

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-08
OF THE FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT

IDENTIFYING THE STERLING RANCH PRIMARY STATION LOCATION

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, the Board previously approved *Resolution No. 2024-12* setting forth the District’s criteria for consideration of primary and secondary station locations, and designating nine locations as primary station locations for Front Range Passenger Rail along the recommended route between Pueblo and Fort Collins; and

WHEREAS, the Board subsequently approved *Resolution No. 2025-06* in which it determined that as part of the implementation plan for starter service in the northwest rail corridor from Denver to Fort Collins (“Joint Service”), it was appropriate to add three additional primary station locations, for a total of twelve primary stations, as well as contemplating special event stations to be considered on a case-by-case basis; and

WHEREAS, the District, in continued collaboration with local governments, has determined that the primary station location identified as “Douglas County” should be located in the vicinity of the Sterling Ranch Colorado Metropolitan District Nos. 1-7, along the consolidated mainline near the intersection of U.S. Highway 85 and Titan Road, and redesignated as the “Sterling Ranch” primary station; and

WHEREAS, the Board also desires to consider special event station locations to increase car-free access to major events; and

WHEREAS, the District will continue to collaborate with local governments regarding specific station siting in accordance with Section 32 22 106(1)(h), C.R.S.; and

WHEREAS, it remains the District's intent to extend Front Range Passenger Rail service south to the New Mexico border in the future, ultimately creating a seamless connection with the Southwest Chief in Trinidad.

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

1. The primary station location previously identified as "Douglas County" should be located in the vicinity of the Sterling Ranch Colorado Metropolitan District Nos. 1-7, along the consolidated mainline near the intersection of U.S. Highway 85 and Titan Road, and redesignated as the "Sterling Ranch" primary station.
2. The Board hereby directs the General Manager to further investigate partnerships for the development of special event stations to increase car-free access to major events.
3. No other changes are made to the District's location criteria for primary and secondary stations set forth in *Resolution No. 2025-16* at this time.

APPROVED this 26th day of March 2026.



Chair

ATTEST:

Joan Peck
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Planning Committee, FRPRD Board of Directors
FROM:	Sal Pace, General Manager
DATE:	March 11, 2026
RE:	Placement of Douglas County Station

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests that the Planning Committee review the proposed Sterling Ranch area location for the Douglas County Station and consider advancing this proposal to the full Board for formal adoption. In addition, this memo recommends that the District remove the remainder of Douglas County from the District as part of the forthcoming legislative process expected in the State legislature this April.

BACKGROUND

The FRPRD Board previously designated a station in Douglas County along the class 1 railroad corridor. That designation reflects a deliberate evolution from an earlier proposed station in Castle Rock that was identified in prior planning work. The proposed Castle Rock station encountered community opposition from local elected officials and stakeholders, making it not viable to pursue at this time. Rather than commit the District to an unsupported location, the Board designated the stop broadly as “Douglas County,” preserving flexibility to identify a site with genuine community support in the future.

Currently the District is preparing a public-facing Operating Plan that needs to finalize the Douglas County station location and address other important items – such as special events stops. Staff has continued outreach in Douglas County, and found strong support for a station location near the Sterling Ranch community.

PROPOSED STATION LOCATION: U.S. HIGHWAY 85 AND TITAN ROAD

The District’s Operating Plan will be completed in May 2026, and staff proposes that Sterling Ranch area be identified as the Board’s chosen site for the Douglas County station. The proposed station site is in the vicinity of U.S. Highway 85 and Titan Road along the Santa Fe Drive corridor, and specifically along the alignment of the Class 1 railroad tracks that will carry FRPR service. This is an operationally appropriate location for the Douglas County stop. The site sits between Castle Rock and Highlands Ranch, providing a central access point for existing Douglas County communities to access a station.

One of the goals with any station placement is to maintain the intercity passenger rail designation for the District with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The spacing from a Sterling Ranch area station to Littleton – Mineral Station is approximately 5.1 miles, and this spacing is consistent

with previously adopted Board policy intended for maintaining the intercity rail designation. Traveling south from the Sterling Ranch area, the next proposed station will be 55 miles away in downtown Colorado Springs.

The Sterling Ranch station area is currently characterized by industrial land uses that present a redevelopment opportunity, shown as General Industrial on Douglas County zoning maps. A FRPR station at this location could serve as an anchor investment for station-area development, and is immediately adjacent to the larger Sterling Ranch community to the southwest. To support a station in the Sterling Ranch area, the Sterling Ranch master developer indicates a county redevelopment authority could be considered to assist with development of the station and station area, providing a formal mechanism for coordinating investment and land use activation in partnership with Douglas County.

STERLING RANCH COMMUNITY

Sterling Ranch is a master-planned community within unincorporated Douglas County, governed by a metropolitan district. It is the largest community in Douglas County with significant remaining growth potential. Sterling Ranch recently received approvals to expand its planned build-out from 12,500 to 16,000 homes, with approximately 12,000 units remaining to be constructed. At full buildout, Sterling Ranch is projected to house 55,000 people. This scale of planned growth represents a durable and substantial long-term ridership base for FRPR service. In addition, the communities of Castle Rock to the south and Highlands Ranch to the northeast have approximately 90,000 and 100,000 residents, respectively. Nearby employers include Lockheed Martin, with multiple campuses surrounding Sterling Ranch with ~11,000 employees.

This staff recommendation proposes partnering directly with the Sterling Ranch Community Authority Board (Sterling Ranch CAB) as the Station Partner. Sterling Ranch CAB is the governing body overseeing the numerous Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts that serve as taxation, financing, management and government entities. However, Sterling Ranch does not include the immediate station location identified above. Sterling Ranch CAB is ready to take the lead and coordinate with Douglas County planning and development staff, as the relevant governmental entity governing land use for the immediate station location. Accordingly, Sterling Ranch CAB is ready to lead station area visioning, planning, and Local Return Program implementation. This proposed structure reflects the unique governance of Sterling Ranch and the proposed station location, and requires Sterling Ranch CAB to manage relevant land use acquisition and approvals and station development activities, including work with Douglas County.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR STERLING RANCH

In the Spring of 2025 Congresswoman Lauren Boebert, who represents Douglas County, publicly opposed FRPR citing local opposition to the proposed station in Castle Rock as a major factor. FRPR staff met with both the Mayor and City Manager in Castle Rock in December last year. While Castle Rock leadership felt that in the future Castle Rock might desire a station, they clearly indicated that currently there was not sufficient local support to merit a station in Castle Rock. Other meetings in the community, such as with the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce, only underscored the same community concerns.

Under the direction of FRPRD Government Affairs and Communications Chair, Deborah Mulvey, staff have participated in multiple meetings to assess the strongest station alignment in Douglas County. After multiple meetings and discussions, staff unanimously recommend following the lead of the locals in Douglas County and identifying Sterling Ranch area as the preferred location. The

Douglas County Board of County Commissioners recommended the Sterling Ranch location in letter to the District dated January 16, 2024, reflecting county-level support for station placement at Sterling Ranch. In contrast to the opposition encountered in Castle Rock, the Sterling Ranch area location has been welcomed by the community and its master developer. Staff consulted closely with Brock Smethills, President of Sterling Ranch Development Company, in preparing this recommendation. There is sufficient community support across governmental levels for the proposed Sterling Ranch location compared to the Castle Rock location in Douglas County.

FRPR DISTRICT BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT

The FRPR District is currently working with the Colorado General Assembly on legislation to realign District boundaries with the final service corridor. In connection with the approval of the Sterling Ranch area station, staff recommends that the District pursue legislation to retain the Sterling Ranch community and adjacent industrial areas within the District boundary while removing the remainder of Douglas County. This action aligns the District's geographic footprint with the actual station area and service corridor.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Planning Committee direction, staff proposes the following next steps:

- Advance the Sterling Ranch area station for approval to the full FRPRD Board for formal action at the March 2026 Board meeting, in place of the station currently entitled "Douglas County".
- Formally adopt Sterling Ranch area as the official station the District's Operating Plan in place of "Douglas County"
- Initiate station area visioning for the Sterling Ranch area station, with Sterling Ranch CAB as the Station Partner. Develop an agreement for Sterling Ranch CAB to lead on station and station area development, including work with Douglas County.
- Pursue legislation to retain the Sterling Ranch community and the station area within the District while removing the remainder of Douglas County from District boundaries.