

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-11**  
**OF THE FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT**  
**ADOPTING THE LOCAL RETURN PROGRAM AND**  
**STATION PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 32-22-101, *et seq.*, C.R.S. (the “Act”), the Front Range Passenger Rail District (the “District”) was established as a body politic and corporate and a political subdivision of the State of Colorado to research, develop, construct, operate, and maintain an interconnected passenger rail system within the front range extending from Wyoming to New Mexico (“Front Range Passenger Rail”) that is competitive in terms of travel time for comparable trips with other modes of surface transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, except as otherwise specifically provided, the Board of Directors of the District (the “Board”) exercises and performs all powers, privileges, and duties vested in or imposed upon the District in the Act; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 32-22-105(1)(a)(II), C.R.S., the Board is empowered to approve station locations for Front Range Passenger Rail, and the Board and District staff have engaged extensively with local governments across the corridor on station locations, station area planning, and the District’s funding model; and

**WHEREAS**, the Colorado Department of Transportation (“CDOT”), in cooperation with the District, is currently completing a federal service development planning effort (the “SDP”) pursuant to Federal Railroad Administration (“FRA”) guidelines that contemplates the initial development of Front Range Passenger Rail intercity passenger rail service between Pueblo and Fort Collins, with station locations identified in communities along the corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has proposed and evaluated a Local Return Program and Station Planning Principles, attached as **Exhibit A**, as an optional mechanism through which local governments hosting permanent stations may elect to receive District funding directly and take responsibility for planning, developing, and managing station areas in their communities, enabling local control over station delivery while ensuring consistency and quality across the corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, under the proposed Local Return Program, the District would provide annual funding to each participating local government for a 25-year period, with funding amounts based on population, to be used for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of their station and eligible station-area investments that enhance access, connectivity, and functionality, including multimodal access and first- and last-mile improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, the District intends to fund and deliver essential infrastructure components within Class 1 freight railroad rights-of-way, including platforms, sidings, canopies, and ADA access to platforms, independent of the Local Return Program; and

**WHEREAS**, for local governments that elect not to participate in the Local Return Program, the District will deliver, operate, and maintain a station sufficient to support safe, accessible passenger rail service, and non-participating local governments will not be excluded from planning for station delivery in their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, any local government with a designated station that provides written support for FRPRD's Station Summary by June 30, 2026, will receive an additional 10 percent increase to its annual Local Return funding amount; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board finds that the Local Return Program and Station Planning Principles, as revised, appropriately balance local flexibility and control with corridor-wide consistency, provide a clear and fair structure for the delivery of station infrastructure following ballot passage, and establish a timely and meaningful basis for local governments to express public support for Front Range Passenger Rail in their communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the District that:**

1. The Local Return Program and Station Planning Principles, in the form attached hereto are hereby adopted as a formal policy of the District.
2. The General Manager is authorized and directed to implement the Local Return Program consistent with this Resolution and the attached Local Return Program and Station Planning Principles, including administering the 10 percent Local Return Program incentive for local governments that provide timely public support for their District Station Summaries by June 30, 2026, as described in this Resolution.
3. The General Manager is authorized and directed to develop and publish station summaries for each proposed station community along the corridor, working in partnership with local governments and station partners, and to invite local government input and guidance in shaping summary content.
4. The Board affirms that local governments are not required to enter into agreements or provide support for the District's Station Summaries in advance of the District's potential ballot referral to qualify for the base amount of annual Local Return funding, and that final funding conditions, scopes, and obligations will be formalized through intergovernmental agreements following voter approval.
5. The General Manager is directed to continue outreach to local governments across the corridor and to report to the Board on the status of station summaries and local government support prior to and following the potential ballot referral.

APPROVED this 24th day of April 2026.



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Chair

ATTEST:

*Joan Peck*  
Secretary

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*Front Range Passenger Rail District  
Resolution No. 2026-11  
Exhibit A*

**EXHIBIT A**  
**Local Return Program and Station Planning Principles**

*[See attached]*

# MEMORANDUM

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<b>TO:</b>	FRPRD Board of Directors
<b>FROM:</b>	Sal Pace, General Manager
<b>DATE:</b>	April 24, 2026
<b>RE:</b>	Local Return Program policy

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## ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests that the Board consider approval of the revised Local Return Program for formal adoption. The revised Local Return Program document is attached.

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## UPDATE TO SEPARATE LOCAL RETURN INCENTIVE FROM EACH CITY'S PLANNING EFFORTS

Following the Planning Committee's March review, staff revised the Local Return Program to address a structural issue in the earlier framework: local government approvals of station area visioning were linked in a way that unintentionally requested planning approvals ahead of local planning effort timelines and readiness. The revised Local Return Program document now clarifies our intent.

The revised program makes two conceptually distinct updates:

### 1) CLARIFYING FRPRD'S PUBLIC EDUCATION ROLE AND PUBLIC FACING DOCUMENTS

FRPRD has a standing obligation to educate the public about the proposed service — where stations are located, what the system will look like, and what planning is underway. The revised program document formalizes this as a distinct FRPRD responsibility: developing corridor-wide, consistent, public-facing materials for every station community. This work proceeds on FRPRD's timeline and does not depend on completion of local planning efforts, while also providing a platform to share local planning efforts to date and planning currently underway. A Station Summary will be prepared for each proposed station location, and allow for station partner input and guidance.

### 2) SEEKING LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR EACH FRPR STATION SUMMARY

The 10% Local Return incentive was previously tied to a community endorsing its station area vision, unintentionally requesting planning approvals through local government efforts that would be rushed. The incentive is now tied to their support for the FRPRD Station Summary for their community — expressed through a council or board resolution, a letter of support, or an agreement with FRPRD. A local government can support their FRPRD Station Summary now while recognizing that meaningful planning work lies ahead, both before and after the ballot. These two concepts are no longer in conflict, and the revised incentive structure clarifies this approach.

## CLARIFICATION ON LOCAL RETURN PROGRAM DETAILS

The Local Return Program document specifically identifies key details while not addressing certain topics, due to the timing and state of the District's design and planning efforts. For example, station standards such as wayfinding and signage are not fully defined, so the Local Return Program policy speaks to intent rather than formal standards. Provided below are two clarifications around what the

policy says, and what it does not say, and gives rationale for each, including one clarification to the policy document.

### 1) USES OF LOCAL RETURN FUNDING

The Local Return Program specifies that funding “must support the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a passenger rail station, and may support broader station-area investments that enhance access, connectivity, and functionality, including multimodal access and first- and last-mile improvements.”

This list of funding includes the elements identified in Zones 2-4, including the station facility (hall) and immediate surroundings, multimodal connections and access, and station area development and placemaking, as reviewed at the FRPR Board Retreat in January.

The zone 3 station-area investments tied to multimodal connections and access are meant to be broad in nature, and may not always be infrastructure investments in the traditional sense, such as construction of bike lanes, but rather operational considerations such as enhance first/last mile transit service to the station. The Local Return Program policy now includes the following additional sentence under Principle 1:

*Station-area expenditures may include operational activities for enhancing transit and multimodal access, as improving access may fall outside of traditional capital expenditures.*

### 2) RESPONSIBILITY AND APPROVAL TIMING FOR FORMAL ADOPTION OF LOCAL RETURN BY STATION PARTNERS

The Local Return Program document specifically indicates that station partners will approve of and accept responsibility for their stations as part of Inter-Governmental Agreements after any ballot measure passes. This means station partners are not obligated to decide now if they will participate in Local Return, as the IGA process will provide specifics around financial and performance obligations that need further definition.

Separately, the Local Return Program does offer a 10% increase to their annual Local Return funding amount if they provide written public support of FRPRD’s Station Summary by June 30, 2026. The focus of this support is on the station summary and public facing materials, namely that the District is bringing a station to their community, acknowledging that stations location and connectivity in their community, and generally speaking to the need for additional planning in the future. The station summaries do not obligate partners to accept and/or participate in the Local Return Program, but the summaries are written with the station partner as the lead agency for their station and station area.

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### NEXT STEPS

Pending Board direction, staff recommend the Board consider the Local Return Program for formal adoption at the Board meeting.

Staff will also continue the following work in parallel:

- Continue outreach to local governments across the corridor and invite local government station partners to provide public support for their FRPR Station Summary by June 30, 2026.
- Develop public-facing Station Summaries that detail station locations, planning context, and connectivity details for every station community.

# Local Return Program & Station Planning Principles

## Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPRD)

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### Purpose

The Local Return Program is an optional program that local government with proposed permanent stations may opt into. The program proposes to send FRPRD funding directly to each station partner local government and allows them to control and manage the delivery of a station hall and station area infrastructure improvements in their community. Upon voter approval, FRPRD will directly fund the train and train service to each station location, including all improvements within the Class 1 freight railway rights-of-way. Station partners (local governments) would plan, develop, and manage station halls and station areas using dedicated funding if they chose to opt in.

The Local Return Program and the principles identified below simplify implementation and preserve local flexibility while ensuring high-quality station delivery and clear public understanding across the corridor. The Local Return Program is optional, and Principle 4 below identifies the path for local governments that do not wish to participate in the program.

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### Principle 1: Local Return Funding

Following voter approval of a regional funding measure, FRPRD will provide annual funding for a 25-year period to each local government hosting a passenger rail station.

Local Return funding must support the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a passenger rail station, and may support broader station-area investments that enhance access, connectivity, and functionality, including multimodal access and first- and last-mile improvements. Station-area expenditures may include operational activities for enhancing transit and multi-modal access, as improving access may fall outside of traditional capital expenditures. The train system's essential components, such as the platforms, sidings, canopies and ADA access to the platforms, will be paid for by FRPRD directly.

Final funding conditions, scopes, and obligations for the Local Return Program will be formalized through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) following voter approval of the referred ballot question.

Local Return funding amounts will be awarded for 25 years after ballot passage and will be based on community population:

- **Over 700,000:** \$4.0 million annually
- **Over 300,000:** \$3.5 million annually
- **Over 99,000:** \$3.0 million annually

- **Over 75,000:** \$2.5 million annually
- **Over 20,000:** \$2.0 million annually
- **Under 20,000:** \$1.5 million annually

Population will be determined using the current and most recent census or state demographic estimates.

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## **Principle 2: Public Facing Materials for Station Areas**

### **Public Facing Materials**

FRPRD is obligated to educate the public around the proposed train service, including identification of station locations and planning efforts to date by each local government. FRPRD will be developing narratives and graphics that summarize station readiness across the District. FRPRD will work with local governments to share their relevant station and station area planning efforts to date within these summaries.

Anticipated information for each Station Summary will include materials that are consistent across the corridor and designed for general public understanding, including:

- Identification of planned station locations, including Joint Service station locations (for northern stations) which are expected to be identified publicly by the JSEOC in the coming weeks.
- Narrative summaries of key station and station area details, including adjacent land uses, proximity to major roads and trail systems, key regional destinations, transit connections within the station area, parking, and related transportation and land use information pertinent to an intercity rail system
- Graphics that highlight station locations and station areas, including possible station hall architecture and/or station design perspectives. As design details are not yet finalized, FRPRD expects that many graphics will be both conceptual and aspirational in nature.
- Identification of planning efforts to date for each station and station area, current planning efforts underway, and expected planning efforts post-ballot.
- Acknowledgement that additional planning is required for every station and station area, and that the FRPRD will be able to assist with local planning efforts through the Local Return Program.

These descriptions are non-binding, and local governments may modify them following passage of a ballot measure.

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## **Principle 3: Incentive for Local Government Support of FRPRD Station Summaries**

Any local government (with a designated station) that enters into an agreement with FRPRD or provides written confirmation supporting FRPRD's Station Summary (either a council/board resolution or letter of support) by June 30, 2026 will receive an additional 10% increase to its annual Local Return funding amount.

- The agreement or support document will speak to intent only, and does not lock in final designs, funding allocations, or implementation obligations. FRPRD's main goal for this public support document is to show local government support for FRPRD's public facing station summary.
  - Local governments are encouraged to partner with FRPRD staff and consultants in shaping and refining the summary narrative.
  - Final funding and implementation details will be established after ballot passage with IGAs.
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## **Principle 4: Minimum Station Delivery**

If a local government elects not to accept the Local Return funding, the District will deliver, operate and maintain a station sufficient to support safe, accessible passenger rail service. Under this scenario, the local government will be included in planning for the station delivery in their community, including the planning, design and construction components.

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## **Additional Clarifications**

- Local governments are not required to enter into agreements or confirm support for FRPRD's Station Summary ahead of ballot referral to receive the base amount of Local Annual Return funding.
- Local governments are not required to contribute to ballot access costs.
- The 10% incentive is tied solely to endorsement of FRPRD station summary by June 30, 2026.