

**Transportation Commission of Colorado  
Transit & Intermodal Committee  
Meeting Agenda  
Thursday, September 19, 2013  
4201 East Arkansas Avenue  
Denver, Colorado**

**Mark Imhoff, Director  
Division of Transit and Rail**

**Ed Peterson, Chairman  
District 2, Lakewood**

**Kathy Connell  
District 6, Steamboat Springs**

**Kathy Gilliland  
District 5, Livermore**

**Les Gruen  
District 9, Colorado Springs**

**Steve Parker  
District 8, Durango**

**Herman Stockinger, Secretary  
Transportation Commission**

**Debra Perkins-Smith, Director  
Division of Transportation  
Development**

- **Approval of the June 2013 T&I Meeting minutes – 5 minutes**
- **PD14 Performance Measures - 5 minutes**
- **AGS/ICS - 5 minutes**
- **State Transit Plan – 5 minutes**
- **FASTER Update – 5 minutes**
- **TC Loan Payoff – 5 minutes**

**THE AGENDA MAY BE ALTERED AT THE CHAIR'S DISCRETION**

## Transit & Intermodal Committee Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Peterson at 10:58. In attendance were Commissioners Peterson, Gilliland, Connell and Gruen. Also in attendance were Commissioners Hofmeister and Ortiz, and staff members Herman Stockinger, Debra Perkins-Smith, Mark Imhoff, Tim Harris, David Krutsinger, Tracey MacDonald and Tom Mauser.

1. **Approval of March 2013 Minutes:** The minutes of the March 2013 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. **PD 14 Performance Measures:** David Krutsinger informed the Committee of the high-level effort to develop performance measures for transit within PD 14 in collaboration with others. Measures are being developed for infrastructure condition and performance. Since the infrastructure measure has already been developed and discussed, he focused on system performance. Two measures have been proposed:
  - a. Transit Utilization: this would measure ridership statewide and by transit agency size (FTA population categories). This is something already used in Your CDOT Dollar. This measure assumes that transit ridership will grow along with population, and will measure ridership from year to year. A moving average will be used to account for anomalies such as sudden gas price increases.
  - b. Transit Connectivity: this would measure the number of revenue miles of regional, inter-regional and intercity bus routes in the state that connect with local systems. It is assumed this measure will also grow as population and transit ridership grow and collaboration increases.

David was asked whether the base was set in the current year; he confirmed that 2013 was the base year for measurement. These measures will be discussed with the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee in July, then come back to the Statewide Committee of TC later in July with proposed “targets” for the measures.

3. **State Transit Plan:** Tracey MacDonald reported that work on the Plan was started in April and is slated to be finished in 2014. Work on the plan includes developing transit plans for the rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPR’s), conducting a survey of the needs of elderly and disabled populations, and integrating several studies now underway in DTR, such as an intercity and regional bus plan. These items will be integrated into the Transit Plan and all of it into the Statewide Transportation Plan. DTR will conduct technical working group meetings and open houses in each rural TPR. A steering committee with a wide representation will meet about five times, at key points in the process.

A Commission member asked DTR to be sure that Commissioners receive the outreach notices for local meetings and another remarked that it was good to see CDOT conducting a statewide transit plan and integrating it into the statewide transportation plan.

4. **Regional Commuter Bus:** Mark Imhoff reported that the TRAC Subcommittee has been examining the study corridors; also that DTR was integrating their work with Region staff, and that together they were developing recommendations on levels of service, stop locations, park-and-rides and capital needs.

He related that they encountered a logjam when some participants questioned why CDOT would allow DTR to use FASTER funds to operate RCB services but would not provide operating dollars to local entities that provide regional services. DTR responded that there were limited dollars available and that there were many potential regional routes that could request operating funds, and the Transportation Commission had given direction to not consider operating assistance. However, given the level of local agency concern he agreed to revisit the issue with the Commission, and with their concurrence further evaluate the need and how it might be structured. He indicated it was not appropriate for only the existing TRAC RCB Subcommittee to consider this issue, given that it was limited to representatives of the two RCB corridors. He suggested getting full TRAC input from a wider group of representatives. Furthermore, he indicated there was not sufficient time to consider local agency applications for FY 15 operations funding for regional routes, since the call for projects will be done soon and more time would be needed to develop criteria and guidelines. He said it might be possible to allow local agencies to submit descriptions of existing and potential regional routes as a means of gauging the magnitude of interest and funding amounts, possibly considering such projects for FY16.

Commissioners expressed concern over the limited dollars available and that the Commission had already given direction that funds would not be used in this way at this time. Mark indicated DTR had agreed to ask the Commission for guidance and to further analyze the options if the Commission concurred. The Committee acknowledged the issue. A Commissioner acknowledged this was a change in direction but was in response to local concern and pushback. Some Commissioners indicated it didn't feel right to change directions after the Commission had already said "No" to local operating dollars. It was observed that RCB was being considered for operating dollars because there is no other funding stream available for RCB services. It was suggested that operating funds for regional routes could be considered if more funding became available. Further concern was expressed that we not raise false expectations to local transit entities.

There was consensus that DTR should gather information, further analyze, and solicit TRAC input over the next few months. The analysis, findings and recommendations should be brought back to the Transit & Intermodal Committee when complete, to be followed the next month with a full TC Workshop. It was suggested that DTR be careful about how it messages this issue and gathers information so that it doesn't raise expectations or alienate local agencies.

5. **FASTER Program:** Tom Mauser reported that DTR is between cycles but preparing for the 2015/16 FASTER funding cycle. It's a "rolling" application, solicited annually but covering two years, so many 2015 projects are already tentatively approved, as are many FY 2015 dollars. The call for 2015/16 projects will likely go out in late summer. DTR will come to the Commission in September with a TRAC recommendation on the allocation of the FASTER local pool, which must be adjusted for the new Region boundaries. Staff would like to use this opportunity to also adjust allocations based on performance and equity.

Commissioners spoke of the need to not just award funds by "spreading the peanut butter around" evenly. They indicated they had made it very clear that the methodology for allocating funds had to change and that CDOT should make "optimum" use of resources, not merely spread them around. Allocation of funds needs to be consistent with TC direction and philosophy. There was a suggestion that DTR take a certain amount "off the top" for the equity / formula distribution (i.e. \$1 Million / 20%), then divide the funds among projects in an optimal way (i.e. \$4 Million / 80%). There was also an opinion that an "off-the-top" would not be consistent with the Commission's new direction. Tom pointed out that it was difficult to develop a formula that wasn't skewed towards providing a disproportionate allocation to one Region. He gave the example of a Region that has the second highest performance in ridership yet was fourth in terms of funding allocation. Commissioners acknowledged that it would be difficult to come up with a suitable distribution formula but emphasized that staff should develop a recommendation following the Commission's new direction, and report back the revised methodology. Methodology needs to consider the criteria to be used and that population and/or performance may not be the only or most appropriate options.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

# STATE OF COLORADO

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Division of Transit and Rail

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**TO:** Transit and Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**DATE:** Friday, September 6

**RE:** August 14 T&I/SWP Committee feedback on P.D. 14 System Performance Objectives

### **Purpose**

This memorandum summarizes the discussion and feedback that staff received on P.D. 14 System Performance Measures and Objectives at the August 14<sup>th</sup> 2013 joint meeting of the Transit and Intermodal Committee and Statewide Planning Committee.

### **Background**

Staff took proposed transit-related measures and objectives for the System Performance section of Policy Directive 14 to the joint committee meeting to elicit feedback and suggestions. Two measures were discussed at the meeting – Transit Utilization, assessed by statewide ridership (urban and rural) and Transit Connectivity, assessed by revenue service miles provided in by regional, inter-regional, and inter-city passenger services. The objectives presented for these two measures were:

- “Increase ridership of small urban and rural transit grantees an average of 1.5% annually over a 5-year moving average”; and
- “Maintain or increase the total number of revenue service miles of regional, inter-regional, and inter-city passenger service over that recorded for 2012”.

During the discussion of the objectives, Commissioner Connell raised a concern that a commitment to increasing ridership by 1.5% annually was not much of a “push” to build statewide transit ridership and suggested that we consider setting the bar higher. Staff has deliberated on increasing the state’s transit ridership growth goal. We offer two concerns with a goal higher than 1.5%:

- Through our FTA grant process CDOT administers transit operations funding to most of the state’s rural transit providers. However, we do not direct their service operations. Many of the factors that influence ridership (availability of services, convenient and workable schedules, transit system on-time performance, coordinated transfers among more than one agency, etc.) are outside of CDOT’s sphere of control.

- Transit ridership growth is greatly influenced by major capital investments. For example, Denver metro area ridership increases every time RTD opens a new FasTracks rail line. Similarly, we expect an increase in rural ridership this year and next with the opening of the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) Bus Rapid Transit project between Glenwood Springs and Aspen, and in small urban ridership next year with the opening of the Fort Collins Transfort BRT project. These significant investments will increase the statewide transit ridership base, and without additional investments will make overall growth targets harder to attain in following years.

We are committed to developing and promoting an efficient state wide transit system as funds become available, connecting local systems and investments, and expect ridership growth as the system matures. However too aggressive a goal may not be prudent at this time. Staff respectfully proposes a modified change the wording of the original objective to the following: “Increase ridership of small urban and rural transit grantees at least an average of 1.5% annually over a 5-year moving average”.

With respect to the Transit Connectivity measure and objective, there was some concern about the applicability of using “revenue service miles”. This is an industry standard measure, and represents the service miles where a transit route is actually servicing riders; it does not include out-of-service miles where a transit vehicle may be “dead heading” to or from a maintenance facility, miles where a vehicle is being utilized for driver training, or vehicle testing, etc. Although there are some transit systems around the state that offer free fares, by FTA definition, they are still reported as “revenue miles” in the National Transit Database (NTD); NTD will be the source for capturing the data. Staff continues to believe that “revenue service miles” for regional, inter-regional and inter-city passenger service is a good measure and objective to capture the intent of Transit Connectivity.

### **Next Steps**

With the concurrence of the Transit and Intermodal Committee, staff will incorporate the modified objective into the overall PD14 recommendations that will come to the full Transportation Commission via the Statewide Transportation Plan Committee.

# MEMORANDUM

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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**TO:** Transit & Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**DATE:** Friday, September 6

**RE:** Advanced Guideway System (AGS) Feasibility Study Update  
Interregional Connectivity Study (ICS) Update

### SUMMARY

The AGS and ICS studies, together, form the basis for a long-term high-speed passenger transit network for the State of Colorado, focusing on the I-70 and I-25 corridors respectively. By the end of 2013, both studies will be completed and study recommendations will be presented at a full TC Workshop. The following month the Transportation Commission will be asked for two actions: (1) adopt the long-term network for inclusion in both the Statewide Transportation Plan process and the next update to the State Freight & Passenger Rail Plan, and (2) set the top priority corridor for further project development. This action will define the long-term network and cease the need for further system-wide study. By setting the first priority corridor, DTR could begin the corridor development process to be “pipeline ready” for future federal funding if/when it becomes available.

**Advanced Guideway System (AGS) Feasibility Study** – Consistent with the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Study and Record of Decision, the AGS study is evaluating the feasibility of high speed transit options between C-470 and Eagle County Regional Airport (with consideration for a connection to DIA). It includes evaluating technologies, alignments, and financial funding feasibility.

### Status:

- Capital costs for the AGS have been estimated for various alignment & technology pairs, between Golden (C-470) and Eagle County Regional Airport:
  - \$11-\$14 Billion for Hybrid Alignment and Maglev Technology;
  - High speed maglev on a greenfield alignment is more expensive at \$25 Billion largely due to tunneling;
  - High speed rail on a greenfield alignment is even more expensive at \$32 Billion due to longer tunnels than high-speed maglev.

- To help assess the financial feasibility of AGS, CDOT engaged the concession and financial industry through a Request for Financial Information (RFFI). Pertinent information discovered:
  - General P3 industry support for public-private partnership (P3) delivery structure
  - Substantial public funding source is needed before the rest can be financed; the I-70 Mountain Corridor has identified no current federal, state or local funding sources.
  - Extremely difficult to obtain more than \$3 Billion in financing for any transportation project; risks associated with the I-70 Corridor \$1 Billion to possibly \$2 Billion in financing more realistic. On a Minimum Operating Segment of \$5.5 Billion to \$7.0 Billion, a “down payment” of at least \$3.5 Billion would be needed.
  - Maglev is perceived by the finance sector to be risky at this time, with few competitors in the marketplace to keep prices down generally and prevent overpricing by a single technology provider.
  - Finance rates likely 6-7% per year, 30-40 year term.
  - Better project definition, funding commitments, and the establishment of a governance structure are all needed to gain critical participation from the private sector in financing.
- See for additional information:
  - <http://www.coloradodot.info/projects/AGSstudy/project-leadership-team-plt.html>
- Next Steps
  - September 11<sup>th</sup>, AGS PLT – Clear Creek County Location (TBD) 10 AM – 1 PM. MOS modeling results. Draft Funding/Financing Determination.
  - October 9<sup>th</sup>, AGS PLT – Summit County Location (TBD) 10 AM – 1 PM. Draft Report & overall feasibility statement
  - October 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> – CDOT Transportation Commission Workshop.
  - November 13<sup>th</sup>, AGS PLT – Jefferson County Location (TBD) 10 AM – 1 PM. Final Report.
  - November 21<sup>st</sup> – CDOT Transportation Commission. Act on final study findings.

Duration: 18 months (April 2012 – September 2013) Extended to November.

**Interregional Connectivity Study (ICS)** – The ICS is evaluating technologies, alignments and financial/funding options for potential high speed rail along the Front Range from Fort Collins to Pueblo, and the “connectivity” with RTD’s FasTracks system in the Denver metro area. This study is working with a Project Leadership Team (PLT) comprised of representatives from CDOT, federal agencies, elected officials and staff from communities along the Front Range, railroads, and select advocacy groups.

#### Status

- Alignment Evaluation
  - A single north-south alignment has emerged at a high level: north I-25 from Fort Collins to north Denver metro area, E-470 from north Denver metro area via



- DIA to south Denver metro area, and a combination of south I-25/freight alignment.
  - Three options remain for connecting mountain corridor to the north-south alignment: NW parkway quadrant, I-70/I-76, and C-470 SW quadrant.
- Level 3 Evaluation
  - The full north south scenario will be subjected to both value engineering and cost cutting. Value engineering is defined as those things which will reduce the cost without affecting the operability of the system. Cost cutting further reduces costs and also reduces operability of the system, whether flexibility or speed/travel time. Examples:
    - Single track instead of double track
    - Eliminate some grade separations (i.e. bridges/overpasses)
    - Simplify service plans (i.e. more transfers required in the system initially)
  - The purpose of value engineering and cost cutting is to bring project costs into a range where they are more readily fundable, financeable, and implementable.
  - Technology: crash worthiness by FRA standards can be achieved either by car-body strength (buff strength) or through car-body crumple zone (crash energy management or CEM).
- Minimum Operating Segments are in the process of being defined and evaluated by cost, ridership, and operability. An approach was discussed at the August meeting.
- See for additional information:
  - <http://www.coloradodot.info/projects/ICS/participate/plt-meeting-materials/plt-meeting-7>
- Next Steps
  - Next PLT meeting is September 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 AM – 12 noon, CDOT HQ Auditorium
  - Public meetings proposed late September / early October: Ft. Collins, Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo.
  - Final PLT meeting proposed October 15<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 AM – 12 noon, CDOT HQ Auditorium
  - Project Finalization November 2013
  - Project Close-out December 2013

Duration

18 months (April 2012 – September 2013). Extended to December.

# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Transit & Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**DATE:** Friday, September 6

**RE:** Statewide Transit Plan

### Statewide Transit Plan

The Statewide Steering Committee met for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time on August 7. This committee includes the TRAC transit plan subcommittee as well as other stakeholders. The majority of the meeting focused on finalizing the vision, goals and objectives for transit in Colorado. In developing the vision, the team utilized the transit guiding principles developed by the TRAC as well as the TRAC's values. The following is the vision developed by the group:

*Colorado's public transit system will enhance mobility for residents and visitors in an effective, safe, efficient, and sustainable manner; will offer meaningful transportation choices to all segments of the state's population; and will improve access to and connectivity among transportation modes.*

The vision is supported by six goals: Transit System Development and Partnerships, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality, System Preservation and Expansion and Safety and Security. The vision statement and supporting goals can be found on the website (see link below).

The team also presented statewide demographic data and an overview of performance-based planning. The next meeting is scheduled for October 30 at HQ from 12:30 to 2:30. At this meeting we will tentatively discuss local plan update status, review of public input from the open houses, discussion of funding scenarios/financial analysis, and set performance measures.

As of August 21, the team completed the first round of Transit Working Group meetings in the rural TPRs. At these meetings, attendees were provided information about the project, discussion of public involvement approaches, key elements of a coordinated plan, regional demographic data, summary of vision and key themes from the 2008 plans, and discussion of regional transit needs, projects and priorities. Key themes heard at the meetings include:

- Need for additional and more flexible operating funds
- Need for more regional and intercity transit service
- Better connectivity and coordination between services
- Need for additional regional trips for medical and veterans services

The team is in the process of preparing for the second round of transit working group meetings to be held in October. The focus will be on regional goals and objectives, initial needs assessment, and financial analysis. In addition, two public open houses will be held in each TPR following the working group meeting. Additional public open houses will be held in conjunction with the Statewide Transportation Plan effort in spring 2014. The team will use a variety of outreach efforts in addition to the public open houses: website, surveys, postcards, flyers, presentation videos, social media, etc.

On August 14, surveys were sent out to transit providers and human service agencies around the state to gather information on their operations for use in the transit plans. Responses are due August 28. The information gathered will also be used by CASTA in the update to their Transit Provider Directory and by DTR in the development of a transit capital asset inventory system.

The statewide survey to assess the transportation needs of elderly and disabled should be going out in the next few weeks. The survey will be direct mailed to individuals and distributed to state agencies representing elderly and disabled populations to provide the survey to their constituents. The survey will also be available on line in English and Spanish.

The Regional Transit and Human Service Coordination Plans for the rural TPRs will become part of the Regional Transportation Plans as well as the Statewide Transit Plan. The Statewide Transit Plan will also incorporate the transit elements from the urban areas for a statewide perspective. In turn, the Statewide Transit Plan will be integrated into the overall Statewide Transportation Plan.

Please visit the website for more

information: <http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/transitandrail/statewidetransitplan>

- Next Steps: SSC will have a third meeting on 10/30. Distribute elderly and disabled survey. Analyze transit provider and human services survey results for use in development of the plans. Second TWG meetings and public open houses are being scheduled for October.
- Duration: 15 months (April 2013 – June 2014)

# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Transit and Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**DATE:** Friday, September 6

**RE:** FY 2015/16 FASTER Transit Application Update

I am writing to provide an update on the upcoming FASTER Call for Projects.

DTR expects to release a call for FY2015 and FY2016 FASTER Transit projects by the beginning of October. For the first time CDOT will make one call for capital requests in a single application. It will be a call for capital projects not only from FASTER but from three FTA programs that offer capital funding. It is cumbersome and time consuming to process applications for each program, so DTR is consolidating all capital requests into one application per year. In this way DTR can award funds from the most appropriate funding source and can also better respond to those who wish to use FASTER to match federal funds.

Applicants will be able to submit their capital grant application to CDOT using DTR's new, in-the-cloud grant module. Use of the module will make it easier to track applications from initial entry through all grant phases.

The FY 2014/15 call for projects resulted in FY 2014 awards and "preliminary/tentative" projects for FY 2015. In addition, the CDOT Regional Commuter Bus plan will be brought to the TC later this fall for approval; if approved the RCB operations for FY 2015 would come from the FASTER Statewide Transit pool. Therefore, only a limited amount of FY 2015 FASTER Statewide funding remains available for award. Similarly, nearly all the FY 2015 FASTER local funds were preliminarily awarded.

This fall DTR will be presenting a package of options to the Commission for how to allocate FASTER Local Transit funds. The options will take into consideration the Transportation Commission preference to allocate based on achieving performance goals, not merely by a Regional formula allocation to spread the funds. DTR will present options to the TRAC for discussion, then will make a recommendation to the Commission.

# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Transit and Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**DATE:** Friday, September 6

**RE:** 2014 FTA Transit Grant Loan Request

I am writing to provide—particularly for the sake of the new Commission members—a heads-up about an upcoming request to the Commission for a loan to cover FTA grant contracts.

For a number of years DTR has requested and received a loan from the Commission, via Supplemental Budget request, to allow the execution of annual calendar year contracts with local recipients of FTA funds in a timely fashion. Local agencies need much of this funding for day-to-day operations of their transit programs beginning on January 1.

We award the FTA funds on a calendar year basis. In order to execute a grant contract, DTR must have the funds in hand to cover that contract. In recent years the federal government has not appropriated funds before the onset of the federal fiscal year on October 1, and has not appropriated funds for the entire fiscal year until late in the fiscal year. Instead it has passed numerous continuing resolutions that provide funding in small increments--not enough with which to enable DTR to execute annual contracts. The Commission loan enables DTR contracts to be executed in a timely fashion, by December, prior to the calendar year. DTR has always fully repaid its loans once full appropriations from FTA were made.

Last year DTR requested and received a loan of \$13.4 million; the loan has been fully repaid. The FY 2014 request will likely be \$15 million. The request is higher than the FY 2013 loan amount because CDOT has agreed to administer Section 5310 funds for the Denver urbanized area at the request of RTD, and the related need to cover those grants.