

# AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee  
Finance Subcommittee  
Wednesday, January 6, 2021  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
**VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE**  
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order
2. December 16, 2020 Meeting Summary (5 minutes)  
(Attachement A)
3. COVID Relief Funding (40 minutes)  
(Attachment B) Ron Papsdorf
4. Accountability Committee Preliminary Report Review (10 minutes)
5. Member Comment/Other Matters (5 minutes)
6. Next Meeting: January 20, 2021
7. Adjournment

**ATTACH A**

MEETING SUMMARY  
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE-Finance Subcommittee  
Wednesday, December 16, 2020  
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Rutt Bridges  
Dan Blankenship  
Krystin Trustman  
Rebecca White  
Chris Frampton  
Elise Jones  
Lynn Guissinger

Others Present: Ron Papsdorf, Matthew Helfant, Doug Rex, Natalie Shishido, Tanya Eydelman, Anna Danegger, Barbara McManus, Monika Triepf-Harnke, Bill Van Meter, Jacob Riger, David Singer, Miller Hudson, Jyotsna Vishwakarma, Randy Grauberger, Nicole Carey, Jordan Sanchez, Kathleen Bracke, Melanie Choquette, Bill Sirois, Doug MacLeod, Luke Palmisano, Alex Hyde-Wright, George Gerstle, Mac Callison, Roger Sherman, Kent Moorman.

Call to Order

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

December 2, 2020 Meeting Summary

The meeting summary was accepted.

Front Range Passenger Rail Overview

Jacob Riger, Vice Chair of the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission provided background on the effort. Mr. Riger introduced David Singer from the CDOT project team to present the alternatives that have been developed and are being evaluated. He also highlighted early implementation options to connect Ft. Collins to Colorado Springs. The highest ridership city-pair is Denver to Boulder.

Chair Bridges asked about the system definitions for the \$1.5 billion to \$2.5 billion initial phase, including stations.

Mr. Singer responded that the project team is still working to define specific operational parameters, stations, need for one-seat trips, etc. The estimated total time to travel north to south is estimated to be 2 ½ to 3 hours, but the average passenger trip would be about 40 minutes since the majority of riders would not travel the entire length.

Ms. Jones observed that one of the direct connections of this project to the Accountability Committee is how it might relate to Northwest Rail. She asked about the likelihood of getting NW Rail via FasTracks vs. Front Range Passenger Rail; where are we in the realm of viability for Front Range Passenger Rail?

Mr. Singer stated that the project team is focused on finding the preferred solution and exploring opportunities for funding and operations for that solution.

Mr. Riger added that there is a lot of momentum and excitement at the State and Federal levels, including from Amtrak.

Ms. Jones noted that unfinished FasTracks is a big issue, particularly NW Rail and one option is to support leveraging the BNSF route between Denver and Boulder for Front Range Passenger Rail to fill that gap.

#### CARES Act Funding Review

Ron Papsdorf introduced Tanya Eydelman from North Highland to provide a summary of their review of RTD's use of \$232 million in CARES Act funding. North Highland found that the funds appear to be spent consistent with FTA requirements and used the funds to retain staff and pay for purchased transportation services while implementing other cost cutting measures to adjust to reduced ridership, farebox revenue, and sales tax revenue resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### RTD Administrative Overhead Review

Ron Papsdorf introduced Tanya Eydelman from North Highland to provide a summary of their review of RTD's Administrative Overhead. Based on a review of information provided by RTD, North Highland found that RTD appears to have a somewhat higher percentage of administrative staff than peer transit agencies; higher administrative staff salaries and wages than peers, adjusted for cost of living; and total administrative salary and wages as a percentage of total operating expenses on par with peer agencies.

Chair Bridges suggested that the assessment be refreshed after RTD's 2021 staff reductions are complete.

Rebecca White asked about the use of additional consultant support to supplement administrative staff at RTD.

Anna Danegger from North Highland responded that they did not evaluate contracted out administrative services as part of this review.

Chair Bridges stated that the subcommittee needs to understand this work better and that it is not quite ready to be included in the Accountability Committee Preliminary Report.

#### Member Comment/Other Matters

Lynn Guissinger inquired about the process for taking recommendations to the RTD Board of Directors. It was noted that the Accountability Committee Co-Chairs are planning on attending an upcoming Board meeting and that the final approved legislative recommendations would be sent to Ms. Guissinger.

The next meeting will take place on January 6, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

**ATTACH B**

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Finance Subcommittee

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

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 6, 2021	Discussion	3

**SUBJECT**

COVID Relief Funding

**PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

N/A

**ACTION BY OTHERS**

N/A

**SUMMARY**

On December 27, the President signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021. In addition to Federal Fiscal Year appropriations, the Act includes additional coronavirus response and relief supplemental appropriations. Like the CARES Act, this Act includes additional support for the nation's transit systems, specifically \$13.3 billion to the Federal Transit Administration for urbanized area formula grants. Based on an initial assessment that these funds will be distributed similarly to the CARES Act funds, RTD may receive about \$130 million from this Act.

RTD staff will discuss previous guidance and initial thoughts that may form a framework for their decision making on the use of these additional COVID relief funds in the context of the 2021 budget.

The subcommittee should consider this in the context of the review of RTD's use of CARES Act funding, the 2021 budget, and how these funds might best be used to prepare RTD to emerge from the pandemic and restore service and financial stability.

**PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS**

N/A

**PROPOSED MOTION**

N/A

**ATTACHMENT**

1. COVID Relief Funding-Federal Transit Administration Provision Summary

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at [drex@drcog.org](mailto:drex@drcog.org) or (303) 480-6701; or Ron Papsdorf, Director, Transportation Planning and Operations, at 303-480-6747 or [rpapsdorf@drcog.org](mailto:rpapsdorf@drcog.org).

## COVID Relief Funding – Federal Transit Administration Provision Summary

For “Transit Infrastructure Grants”, \$14,000,000,000, to remain available until expended, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

Provision	Comments
<p>\$13,271,310,572 for grants to recipients eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, and administered as if such funds were provided under section 5307 and section 5337 of title 49, except that funds apportioned under section 5337 shall be added to funds apportioned under 5307 for administration under 5307.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds allocated in the same ratio as funds were provided under Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020.</li> <li>• Funds to be allocated not later than 30 days after enactment.</li> <li>• The total of these funds plus previous CARES Act allocations to any urbanized area may not exceed 75% of that urbanized area’s 2018 operating costs based on data contained in the National Transit Database.</li> <li>• For urbanized areas exceeding 75%, the funds in excess of 75% will be redistributed to urbanized areas not exceeding 75%.</li> </ul> <p>No recipient in an urbanized area may receive more than \$4 billion from this Act and the CARES Act combined, until 75% of the funds provided to the recipient are obligated and only after the recipient certifies that the use of such funds in excess of \$4 billion is necessary to prevent layoffs or furloughs directly related to demonstrated revenue losses directly attributable to COVID-19.</p>	<p><i>These funds will be apportioned in accordance with section 5307 (urbanized area formula grant program) and section 5337 (state of good repair grant formula program), except that the portion calculated under section 5337 will be combined with the section 5307 amount and administered under section 5307.</i></p> <p><i>RTD’s reported 2018 operating costs were \$663.8 million; 75% is \$497.8 million. RTD received \$232 million under the CARES Act and may receive approximately \$130 million under this Act, for a total of \$362 million. Therefore, RTD should not be limited.</i></p>
<p>\$50,034,973 for grants to recipients or subrecipients eligible under section 5310 of title 49.</p>	<p><i>DRCOG is the designated recipient for these grants for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors &amp; Individuals with Disabilities in the Denver-Aurora urbanized area. CDOT administers the program for areas in the DRCOG region outside of the Denver-Aurora Urbanized Area (Boulder, Louisville-Lafayette, and Longmont) and areas outside of urbanized areas. mostly on the plains and in the foothills.</i></p>

## COVID Relief Funding – Federal Transit Administration Provision Summary

<p>\$678,654,455 for grants to recipients or subrecipients eligible under section 5311 of title 49.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amounts allocated to any State for rural operating costs under this heading when combined with CARES Act funding may not exceed 125% of that State’s combined 2018 rural operating costs of the recipients and subrecipients in the State based on data contained in the National Transit Database.</li> <li>• For States exceeding 125%, the funds in excess of 125% will be redistributed to States not exceeding 125%.</li> </ul>	<p><i>These are grants to States for Rural Transit and Intercity Bus. They are administered by CDOT.</i></p>
<p>Funds provided under this heading in this Act are available for the operating expenses of transit agencies related to the response to a COVID–19 public health emergency, including, beginning on January 20, 2020, reimbursement for operating costs to maintain service and lost revenue due to the COVID–19 public health emergency, including the purchase of personal protective equipment, and paying the administrative leave of operations or contractor personnel due to reductions in service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to the maximum extent possible, funds made available under this heading in this Act and in title XII of division B of the CARES Act (Public Law 116–136; 134 Stat. 599) shall be directed to payroll and operations of public transit (including payroll and expenses of private providers of public transportation), unless the recipient certifies to the Secretary that the recipient has not furloughed any employees.</li> <li>• such operating expenses are not required to be included in a transportation improvement program, long-range transportation plan, statewide transportation plan, or a statewide transportation improvement program.</li> <li>• private providers of public transportation shall be considered eligible subrecipients of funding provided under this heading.</li> <li>• the Federal share of the costs for which any grant is made under this heading in this Act shall be, at the option of the recipient, up to 100 percent.</li> </ul>	<p><i>To the maximum extent possible, funds shall be used for payroll and public transit operations – unless the recipient certifies that they have not furloughed any employees.</i></p> <p><i>These expenses are not required to be in DRCOG’s TIP or Regional Transportation Plan.</i></p> <p><i>RTD can use funds to pay private providers of public transportation.</i></p> <p><i>A non-federal match is not required for these funds.</i></p>