



## **INFORMATION ITEM MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager  
Natalie Stiffler, Interim Director of Transportation and Mobility  
Valerie Watson, Transportation Planning Manager  
Danny O'Connor, Principal Transportation Planner/Transit Program Manager  
Jean Sanson, Principal Transportation Planner

**Date:** January 19, 2023

**Subject:** **Update on the Regional Transportation District (RTD) Northwest Rail Peak Service Study**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Part of RTD's ongoing commitment to the FasTracks plan includes extending commuter rail service from Denver Union Station to Longmont. Toward this goal, RTD has initiated a 2-year Northwest Rail Peak Service Study to evaluate how best to provide peak period service on this route: three morning trips from Longmont to Denver and three evening trips from Denver to Longmont.

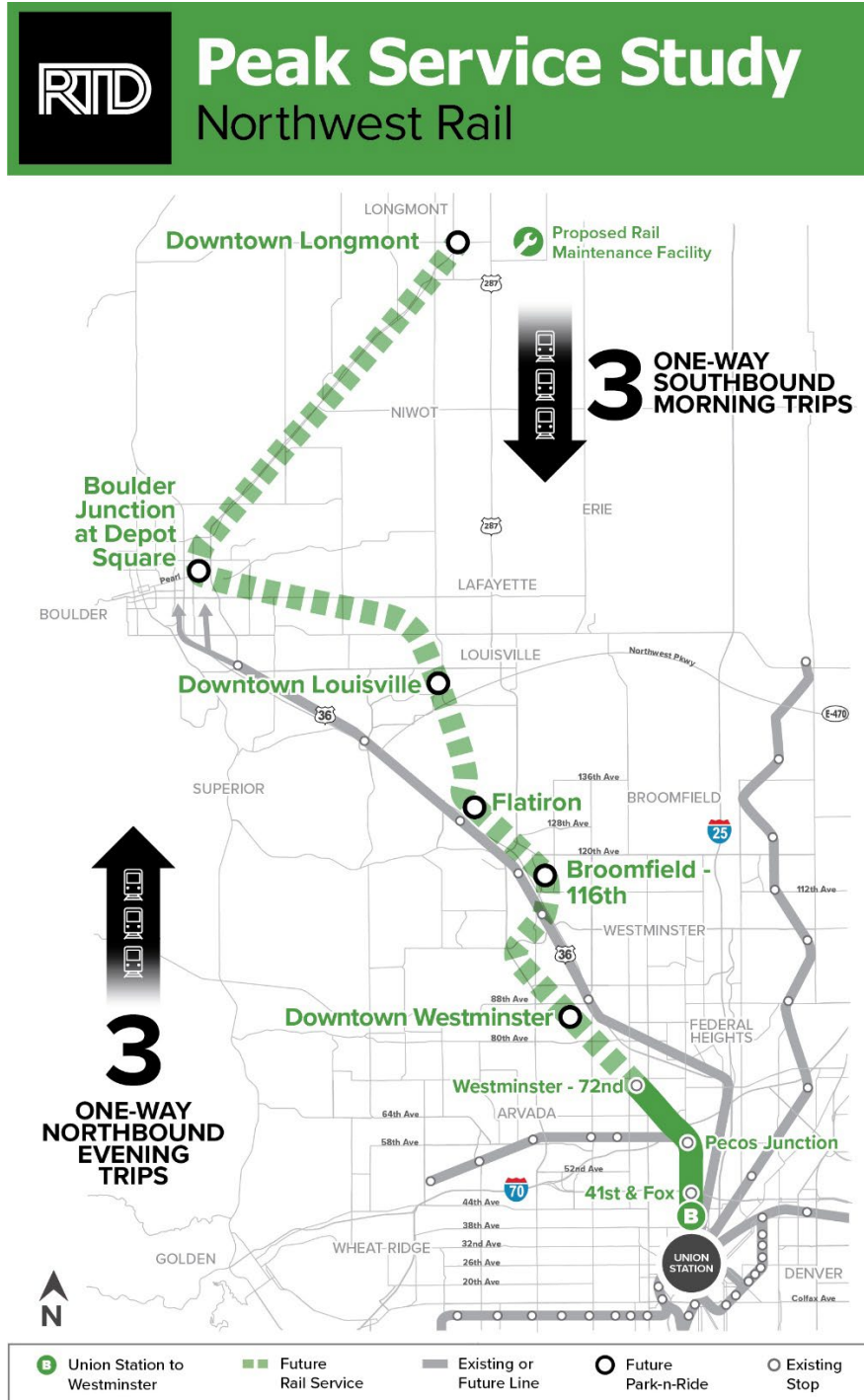
The Study will identify the requirements, costs, and operational needs to upgrade existing track, develop rail stations, and provide peak service to northwestern metropolitan communities, which include Arvada, Westminster, Broomfield, Louisville, Boulder, and Longmont.

### **BACKGROUND**

The first section of the Northwest Rail, known as the B Line, currently operates between Denver Union Station and Westminster Station at 72nd Avenue. Findings and implementation recommendations from the Study will help RTD and partners determine the feasibility of extending rail service through an initial peak service approach, as shown in Figure 1. The continuation of the Northwest Rail to Longmont offers opportunities for possible partnership with agencies like the Front Range Rail District, which was created in 2022 by the Colorado General Assembly to plan for the creation of passenger rail along the Front Range between Fort

Collins and Pueblo. The Northwest Rail alignment is a potential route for the Denver to Longmont segment of this longer passenger rail service.

**Figure 1: RTD Northwest Rail Peak Service Study Map**



The Study will specifically include:

- Planning service delivery for the 35-mile segment from the existing B Line Westminster Station to future Longmont Station;
- Partnering with local jurisdictions to plan for and conceptually design six new stations: Downtown Westminster (88th Avenue), Broomfield (116th Avenue), Flatiron, Downtown Louisville, Boulder Junction, and Downtown Longmont;
- Identifying preferred maintenance facility locations near the end-of-line station in Longmont;
- Coordinating with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) which owns the rail line; Peak Service would operate on existing BNSF tracks; and
- Evaluating potential vehicle types to meet operational requirements.

## NEXT STEPS

RTD is hosting two public open houses that will provide information about the Northwest Rail Peak Service Study. This will be the first set of five planned public open houses through 2023. Community members are welcome to join the discussion and provide feedback.

OPEN HOUSES	
<p><b>Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023, 5-7 p.m.</b> Hampton Inn &amp; Suites Boulder-North 6333 Lookout Rd., Boulder, CO 80301</p>	<p><b>Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023, 5-7 p.m.</b> Westminster City Park Recreation Center Longs Peak Community Room 10455 Sheridan Blvd., Westminster, CO 80020</p>
SELF-GUIDED ONLINE MEETING	
<p>Available between <b>Tuesday, January 31</b> and <b>Tuesday, February 21, 2023</b> at <a href="http://NorthwestRailPeakServiceStudyOnlineMeeting.com">NorthwestRailPeakServiceStudyOnlineMeeting.com</a></p>	

At these public meetings, RTD will be sharing initial concept plans for the Boulder Junction commuter rail station, which will help inform the city's upcoming Boulder Junction Phase 2 project.