





# Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission

- Legislature's Senate Bill 17 – 153 created the Commission (effective July 1, 2017); replaced previous SW Chief Commission.
- Housed under CDOT; independent of Colorado Transportation Commission





# Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission

- 11 voting Commissioners
  - Five appointed by the Governor: two railroads, two passenger rail advocates, one resident from Southwest Chief counties in SE Colorado
  - One each from the four Front Range MPOs and one from South Central Council of Governments
  - One from RTD
- 3 non-voting members
  - CDOT
  - Amtrak
  - Cheyenne, Wyoming

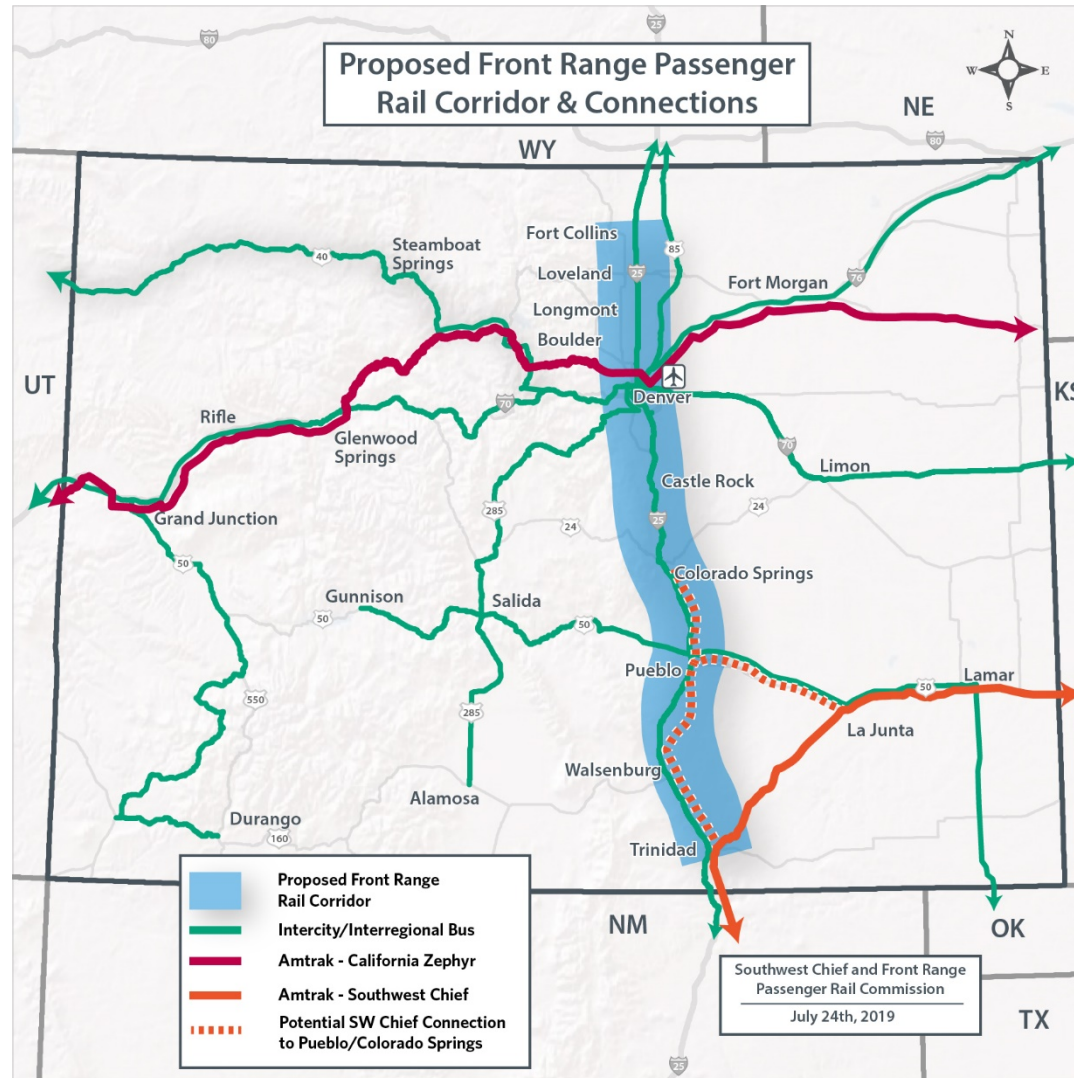


# Commission's Purposes

- Work to preserve Amtrak's Southwest Chief service across southeast Colorado and possibly extend Amtrak SW Chief service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs
- Facilitate the development of Front Range Passenger Rail service



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





# Why the Renewed Interest in Passenger Rail?

- Highway congestion is getting worse; travel time is increasing and is less predictable
- State's population grew by 2.2 million from 1990 – 2016
- Corridor will gain 84% of state's additional 3 million residents by 2050.
- Front Range may be losing ability to be economically competitive; most other major US population bases have existing or planned Passenger Rail Service.
- Younger population groups prefer reliable "Transit" over owning a car and associated costs



# 2018 Accomplishments

## Funding

- May 31 – Senate Bill 18-001 is signed by Governor with \$2.5 million for Passenger Rail Commission. (studies, staffing and federal grant match)
- March –\$16.0 million TIGER IX grant received to replace 60-year old bolted rail, turnouts and at-grade crossing surfaces on the BNSF's trackage in KS, CO, and NM utilized by Amtrak's Southwest Chief.
- December –\$9.16 million CRISI grant to install Positive Train Control (PTC) on 179 miles of track between Dodge City, KS and Las Animas, CO.



# Current Commission Activities

Hire Consultant for Rail Passenger Service Development Plan and environmental work in early August

## Communications Sub-Committee

- Updating Commission's Website
- Develop other communication tools to drive Commission outreach

"2019 Build Grant" submitted to continue upgrades to BNSF's track on the Southwest Chief route. Application completed in conjunction with Amtrak, BNSF, and neighboring states and communities.

Hold monthly Commission meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month)





## Consultant /CDOT Blended Team

- Consultant Team hired for Rail Passenger Service Development Plan and NEPA work; Notice to Proceed expected early August
- CDOT Offer of In-Kind Staff Resources to Passenger Rail Commission
  - Technical environmental experts who know I-25 North, I-25 South, and other corridor locations
  - Travel Demand Modeling staff
  - Office of Communications support



# Front Range Passenger Rail

<https://frontrangerail.metroquest.com>



# COLORADO


Department of  
Transportation

## 1 Front Range Passenger Rail

WELCOME

Hello!

We are interested in your thoughts and opinions on a possible future passenger rail service along the Front Range. The Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission and CDOT are considering how a passenger rail service from Fort Collins to Pueblo could meet the demands of our growing state.

 Español

 Begin



Larimer and Weld Counties together will grow 65% from 0.7 million to nearly 1.2 million people. El Paso County will grow 39% from 0.7 million to 1.1 million persons. Metro Denver will grow 27% from 3.3 million to 4.2 million people.



# Questions?



SOUTHWEST CHIEF & FRONT RANGE  
PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION

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