

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-12
OF THE FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT
ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL EVENT STATION POLICY**

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 also empowered to approve station locations for Front Range Passenger Rail; 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; and

WHEREAS, Front Range Passenger Rail is designed and regulated as an FRA intercity passenger rail system with scheduled service, longer-distance travel, and investment decisions supported by durable ridership and public benefit; and

WHEREAS, the Front Range Passenger Rail route uses Class 1 freight railroad infrastructure, the BNSF Subdivision north of Denver and the Colorado Joint Line, operated jointly by BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad, south of Denver to Pueblo, and all station locations must be approved by the host Class 1 railroads; and

WHEREAS, a special event station, for the purpose of this framework, is a physical infrastructure designation, a stop location on the Class 1 alignment, at or near a major event venue or destination, that Front Range Passenger Rail trains could serve; and

WHEREAS, designation of a special event station location does not guarantee service, but will establish the conditions under which service can eventually be designed, negotiated, and delivered; and

WHEREAS, a clear policy framework for evaluating special event station candidates will provide policy direction to the District’s staff and partners; enable candidate designations to be made on a consistent basis; define the criteria the District applies for reference by potential partners and event organizers; and allow infrastructure coordination to proceed in parallel with broader service planning; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to adopt a policy for evaluating special event station location candidates along the Front Range Passenger Rail.

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

1. Special event station candidate locations will be evaluated considering the following three-part test:
 - (1) whether a genuine transportation need exists at the proposed location, including sustained multi-event demand;
 - (2) whether Front Range Passenger Rail can deliver meaningful service at the location; and
 - (3) whether the investment case, including platform infrastructure, host railroad coordination, capital contribution, and operational sustainability, can be assembled.
2. The Board affirms that a special event station designation is a physical infrastructure designation only and does not guarantee service. Service design, scheduling, operational agreements with event organizers, and host railroad approvals are distinct steps that follow designation and depend on Class 1 railroad operating agreements.
3. The Board affirms that consultation with the host Class 1 railroads is a prerequisite to any special event station designation, providing an initial vetting that all station locations must ultimately be approved by the railroads.
4. The Board hereby adopts the three-part evaluation test set forth above as the District's policy framework for evaluating special event station candidates along the Front Range Passenger Rail corridor and any proposed special event station candidate must satisfy all three elements of the framework.
5. Specific special event station candidate designations shall be made by the Board by separate resolution following application of the evaluation framework established herein, and any such resolution shall set forth the findings supporting each element of the three-part test as applied to the specific candidate location.
6. The Board directs the General Manager to develop formal evaluation criteria and procedures consistent with this framework for assessing future special event station requests along the corridor, informed by Class 1 railroad input and updated as the District advances toward service agreements.

APPROVED this 24th day of April 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. E. P..." with a large, stylized initial "K" on the left.

Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Peck

Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO:	FRPRD Board of Directors
FROM:	Sal Pace, General Manager
DATE:	April 24, 2026
RE:	Special Event Stations – Policy Framework and Candidate Location

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests that the Board of Directors review the proposed policy framework for special event stations, and that the Board consider adoption of this policy framework and evaluation approach for potential special event stations along the FRPR corridor.

In the near future, staff intend to request the designation of Broncos Stadium at Burnham Yard in Denver as the District's first special event station candidate, which would allow staff to formalize planning discussions with the City and County of Denver and the Broncos organization in connection with the proposed stadium and mixed-use district. An initial designation will require extensive, continuing work with these partners and the Class 1 railroads before any special event station becomes an operational reality.

This memorandum builds on the staff presentation to the Planning Committee on April 8, 2026 and the Executive Committee on April 21, 2026, and responds to questions raised and provides clarification around special event stations versus operational activity that would be programmed in the future. This memorandum also highlights the need for additional Class 1 railroad coordination for any special event stop designation.

BACKGROUND

This memorandum introduces a policy framework for evaluating special event stop candidates, surveys relevant precedents from intercity rail systems nationally, and applies that framework to candidate locations along the Class 1 alignment.

The proposed FRPR station at Burnham Yard - identified in planning documents submitted to the City and County of Denver by the Broncos organization - underscores the opportunity to serve high-demand destinations. Ongoing discussions with development partners make establishing a clear conceptual foundation both practical and necessary.

As a prerequisite for any consideration of a special event station designation, consultation with the Class 1 railroads is required and provides an initial vetting by their organizations, as all station locations must be approved by the railroads. Later, as operational details emerge for the final approval as a special event stop on the corridor, the District would work closely with the railroads for approvals and service schedule details.

For the purposes of this initial policy framework, a special event station is a physical infrastructure designation only — a stop location on the Class 1 alignment, at or near a major event venue or destination, that FRPR trains could serve. The question being addressed is where and whether to designate a special event station to signal the District's intent, enables site-level discussions with development partners and host railroads, and allows infrastructure coordination to proceed in parallel with service planning. A special event station designation does not create service; it creates the conditions under which service can eventually be designed, negotiated, and delivered.

Special event service is a distinct concept, addressing the questions of how and when dedicated or

adjusted train operations are organized around specific events, game days, or seasonal demand. Service-related questions about scheduling, train frequency, operational agreements with event organizers, and the potential for branded or experience-oriented train products are separated in this framework and specifically not answered at this time. In order to provide special event service operating details, the District requires Class 1 operating agreements and Amtrak coordination after a successful ballot measure.

Accordingly, this memorandum and the District's current work is on preferred special event station locations, whereas service design is the work that follows.

SPECIAL EVENT STATION APPROACH

The question of special event service is, at its core, a question about what justifies adding a special event station location, building out that station's infrastructure, managing service to a station, and negotiating the access for service to that station on a regular basis. Any proposed station along the FRPR corridor — whether driven by event demand, destination travel, or community development — requires the same foundational test: does the totality of the case for service at this location justify the investment in infrastructure, the operational commitment, and the complexity of host railroad negotiation? Event demand is one important input into that analysis, but not a sufficient answer on its own.

FRPR proposes to operate under the FRA framework as intercity passenger rail — a model defined by longer-distance travel, scheduled service, and investment decisions that must stand on durable ridership and public benefit. The closest Colorado analogy to special event service is the Amtrak Winter Park Express: a purpose-designed intercity product, intentionally scheduled and marketed around a specific high-demand destination with consistent seasonal ridership. The ski train example is a standard FRPR can follow, and is different from RTD which navigates event-day services under its own regulatory framework and with commuter service frequencies that are substantially different than the goals of FRPR.

INTERCITY RAIL SYSTEMS APPROACH NATIONALLY

Nationally, intercity passenger rail systems have addressed special event and destination service in several ways. Amtrak has operated a temporary seasonal stop adjacent to the New York State Fair since 2002, and a similar stop for the North Carolina State Fair — both cases where the Class 1 tracks run directly alongside the fairgrounds, and where state DOT partnerships support the temporary platform investment. The Amtrak Winter Park Express remains the most instructive Colorado precedent: a purpose-scheduled intercity service organized around a specific destination with reliable, recurring demand. What these models share is a recognition that event or destination demand can justify the investment and operational complexity of a stop — whether as a temporary seasonal addition to existing service, as in the State Fair model, or as a purpose-designed intercity product, as with the Winter Park Express. FRPR's approach to special event stations can learn from both examples.

For FRPR, the geography of the Class 1 alignment is the first and most important filter. The FRPR route uses a BNSF Subdivision north of Denver and the Colorado Joint Line — operated jointly by BNSF and Union Pacific — south of Denver to Pueblo. The great majority of event venues and destination facilities along the Front Range are not immediately adjacent to those tracks. That geographic threshold is the appropriate starting point for evaluating any special event stop candidate. Proximity to the Class 1 alignment is necessary but not sufficient; the full case must address transportation need, operational feasibility, and investment justification.

A FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION

Staff propose a three-part test for evaluating any new special event station candidate along the FRPR corridor.

The first consideration is whether a genuine transportation need exists at the proposed location. Would FRPR service solve a real problem — congestion relief, regional access, corridor connectivity — that is not already solved by existing transportation options? Investing infrastructure into a special event stop justified entirely by one event calendar is a fragile investment. Hence, a location must include substantial ridership demands with multiple high attendance events throughout the year, sustained over many years.

The second consideration is whether FRPR can deliver meaningful service at this location within an intercity model. With three to six daily trains, FRPR's characteristics of service cannot match the event-timed flexibility of high-frequency commuter systems. That said, FRPR will continue working with the Class I railroads to explore occasional schedule adjustments around major, well-attended events to better align service with peak demand.

The third consideration is whether the investment case can be assembled. A special event stop requires, at minimum, a compliant boarding platform, coordination with the host railroad on dwell time and scheduling, capital investment by one or more parties, and a sustainable operational framework. The costs and complexity of each element vary considerably by site, and the District must conclude that the investment is worth the cost.

QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE APRIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Board members raised a number of well-framed questions at the April 8 Planning Committee meeting, which fall into three areas of discussion.

On criteria and designation: the evaluation framework above is intentionally qualitative at this stage because the quantitative inputs — ridership modeling, capital cost estimates, platform specifications — will not be available until the District has reached service agreements with the Class 1 railroads. Platform type, whether temporary or permanent, is resolved through the investment assembly process for each candidate based on event frequency, year-round versus seasonal use, and the cost-share structure among partners — it is one element of that third layer of the framework, not a precondition for candidate designation. Designating a candidate station is itself the signal to outside groups: it tells development partners, municipalities, and event organizers that the District has a policy framework, has applied it, and is engaged in earnest, while also establishing the criteria that govern future requests rather than leaving the District to respond ad hoc.

On operations and service design: questions raised about how a special event stop fits into the service schedule, whether FRPR would contract directly with event organizers, how FRPR compares with car travel for event-day trips, and how operations would be structured — including the possibility of branded or experience-oriented special event train products — are the right questions, and staff has no intention of avoiding them. They are service design questions, and they depend on Class 1 operating agreements that are the central deliverable of the post-ballot period. FRPR will not have binding agreements with BNSF, Union Pacific, and Amtrak governing train slots, dwell times, and scheduling flexibility until the District can bring capital to those negotiations. Committing to service outcomes before those agreements are in place would be premature and could complicate the negotiations themselves. The District should answer these questions in this sequence.

On financing and cost structure: how special event stations and associated service are financed, and what event organizers and venue operators contribute, are likewise post-agreement questions. The appropriate framework is that the investment case must be assembled before any station becomes operational, and that assembly will involve the District, host railroads, development partners, and potentially municipal partners. The contours of that conversation are already forming at Burnham Yard through staff engagement with the City and County of Denver and the Broncos

organization. Establishing the policy foundation now is what makes a structured and credible financial negotiation possible.

The District can and should consider special event–branded train service at communities with planned stations. These services likely wouldn't require new infrastructure but would require coordination with Class I railroads to allow occasional schedule adjustments for major, high-demand events.

BRONCOS STADIUM AT BURNHAM YARD, DENVER — EXPECTED FIRST CANDIDATE

The planned Broncos stadium and mixed-use district at Burnham Yard in Denver represents the strongest current case for a special event station along the FRPR corridor.

On the first consideration, the transportation need is clear and multi-dimensional. The planned development is a 150-acre mixed-use district anchored by a retractable roof stadium with capacity for NFL games, other college and professional sporting events, major concerts, conventions, and civic events. A rider from Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, or Boulder who chooses FRPR for travel to a Broncos game or a major concert avoids one of the most consistently congested surface corridors on the Front Range. The year-round programming enabled by a retractable roof means demand is not episodic or seasonal — it is persistent. A special event station at Burnham Yards would be a genuine transportation solution.

On the second consideration, the service model is workable. FRPR's initial service at three to six daily trains will not operate a dedicated game-day shuttle, however, future operations planning could make adjustments with the host railroads at the table. Ultimately, riders will plan around the schedules offered: some will arrive early and spend time in the district, some will stay overnight, and others will find same-day travel works. That's how intercity rail has long supported destination travel—and strong destinations consistently drive ridership. At the same time, the District can explore targeted timetable adjustments, with Class I railroad approval, to better align service with major events. Translating this into scheduling, platform design, and host railroad coordination is work ahead—but the intercity model can support it.

On the third consideration, the investment case is strong—anchored by multiple 75,000-person events each year. The Colorado Joint Line forms the western edge of Burnham Yard, and the Broncos' master plan identifies an FRPR special event stop. The stadium's 2031 opening aligns with projected FRPR service. Staff is actively coordinating with the City of Denver and the Broncos, with final costs to be negotiated. Advancing Burnham Yard as the first special event station candidate would establish a clear policy foundation for these discussions.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board direction, staff proposes the following:

- That the Board approve of an initial policy framework for designation of special events stations, as outlined in this memorandum. This framework allows current and future special event station candidates to be evaluated, and provides policy direction to the Board, staff and entire District.
- Provide any specific planning guidance for a potential special event station serving the Broncos Stadium at Burnham Yard in Denver, as the District's expected first special event station candidate.
- Advance the development of a formal evaluation framework and criteria for assessing future special event and destination station requests along the corridor. In the future, this would include operational details once the initial access agreements with the Class 1 railroads are established.