

# NEWS RELEASE



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## RTD and Denver receive key Federal Transit Administration project rating and funding recommendation for Colfax BRT

*Project advances to next steps that include submittal of final grant application*

DENVER (March 9, 2023) — The [Regional Transportation District \(RTD\)](#), the city and county of Denver (CCD) and state and local partners are celebrating a major milestone in their quest to bring Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to East Colfax Avenue, with the door to a significant funding source now open.

Today, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced that it is [recommending \\$126.9M](#) in federal funding for [Colfax BRT](#), \$8.1M of which would come from FY 2023 and prior budget years and \$118.8M from President Biden's FY 2024 budget. RTD and its partners will submit a final grant application for federal [Small Starts](#) funding this summer that reflects a more refined project budget at 60% design, and intend to request the maximum \$150M that is allowed in the Small Starts program. The funding recommendation followed a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) review of the project's viability and benefits, considering mobility improvements, congestion relief, cost effectiveness, economic development, environmental benefits and the reliability of project partners and sources of matching funds. The FTA gave the project proposal a "high" rating. RTD and CCD will work closely with the FTA to finalize project details. A grant agreement with the FTA for this initial funding is anticipated in 2024.

"BRT along Colfax is critical to providing more Denver residents more mobility options to move about their community," Mayor Michael B. Hancock said. "This funding recommendation demonstrates the USDOT's confidence in our ability to bring positive, transformative changes to East Colfax Avenue, changes that will create economic opportunity and improve quality of life for our residents by making travel safer, faster and more equitable – and better for our environment."

The funding recommendation is an important step toward implementing high frequency bus service and advancing development of the 9.9-mile Colfax Avenue corridor that extends from Denver Union Station to the R Line Colfax Station in Aurora. The corridor serves numerous population and employment concentrations, key activity centers and popular destinations.

### ABOUT RTD

The Regional Transportation District develops, operates and maintains a public transportation system that meets the transit needs of close to 3 million people within an eight-county service area in the Denver Metro region. For more information, visit [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com), call 303-299-6000 and follow along on social media: [www.facebook.com/RideRTD](https://www.facebook.com/RideRTD), [@RideRTD](https://twitter.com/RideRTD) on Twitter, [@ridertd](https://www.instagram.com/ridertd) on Instagram and [rideRTDco](https://www.youtube.com/ridertdco) on YouTube. For the most current RTD news, visit the News Stop, at [rtd-denver.com/news-stop](http://rtd-denver.com/news-stop).

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“FTA’s partnership with RTD, the city and county of Denver, and the State of Colorado in support of the Colfax BRT project is a prime example of collaboration at all levels of government,” said RTD General Manager and CEO Debra A. Johnson. “Further, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the members of Colorado’s congressional delegation who have supported this project as RTD and the city and county of Denver work to secure federal funding that will deliver swift mobility options along the longest contiguous business corridor in the United States.”

The Colfax BRT project is a coordinated effort among RTD, CCD and supporting partners, including the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the city of Aurora and Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), who have aligned their roles to lay the groundwork for the project’s future success. Federal funding received through the Small Starts program will pass through RTD to Denver and its Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI), which will be the lead agency in BRT construction.

“DOTI staff developed the idea of bus rapid transit for East Colfax and shepherded the concept through the necessary planning, design, and environmental review processes that made for a strong project proposal and qualifying FTA rating,” said Adam Phipps, Executive Director of DOTI. “We’re seeing our years of hard work and desire to answer community calls for more comfortable and reliable transit options one step closer to reality and we’re looking forward to leading the construction of the biggest transportation improvement project in our city’s history.”

Total costs for the Colfax BRT project will be approximately \$250-\$300M, with additional funding sources to include the voter-approved Elevate Denver Bond (\$55M for BRT, \$15M for East Colfax streetscaping), \$15M in DRCOG contributions, and up to \$12M from the city of Aurora for station enhancements east of Yosemite Street.

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