



City of
Golden

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Denver Regional Council of Governments
1001 17th Street, Suite 700
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RE: Delay of TIP Grant – Golden Free Transit Project (TIP ID 2024-050)

The purpose of this letter is to respond to your request for a status update regarding the TIP grant awarded by DRCOG for the Golden Free Transit project in the City of Golden. This project will provide on-demand transit service to build on the local Ore Cart shuttle system operated in partnership between the City and Colorado School of Mines. The Ore Cart has integrated regional bus and rail transit service provided by RTD with local needs such as bus access to the RTD Jefferson County W Line station, north Golden commercial and residential neighborhoods and across the growing Mines campus including new on-campus residences. The project will address a persistent and unserved transit gap in south Golden neighborhoods which are physically separate from the core of our community by institutional and recreational land uses, and state and federal highways. The City and our partners have previously operated on-demand transit services and will utilize existing communications platforms to quickly integrate the project into our other service offerings.

As discussed with DRCOG staff after receiving the first strike, there have been several unforeseen factors impacting the Golden Free Transit project and the ability to be advertised, including:

- **MMOF Funding and State Transportation Budget.** City staff understand the project will be funded via MMOF funds. These funds were subject to potential rescission as part of 2025 state budget discussions. DRCOG staff provided regular communication and updates to grant recipients during discussions. CDOT and DRCOG coordination that allowed the project to proceed towards an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) was not completed until late summer 2025, and the City received our first strike shortly afterwards in September.
- **Grant Administrator Uncertainty.** Upon conclusion of the MMOF discussion, the grant was intended to be administered by the CDOT. CDOT staff determined that they did not have the capacity to oversee the grant and coordinated with the Federal Transit Administration to shift responsibility to RTD. The City coordinated with RTD staff to update them on the general project approach, draft scope of work and project area, and other funding requirements as they had been minimally involved in the grant application. RTD has changed personnel responsible

for grant administration several times. This coordination and change came at a cost to the project schedule, with work on the IGA beginning in earnest in early 2026.

City and RTD staff have worked diligently to address the project issues that have hampered beginning the project. A draft IGA has been approved by both RTD and City legal staff. City Council is scheduled to review and approve the IGA at their July 28 meeting. City staff have a request for proposals ready to issue upon IGA approval and are targeting service start in October 2026.

Sincerely,

Matt Wempe
Principal Planner
City of Golden