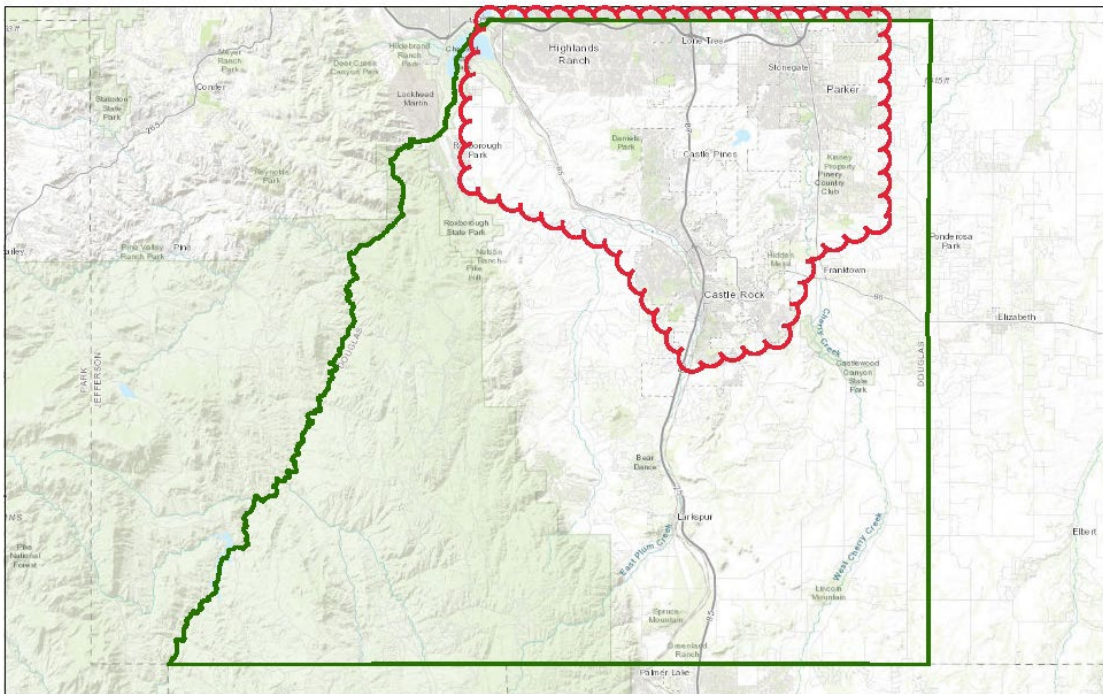


# **Attachment B: Supplemental Transit Project Updates**

## **1. Douglas County Integrated Transit and Multimodal Study**

In 2023, Douglas County staff released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to expand upon previous planning efforts to identify gaps in the transit and multimodal transportation network in northern and central Douglas County. The study is intended to recommend physical and operational improvements, and identify a transit pilot service to implement upon completion of the study. The study will also provide a framework to enhance, sustain, and expand transit and multimodal transportation in the County. As shown in Exhibit 1, the study area encompasses the urban and suburban areas of the County, including Highlands Ranch, the cities of Castle Pines and Lone Tree, and the towns of Parker and Castle Rock.

Exhibit 1 – Study Area: Douglas County Urban/Suburban Areas



Douglas County selected the consulting firm, Fehr & Peers, in March 2024 to conduct the study. It is expected to be completed in the summer of 2025. Presently, there has been one kick off meeting with the stakeholders. The consulting firm is currently reviewing previous planning efforts and collecting various transit and multimodal data from the area and stakeholders.

The study is being funded by the County and a federal grant awarded through DRCOG's 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The County has also received a TIP award for the transit pilot service to be determined by the study and implemented by the County soon after completion of the study.

## **2. CDOT Mobility Hub Project:**

CDOT is beginning a new project to evaluate and design a potential mobility hub in the Castle Rock area to serve Bustang. On March 7, 2024 the Request for Proposals (RFP) was released seeking consulting services to help evaluate three potential locations for the mobility hub, and for engineering services to design the project. The three potential locations include two sites in Castle Rock: the northeast corner of Wolfensberger Road at Wilcox Street, and the area around the proposed Brickyard mixed use development. The third location is along I-25 in the proposed Pine Canyon development in Douglas County. Town staff will provide input to this project, and CDOT project staff has already been made aware that the Town will oppose the selection of a site within Pine Canyon as long as the developer continues to pursue urban level zoning within unincorporated Douglas County.

The study's goals are intended to provide northbound and southbound mobility hubs along I-25 in Castle Rock for CDOT's Bustang service, allowing for minimal delay to depart and re-enter I-25. According to the Scope of Work, the project will provide the following improvements:

- A. Site Selection: Work collaboratively with CDOT, Douglas County, Castle Rock, and the Front Range Passenger Rail on a clear and transparent site selection process to determine the final mobility hub location that aligns with CDOT's Statewide Mobility Hub Goals.
- B. Final Design:
  - a. Provide a transit stop for Bustang south line in Castle Rock while maintaining Bustang ridership efficiency
  - b. Provide safe access for pedestrians and vehicular traffic to the mobility hub
  - c. Create a potential tie into and/or ensure design does not preclude opportunities to tie into additional mobility plans
    - i. E.g. bike/pedestrian connections, FRPR, microtransit, shuttle services, etc.
  - d. Decrease vehicle traffic and associated ecological impacts

Two million dollars is estimated for this project. Construction costs will be determined based on the outcome of the project. CDOT has reportedly allocated

up to \$13 million to complete the construction of the mobility hub. No contribution from the Town has been requested as of today.

Deadline to submit RFP proposals was April 4<sup>th</sup>. CDOT is currently reviewing the proposals and is expected to select a preferred consultant soon.

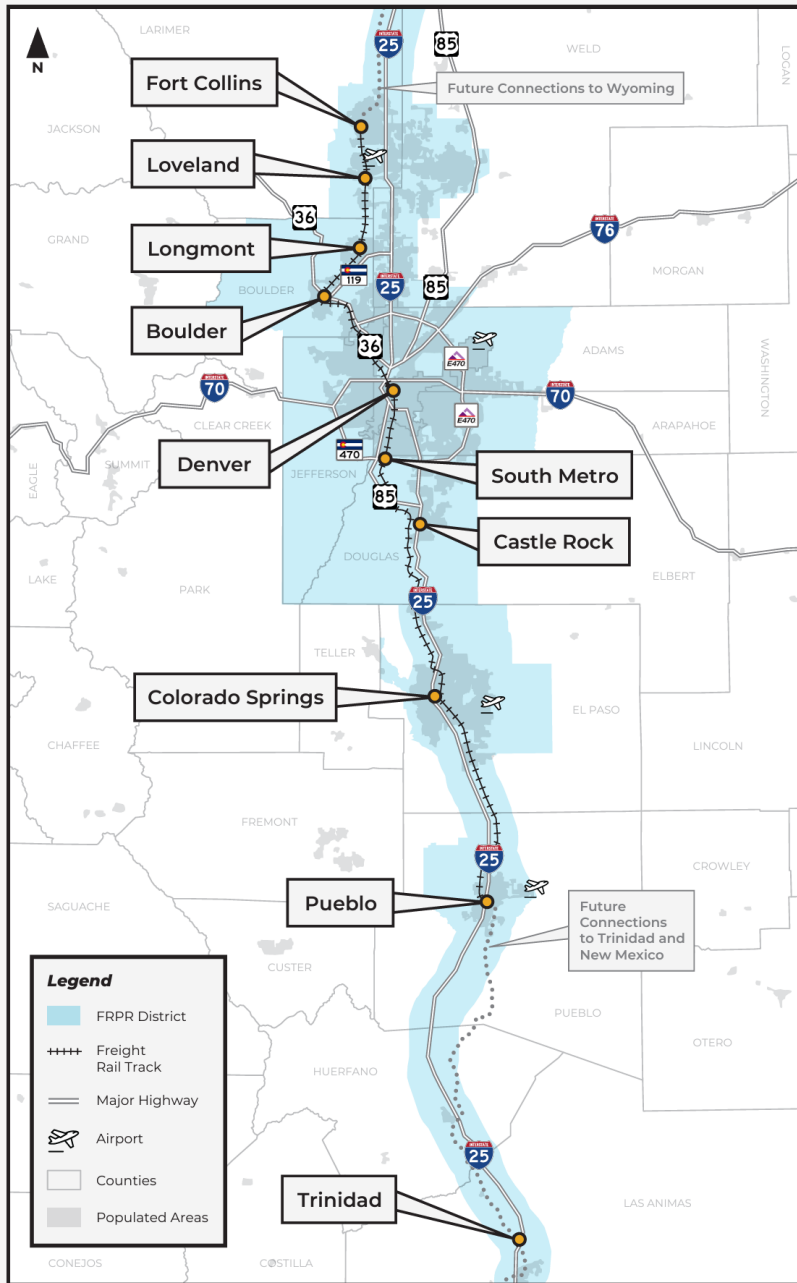
### **3. *Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR):***

For nearly 20 years, passenger rail has been envisioned along the Colorado Front Range from Pueblo to Fort Collins. Since then, CDOT has funded or participated in several studies evaluating this service, such as the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority High Speed Rail Feasibility Study, and the Interregional Connectivity Study. In 2009, the State's Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) was created as a new division within CDOT responsible for planning, developing, operating, and integrating transit and rail into the statewide transportation system. Bustang service is one of these services managed and operated by DTR. The proposed FRPR service is also one of these transit services DTR is helping to plan.

The vision for the FRPR is to develop passenger rail that serves Front Range communities from Fort Collins to Pueblo, which is a critical component of Colorado's future for assisting with increasing multi-modal options. Front Range Passenger Rail will provide a safe, efficient, and reliable transportation option for travel between major population centers and destinations along the Front Range and create a backbone for connecting and expanding rail and transit options in the state and region.

In 2021 the Colorado State Legislature established the Front Range Passenger Rail District through the FRPR District Act (SB 21-238). The FRPR District is an independent government agency with the mission to plan, design, finance, construct, operate, and maintain a new passenger rail system along the Front Range. The District boundary extends from the Wyoming to the New Mexico border, spanning portions or the entirety of the 13 counties near I-25 along the Front Range. Exhibit 1 depicts the District boundary and rail alignment.

Exhibit 1: FRPR District Boundary Map



The FRPR District Act also gave the District the authority to levy taxes, through ballot measures, to fund and support rail programs, including establishing station area improvement districts. It is governed by a Board of Directors with 17 voting and 7 non-voting members and is not accountable to CDOT or the Governor’s office, although the Governor appoints five of the 24 board members. In order to levy taxes within the boundary of the District, voter approval is necessary. Voting is limited to residency within the boundary area. It is likely that multiple funding sources (federal, state, local and/or private) will be needed to fund FRPR service.

Funding will be explored further with recommendations as part of the environmental review process.

Town staff has been informed that the District is currently working on ballot language for the tax measure, but it's unclear when the issue will be brought to the public for approval. If approved, the tax levy will likely apply to the entire District boundary, even if rail service is not provided to all areas within the District. For example, if service is phased in beginning with service from Denver through Boulder to Longmont, as the Governor has suggested, all communities within the District boundary could be subjected to the tax. This includes communities such as Trinidad near the New Mexico border and Wellington north of Fort Collins, as well as Castle Rock. Though, according to FRPR staff they would prefer to have the entire line operational at the same time (Pueblo to Fort Collins), rather than a phased approach.

From the FRPR webpage, the District is currently evaluating routes, stations, service, infrastructure, operations, costs, and financing as part of creating the Service Development Plan (SDP). The SDP defines the where, when and how for future rail service along the front range. The first train could be operational in the next 10-15 years. The Governor has reportedly stated that he would like to begin service by 2029.

According to FRPR staff, the proposed plan is to share the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) or the Union Pacific (UP) rail line. Two-way rail service could be provided on either rail line similar to the Capital Corridor in California from Oakland to Sacramento. Station spacing should be 10 miles apart with a 700 to 800 foot long platform. Connections to local transit and supporting multimodal facilities should be provided by the local jurisdiction or agency. FRPR does not plan to provide vehicle parking or a park-n-ride facility at the station. Other station area considerations include the status of supporting infrastructure, such as utilities, access, and opportunities for infill development. Any first and last mile connectivity or infrastructure issues will be the responsibility of local agencies or local improvement district, however, since the ballot language is still being developed there could be a local share back option available.

There are still several unknowns regarding the future FRPR service including;

- How often will train service run?
- How much will tickets cost?
- Will there be discounted tickets for seniors, disabled, and low income and how much will they cost?
- How much revenue will the service generate?
- How long will construct take?
- What is the proposed tax (sales or property)?
- How much is the proposed tax?

The next big step for the FRPR team is to hold a bigger stakeholder meeting this May/June timeframe when more details of the SDP will be shared. They also want to know more on how some of the new proposed State legislation turns out before the meeting. Community outreach or input is currently on hold and waiting on the SDP analysis to be completed so that more information can be shared during the public outreach. In the meantime, the FRPR staff is willing to attend events and meetings to share information.

Crime rate is much lower for passenger rail when compared to light rail transit (LRT), such as services provided by RTD. This starts with enforcing the fare people pay, which is typically higher than LRT service. FRPR will have conductors to make sure the fare is paid that helps reduce the possibilities of criminal activity. Since LRT is open to anyone who wants to ride, with little to no fare enforcement, passengers are able to board without paying and can behave as they want on the LRT trains and station areas. There are also significant differences in the projected users of passenger rail than LRT users. Passenger rail riders are typically traveling greater distances at higher speeds with far fewer stops in between. Town staff will continue to work with the FRPR team regarding the station area planning process and the impacts and prevention of potential crime. The Federal Transit Administration launched the Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative to provide information and resources to help transit agencies address and prevent crime on their systems. Federal funding is available to prevent and address potential crime in the transit system.