



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project**

UPDATED: May 13, 2026

#### **Q: What is the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project?**

A: The Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project features a full-depth replacement of rail that has served RTD's central downtown corridor for 30 years. This major construction initiative will improve safety and reliability on the light rail system.

#### **Q: Why is RTD undertaking the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project right now?**

A: Managing and maintaining assets in a state of good repair ensures the long-term integrity of the rail network for all individuals who entrust RTD to deliver them to their destinations. After more than 30 years, RTD is investing in its oldest rail infrastructure to ensure the long-term integrity of the network. The paved sections of track in the downtown loop are underneath concrete so the rails and ballast rock beneath the rails are more difficult to maintain. Years of increasing vehicular and train traffic — along with chemicals like de-icing salts — have taken a toll on the downtown tracks, making this project a priority. RTD is working together to minimize impacts to customers and the public.



#### **Q: Between 2012 and 2023, RTD completed 17 repair and replacement projects at key intersections within the central corridor. This work prioritized curved rail, switches, and at-grade crossings. How is this project different?**

A: This major reconstruction project is the first of its kind in RTD's history. Previous rail-related construction projects were aimed at specific segment enhancements and repairs. For instance, during previous projects, RTD prioritized high-risk areas like switches and at-grade rail crossings, completing one or two projects per year.

**Q: How will the Downtown Rail Reconstruction project affect travel in downtown?**

A: During the planned maintenance work in 2026, RTD will focus on maintaining customers' connections to and from their destinations with as little disruption as possible. The following options are available to support rail customers who may be temporarily impacted by the planned reconstruction work:

The following service changes will take effect June 7, 2026.

- The D Line will be suspended during construction. In place of the D Line, RTD will return former C Line service to provide direct access to Denver Union Station, and customers will be able to easily connect to the downtown loop using the 16th Street FreeRide or Free MetroRide. The 16th Street FreeRide will increase frequency to approximately every three minutes, seven days a week. The Free MetroRide runs every 10 minutes during peak service times, Mondays through Fridays. C Line trains will operate on 15-minute frequencies between Littleton•Mineral Station and Denver Union Station.
- The H Line will be suspended during construction. However, RTD will extend R Line service to RidgeGate Parkway Station and implement a temporary rail line, the T Line, that will operate between Lincoln and I-25•Broadway stations. Customers traveling downtown will need to transfer to either an E Line or T Line train at Bellevue Station.
- The R and T lines will provide 15-minute service frequency on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., then every 30 minutes until midnight (2 a.m. on Fridays). For more information, see [Final June 2026 service changes](#).
- The E Line will maintain 15-minute frequency to support transfers at Belleview Station.
- The L Line will be suspended during the project, and Route 43 will provide customers with continued connections along the downtown corridor. RTD will increase frequency of Route 43 to every 7.5 minutes during peak times between Central Park Station and the Auraria campus.
- Bus Route 16 and Route ART also provide alternate service to the Colfax at Auraria Station. Bus stops near the project will remain open and operational during the reconstruction work.



**Q: What about accessibility during construction?**

A: RTD is dedicated to providing safe and accessible services, preserving a reliable transit infrastructure, supporting previous investments, and extending the design life of agency assets. The downtown area will remain accessible by transit during all phases of construction. Customers and the public will still have access to transit, businesses and downtown events during the construction project. RTD’s website and apps are the best ways for customers to plan a trip and reach their downtown destinations.

**Q: How will the construction impacts and service impacts be communicated to the public?**

A: RTD is working with numerous downtown partners and the media to provide advanced information and communications about the Downtown Rail Reconstruction Project. In advance of the work, RTD will highlight the benefits of the project and its impact to services using multiple communication channels and platforms. This includes in-system assets such as signage, community engagement and outreach, media relations, partner and stakeholder collaboration, web, digital, and social media notifications. Project-specific materials and resources will be developed to explain the project details and support external engagement opportunities with customers, partners, and local stakeholders. This comprehensive no-surprises approach aims to

effectively manage expectations by informing and engaging customers and the community with consistent, accurate, and timely communications.

**Q: What alternatives are available for customers who currently utilize transit to access Colfax Avenue between Seventh and 10th streets and the Downtown Loop?**

A: Bus Route 16 and ART will continue to provide alternate service to the Colfax at Auraria Station. Bus stops near the reconstruction project will remain open and operational during the reconstruction work.

**Q: What are the impacts to traffic lanes and businesses adjacent to the construction sites? Will the project involve full closures of intersections?**

A: Work within the Downtown Loop midblocks will be sequenced so not all intersections will be impacted at the same time. This work is not expected to occur at two consecutive one-way intersections at one time (e.g., 14th and 17th). However, to expedite the work, where possible, downtown work may occur simultaneously at multiple intersections (e.g., 14th and 15th, then 17th and 18th). All work downtown will require single lane closures, with at least one travel lane maintained at all times.

Smaller-scale utility work will occur at intersections along Stout and California from 15th to 19th — this will not be full reconstruction work.

Business and parking lot access will be maintained to the greatest degree possible for the duration of downtown work. Parking access may be disrupted for brief periods of time and will be communicated to property management teams in advance. Sidewalk access throughout downtown will be maintained, and at least three out of four crosswalks will be maintained at each intersection at all times.

RTD and the project contractor are working directly with local businesses and stakeholders in the Downtown Loop midblock area to minimize impacts as much as possible.

Work along the Colfax Avenue Alignment near the Auraria campus will be sequenced so that full closures at Seventh and Ninth streets do not occur at the same time. Each intersection will require a temporary full closure which will last for approximately 10 days each. Travelers should plan for delays during these periods.

RTD and the project contractor are coordinating closely with Auraria Higher Education Center to communicate impacts and maintain access to campus facilities as much as possible throughout construction, which is expected to continue through fall 2026.

Please note that all construction activities are schedule- and weather-dependent and subject to change.

**Q: Why is RTD not running the H Line to Denver Union Station?**

A: RTD considered the option of running all D, E, H, and W lines to Denver Union Station during this phase of the project. However, that would require turning 16 trains an hour at the terminal location. After assessing its feasibility and impacts to on-time performance, it was determined that the D and H lines will be suspended, and C, E, and W lines will go to Denver Union Station. All light rail trains will maintain their current frequencies (e.g., 15 minutes).

**Q: Will the D Line stop at Auraria West this summer?**

A: Effective June 7, 2026:

- All D Line trains to Denver Union Station will be suspended. In place of the D Line, RTD will return former C Line service to provide direct access to Denver Union Station, and customers can easily connect to the downtown loop using the 16th Street FreeRide or Free MetroRide.
- The 16th Street FreeRide will increase frequency to approximately every three minutes, seven days a week. The Free MetroRide operates every 10 minutes during peak service times, Mondays through Fridays.
- The C Line will operate on 15-minute frequencies between Littleton•Mineral Station and Denver Union Station.
- RTD will increase frequency of Route 43 to every 7.5 minutes during peak times between Central Park Station and the Auraria campus.
- Bus Route 16 and Route ART also provide alternate service to the Colfax at Auraria Station. Bus stops near the project will remain open and operational during the reconstruction work.

This means that the Auraria West Station will be served by the C, E, and W lines during the reconstruction project and temporary detours. For more information, see [Final June 2026 service changes](#).

**Q: What is the timeline for completion in this segment of the project?**

Work in both areas is expected to be completed by early 2027.