

AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee

Monday, June 14, 2021

8:30am - 10:30am

VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE

Denver, CO

1. Call to order
2. Public hearing on draft recommendations
3. Meeting Summaries:
 - May 10, 2021 Full RTD Accountability Committee
(Attachment A)
 - May 17, 2021 Governance Subcommittee
(Attachment B)
 - May 19, 2021 Finance Subcommittee
(Attachment C)
 - May 19, 2021 Operations Subcommittee
(Attachment D)
4. Co-Chair's Report
5. RTD Update
6. Update on RTD Response to Covid-19 Relief Spending Recommendations
7. Briefing on public comments received
(Attachment E)
8. Discussion on draft recommendations
(Attachment F)

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

9. Member comment/Other matters
10. Adjournment

ATTACH A

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Monday, May 10, 2021

Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elise Jones (Co-Chair)
Crystal Murillo (Co-Chair)
Deyanira Zavala
Rutt Bridges
Chris Frampton
Rebecca White

Jackie Millet
Dan Blankenship
Krystin Trustman
Lynn Guissinger
Troy Whitmore
Julie Duran Mullica

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Debra Johnson, Mac Callison, Luke Palmisano, Kent Moorman, Alex Hyde-Wright, Adam Zarrin, Jean Sanson, Debra Baskett, Jordan Sanchez, Natalie Shishido, Holly Buck, Tanya Eydelman, Kathleen Bracke, Michael Ford, Julie Kirk, Doug MacLeod, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Bill Sirois, Maux Sullivan, Barbara McManus, Bill Van Meter, Joel Noble, Molly McKinley, Melanie Choquette, Lindsey Alarcon, Monika Treipl-Harnke, Christina Zazueta, Begley, Riley Judd, Nathan Batchelder, Tina McDonald, Maggie Lea, Cyn Hudson, M Snyder, Jyotsna Vishwakarma, and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

Co-Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Public comment

Molly McKinley provided a statement of support for the recommendations on streamlining fares, passes, and services that were brought forward by the Operations Subcommittee.

Tina MacDonald expressed her concern for the current RTD operations. She is concerned about the accessibility for people who have mobility devices and assistance dogs, specifically when it comes to RTD's partnership with Uber. She also wanted to bring attention to safety concerns for women who are intellectually or developmentally disabled, as they are statistically at higher risk of being attacked.

April 12, 2021 Accountability Committee meeting summary

The summary was accepted, as written, by the committee.

Co-Chair Report

Co-Chair Jones reported that [HB-1186](#) passed through the Senate and is awaiting Governor Polis' signature.

Follow up discussion on RTD response to Covid-19 relief spending recommendations

Doug MacLeod and Debra Johnson provided an update to the committee. RTD is waiting on official guidance from FTA for how CRRSSA funds and ARPA funds can be used. Co-Chair Jones wanted to know if any of these funds are being designated to implement recommendations from the RTD Accountability Committee, which were designed to restore ridership and help RTD recover from COVID. Co-Chair Jones specifically wanted an update on the suggestion of a six-month pilot program to test out the committee's recommendations. Debra Johnson responded that to do the pilot program, FTA has

advised that a fare study and equity analysis be performed before anything else takes place. The fare study and equity analysis cannot be funded with CRRSSA funds. With the combination of completing the analysis and the pilot program, it is anticipated to take anywhere from 18 months to 24 months.

Subcommittee recommendation status reports:

- Finance Subcommittee – Rutt Bridges reported.
 - The subcommittee created suggestions in support of some ideas and fares for northwest rail.
 - Also, discussed the idea of how the dashboard would work and how we could make that dashboard more understandable.
- Governance Subcommittee – Julie Duran Mullica reported.
 - Partnership recommendations:
 - Clearly identify and communicate guidelines and goals for partnerships to ensure consistent and equitable access to these opportunities.
 - Leverage existing and new partnerships to improve service efficiency and grow ridership.
 - Incentivize communities to enter cost-sharing arrangements with RTD to provide new or existing local transit solutions to minimize service gaps and increase ridership.
 - Explore opportunities to provide cost-effective local transportation services through collaboration with existing mobility service providers.
 - Consider developing a competitive Innovation Grant program to drive bold ideas to increasing ridership.
 - Regularly evaluate the success of existing partnerships by predetermined metrics and “re-scope” relationships to ensure maximum benefit.
 - Encourage RTD’s public-facing dashboard to include a component that highlights existing private and public partnerships.
 - Service Area Recommendations:
 - It is important to not only right-size the geographic boundaries of the district, but to right-size the service over time as the region continues to grow.
 - Identify what are the trip purposes most in demand along the edges of the RTD district.
 - Recognize if all areas within a certain distance of a light rail or commuter rail line/station be included in the RTD boundary.
 - Research some innovative micromobility options RTD should implement to meet the needs of communities where fixed guideway service may not be suitable.
- Operations Subcommittee – Deya Zavala reported.
 - Consolidate all discounts into a free fare that would cover for equity populations (youth, senior, disabled, and low-income).
 - Identify strategies to simplify pass structures.
 - Convene community, business, and anchor institutions (hospitals, universities, school districts) utilizing passes on a regular basis to determine updates to the agreements.
 - Implement equity in fare evasion.

Discussion on next steps after final report submittal

Doug Rex provided a brief overview of next steps to the committee. There will be two committee meeting for the month of June on the 14th and the 28th. After the final report is adopted and submitted to RTD, the Governor, and the Legislature by July 1st, RTD will have forty-five days to respond to recommendations included in the report. The Co-chairs and subcommittee chairs had a discussion with the entire committee on possible follow up after that forty-five-day period to have a conversation with RTD about which recommendations they accepted, ones they did not, and have an open discussion about it. The committee agreed that it would be good to have a follow-up discussion to tie up any loose ends. There was also an additional suggestion of having a third-party moderator to conduct the follow-up meeting.

Letter regarding state transportation funding proposal

Elise Jones provided an overview of [the letter sent to Senators Winter and Fenberg and Representatives Gray and Garnett](#). The letter was sent on April 15 to promote a greater share of multimodal funding from the new state transportation funding proposal. Co-chair Jones reported that the committee was not alone in this concern and received a response from the bill sponsors that they will be expanding that pot of funding.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Member comment/Other matters

Doug Rex wanted to remind everyone that there will be two meeting in June on the 14th and 28th. At those meetings, finalized recommendations will be provided and the committee will be asked to take action on those. He also stated that there will be a public hearing scheduled for the June 14th meeting and staff is performing public outreach and seeking public input into the recommendations.

Co-chair Jones suggested that after the public hearing, we allow RTD Accountability Committee members to react and amend the recommendations based on what they have heard.

Rutt Bridges suggested the meeting on the 14th be a two-hour meeting to allot more time for the public hearing.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

ATTACH B

SUMMARY
RTD Accountability Committee: Governance Subcommittee
Monday, May 17, 2021
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

Joint subcommittee members present:

Julie Duran Mullica (Chair)

Deya Zavala

Elise Jones

Jackie Millet

Rutt Bridges

Troy Whitmore

Others Present: Doug Rex, Ron Papsdorf, Matthew Helfant, Melinda Stevens, Debra Baskett, Mac Callison, Kent Moorman, Kathleen Bracke, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Bill Sirois, Barbara McManus, Tanya Eydelman, Chris McCarthy, Miller Hudson, George Gerstle, Michael Davies, Bobby Dishell, Doug Tisdale, John McKay, Pauletta Tonilas.

Chair Mullica called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

May 3, 2021 Meeting Summary

Meeting summary was submitted. No revisions were requested.

Continued discussion of RTD Board Structure

North Highland staff presented on the topic including a review of last meeting, findings and recommendations.

Specific questions/comments about the Board structure recommendation included:

- Troy Whitmore
 - Wished to state for the record that there are two other large transit agencies that have an elected board that were not included in the peer review.
- Rutt Bridges
 - Asked if someone would provide an update on the RTD committee structure revisions.
 - RTD Director, Doug Tisdale stated that a group of RTD directors are developing a proposal to reduce the size of the committees to a smaller number (e.g., five to seven members) and are also looking at the possibility of reducing the number of committees. Further discussion will occur at an upcoming RTD Board retreat.
- Chair Mullica
 - Said that she was struggling with how to measure board effectiveness and reiterated the question of what problem are we trying to solve with a recommendation.
- Jackie Millet
 - Stated that she had particular interest in the RTD board structure issue and reiterated that her concerns are not with any one Board. Her issues are related to the efficiencies of the Board and the ability of staff to serve a board

of 15 members. She also expressed her concern about the Board's ability to govern from a regional perspective. Ms. Millet said that a possible recommendation could be a more thorough assessment of the 15-member board structure to see if it could be improved.

- Deya Zavala
 - Expressed her concern that the recommendations are for just more studies and RTD is undertaking a lot of different studies at the moment. But she understands that since the RTD Accountability Committee's work is about to end that this is really the only option.
- Jackie Millet
 - Acknowledged the point that RTD is involved in a lot of studies that are probably higher priority but didn't want to lose the idea of an evaluation of the board structure.
- Chair Mullica
 - Circled back to the question about who the audience is for this recommendation. She believes it is for the legislature (and not RTD) they have the authority to effect change. Chair Mullica then asked if the subcommittee wanted to make a "soft" recommendation on the topic.
- Jackie Millet
 - Agreed that a soft recommendation makes a lot of sense since there is so much going on at RTD at the moment. RTD just needs to let this settle in for now until some new processes are in place.
- Deya Zavala
 - Agreed with Ms. Millet. She also mentioned that the subcommittee is proposing the subregional service council concept and any action/review of Board structure should be contingent on the implementation of that new structure.
- Elise Jones
 - Also agreed and stated that the subcommittee should say in the final report that we took a look at Board structure and decided that it was a lower priority than other recommendations to improve the functionality of RTD and its Board. Once the other recommendations are implemented, Board structure should be evaluated to determine if additional steps are needed to improve effectiveness.
- Jackie Millet
 - Stated that she's very interested in the evaluation of the subregional service council implementation to see if it improves the effectiveness of the Board.
- Rutt Bridges
 - Agreed with the comments. He believes RTD should be given enough time to implement the subregional service council recommendation before putting the Board under a microscope again.
- Ron Papsdorf
 - Summarized the discussion by saying that the recommendation prepared by North Highland is about there but needs to be in the context of the subregional service council implementation. If RTD elects not to implement

the service council recommendation, then an evaluation of the Board should occur.

Next Steps

Chair Mullica mentioned that this is the last meeting of the subcommittee and thanked all participants for their invested time and energy into the process.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

ATTACH C

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE-Finance Subcommittee
Wednesday, May 19, 2021
Note: Meeting held virtually via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rutt Bridges
Dan Blankenship
Rebecca White
Krystin Trustman
Elise Jones
Troy Whitmore

Others Present: Ron Papsdorf, Doug Rex, Matthew Helfant, Natalie Shishido, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Debra Johnson, Bill Van Meter, Bill Sirois, Doug MacLeod, Michael Davies, Barbara McManus, Jyotsna Vishwakarma, Alex Hyde-Wright, Mac Callison, Luke Palmisano, Peggy Catlin, Shelley Cook, George Gerstle, Monika Treipl-Harnke, Janet Buckner, John McKay.

Call to Order

Rutt Bridges called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

May 5, 2021 Meeting Summary

The meeting summary was accepted.

FreeLift: Demand-driven first/last mile partnerships

Rutt Bridges introduced the proposed recommendation to pilot a demand-driven first and last mile transit solution in partnership with transportation network companies (TNCs) to connect people to higher frequency fixed-route transit services. The subcommittee had a discussion of revisions to the recommendation for clarity and to strengthen language related to services for customers with moderate disabilities.

Rutt Bridges MOVED the proposed revisions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Rutt Bridges MOVED the recommendation as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

RTD Dashboard – Financial Information Recommendations

Rebecca White introduced the item and presented a revised set of recommendations for financial information to include in an RTD dashboard.

Rebecca White MOVED the revised recommendations. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

NW Rail Discussion – Draft Recommendation

Rutt Bridges introduced the topic and presented the draft recommendations for discussion.

The subcommittee members discussed the proposal and potential revisions to refine the recommendation. The subcommittee voted to remove sections 4, 5, and 6 from the NW Rail Compromise portion of the recommendation.

Elise Jones MOVED the recommendations as revised. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Member Comment/Other Matters

Rutt Bridges thanked the subcommittee members, the Accountability Committee Co-Chairs, and fellow subcommittee chairs for their work and support. He acknowledged the work of the DRCOG staff and extended a special thanks to RTD for their cooperation during the process.

Elise Jones thanked Rutt Bridges for his incredible work chairing the subcommittee.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

ATTACH D

MEETING SUMMARY
**RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE- OPERATIONS AND FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE JOINT
MEETING**

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Note: Meeting held virtually via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Deya Zavala (Chair)
Rutt Bridges
Krystin Trustman
Elise Jones
Troy Whitmore

Lynn Guissinger
Crystal Murillo
Chris Frampton

Others Present: Debra Johnson, Bill Sirois, Angie Rivera-Malpiede, Daniel O'Connor, Brian Welch, Tanya Eydelman, Ala Battikhi, Chris McCarthy, Luke Palmisano, Monika Treipl-Harnke, Mac Callison, Michael Davies, Chris Quinn, Allison Crump, Alex Hyde-Wright, Natalie Shishido and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3pm.

May 5, 2021 Operations Subcommittee Meeting Summary

No comments.

Recommendations on Performance Measures

North Highland staff presented potential performance measures based on input from previous discussions. Crystal Murillo advocated for performance measurements around housing affordability and access to transit. Elise Jones said that she heard from the RTD board that measuring number of meetings/engagements is not useful. Tanya Eydelman from North Highland explained why North Highland recommends including that metric. She stated that measuring activity is a steppingstone to measuring success. Ms. Jones added that there is a difference between having conversations with the community and more meaningful interactions. Troy Whitmore agreed with Ms. Jones. Debra Johnson also concurred with the assessment. Rutt Bridges stated that the method(s) for obtaining input for customer satisfaction is important.

Recommendations on Fixed Route and Paratransit Service Provision

Chair Zavala shared draft recommendations that she prepared based on dialogue on this topic at previous meetings. Kristin Trustman noted some accessibility challenges for some individuals with disabilities for boarding trains and a lack of consistency in wayfinding signage which poses a challenge for some people with visual impairments. Elise Jones advocated thoughtful planning for space at transit stations for multimodal mobility options. She also stated that land use planning coordination is important to highlight. Crystal Murillo stated that she agreed with previous statements and said that partnerships will help achieve these goals. Rutt Bridges noted the importance of including bicycle infrastructure and facilities in planning for multimodal access. He also advocated for focus on the needs of individuals with disabilities when planning for transit-oriented development. Ms. Trustman noted challenges at Union Station for access to drop off and pick up passengers that have disabilities. Debra Johnson noted that RTD is working on finding solutions to some of the accessibility challenges noted.

Recommendations on Operator Retention

There was consensus on concurring with the State Auditor's Report findings on this topic.

Member Comment/Other Matters

Chair Zavala thanked the members of the subcommittee, DRCOG staff, RTD staff, and the RTD Board for their participation and guidance. Committee Co-Chairs Elise Jones and Crystal Murillo thanked Chair Zavala for her great work facilitating the meetings.

Next Steps

This was the final subcommittee meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at about a few minutes to 4pm.

ATTACHE

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 #
June 14, 2021	Discussion	7

SUBJECT

Briefing on public comments received on the draft recommendations.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Over the last year, the RTD Accountability Committee has undertaken an analysis of RTD and drafted recommendations for improvement. Prior to finalizing recommendations, an online survey has been utilized as a tool to gather public feedback on the draft recommendations. This survey was launched on June 2 and will run through June 15. The Committee will consider the input received from this survey and at their public hearing on June 14 in finalizing its recommendations.

DRCOG staff will brief the RTD Accountability Committee on the input received through the survey and other comments received so far.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

Note: Public Comments received by Friday, June 11 will be emailed to Committee members.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

ATTACH F

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 #
June 14, 2021	Discussion	8

SUBJECT

Discussion on Draft Recommendations

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Last summer, the RTD Board in collaboration with Governor Polis and the transportation committee chairs of the Colorado General Assembly formed the RTD Accountability Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to provide an independent and objective analysis of RTD's operations and develop a set of recommendations for improvement to the operations and statutes related to RTD. Over the last year, the Committee has undertaken an analysis of the agency, studied many other similar transit agencies, and has drafted recommendations for improvement. Much of the analysis was conducted by the three subcommittees: Governance, Finance, and Operations. Based on several months of deliberations, the subcommittees have elevated draft recommendations for consideration by the full RTD Accountability Committee.

Equity assessments accompany each of the recommendations. One of the first items the RTD Accountability Committee worked on was developing an equity assessment template to evaluate all recommendations for their potential impact on vulnerable communities (attached). Mile High Connects engaged with community stakeholders to conduct equity assessments of each of the draft recommendations based on the template. These assessments are included in the packet for Committee members to consider as they finalize their recommendations.

At the 14th meeting, the RTD Accountability Committee will discuss the recommendations, equity assessments, and public feedback.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

1. Draft Recommendations
2. Equity Assessment Mission Statement
3. Equity Assessment

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Doug Rex, Executive Director, DRCOG 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

Draft Recommendations

Last summer, the RTD Board in collaboration with Governor Polis and the transportation committee chairs of the Colorado General Assembly formed the RTD Accountability Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to provide an independent and objective analysis of RTD's operations and develop a set of recommendations for improvement to the operations and statutes related to RTD. The Committee is independent of RTD and hosted by the Denver Regional Council of Governments.

Over the last year, the Committee has undertaken an analysis of the agency and has drafted recommendations for improvement. The recommendations will be delivered to the board and staff of RTD, the governor, the Colorado General Assembly, and the public.

Prior to finalizing their recommendations, the Committee wants to hear your opinions on the draft recommendations. This report organizes the recommendations into six topics:

- Governance
 - Subregional Service Councils
 - Board of Directors
- Operations
 - Fares and Pass Programs
 - Operator Retention
- Service
- Northwest Rail/Unfinished FasTracks
- Using Federal COVID-19 Relief Funds
- Partnerships
- Transparency and Reporting
 - System Performance
 - Financial

You may review summaries of the recommendations and provide input on [this short survey](#). Please provide your feedback by **June 14**. A public hearing will also be held before the RTD Accountability Committee at their [June 14 meeting](#).

The Committee will consider the input received through the survey and at the public hearing, and adoption of final recommendations is anticipated at the June 28 RTD Accountability Committee meeting.

GOVERNANCE

Subregional Service Councils

The RTD Accountability Committee believes that RTD should have a more collaborative decision-making structure to increase input from local communities.

Revise RTD's transit service planning process by establishing subregional service councils. Service councils will have responsibility for developing and recommending "local" transit service plans for the RTD Board's consideration. The RTD Accountability Committee believes the introduction of this concept will:

- improve collaboration between RTD and the communities it serves. increase opportunities for public input through locally-accessible forums.
- advance social equity goals by developing community-based transit plans that identify transportation and service gaps, especially in low income and minority neighborhoods.
- promote innovative mobility solutions at a local level consistent with the RTD Board's overall service goals and objectives.
- provide an opportunity to address geographic equity and rebuild trust and transparency with constituents.

Membership: The RTD Accountability Committee recommends service councils be representative of the community-at-large. Service council membership shall include:

- Elected representatives from each city/town/county within each council district.
- A broad spectrum of interests and geography to ensure social, economic, financial, and environmental equity considerations are represented.
- Transit Users: residents who live, work, or attend university within the council district.

Districts: The RTD Accountability Committee recommends RTD establish a workgroup of regional stakeholders to comprehensively evaluate the following two service council boundary concepts to ascertain the best fit for the Denver region. The workgroup shall consider the role and purpose of the service councils, community cohesion and RTD staff resources in its analysis.

- **County Boundaries:** The RTD service area encompasses wholly or partially Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties. The establishment of service councils based on this pre-determined geo-political boundary would appear logical since local governments residing in the same county already have a familiarity with each other. Additionally, county-based service councils would be consistent with the already established DRCOG subregional forums which are utilized for transportation planning and funding decisions.
- **Travel Shed:** A valuable tool for visualizing and analyzing mobility patterns. In the Denver region, known travel behavior makes this concept a viable option particularly if fewer service districts is the objective.

RTD Resource Allocation: RTD Accountability Committee acknowledges the critical role RTD plays in fulfilling the mobility needs of Denver area residents. Understandably, taxpayers are interested in having more information of how their tax dollars are being used to create an equitable transit system. As a result, the RTD Accountability Committee recommends RTD develop and submit to the subregional service councils an annual report illustrating how the revenues generated in each subregion are used to provide transportation “value” to the residents of the subregion.

RTD Board of Directors

The structure of the Board of Directors differs from some peer agencies. The RTD Accountability Committee believes a deeper exploration should be pursued after Subregional Councils are implemented.

The RTD Accountability Committee acknowledges there is not consensus on the effectiveness the RTD Board, nor is there clarity on the existence of a problem or what that problem may be. In addition, the RTD Accountability Committee is making a series of recommendations (e.g., Subregional Service Councils) which, if implemented, may impact Board operations. Finally, the RTD Board is proactively making changes to the structure of subcommittees while the organization has appointed a new General Manager.

When coupled with these changes, these high-level findings are not sufficient for developing recommendations, as they simply note areas of differences and commonalities, as opposed to effectiveness. Therefore, it would be premature to develop recommendations for future Board structures and the RTD Accountability Committee suggests further study and analysis be completed by an independent body with input from regional stakeholders. Specifically, the committee recommends the following course of action:

- Following a reasonable period of time for the RTD Accountability Committee recommendations to be implemented (e.g. two years), investigate the effectiveness of RTD’s Board structure. In partnership with regional stakeholders, evaluate the historical context of RTD’s Board structure, define Board effectiveness, success and efficiency, and evaluate past Boards for meeting these criteria. Determine if a problem exists, and if so, develop a problem statement. If a problem does not exist or inefficiencies are not found, the RTD Board structure should remain intact.
- If a problem does exist, or it is determined the Board could be operating more efficiently, conduct a deep and thorough study of RTD’s Board structure in comparison with peer transit agency and agencies within the region. Further examine the findings in this assessment, and develop an understanding of the impacts the implementation of any RTD Accountability Committee recommendations.
- Based on the findings of the study, determine if a new Board structure would better serve both RTD and the region’s constituents. If so, outline a new Board structure, including roles and responsibilities, and revise the by-laws if necessary.

OPERATIONS

Fares and Pass Programs

RTD's fare structure and pass programs are complex and can be difficult to navigate. The RTD Accountability Committee recommends simplifying fares and pass programs to improve the customer experience and increase ridership.

1. Consolidate all discounts into a free fare that would cover for equity populations (youth, senior, disabled, and low-income).
 - Eliminate exact change requirements for discounted fares.
 - Recognizing the potential barriers to free fares, the committee recommends consolidating fares as single 50% discount.
2. Identify strategies to simplify pass structures.
 - Implement a “family plan” benefit for all RTD pass-holders, where an adult can purchase fare media using one smart card for their multiple individuals.
 - Standardize existing deep discount group pass programs (EcoPass, NEcoPass, College Pass) into one brand, EcoPass, focused on incentivizing use.
 - Explore a “pay as you go” pass with fare capping/accumulators
 - Make Ecopass available to every employee in the district (~1.5 million) through a monthly, per employee transportation fee assessed on employers
 - Explore the implementation of a recurrent “membership” model
 - Incentivize individuals & organizations to purchase passes in bulk by:
 - Extending discounts for bulk purchases.
 - Enabling contributions to mobile wallets from multiple entities: both the employee/resident, and from employers/governments/non-profits, allowing employers to match contributions directly on the pass media of the employees.
 - Explore a “connect card” that allows riders to use transit fare across various entities (for example: CDOT’s Bustang, and microtransit/mobility options).
 - Replicate pass types on the mobile platform with fare capping/accumulators (ex: if you purchase fare amounts that add up to a day/monthly pass, your fare is automatically converted as opposed to over-paying).
3. Convene community, business and anchor institutions (hospitals, universities, school districts) utilizing passes on a regular basis to determine updates to the agreements.
4. Implement equity in fare evasion
 - The fine for fare evasion on RTD services is \$75 and is set by state statute. Given that fare evasion and illegal parking are similar offenses, this raises some equity concerns that transit riders pay higher fines than car drivers.

Operator Retention

The RTD Accountability Committee operations subcommittee assessed and discussed the State Auditor Report's findings on operator retention and human resources. The report described a series of recommendations to address and improve operator retention. The committee agrees with the findings of the report and encourages RTD to utilize federal relief funding to support the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

Summary of report recommendations:

- RTD management should take additional steps to improve supervisory practices around performance feedback to address operator turnover.
- RTD management should improve its processes to help ensure that bus operators receive adequate rest breaks during their work shifts, in accordance with requirements in the Union Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- RTD management should improve its processes for assigning schedules to operators.

SERVICE

The RTD Accountability Committee recommends the following strategies to improve RTD's service delivery:

1. Accessibility + Infrastructure

- Improve accessibility at light rail and fixed route stops. Proposed solutions include:
 - Zero-stair entrance at transit stations.
 - Standardize wayfinding signage and directional grooved pavement, ensuring some level of consistency across similarly designed stations to ensure blind communities are able to navigate transit stations.
 - Improve audio announcement system to assist those in the blind community.
- Identify a pipeline of accessibility improvements alongside disability and mobility advocates to allocate federal infrastructure dollars as they become available.
- Using existing survey data, work in partnership with municipalities to standardize and improve bus stop placement to ensure greater accessibility.

2. Multimodal Transportation

- Work with micro-mobility partners and municipalities to ensure transit stations have diverse mobility options (e-bikes, scooters and other multi-modal devices including 3- and 4-wheel for people with mobility issues) to provide riders the last mile connection.

3. Service Delivery

- As Reimagine RTD continues its work, focus redesign efforts prioritizing travel needs on frequent transit users, including bus rapid transit.
- Work in coordination with municipalities and anchor institutions to coordinate land use and transportation planning to ensure a comprehensive network of transit-only lanes on major routes and equitable transit-oriented developments.
- Designate easily accessible space at RTD bus and rail stations for individuals with disabilities to access services such as taxis, Uber/Lyft, and other transportation providers. Designated areas at the station would help provide a seamless connection for transit riders.

NORTHWEST RAIL/UNFINISHED FASTTRACKS

The five unfinished FasTracks corridors, and Northwest Rail in particular, are a significant financial and operating challenge for RTD. These recommendations provide opportunities to explore achievable options while continuing to keep commitments to voters.

1. The RTD Accountability Committee supports the Northwest Rail alignment for the Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) corridor and recommends RTD pursue all reasonable partnership opportunities with the FRPR project. This route not only appears to provide significant benefits for the FRPR project but also offers an opportunity to leverage investments and services to support NW Rail.
2. RTD should work with local jurisdictions and DRCOG to explore opportunities for transit-oriented development and other strategies to increase projected ridership on the unfinished corridors.
3. RTD should investigate opportunities to increase non-RTD resources for transit stations including local cost sharing, grants, tax increment financing, or public-private partnerships.
4. RTD should perform a complete and comprehensive analysis of the Northwest Rail project to establish a common set of assumptions and engage in a regional discussion about opportunities and alternatives, both near-term and long-term, for the corridor.
5. RTD should work with CDOT and DRCOG to implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects in the northwest region, beginning with SH 119, as identified in the Northwest Area Mobility Study (NAMS) and the DRCOG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan.
6. Due to a heavy debt burden, RTD cannot afford to begin construction on the promised northwest rail line from Denver through Boulder to Longmont at this time. The RTD Accountability Committee recommends that until adequate funding can be found for this project, RTD should focus on significantly expanding Bus Rapid Transit services like the existing Flatiron Flyer, including direct service to Longmont and other Northwest Corridor communities by 2026 while continuing to pursue longer-term plans for the completion of Northwest Rail:
 - RTD should evaluate the validity of the suggested benefits of a Northwest Corridor BRT transit system that it will 1) deliver services a decade or more sooner than rail, 2) better accommodate future growth than rail, 3) be far less expensive to implement than rail, 4) be far less expensive to operate than rail, 5) be far less expensive to maintain than rail, and 6) be far less of a threat to RTD's future financial stability than rail; respond to the RTD Accountability Committee on these six points; and take action if deemed appropriate.
 - RTD should consider potential compromises with the Northwest region, such as the proposed compromise plan to deliver expanded BRT services to the Northwest Corridor by 2026 while continuing to pursue the longer-term plans for the completion of NW Rail and take appropriate action.
 - RTD should restore all six Flatiron Flyer routes within 12 months.
 - Within five years, RTD should increase BRT capacity within the NW Corridor from 3.37 million to 5 million rides per year.
 - RTD should provide the final \$175 million needed to complete SH 119 BRT between Boulder and Longmont. If financed at 2% interest over 30 years, this would cost RTD \$9.3 million per year.

USING FEDERAL COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS

These recommendations are aimed at stabilizing RTD operations, restoring services, rebuilding trust, attracting new and returning riders, and helping the agency recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Provide a transparent process and make priorities clear.
 - RTD should provide full transparency during its process to consider and implement its use of these federal funds so that stakeholders and members of the public can follow the tradeoffs and pros and cons of their decisions. RTD should clearly define its priorities for this funding, what issues are being addressed by additional funds, and the amount of funding allocated to each priority. This transparency should continue as funds are spent so that the public can track expenditures.
2. Strategically recall previously laid off front line employees.
 - The Committee acknowledges and supports RTD's decision to recall approximately 200 direct-service employees. However, in keeping with the above recommendation, RTD should explain the amount of federal funding needed to recall these workers and what amount of funding is available for additional priorities. The focus of these recalls should be to ensure that RTD has capacity to restore quality transit service, particularly to transit-dependent communities as quickly as possible.
3. Share federal funding with other transit service providers in the metro area.
 - There are several non-profit and community-based transit service providers in the RTD district. They supplement RTD's fixed-route and para transit services, often at lower cost than RTD could provide comparable service. As with RTD, these providers have been impacted by reduced ridership and revenues due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will benefit from this funding.
4. Conduct a six-month pilot to rebuild ridership and attract new riders via a reduced flat fare for local and regional routes and free fares for all or some of the discount groups (youth up to 19 years old, seniors 65+, disabled and low income LiVE).
 - Market it as a simple, affordable, and easy to understand way to ride RTD and an incentive to attract returning and new riders. This will reduce costs for financially struggling essential workers who are still riding RTD. During the pilot program, use this time to explore other ways to improve affordability of existing and/or new pass programs, including LiVE, that can be put in place as a longer-term solution.
5. Help rebuild and increase ridership by improving uptake and ease of use of passes.
 - Allow flexibility in the EcoPass programs and contracts so that more neighborhoods and businesses can participate. For example, allow master EcoPass contracts to support county-wide affordable housing programs and create more options for businesses to obtain employee EcoPasses for a subset of their workers. Consider discounts for bulk pass purchases.
6. Help fund PEAK eligibility technicians/caseworkers at county HHS departments to help people through LiVE enrollment, and allow LiVE applicants to prove eligibility through verification documents from other assistance programs (SNAP, WIC, etc.). Continuing to get the LiVE ID cards in qualified participant's hands is essential and counties can provide this customer assistance, but need funding to help support this function.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with local governments, non-profits, business, and institutions offer opportunities to leverage and expand RTD resources and services.

1. Leverage existing and new partnerships to improve service efficiency and grow ridership. RTD should emphasize partnerships with local governments, anchor institutions, transportation management organizations (TMOs) and employers or employment centers who have a unique understanding of local mobility needs.
2. Incentivize communities to enter cost-sharing arrangements with RTD to provide new or existing local transit solutions in an effort to minimize service gaps and increase ridership.
3. Explore opportunities to provide cost-effective local transportation services through collaboration with existing mobility service providers (e.g., Via, Uber, Lyft) in areas where traditional fixed route may not be the most appropriate mobility solution. Also, explore opportunities to contract with other third party providers that may specialize in a particular service (e.g., paratransit) at a reduced cost.
4. As more federal relief funds become available, expand these partnership opportunities to improve service efficiency.
5. Develop a competitive Innovation Grant program to drive bold ideas to increasing ridership.
6. Encourage RTD's public-facing dashboard to include a component that highlights existing private and public partnerships.
7. Regularly evaluate the success of existing partnerships by predetermined metrics and "re-scope" relationships to ensure maximum benefit.
8. RTD should pilot First/Last mile projects such as the First/Last Mile RTD FreeLift Loop partnerships to build ridership, especially among disadvantaged communities. FreeLift pilots would serve communities more than a mile from rail stations and be available only to RTD pass holders. The service would be operated in partnership with TNCs or nonprofits such as Via Mobility Services and pick up passengers at designated stops along a designated loop route.

TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING

The RTD Accountability Committee recommends that RTD to provide prominent, accessible and easy-to-understand financial and performance information on its website for the public, stakeholders, partners, and elected officials.

System Performance

1. Operational Effectiveness

- Increase ridership
 - Percent boarding change by mode
- Provide dependable service
 - Percent of on-time performance by mode
 - Percent of employee vacancies
- Ensure fleet reliability
 - Percent of vehicles over their useful life

2. Operational Efficiency

- Efficiently manage finances
 - Operating cost recovery ratio
 - Percent increase in fare revenue
 - Percentage of cost per mile as compared to peer agencies
- Achieve outstanding financial performance
 - Bond Rating

3. Customer Experience

- Provide an excellent rider experience
 - Percent of time passengers are in crowded conditions
 - Average facility and vehicle cleanliness complaints per month
 - Overall customer satisfaction and/or net promoter score
- Engage with customers
 - Call answer rate efficiency (in seconds)
 - Average time to resolve customer issues

4. Community Engagement

- At this time, metrics capturing the success of community engagement are not proposed. While the RTD Accountability Committee prioritized this metric area, there are insufficient peer examples from which to draw. Below is a list of stretch metrics that may be considered at a later time when there is a better understanding of what success would look like and/or data becomes available:
 - Positive contribution to the region
 - Percent increase in positive public impressions (multi-media)
 - Number of successful partnerships

5. Equity & Accessibility

- Serve all populations
 - FTA Title VI Triennial review compliance
 - Percent of customers indicating service frequency meets their needs

- Serve all customers
 - Adherence to ADA zero denials request mandate Average ADA complaints per boarding
- **Stretch Metrics:** The RTD Accountability Committee noted that the metrics outlined above, while measurable and applicable, do not capture the full spirit and importance of measuring equity and accessibility. As such, stretch metrics have been identified for further consideration. These stretch metrics will require a clear definition of terminology and success. In some cases, these metrics may require access to data that is not currently available.
 - Percent of minority/low-income people with access to the system
 - Percent of households within a 10-minute walk or roll of high-quality mobility options (consider how affordable may also be incorporated)
 - Average wait time by service mode
 - Ratio of average fare to national average
 - Average number of transfers per trip
 - Calls answered for paratransit

6. Environmental Impact

- Protect the environment
- Percent increase of low emission vehicles in fleet
- **Stretch Metrics:** The Subcommittee noted that the metric outlined above, while measurable and applicable, does not capture the extent to which RTD is impacting the regional environment. As such, stretch metrics have been identified for further consideration. These stretch metrics will require a clear definition of terminology and success. In some cases, these metrics may require access to data that is not currently available.
 - Pound of seasonal air pollutant prevented (NOX in summer and PM 2.5 in winter) Pounds of CO2 per passenger miles traveled
 - Total facility energy use

7. Safety

- Operate a safe system
 - Number of preventable accidents per 100,000 miles
 - Number of signal violations
- Keep employees safe
 - Number of reported employee equipment accidents
- Keep the system secure
 - Offenses per 100,000 riders
 - Average response time to emergency dispatch calls

Further detail on the project approach and proposed metrics can be found in the RTD Accountability Committee Performance Metric Assessment Recommendations report.

Financial Performance

1. Provide a simplified version of financial budget information that includes a simple one-sheet budget document that is more accessible to the general public and easy to follow. Consider use of public focus groups to help craft content and format.

Currently, RTD's website provides a great deal of financial information which is challenging to sift through and understand. While this amount of detailed financial information may be useful in some situations and should remain available for the public, RTD should create (and update quarterly) the following:

- A basic budget document (ideally in a one-sheet format). This should be a high-level summary document that contains revenues and expenses by category in relation to the current adopted budget. (provide link defining key terms)
- Capital project schedule and expenditure information, updated at least quarterly.

2. Provide explanatory information on RTD's budget and the process it uses to form and finalize this budget.

Even in a basic format, financial information can be difficult to interpret. RTD should supplement the above recommendation focused on a high-level summary with a plain-language "translation" of the budget. The Department also should consider alternative formats, such as videos.

- A layperson's overview of the budget itself, including available revenue streams, primary expense categories, and defining terminology such as "Base System" and "Farebox Revenue." This is also an opportunity to explain that fares do not cover the full cost of a ride, which is a common misperception.
- A description of the budget adoption process and the role of the Board of Directors.
- A description of how the budget aligns with RTD's mission and performance objectives.

3. Include financial information on FasTracks that is easy to follow.

Given the public interest and scrutiny on this program, RTD should build on its well-developed FasTracks website by providing up-to-date financial information to create a more comprehensive representation of the program. This information should describe the FasTracks Internal Savings Account (FISA), how it is used, and any additional resources that help stakeholders and the public understand the status of FasTracks projects. In developing this content, RTD should consider public awareness of terms like "FasTracks," "Base System," etcetera.

4. Provide a long-term vision for the use of federal stimulus funds as they continue to flow.

To date, federal stimulus money received by RTD from the CARES Act and CRRSAA has totaled over \$430 million. The agency is expected to receive a third allotment from the most recent stimulus package. RTD should provide a quarterly report with a full accounting on the use of these funds as well as share its priorities for the third allotment, especially as these funds exceed what is needed to cover base operations (including personnel costs). Materials should explain restrictions on stimulus dollars (what it can and can't be used for) and should provide, where relevant, a connection to the Accountability Committee's recommendations regarding the use of additional federal relief funds.

RTD Accountability Committee
Equity Assessment Mission Statement

Social, economic, financial, and environmental equity is a paramount consideration for the RTD Accountability Committee. The Committee will consider the needs of communities of concern, including but not limited to minority, low-income, individuals with disabilities, older adult, and veteran populations. Effort will be made through the Committee's work to ensure benefits are shared across the RTD service area and that no one group bears a larger burden of environmental or financial impacts. Actions that include spatial and other forms of analysis, community engagement, and consulting experts will be used at appropriate times to inform the work and final recommendations of the Committee.

Operationalizing Equity in the Deliberation of the Committee and Subcommittees

Each subcommittee will engage community organizations with expertise in equity such as the Center for Community Wealth Building, the Denver Institute of Equity and Reconciliation, and Mile High Connects during their initial deliberations as part of the research phase. During the formation and consideration of issues and policy options, an equality lens will be applied. This lens should include the following questions:

1. How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?
 - a. How are we defining benefit and burden?
 - b. How do we measure this impact?
2. Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geography more than others? If so, which communities and how?
 - a. What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?
 - b. Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?
3. Could there be unintended consequences? If so, can they be mitigated?
4. Does this policy/strategy address historic, systemic, environmental, or institutional barriers that have impacted this community?

DRCOG staff and/or the on-call consulting team will assist subcommittees and the Committee to conduct appropriate equity assessments of draft recommendations. Draft recommendations, along with the assessments, will be made available for public review and input. Each subcommittee will consider the assessment and any input obtained through public engagement before making final subcommittee recommendations to the full committee.

The full committee will consider subcommittee recommendations and finalize draft recommendations to bring to a public hearing. Input received from the public hearing will be considered before the committee makes final recommendations. As needed, dissenting opinions will also be included with the final recommendations.

Draft – Equity Assessment for Recommendations on Streamlining Fares, Passes & Service

Background:

An ad hoc equity working group was convened by Mile High Connects. This working group consisted of community leaders and organizations, facilitated by Mile High Connects staff. Participants in this equity assessment include representatives from Conservation Colorado (transit advocacy & environmental justice), Colorado Fiscal Institute (policy and finance), Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (justice reform & health care), Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (transit advocacy & disabilities rights), Denver Streets Partnership (transit advocacy), and the Fax Partnership (housing & business). The overall desired outcome was to assess the RTD Accountability Committee's Governance Committee's proposed recommendation of Sub-Regional Service Councils. The comments and recommendations are offered with an understanding that input was being sought from community organizations outside of the RTD Accountability Committee's standing process and with limited information on the background and history of how the recommendation was formulated.

The ad hoc working group reviewed the recommendation as a package.

Overall Comments and Strategic Recommendations:

- **Be cautious about centering on large employers and businesses:** The focus on the ecopass raised inequity concerns for front-line employees that may not have access to the ecopass in its current form. Recognize that large employers do not represent the most marginalized, transit dependent riders.
- **Limit the burden of proof on income-qualified individuals:** Requiring low income individuals to provide proof of poverty is inequitable as employers are not required to do the same.
- **Offer a free pass for low-income riders:** Working group supports this as an option overall to support low-income riders and increase ridership.

Equity Assessment:

How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

The recommendation may result in moderate benefit to communities of concern, depending on the implementation and operationalization of the proposed fare and pass changes. The ad hoc committee lifted increased, diverse language access; fare capping; and simplifying income verification as an opportunity to increase equity for all riders on RTD system, while expansion of the Ecopass in its current form could decrease equity if it solely focuses on large businesses

where equity populations may not hold positions of power.

a) How are we defining benefit and burden?

Benefit is defined as an opportunity to improve equity populations' access to various pass and fare programs. Burden is defined by the real or perceived challenges to diverse businesses in the region, recognizing that small to midsize businesses may not have equitable access to transit passes and fare structures for their employees.

b) How do we measure this impact?

Continue to look at the data of ridership and use of various pass media.

Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geographies more than others? If so, which communities and how?

Working group noted the inequities in affording various fare media and in support of a free fare to address some of these inequities.

a) What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

Small/micro-businesses with modest annual revenues will be most impacted by an employer fee.

b) Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?

As written, neighborhoods and institutions (businesses, anchor institutions, etc) are equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation. This raises issues of equity and justice within low-income/equity neighborhoods that may bear the burden of additional costs without resources.

Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

The equity working group shared the unintended consequence of bias in current fare evasion practices by RTD that may impact low-income people of color that are transit dependent. RTD enforcement may be unaware of how racism is impacting fare evasion.

Equity Assessment for Governance Recommendations

Background:

An ad hoc equity working group was convened by Mile High Connects. This working group consisted of community leaders and organizations, facilitated by Mile High Connects staff. Participants in this equity assessment include representatives from Conservation Colorado (transit advocacy & environmental justice), Colorado Fiscal Institute (policy and finance), Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (justice reform & health care), Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (transit advocacy & disabilities rights), Denver Streets Partnership (transit advocacy), and the Fax Partnership (housing & business). The overall desired outcome was to assess the RTD Accountability Committee's Governance Committee's proposed recommendations. The comments and recommendations are offered with an understanding that input was being sought from community organizations outside of the RTD Accountability Committee's standing process and with limited information on the background and history of how the recommendation was formulated.

The ad hoc working group reviewed the recommendation as a package.

Overall Comments and Strategic Recommendations:

- **Board of Directors (BOD):** Working group understands that RTD board is on par with other cities across the US and that revisions and changes will not happen at this time. However, in the future, it recommends diversifying the board (demographically, lived and professional experience, understanding and supporting public transit, inclusion of transit and city planners, leaders from local municipalities); proposes a hybrid model with elected and appointed (clarity around appointing body); and considerations should be made around the size of the board (7 board members).
- **Clarify the role of Local Service Councils (LSC):** Continue to explore the role previously recommended LSC's can play as potential decision making bodies that are more connected to local communities.

Equity Assessment:

How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

The working group noted some of the possible inequities around the continued use of districts as this doesn't allow for board members to take into consideration the entire RTD service area and all of the communities it is attempting to serve. The benefit of reviewing the board structure as it currently stands will allow for better resident engagement into how the body that represents residents is engaging and serving its constituents.

a) How are we defining benefit and burden?

Benefit is defined by the energy and time to other areas to study within RTD. Burden is RTD board structure will remain the same for a period of time. Benefit is that the RTD BOD structure is on par with other cities and the burden is understanding how that can be creating on contributing to inequities in the governance structure.

b) How do we measure this impact?

Impact of the recommendation is measured by tracking and monitoring BOD structures and the benefits and burdens around accountability, transparency, membership, capacity, efficiency, relationship with the public, and accessibility to the public.

Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geographies more than others? If so, which communities and how?

This recommendation could impact specific communities or geographies more than others. The ad hoc equity working group noted that the BOD, how it functions, accountability, and more are still difficult to convey in simple ways to the general public. While this is not specific to a geography or community, there was an overall observation of how the BOD is accessible and understandable to the general public.

a) What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

This recommendation could affect all communities of concern.

b) Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?

Neighborhoods are equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation if and when the review of the existing Board structure is completed.

Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

Engage community leaders, key stakeholders, and other elected bodies to mitigate trust if and when the RTD Board of Directors review is reactivated. The proposed Local Service Councils and existing boards within RTD should clarify and align with the new structure once determined.

Equity Assessment for Fixed Route and Paratransit Provision

Background:

An ad hoc equity working group was convened by Mile High Connects. This working group consisted of community leaders and organizations, facilitated by Mile High Connects staff. Participants in this equity assessment include representatives from Conservation Colorado (transit advocacy & environmental justice), Colorado Fiscal Institute (policy and finance), Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (justice reform & health care), Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (transit advocacy & disabilities rights), Denver Streets Partnership (transit advocacy), and the Fax Partnership (housing & business). The overall desired outcome was to assess the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Committee's proposed recommendation on Fixed Routes and Paratransit Service Provision. The comments and recommendations are offered with an understanding that input was being sought from community organizations outside of the RTD Accountability Committee's standing process and with limited information on the background and history of how the recommendation was formulated.

The ad hoc working group reviewed the recommendation as a package.

Overall Comments and Strategic Recommendations:

- **Be inclusive of people with disabilities throughout the work on this recommendation:** The working group strongly recommends working directly with people with disabilities to listen and center their needs around accessibility. The working group also encourages clarity around what is meant by "pipeline of accessibility improvements" that is currently stated in the recommendation.
- **Displacement mitigation:** As with other recommendations, the working group encourages RTD to consider impacts of displacement on low-income communities with expansion and development around transit lines.
- **Opportunity for RTD to promote its services:** The working group sees an opportunity for RTD to continue expanding its promotion of its services.

Equity Assessment:

How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

This recommendation may result in moderate to high benefit to communities of concern as it focuses on accessibility, multimodal transit options, and service delivery. All of these elements are central to RTD being more efficient and increasing ridership. The working group highlighted the importance of including people with disabilities to offer input on the recommendation on accessibility and to include safety with accessibility and multimodal considerations. For multimodal and access considerations, language access is important (multilingual options for apps, way finding in multiple languages).

The working group could not offer recommendations on the operator retention as the recommendations from the report were not included.

a) How are we defining benefit and burden?

Benefits of accessibility and infrastructure are focusing on people with disabilities. Burden is the recommendation may not have included people with disabilities when developing it and safety is not currently paired with accessibility and infrastructure considerations.

Benefits of multimodal transit options give riders access to last mile solutions. Burden is it may not be available outside of the urban core, riders with children may not be able to use multimodal options and riders with disabilities may not be able to use these options, riders where English is not their primary language may not be able to access and use multimodal options, low-income riders may not be able to afford multimodal options.

Benefits of transit service is increasing ridership and providing public transit to more communities. Burden is displacement issues and transit costs for low-income riders, consider offering multimodal pass (public transit, TNCs).

b) How do we measure this impact?

Survey data on fixed route and paratransit service provision once changes have been implemented.

Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geographies more than others? If so, which communities and how?

Yes, it may impact low-income communities of color and people with disabilities across all areas of the recommendations. People with disabilities may not be able to access transit based on what types of infrastructures and accessibility improvements are made. Low-income riders may be displaced with transit expansion and riders may continue to not be able to afford transit.

a) What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

N/A

b) Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?

As the recommendation is currently written, there are no specific neighborhoods required to help achieve this policy recommendation.

Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

People with disabilities may be left out of the development of the accessibility and infrastructure recommendation and possibly implementation. Multimodal transit options may not be viable for

people with disabilities, riders with children, low-income riders, and riders who speak a language other than English. Ways that this can be mitigated is by centering those with disabilities and partnering with multimodal outlets to ensure accessibility (language, people with disabilities, cost).

RTD Accountability Committee: Draft Recommendation **Fixed Route and Paratransit Service Provision**

As RTD continues to evaluate service delivery, the RTD Accountability Committee recommends the following in terms of Fixed Route and Paratransit Service Provision:

Accessibility + Infrastructure

- Improve accessibility at light rail and fixed route stops: Proposed solutions include:
 - Zero-step entrance at transit stations.
 - Standardize wayfinding signage and directional grooved pavement, ensuring some level of consistency across similarly designed stations to ensure blind communities are able to navigate transit stations.
 - Improve audio announcement system to assist those in the blind community.
- Identify a pipeline of accessibility improvement alongside disability and mobility advocates to allocate federal infrastructure dollars as they become available.
- Using existing survey data, work in partnership with municipalities to standardize and improve bus stop placement to ensure hard platform or egress.

Multimodal Transportation

- Work with micro-mobility partners and municipalities to ensure transit stations have diverse mobility options (e-bikes, scooters and other multi-modal devices including 3- and 4-wheel for people with mobility issues) to provide riders the last mile connection.

Service Delivery

- As Reimagine RTD continues its work, focus redesign efforts prioritizing travel needs on frequent transit users, including bus rapid transit.
- Work in coordination with municipalities and anchor institutions to coordinate land use and transportation planning to ensure a comprehensive network of transit-only lanes on major routes and equitable transit-oriented developments.
- Support limited access for pick up by on-Demand services like Taxi, Uber, Lyft that are providing transportation for those with disabilities. Designated areas at the station would help provide a seamless connection for transit riders.

RTD Accountability Committee: Draft Recommendation **Operator Retention**

The RTD Accountability Committee operations sub-committee assessed and discussed the State Auditor Report's findings on operator retention and human resources. The report described a series of recommendations to address and improve operator retention. The committee agrees with the findings

of the report and encourages RTD to utilize federal relief funding to support the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

Notes and Recommendations from Equity Working Group

- Accessibility & Infrastructure:
 - Suggestion to work directly with people with disabilities to understand the evolving needs of that community and RTD may be able to make better improvements based on what they actually need
 - Safety should be a fourth category on this list of accessibility and infrastructure
 - Safety considerations: Is there appropriate lighting? Can we work to make all riders more comfortable and sheltered from the elements? How accessible is signage and information?
 - RTD could do more to promote its services and encourage more people to take public transit
 - Could it be in the policy that specifically dictates you have to work with a local municipality to engage survey feedback from community
- Multimodal Transportation:
 - For riders to utilize multi-modal transportation options, can they simply share their bus passes?
 - Are multi-modal transportation options always available?
 - Is information available in various languages?
 - The further out you get from downtown - will vehicles be available?
 - Proposal that if someone has a monthly bus pass, it comes with a free Lyft pass
 - Who is their ridership? And what options is RTD offering them as first and last mile connections that they will actually use? What should RTD prioritize for first and last mile connections? Should multimodal transit options not be discarded entirely if they don't serve everyone? Should consider what to prioritize
- Service Delivery
 - Where can RTD cooperate with Land Trusts?
 - As RTD's service area expands, they need to be attentive through those expansions that they use all of the tools they have to mitigate the displacement that can happen
 - Working in coordination with municipalities and anchor institutions to coordinate land-use and transportation planning. Give explicit consideration to the communities they will impact - like low-income, communities of color
 - How do you build bus stops near affordable housing?
 - Really consider a multi-modal pass for bus/rail/other transit options

Equity Assessment for Performance Metrics Assessment

Recommendations

Background:

An ad hoc equity working group was convened by Mile High Connects. This working group consisted of community leaders and organizations, facilitated by Mile High Connects staff. Participants in this equity assessment include representatives from Conservation Colorado (transit advocacy & environmental justice), Colorado Fiscal Institute (policy and finance), Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (justice reform & health care), Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (transit advocacy & disabilities rights), Denver Streets Partnership (transit advocacy), and the Fax Partnership (housing & business). The overall desired outcome was to assess the RTD Accountability Committee's Operations Finance Subcommittee's proposed Performance Metrics recommendations. The comments and recommendations are offered with an understanding that input was being sought from community organizations outside of the RTD Accountability Committee's standing process and with limited information on the background and history of how the recommendation was formulated.

The ad hoc working group reviewed the recommendation as a package.

Overall Comments and Strategic Recommendations:

- **Transit expansion and community development:** As with other recommendations, the working group continues to highlight the importance of considering displacement and gentrification with the buildout. RTD should explore the possibility of CLT's with local municipalities and other policies to ensure low-income communities can stay in place or access affordable housing.
- **Dashboard: Managing and sustaining metrics and utility:** There is a focus on increased transparency by providing a dashboard, however the working group recognizes that timely updates are necessary. It is important to name that RTD dedicate staff to maintaining the dashboard with current metrics. Ensure that the dashboard is accessible, usable, easy to navigate, used by the public, advocates, nonprofits, municipalities, resident groups, and more.
- **Definitions of equity:** The working group noticed the broad sweeping definition of equity in the metrics. The term equality is used, which is different from equity. It is important to define equity consistently. RTD may want to consider revising this along with including safety in its definition of equity.

Equity Assessment:

How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

This recommendation may have some benefit to communities of concern. The utility of the

dashboard should be centered if it is to be accessible to a diverse array of constituents, including community residents, advocates, nonprofits, community groups, municipalities, and more. The recommendation is likely to increase equity if the dashboard is designed, implemented, and utilized by its intended audiences.

a) How are we defining benefit and burden?

Benefit to the community is the sharing of data and information equitably along 23 defined metrics under the following key areas: Operational Effectiveness, Financial Performance, Customer Experience, Community Engagement, Equity & Accessibility, Environmental Impact, and Safety. Burden is around the accessibility of the data: data available in multiple languages; literacy; accessibility to diverse audiences; consistent updating and refreshing of the data.

Benefit of continuing to measure ridership is to gain a better understanding of who is riding, who is being served through transit. Burden is that it is not considering which communities are not being served by transit.

b) How do we measure this impact?

The impact of this recommendation would be assessed by garnering data on who is using the dashboard and their intended purpose for the data/information.

Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geographies more than others? If so, which communities and how?

This recommendation will most likely only be relevant to constituents that are privy to transit; they either work in the industry or work in an adjacent field or industry that is connected to transit (direct service agency, etc.). Considerations should be made to broaden the audiences that will use the dashboard.

a) What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

N/A

b) Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?

As the recommendation is currently written, there are no specific neighborhoods that are required to help achieve the policy recommendation, meaning that all neighborhoods would be required to achieve the outcome of the recommendation. As this recommendation moves towards implementation, it is important to recognize that nonprofits and community based organizations do not speak for community residents and whether residents will use the dashboard is contingent on the ease of use and translation of data/metrics for a variety of constituents.

Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

The general public may not use the dashboard or understand the metrics. Ensure that a variety of constituents can use the dashboard in a wide variety of ways. Proactive engagement of different audiences and soliciting feedback in the development of the dashboard can mitigate the unintended consequences.

[Link to Performance Metrics Assessment](#)

Notes & General Comments from MHC Equity Working Group

- Notes on metrics:
 - Percent of on-time performance by mode: Is there a way to include language to prioritize areas with lower income riders, riders of color, and routes that are less frequent?
 - Operating cost recovery ratio: What implications are there for the fare box revenue being included here?
 - Percent increase in fare revenue: How does this account for a possible fare reduction over time?
 - Environment stretch metrics: Wonder if VMT reduction could be included here. Seems like it could help RTD help themselves to be able to really have something like that to point to show what a critical part of the state's goals RTD is.
 - Keep employees safe: For the sample goal, should this be 0?
 - Keep the system secure: Is there another way to measure "safety"?
- Currently it is very difficult to navigate and assemble various types of information from RTD (finances, ridership, board packets, etc.)
- COVID impacted public transit service, may have forced people to purchase cars, this is particularly difficult for low-income people and families
- Data from dashboard needs to be contextualized and updated regularly
- How can equity be institutionalized from the inside out in RTD? Equity a part of all RTD work. Is there a role that the RTD equity manager can play with this?
- Is there a way this equity working group could be a partner to both RTD, including equity manager, and MHC?
- Business considerations should be looked at carefully as RTD is a public entity, not a privately run business.
- How was the +2.10% goal selected for boarding change by mode? Is this feasible given current service levels and finances?

Equity Assessment for Partnership Recommendations

Background:

An ad hoc equity working group was convened by Mile High Connects. This working group consisted of community leaders and organizations, facilitated by Mile High Connects staff. Participants in this equity assessment include representatives from Conservation Colorado (transit advocacy & environmental justice), Colorado Fiscal Institute (policy and finance), Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (justice reform & health care), Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (transit advocacy & disabilities rights), Denver Streets Partnership (transit advocacy), and the Fax Partnership (housing & business). The overall desired outcome was to assess the RTD Accountability Committee's Governance Committee's proposed recommendation of Partnerships. The comments and recommendations are offered with an understanding that input was being sought from community organizations outside of the RTD Accountability Committee's standing process and with limited information on the background and history of how the recommendation was formulated.

The ad hoc working group reviewed the recommendation as a package.

Overall Comments and Strategic Recommendations:

- **Provide clear definitions and guidance:** Partnerships, anchor institutions, and other language is used which may not hold a common definition in the region. Similarly impacted communities are not clearly defined. The working group offered the environmental justice definition for consideration: *Disproportionately impacted community means a community that is in a census black group, as determined in accordance with the most recent US decennial census, where the proportion of households that are low-income is greater than forty percent, the proportion of households that identify as minority is greater than forty percent, or the proportion of households that are housing cost-burdened is greater than forty percent.*
- **Focus on worker dignity:** Recognize that shifting service from RTD to mobility service providers will result in equity as well paid jobs transition to gig-employment.
- **Expansion of partners:** Suggestion to also include schools and service providing organizations as anchor institutions.

Equity Assessment:

How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

The working group noted some of the possible inequities in the proposal to partner with existing mobility providers. The working group had inquiries around this: How are these providers supporting worker dignity? Are the mobility service providers accessible to multi-lingual riders and riders with disabilities?

a) How are we defining benefit and burden?

Benefit is defined as offering expanded service and ridership by partnering with local governments, anchor institutions, transportation management organizations (TMOs) and employers or employment centers who have a unique understanding of local mobility needs. Burden is defined as the lack of inclusion of other institutions such as schools and service organizations as well as consideration of median incomes in surrounding communities of anchor institutions.

b) How do we measure this impact?

Expand the types of partners that qualify as anchor institutions.

Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geographies more than others? If so, which communities and how?

Working group highlighted the location of anchor institutions may be in middle and higher income neighborhoods and communities, which can lead to inequities in partnerships for low-income neighborhoods that may not benefit or be included in the partnerships.

a) What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

Working group assuming that demographics around most of the anchor institutions is middle to upper middle class, white, English is the primary language, able bodied, etc.

b) Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

Partnership recommendation as written does not explicitly name schools or service providers as anchor institutions. Including these types of partners may increase equity and access for low-income communities and communities of color, and has the potential to increase ridership.

Could there be unintended consequences? If so, how can they be mitigated?

Key partners could be left out of the opportunity for partnership with RTD and mobility service providers may not be protected as partners with RTD. Expand who is an anchor institution and ensure worker protections.

RTD Accountability Committee
Equity Assessment for Additional Covid-19 Stimulus Spending
June 2021

Help fund PEAK eligibility technicians/caseworkers at county HHS departments to help people through LiVE enrollment, and allow LiVE applicants to prove eligibility through verification documents from other assistance programs (SNAP, WIC, etc.). Continuing to get the LiVE ID cards in qualified participant's hands is essential and counties can provide this customer assistance, but need funding to help support this function.

1. CRS 32-9-119.7 Farebox recovery ratios – plans

- a) How could this recommendation benefit or burden communities of concern? Is there likely to be an increase or decrease in equity?

This recommendation may benefit communities of concern by potentially making it easier eligible individuals to register for this cost saving program. Further, it could reduce wait times. This recommendation may burden communities of concern if enrollment increases more than the allotted funding, and therefore possible outcomes could be eligible clients denied access to the program or there could be a waiting list.

How are we defining benefit and burden?

A benefit is something that can help improve the access to affordable fares for communities of concern. A burden is something that can curtail it.

- a. How do we measure this impact?

This impact can be measured by how many additional individuals are enrolled.

- b) Could this recommendation impact specific communities or geography more than others? If so, which communities and how?

This recommendation could benefit many communities, but it would likely benefit individuals with low income the most because of the potential to make riding transit more affordable. While there are concentrations of low-income individuals in certain places, there are individuals with low-income living across the entire RTD district.

- a. What are the demographics of the most impacted areas?

While people of any demographic could have low-income, certain groups may be more vulnerable: veterans, older adults, individuals with disabilities, minorities, zero car households, and other communities of concern.

- b. Are neighborhoods equally required to help achieve the policy recommendation? If not, does this raise issues of equity and justice?

This recommendation is for an action district wide. It is not anticipated that any disproportionate impacts or requirements will fall upon any neighborhoods.

- c) Could there be unintended consequences? If so, can they be mitigated?

As previously mentioned, there is a possibility that enrollments can exceed allotted funding. This can be mitigated by finding additional resources.

- d) Does this policy/strategy address historic, systemic, environmental, or institutional barriers that have impacted this community?

This recommendation can address barriers to providing affordable fares for low-income riders by potentially making it easier for eligible individuals to enroll in the LiVe program. This will provide RTD flexibility to reduce fares, especially for low-income riders.

DRAFT