

## Agenda Item 1.3

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BRIEFING PAPER

**Topic: Quantum Commons, Colorado Mountain Passenger Rail and Front Range Passenger Rail**

**Presented by: Abel Montoya, Director, Development & Transportation, Tugce Ucar Maurer, Planner II, Planning & Zoning, Christina Lane, Transportation Operations & Planning Manager, Transportation & Engineering**

**Date: 8/12/2025**

☒ For Information

☐ For Discussion/Board Direction

☐ Consent to  
Place on Business/  
Hearing Agenda

**Issue:** Share information about the Quantum Commons, Front Range Passenger Rail and Colorado Mountain Passenger Rail between staff and the Board of County Commissioners.

**Background:** Quantum Commons is a proposed state of the art campus located south of State Highway 72 between State Highway 93 and Indiana Street.

Colorado Mountain Passenger Rail is a proposed passenger rail service using the existing Union Pacific rail line to connect the Denver Metro Area with the mountain towns, including Winter Park, Granby, Steamboat Springs and Craig.

Front Range Passenger Rail is a proposed passenger rail service to connect Pueblo to Fort Collins with potential future connections to Wyoming and New Mexico.

County staff is currently monitoring these three projects and will discuss what we know about the current status of each. No pre-applications or formal applications have been received by the County on any of these projects. The information in this briefing paper is based on information on websites or news reports.

**Discussion:**Quantum COMmons

Quantum COMmons is a state of the art campus dedicated to advancing quantum innovation. This collaborative research and development facility is proposed for a site that is currently within unincorporated Jefferson County. The 70-acre site is currently owned by Colorado School of Mines and is located south of State Highway 72 between State Highway 93 and Indiana Street. There is the potential that the City of Arvada will receive a petition to annex the property. At this time, the County has not received notice of an annexation.

The current zoning is Industrial-Two (I-2). I-2 is a relatively permissive industrial district that allows for a broad range of manufacturing, process, or fabrication of products. It excludes the manufacturing and storage of explosives and the storage of machinery or vehicles not in operating condition.

The County's adopted Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) recommends Industrial uses for this site. As drafted, the proposed 2040 Comprehensive Plan (CP) recommends Industrial uses for the site.

As drafted, the Vision statement in the CP is that "Jeffco is a sustainable community that balances innovation, inclusivity, resiliency, and stewardship." The Innovation guiding principle is that "Jeffco is creative and forward thinking. Jeffco will continue to explore new and unconventional solutions to its unique challenges, including housing affordability, natural hazards, and environmental preservation. Jeffco views collaboration as a critical component of problem solving, leveraging diverse perspectives, technological integration, local knowledge, and a skilled workforce to drive economic growth and societal progress."

Colorado Mountain Passenger Rail:

The Colorado Mountain Passenger Rail is a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) led initiative to provide passenger rail service and improve connectivity from the front range to the northern mountain communities of Winter Park, Granby, Steamboat Springs, and ending at Craig.

CDOT is currently exploring station locations along the route, including a Metro West station in the Arvada area. While the exact station location, and whether it is in the unincorporated County is not yet known, it may be

located somewhere along State Highway 72 between State Highway 93 and Indiana Street.

The location of this rail line and potential Metro West station may be relatively close in proximity to the Quantum COMmons campus. The CMP's current land use recommendations along Hwy 72 include Industrial and Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use. For informational purposes only the draft CP includes a goal to "Support economic vitality through enhanced connectivity and access." Proposed policies relate to improving infrastructure for goods movement, access to employment, strengthening economic competitiveness, and supporting job centers.

Jefferson County is participating in the Mountain Rail Coalition convened among agency partners to provide guidance on the project. Meetings are convened quarterly. The last Coalition stakeholder meeting was held in July. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for October 2025.

CDOT is currently working on the Service Development Plan that will determine operational and financial feasibility and define all essential elements of planning and operations. Sub-station planning to identify the Metro West station location is anticipated to begin this fall and be complete by the end of the year. Service to provide one daily round trip between Denver and Granby is slated to begin in November 2026, utilizing existing stations: Denver Union Station, Winter Park Resort, Fraiser-Winter Park, and Granby.

#### Front Range Passenger Rail:

The Front Range Passenger Rail District (District) was organized under state law (CRS Section 32-22-101, et seq.) to research, develop, construct, operate, and maintain an interconnected passenger rail system within the front range. The Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) is a train service that will provide connections to several Front Range communities in Colorado from Fort Collins to Pueblo with potential rail extension to Wyoming and New Mexico in the future. The FRPR intends to use 180 miles of existing freight lines to connect the communities.

The planning phase for the project is underway with a Draft Service Development Plan (SDP) to be released later this year. Public engagement meetings, to gather input on the SDP, would follow. A starter service is anticipated to begin service in January 2029 between Denver and Fort

Collins. Full build-out of the Front Range Passenger Rail service connecting to Pueblo is expected by 2045.

**Fiscal Impact:** ☐ yes ☒ no

**SPA Review:** Not applicable, informational update only, Michael Smith, 8/4/25

**County Attorney Review:** Accepted, Kristin Cizowski, 8/4/25

**BIT Review:** No impact, Andy Corbett, 7/31/25

**Fleet Review:** No fiscal impact, Janice Mayer, 7/31/25

**County Human Resources Review (new FTE only):** Not applicable, no new FTEs proposed

**Recommendations:** Not applicable, this work session is for information only.

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