



Transit and Rail Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2011
1:00 - 4:00 PM
CDOT/HQ Auditorium

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

Others Present

Alice de Stigter (Phone), UP Public Affairs
Bob Felsburg, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
Holly Buck, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
Steven Marfitano, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
Michael Ogborn, OmniTRAX
Tom Underwood, JACOBS
Stan Zemler, Vail Town Manager
Stacey Mascarenas, Grand Valley Regional
Transportation Committee

CDOT Present

Division of Transit and Rail: Mark Imhoff,
Wendy Wallach, Tom Mauser, Robin Foote,
David Averill
Division of Transportation Development:
Kathleen Collins, Scott Richrath

I. Call to order

Ann Rajewski called to order the regular meeting of the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) at 1:00 pm on October 14, 2011, in the CDOT/HQ Auditorium.

II. Agenda items

- 1. *Introductions:*** Mark Imhoff opened the meeting and introduced Stan Zemler, Vail Town Manager. Stan has agreed to be the I-70 Coalition representative and replace Michael Penny, who resigned last month. Mark will confirm Stan's appointment with Don Hunt, CDOT Executive Director.
- 2. *Monthly Updates:*** In the absence of Jonathan Hutchison, Ann Rajewski provided a brief update on the status of Amtrak's FY 12 appropriation and the availability of federal capital matching dollars for high/higher speed rail. For FY 2012, Amtrak requested the amount authorized under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), plus an additional amount for ADA compliance work, bringing Amtrak's total request (capital and operations) to \$2.212 billion. The House Appropriations Subcommittee proposed \$1.126 billion for Amtrak and no money for high speed rail. The Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee proposed \$1.481 billion for Amtrak and added \$100 million for high speed rail. The Obama Administration's American Jobs Act includes \$2 billion for Amtrak capital, plus \$4 billion for high speed rail. Since the federal fiscal year ended on September 30 without a final budget for FY 12, Amtrak, along with other federal programs, is being funded via a Continuing Resolution (CR), which expires on

November 18. The CR provides Amtrak with \$1.461 billion, which reflects \$23 million reduction due to the debt ceiling law enacted in August. The next step in determining Amtrak's FY 12 appropriation is a joint House/Senate conference committee, which will resolve the differences. In closing, it was noted that states that have been successful in receiving federal capital money continued refining their intercity rail programs and advancing capital projects to a state of "shovel-readiness" even when federal capital support was lacking. For that reason, CDOT is encouraged to continue its intercity rail development efforts so a competitive application can be submitted when funds become available.

Tom Mauser provided an update on the FASTER FY 2013 call for projects. The Transit Section hosted a conference call regarding the process for this round of FASTER; 24 individuals participated in the call. Additional guidance was provided in a question-answer format and was posted on [Division of Transit and Rail's public website](#). FASTER FY 2013 applications are due on noon October 28, 2011.

The FTA announced its FY 2011 awards for the 5309 State of Good Repair (SGR) and Bus Livability grant programs. Of the \$26.4 million requested in the SGR consolidated application for rural areas (and Grand Junction), Colorado received approximately \$3.4 million for five projects. Colorado's urbanized systems were awarded three projects totaling approximately \$7.4 million. This brings the statewide total of SGR funding to about \$10.8 million. No Colorado projects, either rural or urbanized, were selected for Bus Livability funding.

Jim Souby announced the retirement of Bill Millar, American Public Transportation Association, and the departure of his institutional knowledge to the industry. Jim wanted to keep Bill in an advisory role; however, his organization could not support this resource and requested CDOT consider this option.

3. ***Short Line and Freight Discussion:*** Michael Ogborn provided a PowerPoint presentation titled [American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association](#). Short line railroads are local railroads with annual revenues of \$28 million. These railroads are governed by the federal Surface Transportation Board. They are usually light density lines leased or purchased from the large (Class I) carrier such as UP or BNSF. There are over 550 short lines that operate in 49 states, over 50,000 miles of railroad track; this is nearly 30 percent of the nation's total railroad mileage. Short lines are a feeder system for the large Class I railroads. One out of every four rail cars moving on the national rail network. Short lines employ nearly 20,000 people, serve over 13,000 facilities, and haul over 14 million carloads per year.

Short lines provide fuel savings and environmentally friendly shipping for small businesses and communities around the country. One rail freight car can carry the equivalent of four truck loads; and can carry a ton of cargo 436 miles on one gallon of fuel. Railroads are working to reduce emissions of particular matter by 90 percent and nitrogen oxide by 80 percent. Colorado has 12 short line railroads that carry freight only. It was agreed that all railroads promote economic development. A challenge continues to be linking with multiple shippers.

The Middle Class Tax Relief Act of 2010 extended short line's Section 45G Tax Credit for tax years 2010 and 2011. Section 45G enables regional short lines to claim a tax credit of 50 cents for every dollar spent on infrastructure improvements, up to an annual cap of \$3,500/mile of owned or leased track. Efforts to extend the act into 2012 are now underway. The benefit to the tax credit is this is a national network and it creates jobs.

A Short Line Loan Program was discussed and it was agreed it would be well received in Colorado. Nebraska and Kansas have Loan Programs that have low costs loans or grants. Kansas was able to build a new by-pass utilizing the Loan Program.

Truck size and weight issues were also discussed. Independent studies have concluded that heavier trucks make roads less safe. Large trucks are already dangerous with a fatal crash involvement rate 40 percent higher than the rate for passenger cars. Increasing truck weights is likely to lead to brake-maintenance problems and longer stopping distances. The U.S. Department of Transportation expressed concern about the ability to maintain brakes. Adding weight to a truck makes it more likely that the truck's equipment will wear out sooner including such truck components as brakes, suspension, and tires. In a study on truck crashes in Washington State, the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety found that 77 percent of tractor-trailers involved in crashes had defective equipment.

Nearly half of the bridges in the United States are more than 40 years old. One of every four bridges in the US is structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. The additional cost of repairing bridge damage caused by raising truck weights from 80,000 pounds to 97,000 pounds could be as much as \$65 million. While adding a sixth axle to a 97,000 pound truck may mitigate payment damage, it will increase bridge damage. A 2011 nationwide poll found that 72 percent of registered voters opposed allowing increased weights to 97,000 pounds. Increasing size and weight would adversely affect intermodal efficiency as today's intermodal cars are designed for double stack operations. Increased weights would mean 25-33 percent of existing cars would be rendered obsolete. If truck weights are increased, many containers would be too heavy to double stack. The inability to double stack will lead to intermodal inefficiencies, higher costs for shippers, and increased fuel usage and emissions.

4. **Performance Measures Discussion:** Scott Richrath provided a PowerPoint presentation on [Performance Measures at CDOT](#). Performance measures support management decisions and are used when meeting with stakeholders.

CDOT strives for and measures its performance by utilizing Visions, Goals, and Objectives from Procedural Directive (PD) 14, and Annual Objectives or Targets. The visions are aspirational, department-wide, and long term, and cannot be met with anticipated resources. The PD 14 Goals/Objectives were established by Policy Directive 14.0 in 2008, in conjunction with the Long Range Plan. These goals are specific, measurable, achievable, and results-oriented. The Annual Objectives or Targets are resource-constrained. They are annually established based on Policy Directive 14 and budgeted allocations. CDOT uses performance measures to publish the Annual Performance Report. The report includes the objectives and the actual performance; performance is identified by number or grade letter, and a red-yellow-green stop light indicator. The stop light indicator readily identifies failed performance. Performance measures are also used for the Transportation Deficit Report, which is mandated by the state legislature, as well as reports to the FHWA. Bob Felsburg provided a PowerPoint presentation titled, [Establish a Framework for Transit Performance Measures](#). The following guiding principles were discussed:

- Create a structured, simplified system that organizes performance measures in a manner that improves the understanding and the usefulness of the measures.
- Recognize the Vision and the Vision Values already established by the TRAC.

- Be specific to the need of DTR, but be broad enough to be consistent with performance measures used in other parts of CDOT.

The basic structure of the framework begins with the identification of broadly acceptable goal categories, which provide the base of a hierarchical structure. Secondly, comes values that define individual aspects of the performance of the system. Finally, individual alternative performance measures can be identified as they relate to each value. This structured process not only focuses the developers of the framework to rationally think through a comprehensive and practical set of performance measures, but it also organizes the measures in a way that enhances their understanding.

The group participated in an exercise in which Bob asked the TRAC, as a group, to associate the Vision Values with specific categories. Bob provided a set of eight categories that have been recommended through a national research study, *NCHRP Report 446, A Guidebook for Performance-Based Transportation Planning*. The exercise stimulated discussion regarding the appropriateness of the eight categories and clarification of the values. The group discussed additions, deletions, and refinements of the categories and values. Jim Souby suggested adding a value of: Develop a passenger rail service in or near a major state transportation corridor. The group elected not to adopt the value as they thought it was too specific. Following the exercise, Bob and the DTR staff will perform a literature search and will draft a preliminary framework for the TRAC's consideration. In December, a workshop is anticipated with the TRAC to review and revise the framework as appropriate.

5. **Wrap up:** Ann mentioned that Bob would return in December to expand on the performance measures and also proposed a presentation on Intercity Bus Roles in November. Mark closed with announcing that CDOT no longer owns the V&S Towner Liner and asked if a presentation on CDOT's Budget next month would be helpful. The group agreed it would.

III. Adjournment

Ann adjourned the meeting at 4:10 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Robin Foote

Minutes approved by: Wendy Wallach and Tom Mauser