

BRT AND CRT—WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

As the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and stakeholders consider the most technically and financially feasible way to improve transit service to the Northwest service area, it's important to evaluate the similarities and differences.

BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)

Buses would operate in high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) or dedicated bus lanes, depending on final configuration, to provide rail-like service. BRT can be a cost-effective solution to deliver high-quality, reliable and frequent service while offering more flexibility in routing than a rail line.

COMMUTER RAIL TRANSIT (CRT)

Commuter trains would operate within a freight rail corridor with minimal stops. CRT operates larger and heavier vehicles than light rail or BRT and can carry more passengers per trip, so the service would be less frequent.

WHAT THEY SHARE

- Each station offers state-of-the-art digital customer information, seating, ticket vending machines and enhanced shelters.
- Promotes transit-oriented development (TOD) in and around station areas. TOD is the development of compact, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use communities that fosters economic benefits.
- Reduces automobile traffic and congestion, and aids in air quality and other metro-area environmental goals.
- Provides reliable travel times.
- Same fare structure as the rest of the RTD system.

Examples of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



Examples of Commuter Rail Transit (CRT)



Photos may not be representative of actual vehicles to be used.



Example of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



Example of Commuter Rail Transit (CRT)



NORTHWEST LINE—HOW THEY COMPARE

COMPARATIVE FACTORS	BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)	COMMUTER RAIL TRANSIT (CRT)
Build-out completion	2020 (assuming successful sales/use tax ballot initiative)	2024 (assuming successful sales/use tax ballot initiative)
Infrastructure	Operates in BRT/HOV lanes on freeways and with transit priority on arterial streets	Operates on fixed rails
Service frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longmont to Denver • Longmont to Boulder • Boulder to Denver • Louisville to Denver 	7 minutes peak; 15 minutes off-peak 9 minutes peak; 15 minutes off peak 3 minutes peak; 15 minutes off-peak 7 minutes peak; 15 minutes off-peak	30 minutes peak; 60 minutes off-peak 30 minutes peak; 60 minutes off-peak 20 minutes peak; 60 minutes off-peak 20 minutes peak; 60 minutes off-peak
Station distances	More frequent stops/stations	Fewer stations, longer distances between stations
Operational flexibility	Opportunity for multiple routes serving multiple destinations	Limited to permanent route due to fixed rails
Operations cost	Lower annual operations and maintenance cost	Higher annual operations and maintenance cost
Total build-out cost	\$894.6 million*	\$1.714 billion*
Estimated travel time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longmont to Denver • Longmont to Boulder • Boulder to Denver • Louisville to Denver 	55 minutes 20 minutes 45 minutes 25 minutes	61 minutes 20 minutes 41 minutes 27 minutes
Passenger capacity	45-70 per bus	180-270 per train
Weather considerations	In severe weather, may experience delays	Operates in nearly all weather conditions

*Year of Expenditure

Information subject to change based on additional analysis.

