

AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee
Operations Subcommittee
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
3:00- 4:00 p.m.
VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. October 07, 2020 Meeting Summary
(Attachment A)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Operations Subcommittee Strategic Priorities
(Attachment B)
5. RTD LiVE Presentation
(Attachment C) Monika Treipl-Harnke, RTD Senior Manager, Revenue
6. Fare Equity Discussion
(Attachment D) Matthew Helfant
7. Next Steps

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

8. Member Comment/Other Matters
9. Adjournment

ATTACH A

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 7, 2020
Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Julie Duran Mullica	Northglenn City Council Member
Krystin Trustman	RTD Access-a-Ride Patron
Deya Zavala	Mile High Connects Executive Director
Elise Jones	Boulder County Commissioner
Rutt Bridges	Appointed for financial planning expertise
Troy Whitmore	RTD Board of Directors
Chris Frampton	Real estate developer

Others Present: Barbara McManus, RTD, Nicole Carey, RTD, Michael Ford, RTD, Mac Callison, Aurora, Jordan Sanchez, RTD, Jeff Becker, RTD, Natalie Shishido, CDOT, and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

Matthew Helfant, Senior Transportation Planner, called the meeting to order at 3p.m.

Meeting Summary from September 24, 2020

No comments.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Equity in Transit Service Planning Discussion

Matthew Helfant gave a brief presentation on transit planning. This presentation included background from *Best Practices in Service Planning* (USF Urban Transportation Institute, 2009) and an article from Jarrett Walker entitled *The Transit Ridership Recipe*. Following the presentation there was questions and discussion.

Chris Frampton asked is a net promoter score methodology used to judge quality of service. Matthew asked Chris to provide more information so the Committee can look into it.

Elise Jones asked how RTD is tracking service performance for vulnerable populations. Jeff Becker of RTD staff said they conduct Title VI and Environmental Justice analysis when significant changes are proposed and rider satisfaction surveys that include questions about demographics to get information about satisfaction among various population groups, including vulnerable populations.

Deya Zavala asked Jeff for equity data she recalled from RTD's Reimagine effort. Jeff recommend Matthew request this data from RTD. Deya also asked about the accessibility of vulnerable populations and how well they can get where they need to go. Matthew briefly discussed Title VI analysis for the DRCOG's 2050 MVRTP that will look at travel time for vulnerable populations.

Deya asked Kristin Trustman if she has any additional insight from an Access-a-Ride client perspective. Kristin talked about how it's a mixed bag with travel time based on the variables stemming from a shared ride demand response service. She also said that it is different from fixed route and should not be compared to fixed route.

Elise emphasized that its not just looking at whether transit service is available for vulnerable populations and it gets them where they need to go but also affordability is another barrier.

Ron Papsdorf asked the subcommittee their thoughts on the ridership vs coverage paradigm. Kristin agreed that it is a topic that the subcommittee should discuss further and cited that, in her opinion, it is not necessary for RTD to deploy large vehicles to pick up only a few passengers for the Evergreen route as an example.

There were additional comments agreeing that this is a concept worth exploring further and also to discuss a possible subregional model and other potential alternatives to a status quo where RTD has significant coverage area and challenges providing and deciding an appropriate level of service.

At the end of the meeting, there was consensus around diving into fare equity as a next area discuss related to service planning.

Next Steps

The next meeting will take place on October 21, 2020.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Member Comment/Other Matters
none
2. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at about 4pm.

ATTACH B

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Subcommittee

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

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
October 21, 2020	Discussion	4

SUBJECT

Operations Subcommittee Strategic Priorities

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

The subcommittee will continue the conversation about strategic priorities initiated at the October 19 RTD Accountability Committee. The goal is to further refine the strategic priorities and reach consensus on the items the subcommittee will focus on over the next two months.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

Draft RTD Accountability Committee: Initial Subcommittee Focus Areas

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

RTD Accountability Committee: Initial Subcommittee Focus Areas

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

Core Problems at RTD the Committee Needs to Address

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

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

Governance Subcommittee

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

Operations Subcommittee

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

Finance Subcommittee

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

ATTACH C

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Subcommittee

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

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
October 21, 2020	Information	5

SUBJECT

Briefing on RTD LiVE Fare program.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

In March 2017 RTD convened a working group to evaluate RTD's pass programs. Individuals involved in the working group included members of RTD staff and external stakeholders representing schools, businesses, municipalities, neighborhood groups and advocacy organizations. The group was asked to determine whether changes should be made to RTD's pass programs, ultimately addressing the question of whether RTD is offering the public the passes they want and need and pricing them appropriately. It formulated several options, all of which were modeled by a consultant for their impact on total fare revenue and ridership.

Based on recommendations from this group, RTD created LiVe, an income-based fare discount program, on July 29, 2019. The name is pronounced as one would say, "live your best life," to reflect how the program gives people the chance to live their life with more access to opportunity. LiVe provides a 40 percent discount to qualifying riders whose household incomes are at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. applicants must qualify and enroll in the program to receive the discounted fare. To be eligible you must be between 20 and 64 years old and live within the RTD district. The LiVE Program income threshold amounts will be updated each April, based on the most recent guidelines.

LiVE applications are processed through PEAK, the state's public benefits application system. Once approved, qualifying riders must carry two items to ride the RTD system and enjoy the discount:

1. proof of eligibility card and
2. one of the following forms of fare media: a MyRide card, a mobile ticket (three-hour or day pass) or a ticket issued by a nonprofit agency.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, please contact Matthew Helfant, Senior Planner, Long Range Transportation Planning, at 303-480-6731 or mhelfant@drcog.org or Monika Treipl-Harnke, Senior Manager, Revenue, RTD, at 303-299-2347 or Monika.Treipl-Harnke@RTD-Denver.com.

ATTACH D

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Subcommittee

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

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
October 21, 2020	Informational	6

SUBJECT

Fare Equity Discussion

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

At the last meeting there was a consensus to discuss fare equity at this meeting. RTD staff will make a brief presentation on the [LiVE Program](#) that discounts fares for low-income riders. DRCOG staff will also make a brief presentation on fare equity that will include a look at a fare relief and fare assistance program in Portland, Oregon, and a proposal to make fare free in Kansas City, Missouri.

Please see the following links for more information:

Kansas City

<https://uspirg.org/blogs/blog/usp/zero-fare-transit-kansas-city-case-study-free-public-transportation#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20few%20exceptions,how%20it's%20going%20so%20far>

<https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/who-will-pay-for-kansas-city-mos-free-transit/572980/>

Portland

<https://trimet.org/equity/#lowincome>

<http://portlandobserver.com/news/2018/jul/11/low-income-fares-begin/>

<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/RPTD/Pages/STIF.aspx>

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

Equitable Fare Programs Presentation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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



Fare Equity Discussion

Presented by:

Matthew Helfant

October 21, 2020

RTD Accountability Committee
Operations Subcommittee



Two Case Studies

- Portland- Transit Equity
- Kansas City- Free Fares being considered



Portland- Tri Met Transit Equity

- Decriminalization of fare evasion
- Approximately 8.5 million in free or reduced fares
- 50-72% fare discount based on duration of pass (e.g. one trip; monthly pass)
- Must be 18-64, an Oregon resident, make less than double federal poverty level (federal requirement for 50% discount for 65+ and disabled)
- Reloadable fare medium
- Paid for with revenue from a state payroll tax equal to one-tenth of 1 percent



Kansas City- Zero Fare Transit

- Free fare on buses is being considered
 - Street car is already free
- Estimated annual cost approximately \$8 million
 - \$4.8 million in KC budget
 - Push to make up difference with private sector investment
- Cost to RTD to implement free fares would have eliminated over \$150 million in 2019 revenue if all fares are removed

THANK YOU!

Matthew Helfant, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
mhelfant@drcog.org