

AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee
Finance Subcommittee
Wednesday, November 4, 2020
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. October 21, 2020 Meeting Summary
(Attachement A)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. CDOT Financial Dashboard
5. Update on RTD COVID Immunization Support
6. Peer Agency Comparisons
(Attachment B)
7. FasTracks Unfinished Corridors Report: [Link to Report](#)
8. Summary and Discussion of Needed Legislative Actions

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

9. Member Comment/Other Matters
10. Next Meeting: November 18, 2020
11. Adjournment

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE-Finance Subcommittee
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rutt Bridges
Dan Blankenship
Krystin Trustman
Rebecca White
Lynn Guissing
Elise Jones
Deya Zavala

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, DRCOG Executive Director; Heather McKillop, RTD; Bill Sirois, Tai-Shrae Parish, Mac Callison, Mellanie Snyuder, Melanie Choquette, Luke Palmisano, Natalie Shishido, Jennifer Brandeberry, Jordan Sanchez, Ron Papsdorf, DRCOG, Matthew Helfant, DRCOG.

Call to Order

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Next steps for RTD role in COVID crisis resolution

Rutt Bridges added a few slides to the original presentation regarding process, personal COVID vaccine card, and privacy issues. Mr. Bridges asked if the subcommittee had any concerns with him engaging with RTD and other to pursue the idea further.

No concerns were raised by subcommittee members. Mr. Bridges will proceed and report back to the subcommittee.

RTD state statutes summary

Mr. Bridges requested that the full Title 32-9 be posted on the Accountability Committee web site.

Mr. Bridges introduced Jennifer Brandeberry and asked her to provide some background and history of statutes related to RTD.

Ms. Brandeberry stated that she was providing information to the subcommittee as a private citizen, not as a representative of RTD. In general, RTD is a creature of state statute and over the years several legislatures have made changes to laws impacting RTD's structure and operations. For instance, the requirement for competition goes back to the 80s and originally was established as a 28% base. Now it is a cap. This item hasn't been looked at in a long time. The farebox recovery ratio has also been in statute for a long time.

Elise Jones asked if this requirement is restricting RTD's flexibility to do things like offering free fares or reduced fares?

Mr. Bridges stated that ridership should be the primary goal; efficiently serving the population.

Lynn Guissing suggested the subcommittee talk to RTD staff and Board to get their perspectives on statute issues.

Rebecca White asked how much of the farebox recovery ratio is covered by federal funds vs. fares?

Ms. Jones stated that parking is one of the ripest places for investigation. There are lots of different ways to look at parking policy and revenue issues such as charging for parking in order to reduce transit fares.

Dan Blankenship asked for a report on how much parking might be charged for.

Mr. Bridges stated that a huge investment has been made in parking.

Heather McKillop stated that RTD has a lot of information available about RTD's parking costs, maintenance, etc.

Bill Sirois stated that RTD completed an extensive parking pricing analysis a couple of years ago.

Ms. Brandeberry stated that one of the more significant bills considered in the past related to sales tax unification with the State sales tax (i.e., what is taxed).

Mr. Bridges stated that one thing that could be done without charging for parking would be reserved spaces for certain users such as carpools.

Ms. Jones stated that the question is how could we approach parking management from several perspectives: greenhouse gas emissions, electric vehicles, equity, etc.?

Mr. Blankenship asked for an explanation of the levying taxes statute.

Ms. McKillop stated that this is an old provision, written prior to TABOR that allowed RTD to levy a property tax in order to fill a revenue shortfall. Under TABOR, any such question would have to go the voters. She also stated that RTD's TABOR calculation is based on property tax, even though RTD does not levy a property tax.

Subcommittee Priorities

Mr. Bridges led a discussion and review of Finance Subcommittee priority issues in order to work on preliminary recommendations by the end of 2020. No changes were suggested by committee members. Priority issues include FasTracks funding information, including past investments, financing costs, unfinished corridors, etc.; regional/subregional funding allocation options; and limitations on development of RTD properties.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Member Comment/Other Matters

Mr. Bridges pointed out CDOT's SB 267 project dashboard as a possible model for RTD.

The next meeting will take place on November 4, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Finance Subcommittee

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

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SUBJECT

RTD Peer Agency Comparisons Discussion

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Peer reviews and organizational assessments can provide useful insights into RTD's finances and the work of the Accountability Committee. However, it can be difficult to appropriately identify peer agencies for comparison to RTD, since every agency is unique in terms of its geography, population, services, etc. There are also several sources of information for comparison data.

DRCOG staff have begun an initial assessment of different measures for identifying peer transit agencies and comparisons to RTD. Two key sources of transit system information are the National Transit Database (NTD) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. [American Public Transportation Association \(APTA\) 2020 Fact Book](#)
2. [National Transit Database Transit Agency Profiles](#)
3. Potential Peer Agencies
4. RTD Comparisons to Peers-Working DRAFT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

Potential Peer Agencies for RTD

System	Largest City Served	District Area (sq. mi.)	Population	Density (pop/sq. mi.)	VOMS	Ridership (unlinked trips)	Employee Count	Total Operating Expense
RTD	Denver	2,342	2.9 m	1,248	1,457	105.5 m	2,789	\$579.7 m
King County Department of Metro Transit	Seattle	2,134*	2.1 m	984	3,150	129.1 m	4,420	\$729.5 m
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority	Boston	3,244	3.1 m*	959	2,423	372.4 m	5,924	\$1.5 b
County of Miami-Dade dba: Transportation & Public Work	Miami	306	2.5 m	8,158	1,396*	81.9 m	3,590	\$553.4 m
Tri-Met	Portland	382	1.6 m	4,062	961	97 m	2,900*	\$480.1 m
Dallas Area Rapid Transit	Dallas	698	2.4 m	3,450	1,062	62.4 m	3,662	\$526.4 m*
MARTA	Atlanta	936	2 m	2,102	846	705.5 m	3,516	\$467.4 m
LACMTA	Los Angeles	1,736	12.2 m	7,000	3,873	394.3 m	9,427	\$1.8 b

*= within 10% of RTD metric

Note: MARTA and LACMTA do not share metrics within 10% of RTD but were involved in the RTD Multi-Agency Exchange for best practices.

RTD Comparisons to Peers – Working DRAFT

	Measure ¹	RTD	Within 10%	Peers
Descriptive Measures	Geography	2,342 sq mi	2,108-2,576	Riverside County Transportation Commission; King County Dept. of Metro Transit; Southern California Regional Rail Authority; Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency; Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation; Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority; Maryland Transit Administration
	Population	2.92m	2.63-3.21	Metropolitan Council; Orange County Transportation Authority; Central Puget Sound Regional Transportation Authority; Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority; Port Authority Transit-Hudson
Performance Measures	Vehicles in Operation at Maximum Service (VOMS)	1,457	1,311-1,603	County of Miami-Dade, dba: Transportation & Public Work; Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority – Público; Orange County Transportation Authority; Pace - Suburban Bus Division
	Total Ridership (unlinked passenger trips)	104.7m	94.2-115.2	MTA Long Island Rail Road; Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon; Maryland Transit Administration
	Light Rail Ridership	24.6m	22.1-27.1	METRO Light Rail (Minneapolis-St. Paul); SEPTA (Philadelphia); Central Link (Seattle)
	Bus Ridership	70.5m	63.5-77.6	
	Employees	2,789	2,510-3,068	Port Authority of Allegheny County; Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon; Maryland Transit Administration
	Budget (Total Operating Expense)	\$579.7m	\$521.7m-\$637.7m	Dallas Area Rapid Transit; Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas; County of Miami-Dade, dba: Transportation & Public Work

Other potential descriptive measures to consider: region, screening based on mode operation (e.g. rail operator: yes/no)²

¹ Based on 2018 data

² National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2010. *A Methodology for Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Public Transportation Industry*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
<https://doi.org/10.17226/14402>.

Descriptive Measures:

King County Department of Metro Transit and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority have the most similar geographic and population characteristics to RTD *and* provide rail service. The two transit agencies have a population density within 25% of RTD's service area population density.

Geography

System	Area (Square Miles)	Population	Population/Square Mile	Rail and Bus: Y/N
Riverside County Transportation Commission	2,100	1,800,000	857	N
King County Department of Metro Transit	2,134	2,100,000	984	Y
Southern California Regional Rail Authority	2,291	8,300,000	3,622	N
RTD	2,342	2,900,000	1,248	Y
Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency	2,446	1,200,000	491	N
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation	2,500	1,700,000	680	N
Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority	2,540	2,100,000	827	N
Maryland Transit Administration	2,560	7,800,000	3,046	Y

Population

System	Population	Area (Square Miles)	Population/Square Mile	Rail and Bus: Y/N
Metropolitan Council	2,850,000	2,975	958	N
Orange County Transportation Authority	2,870,000	435	6,598	N
RTD	2,920,000	2,342	1,247	Y
Central Puget Sound RTA	3,110,000	1,087	2,861	Y
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority	3,110,000	3,244	959	Y
Port Authority Trans – Hudson Corporation	3,160,000	226	13,982	N

Performance Measures

Vehicles Operating at Maximum Service

System	Largest city served	VOMS
Pace- Suburban Bus Division	Arlington Heights	1,510
Orange County Transportation Authority	Orange	1,495
RTD	Denver	1,457
Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority – Público	San Juan	1,426
County of Miami-Dade, dba: Transportation & Public Work	Miami	1,396

Total Ridership

System	Largest city served	Annual ridership	Avg. daily weekday UPTs	Operating Expense/ UPT	UPTs/ VRH	VOMS	
MTA Long Island Rail Road (CR)*	Jamaica	105.5m	382,014	\$14.05	50.3	1,026	
RTD	Denver	104.7m	343,460	\$5.54	23.9	1,457	
Tri-Met	Portland	97m	310,328	\$4.95	31.4	961	
Maryland Transit Administration	Baltimore	96.2m	317,560	\$7.86	22.6	1,683	

Light Rail Ridership (Does not include heavy/commuter rail) Peer Systems

System	Largest city served	Annual ridership	Avg. daily weekday boardings	System length (miles)	Avg daily boardings/mile	Lines	Stations
Central Link	Seattle	25.2m	79,113	20.4	3,878	1	16
RTD	Denver	24.6m	95,300	58.5	1,629	8	62
SEPTA	Philadelphia	24.3m	66,633	68.4	974	8	>100
METRO Light Rail	Minneapolis-St. Paul	24.3m	75,300	21.8	3,454	2	37

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_light_rail_systems_by_ridership

RTD overall rankings:

Annual Ridership: 8th of 41 systems (High = 51.4m, Low = 158k)

Avg. boardings/mile: 17th of 41 systems (High = 5,296, Low = 218)

System Length: 5th of 41 systems (High = 93, Low = 1.6)

Bus Ridership

Employees

System	Largest city served	Total Employee Count	Total Hours	Total Operating Wage
Port Authority of Allegheny County	Pittsburg	2,542	5.3m	\$29.95
RTD	Denver	2,789	5.7m	\$27.83
Tri-Met	Portland	2,900	5.3m	\$31.91
Maryland Transit Administration	Baltimore	3,065	6.3m	\$29.22

Budget

System	Largest city served	Total Operating Expense
RTD	Denver	\$579.7m
County of Miami-Dade, dba: Transportation & Public Work	Miami	\$553.4m
Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas	Houston	\$536.9m
Dallas Area Rapid Transit	Dallas	\$526.4m