

Front Range Passenger Rail District Finance Committee

Date: Thursday, November 7, 2024

Time: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89643806679

Join by phone: 720-707-2699 Webinar ID: 896 4380 6679

Committee

Members: Luis Lopez (Chair), Dennis Flores, Josh Laipply, Sal Pace, John Putnam, Chris Nevitt

Time	Agenda Item	Anticipated Action	Discussion Lead
5 mins	Call to Order; Roll Call	Welcome attendees and begin meeting.	Chair Lopez
30 mins	Budget Overview District financial update Questions and Answers	Updates and discussion around monthly/annual budget	GM Karsian
15 mins	Next Steps Legislative request	Committee thoughts on next steps for FY '25 and spending/ budget priorities	Committee Members
10 mins	Director Updates	Committee raises agenda items for future meetings or for staff follow-up.	Chair Lopez



Memo

DATE: November 4, 2024
TO: Finance Committee

FROM: Andy Karsian, General Manager

SUBJECT: FY25 Budget considerations and final steps

Background

As with all local governments, the District must adopt a budget for the upcoming fiscal year beginning January 2025. The District worked with accountants and examined past spending and existing resource opportunities and developed a draft budget for Board review.

The first Board discussion on the budget was in the October Finance committee, which endorsed a favorable recommendation. The full Board reviewed and discussed budget priorities at the annual retreat in October, as well. Finally, at the October Board meeting the District provided the public an opportunity to weigh in on the District budget.

This memo gives an explanation on adjustments, based on Board discussions and the next steps for full Board approval of the budget at the December Board meeting.

Budget for FY25 - Adjustments

The District, as funded currently, has a fiscally constrained budget for the next two years. This means there is not enough money in the budget to accomplish what the District staff and Board identified as priorities moving into 2025 and beyond. No new operating funds came to the District this year. The District has one temporary revenue source from the earned interest on the COLOTrust account, but those base funds (\$12M) are obligated and will likely be distributed from the account sometime in 2025, greatly reducing the amount of interest-earned revenue that could augment the budget.

Additionally, the COLOTrust account provides approximately \$500K of flexible revenue for the District to use. These funds are already being dedicated as augmenting the existing fiscally constrained budget to keep District work ongoing. For example, District accountants transferred \$100K of the earned interest into the District general fund to cover operating expenses through the end of the year. In dedicating these funds, the Board should be careful without a clear strategy on what the state, administration, District Board, and staff plan on accomplishing in 2025.

The FY25 budget begins with around \$2M in funds. Staff salaries and benefits, as well as budget items like insurance, auditing, accounting, legal and rent sum up to approximately \$500K annually.

Changes that occurred since the last Finance committee discussion include the staff position for the Director of Rail Planning and Operations has been eliminated as of November 2024, and the General Manager position is empty beginning January 2025. Both these salaries will free up approximately \$300,000 for the 2025 budget. Of course, the availability of more funds is balanced by the lost work due to those open positions.





The Board prioritized a legislative funding request, as well as dedicating outreach funding for the District for 2025. The budget the Finance committee will review on the 7th includes a revised *Wages* and *Benefits* line item reflecting the revised salary outlook going into 2025.

The budget also reinstates the \$100,000 for *Legislative Services* for the 2025 budget. The line item for *Outreach/Marketing* did not change in this budget for three reasons: one, there could be unspent 2024 *Outreach/Marketing* funds that spill over into 2025; two, increasing the 2025 line item meant reducing other line items, which impacts District operations; and three, there are additional funds in the budget that could be used for outreach and/or marketing purposes in 2025, but in lieu of a clear Board direction on the outreach and communication efforts for the next year, it makes more sense to adjust the budget at a later date.

Next Steps

The Board will have a chance to continuously review the budget over the next year and reprioritize line items within the budget reflecting the uncertainty of the District's future funding at this time.

The District must adopt a budget by the middle of January per state law. There is a way to request an extension if needed, but the District should not need one.

The Finance committee will review (11/7) and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee (11/19 and/or 12/5) regarding the budget and the adjusted line items. With the Finance and Executive Committee blessings, the full Board can approve the budget at the December Board meeting (12/13).

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

Front Range Passenger Rail District Balance Sheet - Governmental Funds September 30, 2024

		General	Total	
Assets Checking Account 1st Bank Colotrust Colotrust - Prime Prepaid Expenses Office Space Deposit Total Assets	\$	105,345.06 952,235.11 8,302,713.94 6,255,024.61 8,500.00 8,500.00 15,632,318.72		105,345.06 952,235.11 8,302,713.94 6,255,024.61 8,500.00 8,500.00 15,632,318.72
Liabilities Accounts Payable Accrued Liabilities Credit Card Liabilities Total Liabilities	\$	911,552.53 52,807.48 712.74 965,072.75	\$	911,552.53 52,807.48 712.74 965,072.75
Fund Balances	_	14,667,245.97	_	14,667,245.97
Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$	15,632,318.72	\$	15,632,318.72

Front Range Passenger Rail District General Fund Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances - Budget and Actual For the Period Ending September 30, 2024

	3 - 1								
	MTD Budget	MTD Actual	Variance	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	Variance	Annual Budget		
Revenues									
Interest Income	\$ 4,166.67	\$ 61,781.65 \$	57,614.98 \$	37,499.99	557,738.55	520,238.56	\$ 50,000.00		
Intergovernmental - State - CDOT	166,666.67	-	(166,666.67)	1,499,999.99	-	(1,499,999.99)	2,000,000.00		
Total Revenue	170,833.34	61,781.65	(109,051.69)	1,537,499.98	557,738.55	(979,761.43)	2,050,000.00		
General and Administration									
Payroll & Benefits	44,250.00	58,023.94	13,773.94	398,250.00	510,694.82	112,444.82	531,000.00		
Accounting	5,833.33	7,463.64	1,630.31	52,500.01	55,432.22	2,932.21	70,000.00		
Auditing	-	-	-	10,000.00	8,000.00	(2,000.00)	10,000.00		
Outreach/marketing	41,666.67	27,512.00	(14,154.67)	374,999.99	350,255.84	(24,744.15)	500,000.00		
Legislative Services	-	16,666.66	16,666.66	-	74,999.97	74,999.97	-		
Dues and Membership	416.67	-	(416.67)	3,749.99	10,137.50	6,387.51	5,000.00		
Insurance	625.00	-	(625.00)	5,625.00	5,893.00	268.00	7,500.00		
Legal	13,750.00	12,000.00	(1,750.00)	123,750.00	232,651.14	108,901.14	165,000.00		
IT Services	1,666.67	2,604.92	938.25	14,999.99	37,035.18	22,035.19	20,000.00		
Miscellaneous	833.33	53.11	(780.22)	7,500.01	2,419.90	(5,080.11)	10,000.00		
Office Supplies and Expenses	625.00	406.70	(218.30)	5,625.00	8,822.38	3,197.38	7,500.00		
Office Space	3,000.00	8,500.00	5,500.00	27,000.00	57,000.00	30,000.00	36,000.00		
Ballot costs	20,833.33	-	(20,833.33)	187,500.01	13,400.00	(174,100.01)	250,000.00		
Events/Travel	1,875.00	201.00	(1,674.00)	16,875.00	10,768.01	(6,106.99)	22,500.00		
Board Expense	833.33	7,250.00	6,416.67	7,500.01	12,839.26	5,339.25	10,000.00		
Utilities	-	161.44	161.44	-	863.59	863.59	-		
Website	5,000.00	470.50	(4,529.50)	45,000.00	1,712.30	(43,287.70)	60,000.00		
Contingency	2,125.00	-	(2,125.00)	19,125.00	-	(19,125.00)	25,500.00		
Contingency Support	10,416.67	-	(10,416.67)	93,749.99	-	(93,749.99)	125,000.00		
Total General and Administration	153,750.00	141,313.91	(12,436.09)	1,393,750.00	1,392,925.11	(824.89)	1,855,000.00		
Operating Expenditures									
Grant Writing	8,333.33	(14,487.50)	(22,820.83)	75,000.01	4,829.17	(70,170.84)	100,000.00		
Service Development Plan	-	822,500.00	822,500.00	1,230,000.00	1,245,702.22	15,702.22	1,640,000.00		
Financial Modeling	20,833.33	-	(20,833.33)	187,500.01	447,479.45	259,979.44	250,000.00		
Total Operating Expenditures	29,166.66	808,012.50	778,845.84	1,492,500.02	1,698,010.84	205,510.82	1,990,000.00		
Total Expenses	182,916.66	949,326.41	766,409.75	2,886,250.02	3,090,935.95	204,685.93	3,845,000.00		
Net Change in Fund Balances	(12,083.32)	(887,544.76)	(875,461.44)	(1,348,750.04)	(2,533,197.40)	(1,184,447.36)	(1,795,000.00)		
Fund Balance - Beginning	14,203,422.00	15,554,790.73	1,351,368.73	15,861,401.00	17,200,443.37	1,339,042.37	15,861,401.00		
Fund Balance - Ending	\$ 14,191,338.68	\$ 14,667,245.97	475,907.29 \$	14,512,650.96	14,667,245.97	154,595.01	\$ 14,066,401.00		



Front Range Passenger Rail District Schedule of Cash Position September 30, 2024 Updated as of October 22, 2024

		General Fund
Wells Fargo - Checking Account	_	
Balance as of 09/30/24	\$	105,345.06
Subsequent activities:		105 245 06
Anticipated balance		105,345.06
1st Bank - Checking Account		
Balance as of 09/30/24	\$	952,235.11
Subsequent activities:		
10/1/2024 Payroll Wages		(31,580.82)
10/1/2024 Payroll Taxes		(14,428.78)
10/3/2024 Retirement Disbursement - 401a		(5,634.97)
10/3/2024 Retirement Disbursement - 457b		(1,162.91)
10/7/2024 Xcel Energy		(161.44)
10/16/2024 Bill.com Payables		(871,181.60)
10/16/2024 CEBT		(5,464.46)
Anticipated balance		22,620.13
Colotrust Plus - Investment Account		
Balance as of 09/30/24	\$	8,302,713.94
Subsequent activities:	,	-))
Earmarked 2021 Federal American Rescue Plan		(6,000,000.00)
Earmarked: 2019 Consolidate Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Grant (CRISI)		(159,000.00)
Earmarked: 2021 RAISE Grant		(20,000.00)
Anticipated balance		2,123,713.94
Colotrust Prime - Investment Account		
Balance as of 09/30/24	\$	6,255,024.61
Subsequent activities:	Ψ	0,233,0201
Earmarked 2021 Federal American Rescue Plan		(6,000,000.00)
Anticipated balance		255,024.61
Total Anticipated balances	\$	2,506,703.74

Current Yield (As of 09/30/24)

COLOTRUST PLUS - 5.2684% COLOTRUST PRIME - 5.0845%

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

Services Provided

Front Range Passenger Rail District a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado, was organized by order and decree of the Colorado State Legislature in 2021. The purpose of the District is to research, develop, construct, operate, and maintain an interconnected passenger rail system within the Front Range that is competitive in terms of travel time for comparable trips with other modes of surface transportation. The District boundary extends from Wyoming to the New Mexico border, spanning portions or the entirety of the 13 counties near I-25.

The District prepares its budget on the modified accrual basis of accounting in accordance with the requirements of Colorado Revised Statutes C.R.S. 29-1-105 using its best estimates as of the date of the budget hearing. These estimates are based on expected conditions and its expected course of actions. The assumptions disclosed herein are those that the District believes are significant to the budget. There will usually be differences between the budget and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected, and those differences may be material.

Revenues

Tax Revenue

The District has the authority to levy taxes through ballot measures in order to fund and support rail programs, including establishing station area improvement districts to construct and maintain train stations. No such taxes are imposed for the 2024 budget year.

Grant Revenue

The District has received and will continued to apply for state and federal funding through various grants created under, but not limited to, the federal infrastructure bill passed a few years ago.

Net Investment Income

Interest earned on the District's available funds has been estimated based on current interest yields.

Expenditures

Service Development Plan

The District will continue to advance the Service Development Plan (SDP) for Front Range Passenger Rail. The SDP evaluates routes, services, investment options, station locations, operations, and financial opportunities, developing an implementation plan for the initial train service. A data-driven plan, the SPD will demonstrate the proposed train service's operational and financial feasibility making the District eligible for federal funding. The District is currently working with CDOT on the plan.

Debt and Leases

The District has no debt and no operating or capital leases.

Reserves

Emergency Reserves

The District has provided for an Emergency Reserve fund equal to at least 3.00% of fiscal year spending for the District, as defined under TABOR.

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT GENERAL FUND 2025 BUDGET

WITH 2023 ACTUAL AND 2024 ESTIMATED For the Years Ended and Ending December 31,

10/22/2024

			1-			
	ACTUAL BUDGE		ACTUAL	ESTIMATED	BUDGET	
	2023	2024	7/31/2024	2024	2025	
BEGINNING FUND BALANCES	\$ 16,316,864	\$ 15,861,401	\$ 17,200,443	\$ 17,200,443	\$13,972,371	
DEVENUES						
REVENUES	2 240 400	2 000 000				
Intergovernmental - State - CDOT Interest Income	2,348,480	2,000,000 50,000	430,324	700,000	60,000	
Other Revenue	5,843	30,000	430,324	700,000	00,000	
			-			
Total revenues	2,354,323	2,050,000	430,324	700,000	60,000	
Total funds available	18,671,187	17,911,401	17,630,767	17,900,443	14,032,371	
EXPENDITURES						
General and administrative						
Payroll & Benefits	221,970	531,000	394,667	685,000	340,000	
Accounting	31,255	70,000	42,264	70,000	70,000	
Auditing	01,200	10,000	8,000	8,000	10,000	
PR Advocacy, Meetings, Lobbying	121,476	-	-	-	-	
Outreach/marketing	-	500,000	311,035	400,000	152,500	
Legislative Services	_	-	58,333	100,000	100,000	
Dues and Membership	4,090	5,000	3,138	5,000	5,000	
Insurance	5,841	7,500	5,893	5,893	7,500	
Legal	323,563	165,000	207,423	285,000	150,000	
IT Services	16,549	20,000	34,116	60,000	23,000	
Miscellaneous	973	10,000	2,119	2,500	-	
Office Supplies - General	9,232	7,500	6,543	7,500	2,500	
Office Supplies - Software	, -	, -	, -	, -	18,000	
Ballot costs	-	250,000	13,400	13,400	, -	
Conferences/Travel - Staff	13,201	22,500	10,254	12,500	13,500	
Conferences/Travel - Board	, -	-	· -	8,000	6,000	
Board Expense	70,540	10,000	6,085	40,000	47,250	
Website	40,146	60,000	984	20,000	50,000	
Technical Assistance	-	-	_	· <u>-</u>	40,000	
Contingency	-	25,500	_	_	125,045	
Contingency Support	-	125,000	-	-	-	
Operations and maintenance						
Office Space	-	36,000	40,000	76,500	107,850	
Utilities	-	-	562	1,300	1,855	
Grant Writing	22,819	100,000	19,317	40,000	-	
Service Development Plan	589,089	1,640,000	423,202	1,640,000	-	
Financial Modeling	-	250,000	250,000	447,479	-	
Transfer of Dedicated Funds	-	-	-	-	12,000,000	
Total expenditures	1,470,744	3,845,000	1,837,335	3,928,072	13,270,000	
Total expenditures and transfers out	=====	0.045.00	4 00= 00=	0.000.5=5	40.070.000	
requiring appropriation	1,470,744	3,845,000	1,837,335	3,928,072	13,270,000	
ENDING FUND BALANCES	\$ 17,200,443	\$ 14,066,401	\$ 15,793,432	\$ 13,972,371	\$ 762,371	
EMERGENCY RESERVE	\$ 70,600	\$ 61,500	\$ 13,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 1,800	
DEDICATED FUNDS	12,159,000	12,159,000	12,159,000	12,159,000	159,000	
DISTRICT RESERVE	12, 100,000	102,500	102,500	102,500	102,500	
AVAILABLE FOR OPERATIONS	4,970,843	1,743,401	3,518,932	1,689,871	499,071	
TOTAL RESERVE	\$ 17,200,443	\$ 14,066,401	\$ 15,793,432	\$13,972,371	\$ 762,371	
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FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT 2025 BUDGET SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

Services Provided

Front Range Passenger Rail District (District), a quasi-municipal corporation and a political subdivision of the state of Colorado, was organized by order and decree of the Colorado State Legislature on June 30, 2021 with the passage of Senate Bill 21-238, the Front Range Passenger Rail District Act (the Act). The purpose of the District is to research, develop, construct, operate, and maintain an interconnected passenger rail system within the Front Range that is competitive in terms of travel time for comparable trips with other modes of surface transportation.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Act (Title 32, Article 22 Colorado Revised Statutes), the District is also required to do the following:

- Collaborate with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to ensure connectivity with any passenger rail system operated by or for RTD;
- If deemed appropriate by the Board and RTD, share capital costs associated with the shared use of rail line infrastructure in the Northwest Rail Line Corridor for passenger rail service;
- Collaborate with Amtrak on interconnectivity with Amtrak's Southwest Chief, California Zephyr and Winter Park Express trains, including rerouting Amtrak's Southwest Chief passenger train;
- Coordinate with the Department of Transportation (CDOT) to ensure that the District's rail system is well-integrated into Colorado's multi-modal transportation system including at least one joint meeting annually of the Board and the state's Transportation Commission;
- Hold at least one meeting annually of the Board and the Board of Directors of the I-70 Coalition to
 ensure that the District's rail system interconnects with any rail system that services the I-70
 mountain corridor:
- Hold at least one meeting annually with the Board of Directors of RTD to discuss and resolve operational and interconnectivity issues;
- Complete an alternatives analysis related to the preferred alignment for the Northern Segment of the main north-south passenger rail line through the Northwest Rail Corridor in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The District is directed to prioritize the initiation of construction and completion of that corridor.

The District extends from Wyoming to New Mexico and includes the City and County of Broomfield and the City and County of Denver. The District encompasses:

- All areas within Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Douglas, El Paso, Huerfano, Jefferson, Larimer, Las Animas, Pueblo and Weld counties that are located within the territory of a metropolitan planning organization;
- All areas within Huerfano, Las Animas and Pueblo counties that are not located within the territory
 of a metropolitan planning organization and are located within a county precinct that is within 5 miles
 of the public right-of-way of Interstate Highway 25;
- All areas withing Larimer and Weld counties that are not located within the territory of a metropolitan planning organization and are located within a county precinct that is north of the City of Ft. Collins and located wholly or partly 5 miles of the public right-of-way of Interstate Highway 25.

The District prepares its budget on the modified accrual basis of accounting in accordance with the requirements of Colorado Revised Statutes C.R.S. 29-1-105 using its best estimates as of the date of the budget hearing. These estimates are based on expected conditions and its expected course of actions. The assumptions disclosed herein are those that the District believes are significant to the budget. There will usually be differences between the budget and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected, and those differences may be material.

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT 2025 BUDGET SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

Services Provided (Continued)

The District is governed by a Board of Directors (the Board) consisting of:

- Six directors appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate of the State of Colorado. At least one of the appointed Directors must be a resident of a county, city and county or municipality through which light or commuter rail service was planned as part of the voter-approved Fastracks Transit Expansion Program of the RTD but has not been constructed.
- Ten directors appointed subject to Senate confirmation by metropolitan planning organizations and rural transportation planning for state transportation planning regions that include the territory of the District. Each metropolitan planning organization that represents more than one million five hundred thousand residents in the District shall appoint four directors unless a single city and county or municipality has 55% or more of the total population of the metro planning organization's territory. When a single city and county or municipality has 55% or more of the total population of the metro planning organization's territory, they shall appoint one of the four directors that would otherwise be appointed by the metro planning organization.
- Two directors from each metropolitan planning organization that represents more than five hundred thousand but fewer than one million residents in the District, shall appoint two directors. This includes Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization. If a single city and county or municipality has 55% or more of the total population of the metro planning organization's territory, the city and county or municipality shall appoint one of the four directors that would otherwise be appointed by the metro planning organization.
- One director appointed by the Pueblo Area Council of Governments
- One director appointed by the South Central Council of Governments
- One director appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of Transportation
- Three non-voting directors may be appointed by each of BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad and Amtrak
- One non-voting director appointed by RTD
- One non-voting director appointed by the Board of the I-70 Mountain Corridor Coalition
- Two non-voting directors may be appointed by each of the states of New Mexico and Wyoming

The District is successor to the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission (the Commission). As such, the District received all of the contractual rights and obligations of the Commission (See Commitments and Contingencies Note 7). To the extent permitted by law, the District is also the successor to the Commission for the purpose of pursuing pending Commission applications to receive federal grants.

Revenues

Tax Revenue

The District has the authority to levy taxes through ballot measures in order to fund and support rail programs, including establishing station area improvement districts to construct and maintain train stations. No such taxes are imposed for the 2025 budget year.

Grant Revenue

The District has received and will continued to apply for state and federal funding through various grants created under, but not limited to, the federal infrastructure bill passed a few years ago.

FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT 2025 BUDGET SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

Revenues (Continued)

Net Investment Income

Interest earned on the District's available funds has been estimated based on current interest yields.

Expenditures

The District will focus its expenditure on expanding outreach, coalition building and education measures. These expenses will be centered around developing a ballot measure and referring it to the 13 counties' ballots for the November 2026 election. The District's largest non-salary expenditure for the year will be for legal costs, as well as consultant support on coalition building as the District seeks a ballot issue for 2026. The largest amount of funding the District holds is the federal grant funds held in the interest bearing account. These have been obligated and may be spent in 2025

Debt and Leases

The District has no debt and no operating or capital leases.

Reserves

Emergency Reserves

The District has provided for an Emergency Reserve fund equal to at least 3.00% of fiscal year spending for the District, as defined under TABOR.

This information is an integral part of the accompanying budget.