

Overview

As part of the “Colorado Intercity and Regional Bus Network- 2013 Update” (Network Plan), specific emphasis was placed on developing regional commuter bus services.

A clear definition is needed in defining the difference between “regional” and “inter-regional”. There already exist networks of “regional” commuter services in the State. CDOT proposes to connect the “regions” with express bus service refining the definition of “Regional Commuter Bus” to “Inter-regional Express Bus”.

The TRAC ICB & RCB sub-committees and I-70 Stakeholder TAG have come up with a broader vision of I-70 using existing services to close the service gaps along with limited Inter-Regional Express Bus.

Findings and Strategies

DTR recommends a focus on a core set of services for the initial phase of service development. Work to date has shown that:

- Working in partnership with both public and private sector providers will result in the most effective deployment of resources.
- Inter-Regional Express doesn’t fulfill all regional needs.
- Creating a framework for measuring performance of the State’s investments in regional and intercity bus services, collecting data and using it to improve service over time is needed.
- Developing ticket sharing/interlining agreements with partner agencies both public and private with a goal of seamless multi-modal utilization is needed
- Developing comprehensive customer information that will support passengers traveling inter-regionally across more than one transit system is needed

Peer Analysis

The following criteria were used:

- State DOT directed commuter bus programs similar to that proposed by CDOT
- Operated by contractors
- Some variation in organization structure
- Focus is long distance, peak hour, peak direction service – not local transit
- Not part of a statewide transit operations providing all services (i.e. – New Jersey Transit)
- Not commuter service into New York City.

The following were selected:

- Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) – commuter bus
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) – Xpress
- New Mexico DOT (NMDOT) Park and Ride
- New Hampshire DOT (NHDOT) – Boston Express

- Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA)- Commuter Services

Summary Statistics for these systems are in Tables B-1, B2, and B3.

Peer Analysis Lessons Learned

- Organization – All are either State DOT's or interface with State DOT's
- There is a variety of structures within each agency, we learned that those with a Board of Directors or Commission react quickly to fare and service issues.
- MTA has five operators and 23 separate contracts compared to the all others who contract with only one or two operators allowing agencies to dedicate less staff to the project.
- All own, lease, or have IGA's for park & rides- they all focus on Park and Ride collection points.
- MTA study shows 14.35% operational savings for agency procured vehicles vs. operator provided vehicles.
- All contractors are responsible to maintain the agency owned vehicles –The agency does period inspection of agency owned vehicles and maintenance records to ensure quality.
- Cost per mile varied but is directly affected negatively by “deadheading” or alternative use of the vehicle.
- All agencies but one maintains their own website.
- Farebox recovery ranged from NMDOT Park and Ride at 15% to AVTA at 84%
- RFP is the preferred route of securing a contractor.

Park and Rides

- For the “go live” we anticipate using:
 1. I-25 South – South Tejon Park and Ride
 2. I-25 South – Woodmen Rd. Park and Ride
 3. I-25 South – Monument Park and Ride
 4. I-25 North – Harmony Road Park and Ride
 5. I-25 North – Centerra Park and Ride – U.S. 34
- While there are secondary access improvements needed for Centerra and Monument, Harmony Rd. and Woodmen Rd. have primary capital needs to make them functional for IX.
- Woodmen Rd. Park and Ride
 - Current access drive will be difficult if not impossible for a 45 ft. bus.
 - Lot is used as an overflow for Tiffany Square Retail Mall directly across Corporate Drive.
 - Tiffany Mall has built a large parking lot down Mark Dabling Blvd.
 - Option 1 – Land swap with Tiffany Square for a portion of their new parking lot.
 - Option 2 – build a roundabout at the intersection of Corporate Drive and Mark Dabling Blvd. - the bus will not have to negotiate the park and ride entrance instead turn around on the roundabout and pick up passengers at the Mountain Metro bus stop.

- Harmony Road Park and Ride.
 - Lot is nearing capacity and expansion of additional 120 spaces is needed.

Demand Analysis on I-25

	Daily One Way Rides	
South I-25 Service	2015 Projection	
	Low Riders	High Riders
	Alternative A: 5 round trips	463
Alternative B: 6 round trips	445	556
North I-25 Service	2015 Projection	
	Low Riders	High Riders
	Alternative A: 5 round trips	214
Alternative B: 6 round trips	206	257

Recommendations

- CDOT to purchase the vehicles and lease them to contractor(s) providing oversight on service quality and vehicle maintenance.
- Establish a customer information system and website and maintain responsibility within CDOT.
- Develop passenger facilities using the existing structure of the CDOT Regions owning the Park and Ride facilities, DTR will fund capital improvements and developing IGA’s with the municipalities for light maintenance such as snowplowing and trash removal.
- Service contract should be RFP – Allow bidders to bid on one or more segments.

Inter-regional Express Bus Vehicle Procurement

- CDOT to purchase 11 Intercity (over the road) 45 ft. coaches for the I-25 service equipped with restroom, wheel chair lift, luxury reclining seats with three point restraint belts and drop down tray tables, WiFi, and 110v electrical outlets.
- For the I-70 service CDOT will purchase two 24-28 ft. air ride suspension coaches (as opposed to cutaways) equipped with same amenities as the full size bus except no restroom.
- “Buy America” or not.

I-25 South “Go Live” Service

- Tejon PnR – Woodmen Rd. PnR-Monument-Civic Center Station- 17th & Stout- DUS – Denver Bus Center.
- Start with 6 round trips – 5 peak hour/direction and one mid-day and budget for 7th as demand grows.
- Walkup fares – Tejon - \$12; Woodmen Rd.-\$12; Monument-\$9 with 10%-20%-25% discounts for 10-20-40 ride passes.

I-25 North “Go Live” Service – See Table A

- Harmony PnR- Centerra PnR (U.S. 34)- Denver Union Station.

- Start with 5 round trips – 4 peak hour/ direction and one mid-day, and budget for 6th as demand grows.
- Walkup fares – Harmony -\$10; Loveland - \$9 with 10%-20%-25% discounts for 10-20-40 rides.

I-70 “Go Live” Service – See Table A

- Vail Transportation Center – Frisco Transfer Station – Silverthorne Transfer Station – Denver Federal Center RTD Light Rail Station – Denver Union Station.
- One round trip departs 7:00 AM; arrives DUS 9:20 AM – Return 3:00 PM arrive Vail at 5:20 PM.
- Walkup Fares to Denver: Vail -\$17; Frisco/Silverthorne - \$12 – between Vail – Frisco/Silverthorne - \$5

Next Steps

- Finish start up operating budget by October 21.
- Introduce service plan and budget to TC Workshop in November.
- Introduce service plan to NFRMPO, DRCOG, PPACG, and Intermountain TPR in November.
- Transportation Commission approval of service plan and budget in December.
- Public outreach – February 2014
- “Go Live” – October 2014 – pending bus delivery.

Table B-1: Summary Characteristics of Peers

System	Number of Buses Operated in Commuter Service	Number of Commuter Routes	Number of Park and Ride Lots Served	Annual Ridership	Range of Route Lengths (One-Way)	Number of Contractors
MTA	220	24	33	4,290,486	22-52 miles	Five (23 separate contracts)
GRTA	134	39	33	2,371,773	9-42 miles	2 (plus two counties)
NM DOT P&R (145 days)	25	10	24	160,849	20-100 miles	One
NHDOT		2	6 (plus three terminals w/o parking)	535,941	63-69 miles	One
AVTA	18-20	3	2	267,759	63-70 miles	One

Table B-2: Staffing Levels

System	MTA	GRTA	NM DOT P&R	NH DOT	AVTA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent • Assistant • Chief Maintenance Operator • 2 Field Supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief - Regional Transit Operations Officer • Director of Operations • Director of Maintenance • Director of Engineering • Director of Procurement • 2 Support Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Bureau Chief • Transit Planning & Coordination Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transportation Administrator • Transportation Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Transit Planner • Director of Operations • Fleet Maintenance • 2 Field Supervisors
Total	5	7	1 ¾	1 ½	% of FTE for each.

Table B-3: Performance Data

System	Contract Strategy	Operating Expenses	Cost Per Trip	Cost Per Mile	Annual Ridership	Boardings Per Mile	Farebox Recovery
	Vehicle Ownership						
MTA	Multiple	\$42,325,544	\$9.86	\$8.12	4,290,486	.82	38%
	Mix						
GRTA	Multiple	\$16,884,121	\$7.12	\$4.85	2,371,773	.68	42%
	Agency						
NM DOT P&R (145 days)	Single	\$3,198,356	\$19.88	\$5.78	160,849	.26	15%
	Vendor						
NHDOT	Single	\$6,006,921	\$11.21	\$4.10	535,941	.37	84%
	Vendor						
AVTA	Single	\$3,240,237	\$12.10	-	267,759	-	72%
	Agency						

High Priority Proposed Services

