

AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee
Operations Subcommittee
Wednesday, April 21, 2021
3:00- 4:00 p.m.
VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. April 7, 2021 Operations Meeting Summary
(Attachment A)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Recommendations on Pass and Fare Programs
(Attachment B)

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

5. Next Steps
6. Member Comment/Other Matters
7. Adjournment

MEETING SUMMARY
RTD ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE - OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

Lynn Guissing
Troy Whitmore
Jackie Millet
Crystal Murillo

Others Present: Debra Johnson, Bill Van Meter, Brian Welch, Anna Danegger, Tanya Eydelman, Ala Battikhi, Mac Callison, Peggy Catlin, George Gerstle, Michael Davies, Kent Moorman, Allison Crump, Luke Palmisano, Alex Hyde-Wright, John McKay, Megan Wagner, Megan Wagner and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3pm.

March 17, 2021 Finance/Operations Subcommittee Meeting Summary

No comments.

Performance Measures Discussion

Chair Deya Zavala introduced Tanya Eydelman from North Highland to facilitate the discussion. Tanya introduced Ala Battikhi, a data analytics expert and gave a presentation on performance measures. After the presentation, Mr. Battikhi provided background on performance metrics and analytics. Chair Zavala asked Ala to confirm that performance metrics should tell a story about performance. Ala confirmed this point. Rutt Bridges asked about how RTD tracks ridership. Debra Johnson explained that RTD tracks boardings using automatic passenger counters and samples from ride checks. She talked about the limitations using these methods and explained that in the future technology may bring a more accurate way to measure ridership.

Chair Zavala asked how environmental impact may be measured. Mr. Battikhi said there are many variables in deciding what to measure including the type of data that is readily available.

Mr. Battikhi next asked the subcommittee what measures they would like to see. Krystin Trustman asked about on time performance/service efficiency. Mr. Battikhi stated a few possible measures. Ms. Johnson stated that sometimes on-time performance is not helpful for measuring customer satisfaction because there is allowance for some minutes before and after the time point stops listed on schedules. Jackie Millet asked about performance metrics around sufficient staffing levels. It was decided that Mr. Battikhi would go through potential measures before answering this question. Crystal Murillo stated that she wants to make sure that service for equity populations is considered for performance measure(s). Elise Jones stated that climate change and ozone have some of the largest impacts from transportation. She would like to see performance measure(s) that look at environmental impact. Chair Zavala stated that she wants to be careful with safety performance measures as they pertain to equity, especially in communities of color. She also stated that employee

engagement should also be considered for performance measure(s) and asked subcommittee members to send any additional ideas to her and DRCOG staff.

Member Comment/Other Matters

Alex Hyde Wright from Boulder County staff briefly discussed recommendations for pass and fare programs. His recommendations were shared with the Committee after the meeting.

Next Steps

The next meetings for both subcommittees will take place on April 21, 2021.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at about 4pm.

ATTACH B

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Subcommittee

From: Matthew Helfant, Senior Transportation Planner
(303) 480-6731 or mhelfant@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
April 7, 2021	Discussion	4

SUBJECT

Fare and Pass Program Recommendations

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Earlier this year the subcommittee had initial discussions on RTD fare and pass programs. Based on the information presented and feedback from the conversations on this topic, Chair Zavala has drafted some recommendations to discuss (attached). A table showing RTD ridership by age cohorts and the presentation from the roundtable on fare and pass programs for anchor institutions from March 29th is also included. This presentation also includes notes from the discussion.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

1. Recommendations on Streamlining Fares, Passes, and Service
2. RTD ridership survey age results
3. Fare and Service Roundtable: Anchor Institutions

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Matthew Helfant, Senior Transportation Planner, at 303-480-6731 or mhelfant@drcog.org.

RTD Accountability Committee: Operations Subcommittee

Recommendations on Streamlining Fares, Passes, and Service

Background:

As the Operations Sub-Committee considers operational goals, it has had convers reviewed the findings of the State Auditor Report in addition to assessing current challenges and opportunities for increasing ridership. With the recommendation to remove the fare box recovery ratio, this recommendation considers goals to assess performance and ease of use in addition to specific recommendations related to fares and passes as we consider one of the recommendations.

Recommendations

The RTD Accountability Committee offers the following recommendations to RTD on Operational Goals and Opportunities:

1. Consider a single reduced/discounted fare.

- Consolidate all discounts into a single 50% discount that would cover youth, senior, disabled, and low-income.
- A free fare can be offered for youth between 0-10 (elementary school)
- Eliminate exact change requirements for discounted fares.

2. Explore opportunities to implement a “family fare” program that promotes family ridership.

- This would encourage ridership across various age groups & build a culture of transit.
- For youth riders, this would allow them to use a “family” email versus a school email, which can be limiting.

3. Use either the zone-based rail fare system or the distance-based regional bus fare system to determine local vs regional fares on regional bus routes and rail services.

4. Identify strategies to streamline and simplify *pass structures*

- Leverage relationships (new & existing) to streamline pass programs & incentivize businesses and anchor institutions by:
 - Making **Ecopass** available to every employee in the district through a transportation fee assessed on employers
 - Standardizing the **College Pass** program for all institutions of higher learning
- Incentivize individuals & organizations to purchase passes in bulk by:
 - Offering discounts for all pass programs (EcoPass, MyRide, monthly, etc.).
 - 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 employee.
- Replicate existing pass types on the mobile platform:
 - Day Pass (with fare capping/accumulators)
 - Monthly Pass (with fare capping/ accumulators).
 - Include non-calendar monthly pass options (can buy a monthly pass good from April 10- May 9).
 - Neighborhood EcoPass, Community EcoPass and Business EcoPass

5. Convene business and anchor institutions (hospitals, universities, school districts) utilizing passes on an annual basis to determine updates to the agreements.

6. Implement equity in fare evasion

Per the presentation from RTD's Chief of Police to the Operations Subcommittee in 2020, the fine for fare evasion on RTD services is \$75 and is set by state statute. This is higher than then the fine for parking tickets (which are set by local jurisdictions). Given that fare evasion and illegal parking are similar offenses, this raises some equity concerns that transit riders pay higher fines than car drivers.

RTD Accountability Committee: Operations Subcommittee

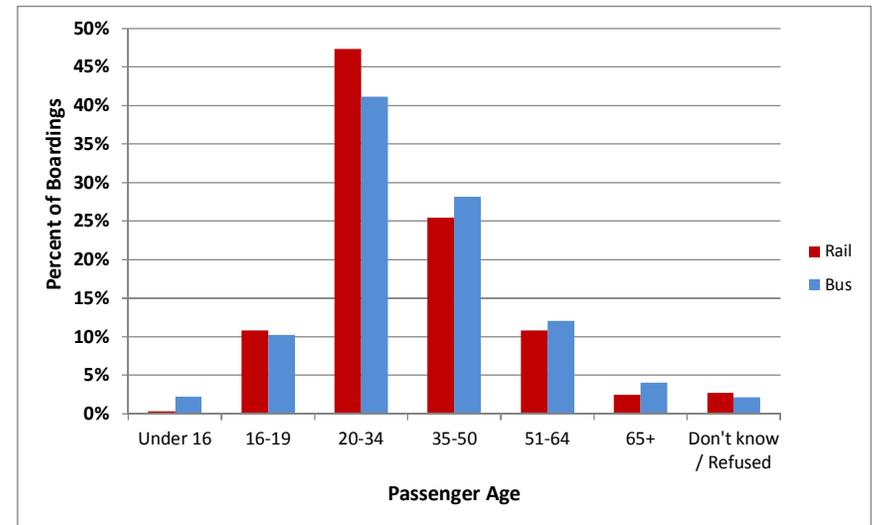
Family Fare Recommendation

In an effort to come up with a new, innovative solution, supporting family ridership will be important. The Operations Subcommittee recommends RTD consider the following when it comes to family fares:

- Leverage relationships and partnerships with school districts to implement a family fare, offering a discounted fare to youth between 5-19 years of age.

Age (Rail & Bus)

- Significant percentage of millennials (Age 20 – 34)
 - 47% of rail boardings
 - 41% of bus boardings
- Less than 5% of both rail and bus boardings in 65+ age group



Fares & Service Roundtable: Anchor Institutions - Agenda

Purpose: Discussion of the current challenges and opportunities related to fares, passes, and service to the anchor institutions of universities and school districts.

Agenda:

- Introductions (Virtual via chat)
- Identified challenges by the RTD Accountability Committee's Operations Sub-Committee
- Discussion on current fares & passes components
- Discussion on service to anchor institutions
- Questions/Comments

Sub-committee: In the summer of 2020, DRCOG agreed to house the RTD Accountability Committee, which is a collaborative established by Governor Polis, the transportation chairs of the Colorado General Assembly and RTD. The purpose of the Committee is to provide an independent and objective analysis of RTD's operations and provide recommendations for consideration. To assist in the Committee's work, three subcommittees (Finance, Operations and Governance) have been established to explore relevant topics.

Fares & Service Roundtable: Anchor Institutions

- Current fares are generally high relative to other transit agencies.
- Current fare structure can be confusing and difficult to navigate.
- Access to Eco passes and other passes increase utilization
- Pre-COVID (2019) total farebox revenue was \$154.4m

Focused Discussion: Youth Fares & College Pass Programs

- What is going well with your current involvement in using the Youth Fare or College pass program?
- What difficulties are you experiencing?
- Where are the conundrums in and around the passes that really puzzle you?
- What are questions/comments that keep reoccurring about the pass programs your institution engages in?
- Are there any other considerations the Operations sub-committee should have in mind as we consider our recommendations?
- Where do you see changes that could improve your overall participation in the program?

Focused Discussion: Service to your anchor institution

- What is going well with service to your institution? What difficulties are you experiencing?
- What seems to be the most critical service challenge for your institution?

Focused Discussion: Takeaways

- Passes/Fares:
 - Barrier free transit: Holistic pass/transit pass to increase ridership
 - Youth Fares:
 - Eliminate exact change
 - Don't require smartphones for younger riders
 - Use an email outside of school to set up ticketing
 - Consider a free fare/significantly reduced fare rate for specific youth age brackets
 - Consolidating fare discounts
 - Ecopass structure:
 - Discount for ecopass participation;
 - Lock in prices to ease user experience
 - Remove the all or nothing from ecopass program - explore pay as you go/opt in measure
 - "Family" fares – focus on goal to increase ridership
 - Accountability for usage:
 - ROI – sharing usage with employer and other constituents
 - Making passes available to affordable housing/neighborhoods
- Service
 - Explore secondary stops with public-private-partnerships to identify needs of a service area
 - Circulating system alongside school district service
 - Support timing for services to/from schools that allow parents to ride with students

Focused Discussion: Other resources shared

- <http://thecommons.dpsk12.org/Page/2145>
- <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/boulder-county-ecopass-study-2014.pdf>
- <https://transit.cityofpetaluma.net/>
- https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/communitywide-eco-pass-faq-1-201402251110.pdf?_ga=2.131978511.1490807776.1617046357-631626784.1616175418