

Bus Rapid Transit on Colfax Avenue: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why is the City doing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Colfax?

BRT on East Colfax Avenue presents an opportunity to reimagine how Denver's main street looks, functions and feels.

The corridor is one of Denver's busiest transportation networks for all modes of travel, especially transit. The bus routes serving East Colfax have the highest ridership of all RTD routes – more than 22,000 riders per weekday. Current bus service in the corridor is near capacity and even small service interruptions can result in passengers being left at stops to wait for the next bus.

The City is moving forward with BRT on Colfax because doing nothing is not an option. Over the next 20 years, the corridor is expected to experience 25% growth in the number of travelers, 67% growth in employment and 25% growth in population. Denver cannot continue to grow and create more people-friendly spaces without safely and efficiently moving more people through the East Colfax corridor.

What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)?

BRT is a premium transit service with upgraded buses, enhanced stations and dedicated transit lanes wherever possible. Upgrades include recognizably branded buses, as well as low-floor and multi-door boarding features to make it easier and faster for all riders, especially those with special needs, to get on and off. Station amenities would feature real-time passenger information, off-bus ticketing, as well as shelter, safety and accessibility improvements.

What are the benefits of this project?

The goal of Colfax Corridor Connections is to improve transit, overall mobility, safety and livability within the corridor now and for generations to come. Benefits of BRT on Colfax include, but are not limited to:

- Significant shift from vehicles to transit due to improved travel times, reliability and convenience
- Bus ridership more than doubles – from 22,000 up to 50,000 daily riders by 2035
- Improved transit travel time of up to 15 minutes during peak hours by 2035
- Improved safety, connectivity, accessibility and mobility options for all travelers
- Increased streetscaping and economic development opportunities
- Improved access to 280,000 jobs and nearly 50 schools along and near Colfax Avenue

How will dedicated center-running transit lanes operate on Colfax Avenue?

By repurposing one general traffic lane in each direction on Colfax between Broadway and Yosemite, all transit activity will occur within two center-running transit only lanes. Busy urban streets like Colfax are good candidates for dedicated transit lanes because the separation of buses and vehicles better organizes traffic flow and improves travel efficiency. Center transit lanes also reduce conflicts with parking and other curbside activities, while creating enhanced streetscaping opportunities and improving pedestrian safety by moving transit stations to the center.

Will vehicle left turns, U-turns and access to local businesses be impacted?

Managing vehicle turns across transit lanes is essential to successful BRT on Colfax. To maintain local access and improve safety, left turns will be allowed at signalized intersections only. Eliminating unprotected left turns significantly reduces potential conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists and other vehicles. As more detailed design plans are developed, potential intersections will be identified where new traffic signals and U-turn facilities may be added to improve safety and local access.

How will dedicated transit lanes on Colfax effect adjacent streets?

Traffic congestion and diversion to adjacent streets occurs today and will increase with or without the project. Minor additional diversion to adjacent streets is projected due to BRT on Colfax and traffic impacts are expected to be limited to a few intersections. In order to safely keep vehicles and buses moving, a number of operational improvements will be made on Colfax and parallel roadways. These options include, but are not limited to: speed reduction and safety improvements (i.e., traffic calming), signal timing/optimization, extended or new turning lanes, and minimal capacity improvements through re-striping or minor curb/gutter relocation (all within existing right-of-way).

What will happen to bus fare prices and local transit service (15 and 15L lines)?

BRT would provide more efficient service for the current 15 and 15L routes. By consolidating portions of these routes with BRT service, transit riders' overall travel times will be faster or maintained. While some riders may have to walk slightly farther to BRT stations, buses will arrive more frequently and predictably. Conceptual BRT stations are roughly ½ mile apart, so riders would have to walk no more than ¼ mile on Colfax to get to the bus. BRT also offers an easier boarding experience and provides opportunities for improved sidewalks, making it easier for people with mobility challenges to ride. The final routing and stop locations of these routes will be further defined as the project moves forward. Ultimately, BRT would improve speed, reliability and the overall user experience of transit on East Colfax while still offering an RTD Local fare for the length of the service.

What bicycle, pedestrian and other improvements are being studied?

A number of other multi-modal transportation improvements are included as part of BRT on Colfax. As the project undergoes more detailed design, a package of supplemental mobility improvements will be finalized. These include bicycle/pedestrian facilities, signage/wayfinding, station access, connectivity with existing RTD services and more.

Will there be impacts to on-street parking?

Specific changes to on-street parking will be identified as the project moves forward. Generally, some on-street parking spaces will be added by moving transit stations to the center of Colfax, while others will be eliminated – primarily near intersections adjacent to bus stops – to improve pedestrian access and safety. A full analysis of on-street parking and station configurations will be completed during the upcoming detailed design phase.



Will there be construction? When will it start?

As the project moves forward, both local and federal funding opportunities for BRT on Colfax are being pursued. Based on available funding, a more detailed design and a project implementation schedule will be developed in 2019. Initial targets anticipate construction could begin as soon as 2022.

How can I get involved in the process?

Public input is vital to making decisions that are in the best overall interest of the community. The project team will continue to implement a proactive public outreach program designed to be responsive to feedback from the community. For more information, visit www.ColfaxBRT.org.

