



Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item – {{section.number}}.B.

City Council Study Session
March 20, 2023



Strategic Priority 5: Robust Infrastructure

Provide safe and equitable access to core services and amenities by safeguarding, maintaining and improving the city's water, wastewater, stormwater, mobility and roadway systems.

Subject: Presentation of the Regional Transportation District Northwest Rail Peak Service Study

Prepared By: Debra Baskett, Senior Transportation & Mobility Planner
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Recommended City Council Action:

Receive a presentation from Regional Transportation District staff regarding the Northwest Rail Peak Service Study.

Summary Statement:

- In 2004, Regional Transportation District (RTD) voters approved FasTracks, a plan to expand transit across the Denver metropolitan region. It included 113 miles of light rail and commuter rail and 18 miles of Bus Rapid Transit.
- RTD opened the first six miles of the Northwest Rail (the B Line) between Denver Union Station and Westminster Station in 2016. RTD has been unable to assemble the funding and approvals to complete the remaining 35 miles of the corridor since that time.
- RTD is evaluating an initial peak service approach as a first step toward full-day rail service from Westminster to Boulder and Longmont.

Fiscal Impact:

\$0 in expenditures.

Source of Funds:

Not applicable.

Policy Issue(s):

Does City Council wish to receive a presentation regarding RTD's Northwest Rail Peak Service Study?

Alternative(s):

City Council could choose not to receive a presentation regarding the Northwest Rail Peak Service Study. This is not recommended due to the importance of this informational update to City Council.

Background Information:

The Northwest Rail is part of RTD's 2004 voter approved FasTracks plan to expand transit across the Denver metropolitan region. The proposed 41-mile commuter rail corridor would operate between Denver's Union Station and Longmont, serving Westminster, Broomfield, Louisville, Boulder, and Longmont. The first six miles of the B Line to Westminster Station was completed in 2016 and operates on right-of-way owned by RTD. The remaining segment of the Northwest Rail would use existing freight railroad tracks owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad. RTD is evaluating a peak service approach as a first step towards full-day rail service to Boulder and Longmont. The peak service concept would begin commuter rail starter service with three trains operating on weekday mornings and three trains in the evening. RTD is coordinating with BSNF to determine the requirements for commuter rail to operate on its track.

The Peak Rail Study will identify a common set of facts for design and construction costs, ridership, benefits, impacts, and strategic partnerships. It will also outline potential funding sources and implementation strategies.

The City's Strategic Plan priority of Robust Infrastructure is met by providing for safe and equitable access to core services and amenities thus safeguarding, maintaining, and improving the city's water, wastewater, stormwater, mobility, and roadway systems with the completion of the Northwest Rail.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark A Freitag

Mark A. Freitag
City Manager

Attachments:

Presentation of the Northwest Rail Peak Rail Service Study