



Transit and Rail Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2012
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 Van Meter		X
Jonathan Hutchison		X	Stan Zemler		X
David Johnson (on phone)	X		Jacob Riger	X	

Others Present

Alice de Stigter UP Public Affairs
 Bob Felsburg, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
 Steven Marfitano, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
 Lee Cryer, RTD
 Scott Weeks, David Evans
 Cliff Davidson, North Front Range MPO
 Randy Grauberger, PB

CDOT Present

Division of Transit and Rail: Mark Imhoff,
 Tom Mauser, David Krutsinger
 John Valerio, Julia Spiker
 Division of Transportation Development: Debra
 Perkins-Smith, Mehdi Baziar, Jason Wallis,
 Tracey MacDonald, Sandi Kohrs

I. Call to order

Ann Rajewski called to order the regular meeting of the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) at 1:20 pm on March 9, 2012, in the CDOT/HQ Auditorium.

II. Agenda items

1. *Introductions*

Mark Imhoff introduced new DTR staff members Tracey MacDonald and Julia Spiker.

2. *Monthly Updates:* James Souby indicated he had attended an RTD meeting regarding plans for the northwest rail line and emphasized that it was needed because it was part of the bigger FasTracks system and provided many benefits.

Mark Imhoff announced he had met with Mike Ogborn of Omnitrax and that they had developed a good application for TIGER funds for a project serving the Vestas wind turbine plant that interfaced with UP & BN. The feedback CDOT received from USDOT was that its TIGER III submittal indicated Colorado's message was too diluted, with too many projects. In response, CDOT has scaled back letters of support to send a clearer message for TIGER IV with priorities.

3. *State Freight & Passenger Rail Plan-*Mehdi Baziar gave a presentation on the SFPRP. The draft was revised to incorporate appropriate comments. Approximately 200 comments were received. Next steps are Commission approval and submission to FRA. The Executive Summary is available on the website. There is a desire for this Plan to be a "leadership document" and set a clear direction. Debra Perkins-Smith asked what was said and whether there were positive comments. Staff responded that comments fit into a few general themes and that many were positive.

Jim S. commented that his organization would like to see more of a commitment in the document to passenger rail and has drafted language that can be added to do so. He commented that the Plan has a lot of good information, but doesn't specifically recommend that a performance based evaluation be utilized to make sure that Plan recommendations are implemented, saying it's important that this be included in the first Plan. Staff responded that the Plan is a framework document and will come together with other studies in the Statewide Transit Plan, which will be integrated into the long-range Statewide Transportation Plan. Jim moved that the Plan be recommended for approval by the Transportation Commission and that it include language referring to performance based planning in the evaluation process; a second caveat was to include an objective to stress the importance of the tourism industry to the economic vitality of the state. Matt O seconded. The motion was adopted.

Jacob Riger noted that another illustration of where the plan could communicate better about its scope intent was the issue of only commuter rail vs. non-CRT passenger rail, e.g.LRT regarding the FasTracks section. Jacob suggested that these types of concerns could be addressed by having the plan be clearer about its intent, purpose, and function, especially in relation to subsequent planning efforts that may provide more detail. Regarding the FasTracks description specifically, David responded by indicating that the Plan was revised to describe all passenger rail technologies.

- 4. ICB/FASTER-** John Valerio made a presentation outlining how CDOT gets involved in Intercity Bus (ICB) projects. A map of ICB services in the state and a table of 2004-2012 ICB funding awards were handed out. ICB services are funded through CDOT using FTA Section 5311(f) funds, with CDOT awarding about \$1.3 million annually for these services. The FTA Section 5311 rural public transportation program requires, under 5311(f), that 15% of 5311 be allocated to ICB purposes. If less than 15% is committed, the governor must sign a waiver stating ICB services are being adequately met relative to other rural transit needs. 5311(f) can be used for operating or capital expenses. CDOT's 5311(f) is directed at routes that would not otherwise exist or would not be profitable and are not expected to be profitable in the near future. CDOT also places a priority on operations funding over capital funding. The definition of "intercity bus," for purposes of 5311(f) funding, specifically excludes "commuter bus" from being eligible for 5311(f) funds.

In 2008 CDOT conducted a study of intercity and regional bus service that went beyond just an ICB focus. The study showed that its proposed regional bus service network has a total operating cost of \$34.8 million annually and that of that total, \$20.8 million is presently funded and \$14.0 million in additional annual operating funds are needed. It also indicated its proposed intercity bus service network additions would require an additional \$1.56 M in annual operating funds above current annual operating expenditures by CDOT.

CDOT is currently funding some of the routes recommended in the 2008 study. CDOT will now be updating that 2008 study. There have been a few changes in Greyhound routes. In this study there will be more emphasis on regional and commuter bus, connections, and stations/facilities that provide connections.

Mark raised some questions for the TRAC's consideration: How can a local entity structure regional, multi-jurisdictional funding? For example, Colorado Springs pays for FREX service that goes into Denver, but Denver doesn't pay for that benefit. What is CDOT's "role?" What are our needs and how should we allocate funding among those needs? Are these questions that should be put to TRAC, STAC, the Transit and Intermodal Committee and TC? While \$14 million is needed, there's only \$10 million in statewide FASTER funds. How much funding should be allocated to O & M (operations and maintenance) rather than capital? The study will examine some of these issues. It's expected to be about an 8 month study, starting around May.

Mike Timlin pointed out that it's helpful also to promote ticket "interlining" (selling tickets for both a local ride that can then be used on a Greyhound bus to which one transfers) and provide more visibility to ICB and regional bus services that are part of a national system. It was added, however, that Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) rules can hinder interlining, for they constrain route creation/approval/authority regarding interstate passengers. Obtaining FMCSA authority is onerous for small operators. It can be a 10 week process or even 10 months.

Terri Binder asked how 5311(f) decisions get made. Projects and requests for funding come to CDOT through a competitive grant application process. Applications for ICB funding can be submitted by either a private company/carrier or from public agency/community. Applications are then evaluated by a CDOT interagency committee that looks particularly at costs vs. available funding. In response to a question about whether FASTER could be used for regional commuter service, staff indicated it could, whereas 5311(f) could not.

Mark suggested that perhaps CDOT could consider dedicating a portion of statewide FASTER funds for O&M, perhaps as much as 30%, for qualifying interregional services, since 5311(f) cannot be used for commuter or regional and there is no other funding available for regional. FREX and FLEX are examples of such services. He added we would need a performance evaluation system to make this decision, since O&M is an ongoing, continuing need, not a one-time request. In updating the 2008 study, we would create criteria.

Cliff Davidson noted that FLEX is 3 year pilot, and locals are examining how to go beyond 3 years. It was pointed out that CDOT pays highway maintenance expenses and that it would be a tremendous help if CDOT stepped in that direction for transit O&M expenses. Tom M noted that both origin and destination cities benefit from regional and commuter routes, and that CDOT benefits by reducing traffic on a congested highway, but added that it's usually only the city of origin that's willing to pay for the service. Gary B suggested that such regional bus funding should be used only as seed money to get started, rather than provided on an ongoing basis, adding that limits needed to be set since there is not enough funding to go around to meet all needs. He added that perhaps we should make only an on-going capital commitment and that users need to pay also.

- 5. Transportation Commission Policy Recommendations-** Ann R pointed out we don't yet have a TRAC future agenda list but will have it next month. It was suggested we get T&I and TC and other dates onto calendars for TRAC meeting June 20th. That meeting with the Commission would be a workshop. It was suggested that TRAC present some proposed policies and that we strategize them next month.

There was a discussion of upcoming studies and how they relate to the upcoming 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan (STP). There are many different pieces that need to be integrated into that overarching Plan, including the State Rail Plan, human services coordination plans (which Tom M is working on), the Intercity and Regional Bus Study (John V), and the AGS and the Interregional Connectivity Studies. These will all be worked into the State Transit Plan then the 2040 STP. Ann, Mark and DTR will put together TRAC policy recommendation/policies.

Sandi Kohrs outlined plans for the 2040 STP, stating that her office is now examining the general planning policies that guide the whole process and overarching performance measures for CDOT. She described the STP and its relationship to DTR. The Plan is corridor based. They'll need information from our studies by spring/summer 2013 for it to go out to the TPRs for consolidated evaluation of all forms of transportation.

- 6. Railroad Communications Handbook-** Jason Wallis of DTD provided copies of the draft Handbook. It was started as a white paper based on prior meeting input but it became clear more needed to be added, such as rails to trails, flow charts of possible parties involved in different types of processes. It describes 6 categories of stakeholders. The FRA crossing inventory was provided as an example. The Section 130 program is described. Achieving uniformity can be a later step. The last portion covers general communication. Points of

contact will be added as the last portion later. TRAC comments included that we pull graphics from the SFPRP and a list of RR as a next step, that we PDF and list links like those provided by Pete R, and that we include RRs on the transit map for the Statewide Transit Plan. It was also suggested we edit the rail abandonment flow chart. It was pointed out, for example, that RR abandonment does NOT start with notification to CDOT. The RRs are required to submit a 3-year list of possible abandonments to the Surface Transportation Board (STB). The manual should describe the roles of the STB, pre-notification and the State.

7. Break

8. Performance Measures, Part III- Bob Felsburg led a detailed discussion that updated the TRAC's Performance Measures chart. The input from the discussion will be included in an update from Felsburg. It was agreed that the Performance Measures exercise should be first on the TRAC agenda next month so it was not cut short again.

9. Ann R wrapped up the meeting and the meeting was adjourned.