connectivity between significant travel markets and provide efficient service between cities as part of an integrated multimodal transportation network.

⁷ Colorado Department of Transportation, 2020

⁸ Colorado Department of Transportation, 2022

⁹ Colorado Department of Transportation, 2021.

Linking key destinations along the Front Range through intercity passenger rail provides choices for urban communities and supports sustainable land use and development, including leveraging local transit investments and policies that would be needed to distribute users from FRPR to their ultimate origins and destinations.

Lastly, FRPR can better connect urban and rural areas in Colorado to the national intercity passenger rail network, linking the growing Colorado market to Amtrak's long-distance *Southwest Chief* (Chicago-Los Angeles) and *California Zephyr* (Chicago-San Francisco) trains.

PROVIDE EQUITABLE TRAVEL OPTIONS

There is a need to provide travel options that improve transportation equity through better access to housing, jobs, education, health care, and other services along the Front Range. The District is committed to equitable access to transportation options to ensure reliable, safe, and affordable transportation choices for all potential users—workers, leisure travelers, older adults, young people, persons with disabilities, and historically underserved communities. In addition to supporting travel choices and access, FRPR can be a foundation for equitable transportation choices that enable underserved populations and communities, which are hampered by disconnected travel options and choices today, to access quality transportation options. FRPR would reduce dependency on highways, improve air quality and community health, and facilitate investments in complementary mobility options (such as sidewalks, bike lanes, micro-transit, and feeder transit services) that are often lacking in historically disadvantaged communities.

EXPECTED USERS AND BENEFICIARIES

The expected users and beneficiaries of the Corridor are the traveling public. This includes residents, visitors, students, tourists, and businesses within the region.

The SDP will identify locations for stations and access to them that will encourage the use of multimodal transit options within cities. The use of transit and bicycles will improve local mobility and minimize impacts on the environment for residents, visitors, and business owners.

POTENTIAL FOR SCALING/PHASING

The District anticipates that implementation of passenger rail service within the Corridor could be phased. Depending on the results of the SDP, availability of funding, and future ballot measure outcomes, initial service could involve lesser service frequency across some segments of the Corridor, followed by subsequent investments to achieve higher service levels. This phased approach is intended to allow for the natural growth and development of rider habits and overall ridership and to avoid spending too much capital in areas of the Corridor that will not have the immediate benefit necessary to continue implementing a project of this size.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CORRIDORS SUBMITTED BY APPLICANT FOR PROGRAM FUNDING

The District does not intend to submit any other corridors to FRA for consideration to receive program funding under the Corridor ID Program.

CORRIDOR LOCATION

The study area for the FRPR SDP effort is the approximately 180-mile Front Range Corridor between Pueblo, Colorado in the south and Fort Collins, Colorado in the north. The Corridor is home to 85 percent of the population of the entire state of Colorado. The potential future FRPR alignments are generally within or adjacent to the Class I railroad rights of way between Pueblo

and Fort Collins. The Corridor includes the communities of Trinidad, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Castle Rock, Denver, Boulder, Longmont, Loveland, and Fort Collins, among others.

The existing freight railroad alignments that are being considered are the BNSF Front Range Subdivision between Denver (MP 0.0) and Fort Collins (MP 74.4) and the BNSF Pikes Peak Subdivision and UP Colorado Springs Subdivision “Joint Line” between Denver (MP 0.0) and Pueblo (MP 120.3). These routes were recommended in prior studies by the Rail Commission and per SB 21-238, notwithstanding a federal environmental decision-making process.

Approximately 45 miles of this 180-mile Corridor is considered rural between the urbanized areas of Denver, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo in the southern portion of the Front Range Corridor. The entire northern portion of the Corridor between Denver and Fort Collins is considered to be an urbanized area.

The Corridor includes all eight congressional districts in Colorado.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

EVALUATION CRITERIA

CORRIDOR BENEFITS

PROJECTED RIDERSHIP, REVENUES, CAPITAL INVESTMENT, AND OPERATING FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Ridership

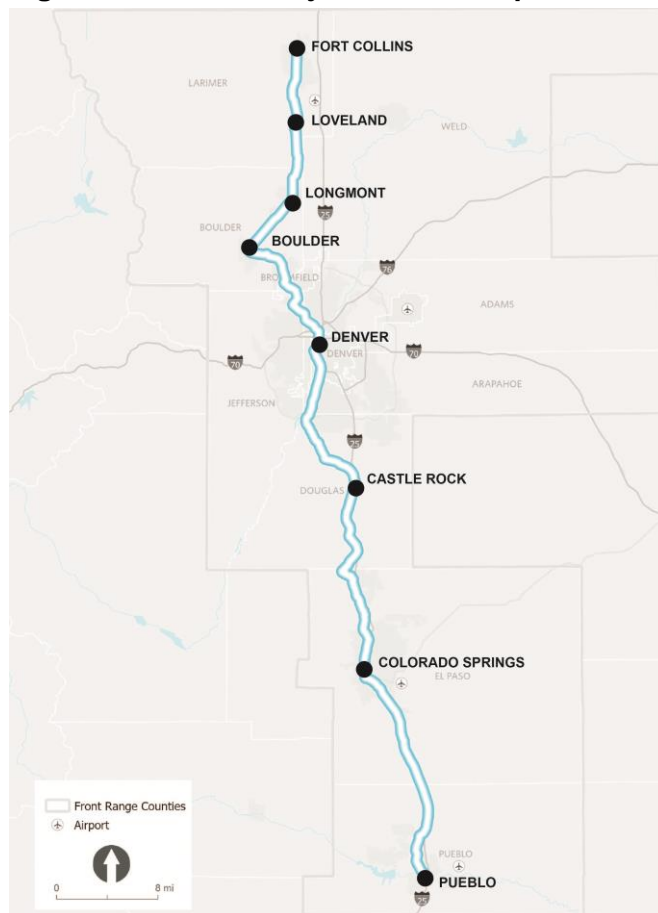
The FRPR Alternatives Evaluation Report (2020) looked at initial ridership data based on a full buildout scenario, depending on the alternative considered. These ridership figures are being refined and adjusted to account for the additional analysis in the ongoing service development planning effort.

The District anticipates that the initial startup phase of the proposed service may involve fewer frequencies, which would attract fewer riders; however, this phased approach allows for natural maturation of the Corridor, enabling organic expansion over time.

Capital Expenditures

In developing the SDP, the District will estimate the capital costs for the project, including project planning and design, environmental reviews, land or real estate acquisition, direct construction costs, and equipment acquisition.

Figure 1: Corridor Major Markets Map



Source: CDOT

Operating and Maintenance Costs

In developing the SDP, the District will estimate the ongoing operations and maintenance costs for the proposed services, including but not limited to train operating crews and onboard train staff, fuel, and other consumables, rolling stock maintenance and overhauls, station services, and long-term track maintenance costs or access fees to host railroads.

ANTICIPATED PUBLIC BENEFITS

Anticipated public benefits represent economic values resulting from rail service improvements. These benefits can be experienced by both current or future users of passenger rail service and the public at-large. These benefits may include transportation cost savings to riders, as well as external benefits, such as travel time savings resulting from reduced congestion, reduced vehicle crashes on highways, reduced pavement maintenance costs, reduced emissions from highway vehicles, and increased economic activity and property values resulting from new or enhanced commercial centers (including transit-oriented development opportunities).

The SDP will generate a series of quantified, monetized benefits. These benefits will be aggregated into several broad categories that align with U.S. DOT's criteria, and will include:

- Travel time savings for a range of user types, monetized using the appropriate values of time as defined by U.S. DOT;
- Reductions in vehicle miles traveled (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; and,
- 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 U.S. DOT.

Analyses 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.

PROJECTED TRIP TIMES AND MODAL COMPETITIVENESS

In developing the SDP, the District will develop reasonable alternatives that will provide a competitive trip time to other modes within the study area. The District will also refine and adjust projected trip times to reflect initial and ultimate conditions.

ANTICIPATED ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT IMPACTS

FRPR is expected to create the potential for substantial economic benefits resulting from facilitating better connections between workers and key employment nodes. Fast, reliable passenger rail service connecting the Front Range Region's fast-growing local economies can create opportunities for business creation or expansion, generating additional good-paying jobs for the region. In addition, a diverse range of transportation options would enhance the region's ability to attract and retain workers in industries that generate significant economic impacts.

The Denver metro area is the hub of economic activity for the state, with more than half the state's population and jobs. Continued economic competitiveness would be supported by an integrated transportation network of multimodal options that provide choice for Coloradans and visitors. Economic development organizations, local governments, and private businesses across the region support the concept of rail and cite transportation connections, including rail, as a factor in attracting the businesses and employees that have fueled Colorado's recent economic growth and competitiveness. Communities along the Front Range view passenger rail as a significant economic benefit, attracting economic investment and business, connecting

employees and jobs, and bringing communities together to support economic vitality statewide.

Economic benefits generated by people choosing a non-SOV travel alternative are important to realize for the Front Range. A starter FRPR service that leverages existing infrastructure and capitalizes on complementary transit investments would reduce capital costs, accelerate the delivery of benefits, and provide mobility choices sooner than a full buildout could be realized.

BENEFITS TO RURAL COMMUNITIES

Approximately 45 miles of the 180-mile Front Range Corridor is considered rural – primarily within the southern portion of the Corridor between Denver and Pueblo. Passenger rail service will enhance equity in rural communities by providing a transportation choice. Rural communities such as La Junta and Trinidad can be better served by the additional transportation choices that would result from the implementation of passenger rail service along the Front Range.

SERVICE TO UNSERVED, UNDERSERVED, AND LOW-INCOME AREAS

As mentioned previously, FRPR also provides the potential for employers and smaller communities in rural areas, many of which are projected to lose population over the next 25 years, to leverage and/or develop local and regional transit systems to connect with urban economies and amenities. Five rural counties (with no populated areas of 50,000 or more)—Las Animas, Huerfano, Custer, Teller, and Elbert—are adjacent or within the District. This includes communities like Trinidad, Colorado and those rural areas north of Fort Collins.

CONNECTIVITY WITH OTHER MODES

The Corridor will benefit and improve connectivity with existing transportation services of other modes, including connections with existing local transit services and intercity bus services.

Potential transit connections with FRPR include Pueblo Transit, Mountain Metro (Colorado Springs), Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD), and Transfort (Fort Collins).

The RTD A Line commuter rail service provides a connection between Denver Union Station and Denver International Airport (DEN) – Colorado’s primary commercial airport with domestic and international flight connections.

Potential state-supported bus connections include CDOT’s Bustang and Outrider services.

SERVICE TO TOP 100 METROPOLITAN AREAS

The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood and Colorado Springs areas rank in the nation’s top 100 most populated metropolitan areas. Fort Collins, Boulder, and Greeley are within the nation’s top 160 most populated areas. Greeley was the sixth fastest growing metro area in the nation between 2010 and 2020; and Fort Collins (ranked 38), Denver-Aurora-Lakewood (51), Colorado Springs (62) were in the top 100 fastest growing metro areas for the same period. Boulder’s population grew 10 percent between 2010 and 2020 and ranked 121st of the nation’s fastest growing areas.¹⁰

ENHANCES PASSENGER RAIL REGIONAL EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

The Corridor enhances regional equity and geographic diversity of intercity passenger rail service through the creation of new service in communities that have never been served by Amtrak. Communities within the Corridor to the north of Denver have not had intercity passenger rail service since September 1967¹¹, while communities to the south of Denver have

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, 2021.

¹¹ Classic Trains Magazine, “Burlington’s Night Crawler”, Spring 2011 Issue.

not had intercity passenger rail service since May 1971.¹²

INTEGRATION WITH NATIONAL RAIL PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The Corridor will be integrated into the national rail passenger transportation system. The initial point of connection to the existing Amtrak intercity passenger rail network will be made at Denver, which is served by the daily long-distance *California Zephyr* and the seasonal *Winter Park Express*. Future connections may also be established at Pueblo with Amtrak's long-distance *Southwest Chief*.

TECHNICAL MERIT

APPLICANT READINESS AND TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS

The District is prepared to commence activities under the Corridor ID Program. Further, the District has already initiated service development planning, working with CDOT and FRA, and is actively developing the partnerships necessary to implement future funding.

The District and CDOT have the technical expertise to perform comprehensive stakeholder engagement, transportation planning, service design, railroad coordination, environmental analysis, and project management activities. Both have recent and ongoing experience with federal grants through previous FY 2019 and FY 2020 CRISI awards.

The District anticipates that participation in the Corridor ID Program will position the District for future Project Development opportunities in partnership with FRA following the completion of the preliminary SDP. Through the service development planning process, the District will generate an inventory of the future capital projects deemed necessary to implement initial startup service along the Corridor. This Corridor Project Inventory resulting from the SDP will form the strategic path for future Project Development activities and future federal funding requests.

APPLICANT COMMITMENT TO CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

The District is committed to Corridor implementation and operation as mandated by its enabling legislation, Colorado SB 21-238. The Front Range Passenger Rail District is committed to the purpose of planning, designing, developing, financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining a passenger rail system along the Front Range.

FRPR has broad political support at the state and local level. Letters of Support for the Corridor are included in **Appendix B**.

PART OF A REGIONAL OR INTERREGIONAL PLANNING STUDY

FRPR is included in the 2018 Colorado State Rail Plan update, as well as MPO/COG transportation plans from North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO), Pikes Peak Area COG (PPACG), Pueblo Area COG (PACOG), and Denver Regional COG (DRCOG).

AVAILABILITY OF NON-FEDERAL FUNDING

In 2018, the Colorado General Assembly provided funding for the Rail Commission (SB 18-001) to hire staff and retain a consultant team to begin the FRPR project. In 2021, the Colorado General Assembly (through SB 21-260) provided additional funding for the initiation of the District and service development planning.

PART OF A STATE RAIL PLAN

The concept of developing intercity passenger rail service along the Front Range Corridor is

¹² Pueblo Chieftain, "Proposed train station would bring passenger service to Pueblo for first time in decades", February 19, 2023.

well documented in the 2018 Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan.¹³

PASSENGER RAIL OPERATOR SUPPORT

Amtrak has included the Front Range Corridor in its Amtrak Connects US 2035 vision.¹⁴ According to Amtrak, “Many combinations of investment, frequency, and trip time are possible. This new corridor provides Colorado Front Range residents with increased mobility options, with Denver as the mid-point anchor.”

SELECTION CRITERIA

DOT STRATEGIC GOALS

SAFETY

The adoption of federally mandated positive train control (PTC) technology, combined with real-time remote monitoring capabilities and a robust safety culture among operating employees will help to ensure safety of train operations within the Corridor.

Corridor planning will also seek to identify opportunities to mitigate impacts at highway-rail grade crossings due to increased train frequencies and the higher operating speeds of passenger trains compared to freight trains. Such mitigation may include crossing closure and consolidation, grade separations, and/or the installation of new active warning devices or supplemental safety measures. Planning will also seek to identify opportunities to reduce trespassing and trespasser-related incidents through fencing and signage.

Travelers switching from automobiles to the passenger rail mode will result in reduced VMT on the regional highway network. Reduced VMT can generate external benefits to the roadway users and the society at-large through reduced highway vehicle crashes.

ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Infrastructure Investment and Job Creation

The development of intercity passenger rail service within the Corridor will contribute to economic progress stemming from infrastructure investment and associated job creation in the rail industry. The development will result in good-paying construction and manufacturing jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union, such as through the use of project labor agreements or union agreements, apprenticeships, community agreements, and local hiring provisions.

Corridor implementation will result in a once-in-a-generation investment in the nation’s core infrastructure assets and will provide opportunities for Colorado families to achieve and maintain economic security through long-term rail industry employment.

Resilient Supply Chains and Economic Opportunity

The existing Class I freight rail lines along the proposed Front Range Corridor form important trade corridors for regional, national, and global supply chains. Commodity flows along these segments include energy products, manufacturing inputs, building materials, clean energy generating equipment, aerospace components, imported consumer goods, and domestic rail intermodal services. The use of rail for each of these trade flows reduces the energy intensity of goods movement when compared to long-haul trucking. Infrastructure investments to support

¹³ Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.codot.gov/programs/transitandrail/assets/plans-studies-reports/statewidetransitplan/2018-colorado-freight-and-passenger-rail-plan.pdf>

¹⁴ Amtrak Connects Us, Front Range Corridor. Retrieved from: <https://www.amtrakconnectsus.com/maps/front-range-corridor/>

intercity passenger rail service in segments with shared freight and passenger rail use could potentially help to enable increased network capacity and velocity for freight movement.

The development of intercity passenger rail service within the Corridor will encourage transit-oriented development and community walkability, enhance the economic vitality and competitiveness of neighborhoods and the region, and provide new spaces and opportunities for commercial activity and housing near future stations.

EQUITY

There is a need to provide travel options that improve transportation equity through better access to housing, jobs, education, health care, and other services along the Front Range. The District is committed to equitable access to transportation options to ensure reliable, safe, and affordable transportation choices for all potential users—workers, leisure travelers, older adults, young people, persons with disabilities, and historically underserved communities. In addition to supporting travel choices and access, FRPR can be a foundation for equitable transportation choices that enable underserved populations and communities, which are hampered by disconnected travel options and choices today, to access quality transportation options. FRPR would reduce dependency on highways, improve air quality and community health, and facilitate investments in complementary mobility options (such as sidewalks, bike lanes, micro-transit, and feeder transit services) that are often lacking in historically disadvantaged communities.

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Colorado has developed bold goals to preserve and protect its natural environment, quality of life, and visitor and recreational economy that are foundational to the state. In 2019, the state legislature passed HB-19-1261, Climate Action Plan to Reduce Pollution, which set greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution reduction goals. In 2021, Governor Polis issued the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap to further the HB-19-1261 climate action plan.¹⁵ The Roadmap concludes that changes to transportation planning and infrastructure are necessary to reduce growth in driving, which is a key to reducing GHG pollution. The Roadmap specifically identifies development of passenger rail along the Front Range as a near-term action the state will pursue over the next two years to make progress toward its 2025 and 2030 GHG pollution reduction goals. In 2021, the Colorado Senate enacted SB-21-260, Sustainability of the Transportation System, which creates new funding sources and state enterprises to improve and expand transportation infrastructure with a focus on mitigating environmental and health impacts of transportation systems. CDOT is committed to pursuing transit and rail investments supporting economic goals in an environmentally responsible manner. In its recent 10-Year Plan update (September 2022), CDOT outlined transportation goals including multimodal mobility, safety, asset management, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. FRPR—and a shift from SOV-dominated travel—are key components of connectivity and mobility to achieve those goals.

An attractive rail alternative to SOV travel would provide Front Range travelers the choice to select a more sustainable method for traveling along the Front Range that benefits communities and the environment collectively. As more people can and do choose alternatives to SOV travel, vehicle miles traveled and vehicle emissions will be reduced, advancing the state's environmental goals and providing sustainable mode choices for future generations.

TRANSFORMATION

Development of intercity passenger rail service along the Front Range Corridor will expand and

¹⁵ Colorado Energy Office, Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap. Retrieved from: <https://energyoffice.colorado.gov/climate-energy/ghg-pollution-reduction-roadmap>

improve the nation’s rail network along segments shared with freight rail through targeted investments to be identified through the service development planning process, such as the construction of new sidings, multiple main tracks, and flyovers; realignment of curves to increase train speeds; upgrading or modernization of rail bridge structures; and the installation of new or upgraded signaling and train control systems, to include PTC installation.

PREVIOUS FEDERAL HIGH-SPEED RAIL CORRIDOR DESIGNATIONS

The Corridor is not one of the previous federally designated High-Speed Rail Corridors.

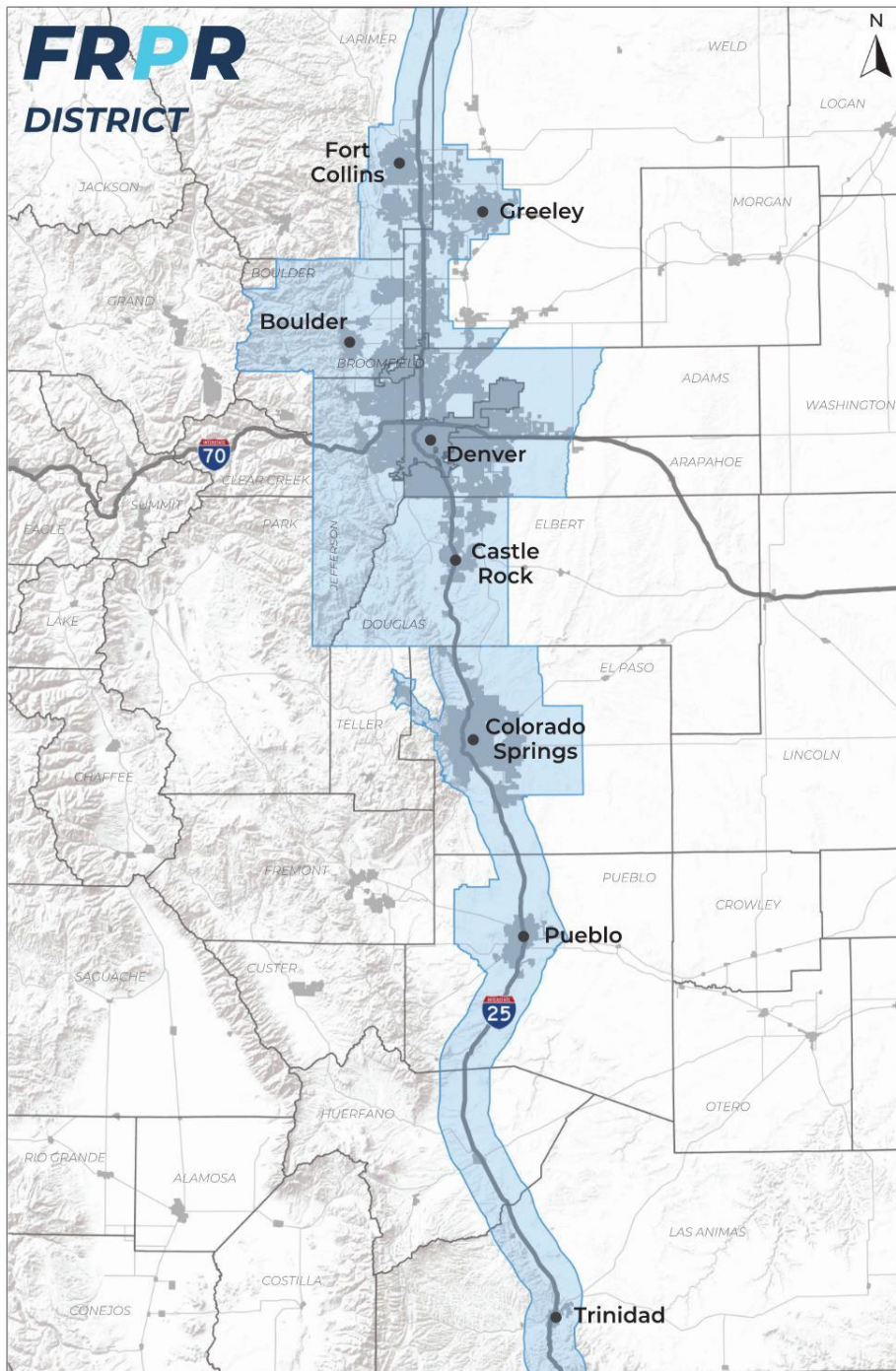
DOT STRATEGIC GOALS

Through the comprehensive service development planning process, the District will make efforts to align with U.S. DOT strategic goals. Table 2 below describes this alignment.

Table 2: Alignment with U.S. DOT Strategic Goals

| Strategic Goal | Alignment |
|---|---|
| Climate and Sustainability | <p>The District understands that through the Corridor ID Program, FRA seeks to identify corridors that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and can be designed with specific elements to address climate change impacts, as well as corridors that align with the President’s greenhouse gas reduction goals, promote energy efficiency, support fiscally responsible land use and efficient design, increase climate resilience, support domestic manufacturing, and reduce pollution.</p> <p>The District also understands that FRA seeks to identify corridors that address environmental justice (EJ), particularly for communities that disproportionately experience climate change-related consequences. To the extent possible, the District will leverage and implement existing statewide transportation policies on resilience, sustainability, climate change, and environmental justice.</p> |
| Equity and Barriers to Opportunity | <p>The District understands that FRA seeks to identify corridors that proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence, as a form of barriers to opportunity. Activities that help to address equity and barriers to opportunity may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing an equity impact analysis for the Corridor; • Adopting an equity and inclusion program/plan; and/or, • Conducting meaningful public engagement to ensure underserved communities are provided an opportunity to be involved in the planning process in a manner that is consistent with federal guidance. |
| Economic Strength and Global Competitiveness | <p>FRPR service development planning activities and project development will support strong labor standards and the free and fair choice to join a union, local hire agreements, and the use of an appropriately trained workforce. The development of the Corridor will coincide with high-quality workforce development programs in Colorado, including registered apprenticeship, labor-management training programs, and supportive services to help train, place, and retain people in good-paying jobs and apprenticeships.</p> <p>For the purposes of enhancing the economic vitality and competitiveness of neighborhoods within the region and providing new spaces and opportunities for commercial activity and housing, FRPR will seek to encourage transit-oriented development at future station sites through deliberate and thoughtful integration of the service development planning process with other local planning.</p> |

APPENDIX A: FRONT RANGE RAIL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES MAP



March 2023

APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

JARED POLIS
GOVERNOR



136 STATE CAPITOL
DENVER, COLORADO 80203

TEL 303-866-2471
FAX 303-866-2003

March 20, 2023

Administrator Amit Bose
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Support for Front Range Passenger Rail District's Application to Join the Corridor Identification and Development Program

Dear Administrator Bose:

It was great seeing you last month during my trip to Washington, DC. I appreciated our discussion about the administration's goals to expand passenger rail access across the country and how Colorado can be a leader in this space. Following that discussion, I am pleased to voice my strong support for the Front Range Passenger Rail District's (FRPRD) application to join the Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP). This is a historic opportunity to further the vision and implementation of a high-quality passenger rail system to connect communities along Colorado's Front Range.

By the year 2050, 3 million new people are expected to live and travel across the Front Range and my administration is taking bold steps to ensure Colorado communities more intentionally connect land use and transportation decisions. But Colorado needs more integrated multimodal travel options to reduce traveler dependence on single occupancy vehicles, increase transportation system capacity, serve regional travel demand, and advance environmental, economic, and equity goals.

CIDP inclusion enables the FRPRD to make significant advancements and would continue the work that has already started from the FY20 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant that was awarded for this project. CIDP's strong federal matching percentage would be used to build rail infrastructure improvement projects along the FRPRD corridor as well as help to solidify partnerships and capitalize on building passenger and commuter rail services.

CIDP inclusion is a crucial step to developing new intercity passenger rail in Colorado and I strongly support the efforts of FRPRD and partners. We respectfully request you consider the application favorably so the District can expeditiously advance this regionally significant program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Governor Jared Polis

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We write to express our support for the Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPRD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) application to join the Federal Rail Administration's new Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP). This is a historic opportunity to further the vision and implementation of a high-quality passenger rail system to connect communities along Colorado's Front Range.

By the year 2050, three million new people are expected to live and travel across the Front Range. Colorado needs integrated multimodal travel options to reduce traveler dependence on single-occupancy vehicles, increase transportation system capacity, serve regional travel demand, and advance environmental, economic, and equity goals.

Inclusion into the CIDP will enable significant advancement of the passenger rail project. The funding will be used to design, build, and improve rail infrastructure within the FRPRD corridor. Federal funding will help to solidify partnerships with passenger and freight rail operators to identify efficient, affordable, and sustainable inter-city rail options along the Front Range corridor in Colorado. We support the efforts of FPRD, CDOT, and the project partners in this endeavor. We respectfully ask that the Department of Transportation give full and fair consideration to the CIDP application so Colorado can advance this regionally beneficial program.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

DIANA DeGETTE

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COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

ENERGY, CLIMATE, AND GRID SECURITY—
RANKING MEMBER

ENVIRONMENT, MANUFACTURING,
AND CRITICAL MINERALS
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Front Range Passenger Rail District's Application to join the Corridor Identification and Development Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to respectfully request full and fair consideration for the Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPRD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) application to join the Federal Rail Administration's new Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP).

Participation in the CIDP is a crucial step to develop new inter-city rail in Colorado to meet growing regional demand. Incorporating multimodal travel options into transportation plans for this corridor will help reduce dependence on single occupancy vehicles and advance environmental, economic, and equity goals. Specifically, this funding will be used to design, build, and improve rail infrastructure within the FRPRD and to solidify partnerships with passenger and freight rail operators to identify efficient, affordable, and sustainable rail options.

Thank you for your consideration of this grant application. I encourage you to give this application every appropriate consideration. Should this application be approved for funding, please contact Joe Wood in my office at Joe.Wood@mail.house.gov or 303-968-6099.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and attention of this matter.

Sincerely,



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



James Tylick
AVP Passenger Operations

BNSF Railway
2600 Lou Menk Drive
Fort Worth, TX 76131
James.tylick@bnsf.com

March 23, 2023

Administrator Amit Bose
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

BNSF takes tremendous pride in delivering transportation services to our freight customers and hosted passenger operations across the country. As the Federal Railroad Administration works to identify potential new and expanded passenger opportunities across the country through the Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP), I write in regard to the Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPRD) application to initiate intercity passenger rail service between Pueblo and Fort Collins, CO.

FRPRD has been working closely and constructively with key stakeholders to explore passenger rail along the Front Range, including BNSF Railway which would ultimately host such restored service. BNSF has an ex-officio non-voting seat on the FRPRD Board and has appreciated the District's early communication and collaboration as the team explores passenger rail options. BNSF considers new and expanded intercity passenger rail proposals through the lens of our "passenger principles" which require important considerations around operating adjustments and infrastructure investments that may be necessary to accommodate such service. We anticipate continuing our constructive dialogue with the FRPRD and other interested stakeholders should the corridor be included in the CIDP.

In closing, BNSF remains committed to the important role we play in the nation's movement of goods along with serving as host to Amtrak and other passenger agencies on our network. The CDIP can support our continued success in these areas by ensuring that new and expanded passenger projects ultimately do no harm to rail freight mobility. BNSF will continue to engage in a constructive and collaborative fashion in pursuit of solutions that work for all stakeholders, allowing rail to provide the environmental benefits in the movement of goods and people as we face the challenges of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Tylick".

James Tylick

CC: General Manager Andy Karsian, Front Range Passenger Rail District



Dennis J. Newman
Executive Vice President, Strategy and Planning

March 15, 2023

Amit Bose
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Application for Corridor Identification and Development Program Funding

Dear Administrator Bose:

On behalf of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), I am writing to express our support for the Colorado Department of Transportation and 2)the Front Range Passenger Rail District application submitted under the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Corridor Identification and Development Program (Corridor ID Program) for the Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor.

Front Range Passenger Rail would complement Colorado's network and facilitate integrated multimodal travel between major population centers along the Front Range. Adding a high-quality service that attracts people to choose passenger rail over single-occupancy vehicular travel would enhance community connections and contribute to future economic vitality and environmental sustainability.

The Front Range Passenger Rail Corridor will help strengthen economic growth and mobility throughout the region and the country. Additionally, it will provide public benefits, will make regional travel more available, accessible, and sustainable, will reduce congestion, and will boost the local economy of the cities and towns along the route.

We are excited to potentially work with all of the projects selected through the Corridor ID Program, to help those sponsors move their projects forward towards future implementation. Thank you for your time and consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. J. Newman", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Dennis Newman
Executive Vice President, Strategy and Planning