

AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee

Monday, October 19, 2020

10:30 - Noon

VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE

Denver, CO

1. Call to order
2. Public comment
Up to 20 minutes is allocated for public comment and each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes. The RTD Accountability Committee requests that the public comment be limited to an item on the Committee's current agenda. Please note: public comment may also be submitted in writing to Matthew Helfant (mhelfant@drcog.org). Comments received will be shared promptly with RTD Accountability Committee members.
3. September 14, 2020 RTD Accountability Committee meeting summary (Attachment A)
4. Introduction of On-Call Consultants- North Highland
5. Appointment of Subcommittee Chairs
Co-Chairs Elise Jones and Crystal Murillo
6. Subcommittee reports
 - Finance Subcommittee
 - Governance Subcommittee
 - Operations Subcommittee
7. Strategic Priorities for Subcommittees
(Attachment B) Co-Chairs Elise Jones and Crystal Murillo

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

8. Member comment/Other matters
9. Adjournment

ATTACH A

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Monday, September 14, 2020
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elise Jones (Co-Chair)	Boulder County Commissioner
Crystal Murillo (Co-Chair)	Aurora City Council Member
Deyanira Zavala	Executive Director of Mile High Connects
Rutt Bridges	Appointed for financial planning expertise
Chris Frampton	Real Estate Developer
Rebecca White	Director of Transportation Development at CDOT
Jackie Millet	Mayor of Lone Tree
Julie Duran Mullica	Northglenn City Council Member
Kathy Nesbitt	V.P. of Administration, University of Colorado
Dan Blankenship	CEO of Roaring Fork Transportation Authority
Krystin Trustman	RTD Access-a-Ride Patron
Lynn Guissing	RTD Board Member- Ex Officio
Troy Whitmore	RTD Board Member- Ex Officio

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director; Adam Zarrin, Colorado State Governor's Office; Mac Callison, Luke Palmisano, Aurora; Kathleen Bracke, Alex Hyde-Wright, George Twigg, Boulder; Debra Baskett, Westminster; Jordan Sanchez, Brandeberry McKenna Public Affairs; George Gerstle, Daily Camera; Bruce Abel, Nicole Carey, Paul DesRocher, Michael Ford, Stephen Haurert, Julie Kirk, John McKay, Barbara McManus, Natalie Menten, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Bill Sirois, Melanie Snyder, Bill Van Meter, Jyotsna Vishwakarma, Brian Welch, Christina Zazueta, Heather McKillop, RTD; Jannette Scarpino, Public Citizen; and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

Co-Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Public comment

There was no public comment.

August 24, 2020 RTD Accountability Committee meeting summary

One typo was corrected: "descending views" replaced with "dissenting views"

ACTION ITEMS

On-call consultant selection

A review panel made up of RTD Accountability Committee members and DRCOG staff evaluated four proposals. The panel came to a consensus on selecting North Highland due to its qualifications and varied experience, including relevant public sector work on equity and human resource issues in addition to transit. DRCOG's Finance and Budget Committee was scheduled to act on the contract at its September 16 meeting.

Jackie Millet MOVED to approve concurrence with the review panel recommendation to contract with North Highland for on-call consulting to support

the RTD Accountability Committee. The motion was seconded by Crystal Murillo and passed unanimously.

Equity and Sustainability Working Group recommendations

The RTD Accountability Committee recognized the importance of integrating an equity lens into its deliberations and recommendations. A workgroup was formed for the purpose of creating a guiding document. Ron Papsdorf provided a brief explanation of the document and took questions. There was no action taken at this time as DRCOG staff were directed to make minor adjustments to amplify financial and environmental equity in the document and share the adjusted version with the Committee.

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS

Subcommittee reports

- Operations Subcommittees: Matthew Helfant shared the edits made by subcommittee to the RTD Accountability Committee objectives table.
- Finance Subcommittee: Rutt Bridges welcomed new committee member Rebecca White to the subcommittee. Mr. Bridges outlined the edits the subcommittee made to the objectives table acknowledging that there is likely to be additional revisions throughout this process.
- Governance Subcommittee: Subcommittee did not meet; their first meeting was scheduled for September 16.

RTD update

Matthew Helfant introduced Bruce Abel from RTD to provide an update on the latest conversations staff and the RTD Board are having to address the fiscal challenges stemming from COVID.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Future meeting schedule

The Committee concurred with staff recommendations to hold only one full committee meeting and two subcommittee meetings monthly. Full committee meetings will occur on the second Monday of each month. However, due to a holiday, the October meeting will be held on October 19 instead of October 12.

Member comment/Other matters

DRCOG RTD Accountability Committee webpage: Matthew Helfant showed the Committee the webpage and provided high-level explanation.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

ATTACH B

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
October 19, 2020	Informational	6

SUBJECT

RTD Accountability Strategic Priorities

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Over the past couple months, subcommittees have initiated conversations around the focus areas identified in the RTD Accountability Committee scope of work. In order to make upcoming meetings as efficient as possible, the Committee's co-chairs will lead a discussion to focus in on key areas for further exploration and ultimately the development of recommendations. The co-chairs have provided the attached document as a starting point for your review and consideration at the October 19 meeting.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

Draft RTD Accountability Committee: Initial Subcommittee Focus Areas

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at drex@drcog.org or (303) 480-6701; or Matthew Helfant, Senior Transportation Planner, at 303-480-6731 or mhelfant@drcog.org.

RTD Accountability Committee: Initial Subcommittee Focus Areas

The Committee's mission is to provide feedback and a set of recommendations for improvement to the operations of and statutes related to RTD, to the board and staff of the RTD, the Governor, the General Assembly, and the public.

Core Problems at RTD the Committee Needs to Address

- Assuring financial stability by addressing insufficient revenues, an unsustainable financial model, high debt load and operating within available resources and available contingency plans
- Rebuilding trust and transparency with constituents
- Increasing ridership to address both post-COVID-19 losses and pre-COVID-19 declines
- Ensuring appropriate levels of service, especially for transit-reliant and vulnerable populations
- Strengthening partnerships with local governments, other transit agencies, non-profits and other entities such as Districts and Regional Transportation Authorities (RTA's)
- Addressing unfinished FasTracks corridors
- Encouraging RTD to innovate and anticipate new dynamics and trends
- Refocusing RTD on serving core mission: serving transit markets well
- Addressing work force challenges, such as operator shortages, compensation, hours, etc.

The subcommittees will focus their initial inquiry and development of recommendations in the following areas:

Governance Subcommittee

1. Explore and develop an alternative governance structure and deployment of transit services proposals that follow a regional/subregional model and partnership with local governments, with the following potential characteristics:
 - Use of community-based transit planning
 - A regional/local division of RTD funding and routes, with RTD focusing on regional routes and local governments focusing on local transit networks that meet regionally established criteria and can be competitively contracted out. Consideration of the disparities in amount of local funding governments from high income and low-income areas could supply should be included.
 - The ability/requirement for locals to match a portion of RTD funds to leverage additional local funding. Match requirement could be lower for counties with higher low income/vulnerable populations to address equity concerns.
 - A DRCOG Subregional TIP Forum-type process and structure with RTA's, counties, cities or other regional jurisdictions serving as subregions
 - Adherence to consistent performance criteria throughout RTD's service area, e.g., MetroVision goals
2. Explore how to enable partnerships with other transit agencies and nonprofits to provide for better service outside and inside RTD boundaries, e.g., using the HOP in Boulder as a local model and the Fort Collins/Transfort Flex as an inter-regional model.
 - This model can be useful for providing service to low ridership areas such as Evergreen
3. Assess whether the size and structure of RTD's service area is appropriate relative to its ability to provide transit service.
4. Assess whether the RTD Board would be more effective with a different size or structure, e.g, elected vs. appointed, number of districts, at-large vs. districts, representation at both the regional and subregional scale (e.g., DRCOG subregional forums, LA Metro, etc.).
 - Consider the addition of select community/organization representatives connected with key transit user groups, ex-officio members such as a representative of CDOT, DRCOG, the state legislature, governor's office, or others

Operations Subcommittee

1. Assess and make recommendations on how RTD fares and pass programs can be improved to increase equity, ridership, affordability and ease of access.
 - Make eco passes available to riders outside of their employment
 - Consider an expansion of mobile ticketing
 - Consider allowing for rear loading of buses
2. Make recommendations on how RTD can enhance service delivery to transit-reliant, vulnerable populations (i.e., older adults, communities of color, people with disabilities, low income, zero car households) through different models of service delivery (e.g., contracting out to local providers, use of Lyft/Uber/TNCs, vanpool support, etc.) and reflecting changing travel trends post-COVID-19.
 - Consider changes in service provision that focuses on higher density areas rather than entire eight county area
 - Look at first and last mile deficiencies
3. Focus on proactive, community-based transit service planning and operations (e.g., work with locals to develop options for service changes, integrate transit routes and stop/stations with local land use plans, seek out partnership opportunities, etc.). Strengthen and formalize coordination between RTD and cities and counties with development review review/approval of projects and design of transit service for key developments.
4. Undertake an overall organizational assessment (human resources, work culture, management and governance of the District; organizational and Board structure).
5. Emphasize social/environmental justice and equity analysis to influence transit services provided, and how needed changes are determined.

Finance Subcommittee

1. Review and make recommended changes to RTD to achieve a more sustainable financial model, including review of investment policies/guiding principles, debt, regional/subregional funding allocation, and statutes that limit opportunities for revenue generation, cost savings and increased ridership, including provisions that:
 - Require RTD to raise a certain amount through fares (this is a barrier to lower cost service).
 - Limit RTD's ability to develop anything but parking lots on its properties (e.g., rather than affordable housing and key services at TOD sites that can generate transit riders and potentially revenue).
 - Limit RTD from charging for parking. Examine how changes in parking policies and pricing could increase revenues, TOD and ridership.
 - Affect RTD's ability to contract for cheaper service delivery.
2. Review FasTracks spending and make recommendations on how to achieve an equitable resolution for the unfinished FasTracks Corridors. This will include answering the following questions:
 - How have FasTracks and base operating monies been generated and spent to date across the RTD service area?
 - How much of base funding has been diverted to FasTracks projects?
 - What is the cost of finishing FasTracks?
 - How can unfinished corridors be served in a cost effective and cost efficient manner (e.g., project completion, equivalent mobility, financial, etc.)?
3. Make recommendations on how to improve financial transparency to build back public trust and demonstrate RTD accountability to the voters and policy makers, such as the development of a public, online dashboard to show how RTD money is generated and spent, similar to CDOT's dashboard regarding SB 267 funds.
4. Examine partnership opportunities (i.e., with CDOT, local governments, human services agencies, non-profits, private sector, etc.) to enhance mobility services, allow RTD to focus on delivering the types of service(s) they can do most effectively/efficiently, and leverage RTD funding and/or decrease costs of service.