



Transit and Rail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2011

1:00-4:00 PM

Denver: CDOT/HQ Aspen Conference Room

Members Present	Yes	No	Members Present	Yes	No
Tom Allen	x		Matthew O'Neill	x	
Gary Beedy	x		Michael Penny	x	
Terri A. Binder	x		Ann Rajewski	x	
Craig Blewitt		*	Peter J. Rickershauser	x	
Richard Hartman		x	James Souby	x	
Todd Hollenbeck	x		Michael E. Timlin	x	
Jonathan Hutchison		x	Bill VanMeter		x
David Johnson	x		Scott Weeks	x	
Douglas Lehnen	x				

Others Present

Kelley Collier, Eagle County Regional Transportation Authority (ECRTA)

Terry Baylie, East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG)

Marlys Sittner, City of Fort Collins, General Manager, Transport/Dial-a-Ride

Joe Vaccaro, Community Intersections, and Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Coordination Committee on Specialized Transportation (CCOST)

*David Menter, substitute as observer for Craig Blewitt

David Hollis, HNTB Corporation Vince Rogalski, STAC member

Division of Transit and Rail: Wendy Wallach, Tom Mauser, Robin Foote

I. Call to order

Ann Rajewski called to order the regular meeting of the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) at 1:05 pm on May 20, 2011, in the Denver CDOT/HQ Aspen Conference Room.

II. Agenda items

- a) STAC update: The STAC update was not provided, but will be provided at future meetings.

Catch 22 of Transit Funding: Earmarked awards have now been replaced with discretionary grants that require a competitive process. Ann Rajewski provided a brief overview of last year's discretionary grants and the collaborative effort required to process the grant applications within a short turnaround of 6-10 weeks. In February 2011 CDOT and CASTA made a joint visit to DC and while there visited the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to discuss the discretionary grant process, how we could make the process less arduous and present more fundable applications. The FTA encouraged CDOT to prioritize the rural projects as part of a consolidated application. Ann stated that this year a consultant was hired to assist CDOT with identifying projects that did not receive requested funds within the past few years, as well as any new requests. Once a list of eligible projects is received from the consultant, CDOT will be asked to prioritize the projects. The projects will be prioritized and tentatively only 5 projects will be selected for each discretionary grant; i.e. Livability, State of Good Repair, Energy

Efficiency, etc. Ann discussed the reality of limited funding and subsidized tax dollars and funding options. Ann invited four guest speakers (transit representatives from around the state) to provide an overview to the TRAC on the successes and challenges encountered in each area. The areas discussed included Resort, Rural/Specialized, Urban, and Specialized.

b) Budget Presentations:

1. Resort: Kelley Collier, Director of EcoTransit in Eagle County is responsible for department functions, administration, and strategic planning. Kelley supervises transit revenue operations, capital programs, and budget management. Kelley also works with the ECRTA Board, operations manager and road supervisors in special projects and all transportation and personnel issues.

Successes:

- Commuter (employee) based riders that support the economy
- 25% increase in ridership (year-to-date) following prior year decreases

Challenges:

- Services cut in 2009; 34% reduction in routes due to lack of usage
- 48% increase in fares
- 50% decrease in ridership resulted from service reductions and fare increases
- Times changed to support peak commute times; cut 12:00-2:00 am service

Budget Impact:

- Eagle County (resorts) funds the system; 75% operation; 25% fares
- Had to decrease fleet by 3 buses; 5 needing replacement-maybe replaced with federal funds

2. Rural / Special: Terri Baylie, East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG)
The ECCOG was created in the early 1970's as a voluntary association of county commissioners, mayors and town council members in Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson and Lincoln counties, who joined hands to keep governmental decision-making at the local level. The four-county region is situated on Colorado's Central Plains between the Front Range and the Kansas state line.

Successes:

- Offers part-time, scheduled public transit services to anyone, regardless of age, using wheelchair accessible mini-buses
- Part-time service extends the lifetime of the vehicles
- Provides local, in-town trips, as well as interregional trips to Denver and Colorado Springs for medical and essential shopping purposes
- Decentralized program, with counties providing fuel, maintenance

Challenges:

- Operating a part-time schedule requires a demand response service
- Part-time schedule Monday-Friday
- Does not provide emergency transportation

- Does not generate cash from fare box revenues; donations accepted
- Overlapping regions require all county commissioners to work together

Budget Impact:

- The transit system is funded with FTA grant funds awarded to ECCOG through CDOT's Transit Unit. These grant funds are used in conjunction with county and other local funds.
- 53% of budget is FTA (Sec. 5311)
- 99% of vehicles funded by FTA (Sec. 5310)
- Drivers salaries are biggest budget item; positions are combined to cut costs
- Struggle to maintain services; will ask for funds for vehicle replacement

3. Urban: Marlys Sittner, City of Fort Collins, General Manager, Transfort/Dial-a-Ride Dial-A-Ride is a door-to-door paratransit service for individuals who, because of a disability, are prevented from using Transfort, the City's fixed-route bus service. The City of Fort Collins is an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000 based on the 2002 census. This classification makes the grant process a little more complicated because urbanized areas of this size can't use their FTA formula funds for operating expenses.

Successes:

- Operating budget \$8.9 million
- Hours/Miles Revenue Services: 100,000/1,200,000
- Fixed routes: 17 plus 1 regional route to Longmont
- Major federal funding: FTA section 5307 Urbanized Formula Grant (Fort Collins is a designated recipient for North Front Range Transportation Management Area)

Challenges:

- Cuts in recent years: unfilled vacancies; FTE losses; conference & training supplies; hardware/software upgrades; promotional spending; all discretionary spending
- Elimination of Saturday Service or elimination of 3 fixed routes
- Reduction in ridership / personnel: \$200,000+ / 10.0 FTE
- Non-replacement of fleet vehicles at the end of FTA average useful life

Budget Impact:

- FTA 5307 operating funds limited to 50% of 2002 Appropriation: \$578,089
- Reduction in Federal Operating Funding: \$650,000
- Reduction in Revenue Hours: 10,500 hours
- If FTA dollars are reduced by 30% that would reduce the total operating routes by 10%

4. Specialized: Joe Vaccaro from Community Intersections, speaking on behalf of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments' (PPACG) Coordination Committee on Specialized Transportation (CCOST)

The PPACG AAA Mobility Management Program works with the Coordination Committee on Specialized Transportation (CCOST) to coordinate services and identify goals and emerging issues related to public, human service, and job-access transportation services in the Pikes Peak region. Committee members include transportation planning and funding agencies, transit service providers, PPACG member entities, and at-large community organizations. CCOST advises the PPACG Board of Directors on issues, goals, and plans related to specialized transportation. The committee also provides a forum for coordinating the services of its member agencies in order to deliver specialized transportation more effectively and efficiently.

Successes:

- Serves adults with developmental disabilities and the elderly
- Specialized: door-to-door services versus curb-to-curb
- Drivers require 50 hours of specialized training
- 12,000-13,000 riders per year
- New project to collaborate with transportation drivers
- Will serve four non-profit agencies that have separate funding
- Unified call and dispatch center, which brings populations together

Challenges:

- Serves adults with developmental disabilities
- Majority of costs used to pay drivers

Budget Impact:

- Majority of costs used to pay drivers

- c) Break-up into Discussion Groups: The guest speakers participated in the TRAC break-out groups and assisted the TRAC with prioritizing projects for the discretionary grant process. The feedback received from the break-out groups will be consolidated, recorded and prioritized for further discussion.
- d) Large Group Wrap Up: The input from the break-out groups was collected and will be prioritized and summarized for the next meeting.

III. Agenda items for next month

Time did not allow for the discussion of next month's agenda items.

IV. Adjournment

Ann adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Robin Foote

Minutes approved by: Wendy Wallach and Tom Mauser