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Transportation

Denver to get nearly \$10M annually from train tax for connecting stadium developments



Aerial view of Burnham Yard

DON IRELAND | SPECIAL TO THE DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



By [Lincoln Roch](#) – Intern, Denver Business Journal
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Story Highlights

- Denver will receive \$9.9 million annually from the Colorado Connector train sales tax.
- The Front Range Passenger Rail District approved a service plan including special event stops at proposed stadiums.
- Voters will decide on a 1/3 cent sales tax in November across 32 municipalities.

If a train ends up crossing the Front Range, Denver will be getting nearly \$10 million each year that could support its stadium dreams.

The Front Range Passenger Rail District's board voted Friday morning to approve the final draft of a service delivery plan for the proposed Colorado Connector train connecting Fort Collins to Pueblo. The plan included an increase in the amount of money Denver would receive from a district-wide sales tax to go toward three proposed stations in the City.

In August, the board is expected to refer a 1/3 cent sales tax to the November ballot in the 32 municipalities along the train's route. It would generate a projected \$295 million each year.

The core infrastructure investments at every station, including the station platforms themselves, would be paid for by the rail district. Each municipality with a station would then receive annual funding from the sales tax for 25 years, proportional to population, to spend on the station area and to build out multimodal connections to the stops.

Denver was initially slated to receive \$4 million for one stop: Union Station, which will act as the train's hub. But things changed when the Broncos included a potential stop for the train in its large development review pre-application to the city for Burnham Yard in November. [Burnham Yard is the team's preferred site](#) for a planned new stadium.

In June, FRPR general manager Sal Pace announced a [plan to add special event stops](#) to the proposal that could service Burnham Yard and the planned Denver Summit FC stadium at Santa Fe Yards on game days. That stadium is expected to debut by 2029, according to [previous Denver Business Journal reporting](#).

As part of the proposal, Denver would receive \$9 million annually from the local return funding. An additional incentive increased the funding to \$9.9 million after the Denver City Council voted earlier in July to issue a proclamation supporting the train.

"We're proud to negotiate and support an agreement that not only connects Colorado but generates millions of dollars in new funding to improve connectivity and opportunity in Denver," Mayor Mike Johnston's press secretary Jon Ewing told the DBJ after the vote.

Additionally, Pace wants the district to spend at least \$100 million on additional transit and pedestrian infrastructure at the stadium stops, he said. That would bring the total investment from FRPR in Denver to nearly \$350 million over 25 years, the district says.

The Colorado Connector is expected to begin an initial service of three round trips a day between Fort Collins and downtown Denver's Union Station in 2029. The funding for that service and a track-sharing agreement with BNSF have both been secured. If voters approve the sales tax, service from Fort Collins to Pueblo would arrive in 2031.

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