

# AGENDA

RTD Accountability Committee  
Operations Subcommittee  
Wednesday, May 5, 2021  
3:00- 4:00 p.m.  
**VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE**  
Denver, CO

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. April 21, 2021 Operations Meeting Summary  
(Attachment A)

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Recommendations on Performance Measures  
(Attachment B)
5. Recommendations on Partnerships  
(Attachment C)

## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

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



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

**Wednesday, April 21, 2021**

**Note: Meeting held virtually via GoToMeeting**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

Lynn Guissing  
Julie Mullica  
Crystal Murillo  
Chris Frampton

Others Present: Debra Johnson, Michael Ford, Danny O'Connor, Theresa Rinker, Brian Welch, Lynn Baca, Monika Treipl-Harnke, Barbara McMannus, Mac Callison, Michael Davies, Kent Moorman, Allison Crump, Alex Hyde-Wright, Natalie Shishido and DRCOG staff.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3pm.

April 7, 2021 Operations Subcommittee Meeting Summary

No comments.

Recommendations on Pass and Fare Programs

Chair Deya Zavala provided a brief history and overview and then presented draft recommendations for the subcommittee to consider.

Rutt Bridges expressed a preference for the idea of having a flat fare and eliminating zones. He stated it would make it easier to ride and may increase revenue or keep it neutral. He then asked Debra Johnson about ridership on off-peak and weekends. Ms. Johnson said that it would be worth looking into having a reduced fare for off-peak use as a strategy to increase ridership. Elise Jones indicated a preference having just one reduced fare for populations that qualify for simplicity's sake. Ms. Jones also advocated for reducing the cost for EcoPasses to encourage more employers and neighborhoods to participate in the program and generate more ridership. She also promoted the concept of a "master EcoPass" for all low-income riders and "interagency passes" for RTD and other transit providers such as Bustang. Brian Welch from RTD stated that the zone fare system is predicated on a previous finding that a flat fare would be substantial because of how far the airport is from Denver Union Station and this could have possibly placed an undue burden on people traveling shorter distances, especially vulnerable populations. Krystin Trustman stated that the high fares plus the cost of flying make it hard for low-income people to take the train to the airport. Ms. Trustman further stated that when flat fares were instituted elsewhere ridership increased and discount fare programs for vulnerable populations could make up the difference in the increase for the flat fare. Chris Frampton emphasized simplicity although he also acknowledged that there is complexity with the topic. He also stated that allowing an auto renewal for passes may help generate more revenue for RTD. Debra Johnson announced that RTD will soon conduct an equity analysis on fare and pass programs. This will enable them the possibly of wholesale change from the current structure if it is deemed merited. Crystal Murillo stated that she felt comfortable with the discussions and draft recommendations.

Chair Zavala made some minor refinements to the draft recommendations based on the additional ideas shared and discussed such as the "master EcoPass" concept. She then asked if there are any additional comments. Elise Jones asked if it could be explored to recommend making transportation for employment free recognizing that it may take a vote of the people to approve the way to generate the revenue. Rutt Bridges advocated for creating a multiday transit pass for visitors. Lynn Guissing stated that RTD may want to rethink EcoPass structure because one of

the chief complaints of the program is that it gives passes to people who can afford to pay for transit on their own. Several subcommittee members stated that streamlining programs, making them easier to use and understand, and allowing more vulnerable populations to use the system fare-free would provide the most immediate benefit from the proposed recommendations. Elise Jones said that a pay-as-you-go option may be a good alternative to the EcoPass model for employers who do not have as much usage. Chair Zavala told the subcommittee she would email the updated recommendations to them.

#### Member Comment/Other Matters

#### Next Steps

The next meetings for both subcommittees will take place on May 5, 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](mailto:mhelfant@drcog.org)

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
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**SUBJECT**

Recommendations on Performance Measures

**PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

N/A

**ACTION BY OTHERS**

N/A

**SUMMARY**

As part of the Interim Report adopted on January 11, there were a set of legislative recommendations for changes to RTD statutes adopted by the full Committee for the Governor and Legislature to consider. One of the recommendations was to eliminate the requirement for RTD to meet the prescribed farebox recovery ratio. In December, the latest performance audit of RTD was presented (Attachment 1) to the Legislative Audit Committee. The audit contains a recommendation to revise the current farebox recovery ratio to make it more meaningful.

In February, staff from the State Auditor's Office briefed the subcommittee on the recommendation on replacing the farebox recovery ratio. Concurrently, the Finance Subcommittee has also been looking into potential financial performance measures.

In March, there was a joint meeting of the Operations and Finance Subcommittees that focused on this topic. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, North Highland staff facilitated a high-level conversation on possible recommendations based on dialogue at the March meeting. At the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, North Highland will present draft recommendations for the subcommittee to consider.

**PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS**

N/A

**PROPOSED MOTION**

N/A

**ATTACHMENT**

N/A

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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

**ATTACH C**

To: Members of the RTD Accountability Committee Operations Subcommittee

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

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Category</b>	<b>Agenda Item #</b>
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**SUBJECT**

Recommendations on Partnerships

**PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

N/A

**ACTION BY OTHERS**

N/A

**SUMMARY**

One of the RTD Accountability Committee focus areas is an exploration of how to enable partnerships with other transit agencies and nonprofits to provide for better service inside and outside of the RTD service area. This item was discussed at a joint subcommittee roundtable on March 1 as part of the Governance Subcommittee meeting. Since this item is of consequence for operations, we are providing an opportunity for the Operations Subcommittee to weigh in. A copy of proposed recommendations that the Governance Subcommittee will be considering on their May 3 meeting is included for this subcommittee's consideration as well.

**PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS**

N/A

**PROPOSED MOTION**

N/A

**ATTACHMENT**

Draft Partnership Recommendations

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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



## Draft Partnership Recommendations

As RTD continues to evaluate new innovative solutions to improve service delivery, collaborative partnerships will be an important facet of its strategic plan. Building on the RTD Accountability Committee's partnership recommendations for the use of COVID-19 relief funding, the governance subcommittee recommends RTD consider the following:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- As more federal relief funds become available, expand these partnership opportunities to improve service efficiency.
- Consider developing a competitive [Innovation Grant](#) program to drive bold ideas to increasing ridership. Recipients would receive funds to dive deeper into project concepts and implementation, creating models of innovation for the entire service area.
- Encourage RTD's [public-facing dashboard to include a component that ~~to develop a public facing partnership dashboard to~~ highlights](#) existing private and public partnerships.
- Regularly [evaluate the success of](#) existing partnerships [by predetermined metrics and ~~to determine their effectiveness and opportunities to~~](#) "re-scope" relationships to ensure maximum benefit.