

# MEMORANDUM

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Division of Transit and Rail  
4201 East Arkansas Avenue, Room 280  
Denver, CO 80222  
Phone: 303-757-9646  
Fax: 303-757-9656



**TO:** Transit & Intermodal Committee

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

**DATE:** June 7, 2013

**RE:** DTR Update Memo

The purpose of this memo is to give the Transit & Intermodal Committee (and the full Transportation Commission) a status of current activities on select projects and initiatives. These same items will be covered at the Transit & Intermodal Committee meeting on Thursday, June 20. In addition, there will be a tour of the Denver Union Station project on Wednesday afternoon, June 19; Bill Mosher, the DUSPA project manager, will also be presenting a brief history of the project highlighting CDOT's involvement.

## **PD 14 Mobility Performance Measures**

### Background

Policy Directive 14 provides an overall framework for the transportation planning process through which a multimodal, comprehensive Statewide Transportation Plan will be developed that optimizes the transportation system by balancing preservation and maintenance, efficient operations and management practices, and capacity improvements. PD 14 will guide allocation of resources in support of performance objectives for the Statewide Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and the annual budget.

PD 14, last revised in 2008 for the 2035 Statewide Plan update, will be updated to reflect new CDOT budget processes, MAP-21 legislation, and input from TRAC on a "framework" for establishing performance measures for transit.

"System Performance" is one five measures being considered overall. Transit plays prominently in this measure and the already-established "Infrastructure Condition" measure.

### Proposed Revisions to Earlier PD 14

The overall system performance measure is presented below, with transit measures shown in italics. The text under "MEASURES" describes what is being measured followed in the "OBJECTIVES" section by a description of how it is proposed to be measured. Given that this

is a high-level policy document, the intent is not to come up with a broad range of detailed measures, but to have a few indicator measures of the “health” of the transportation system. The measures here are further intended to focus on those aspects of the transportation system that are within the ability of CDOT to either directly control or to directly influence. Finally, the measure must be based on existing, easily-available data.

### 3. SYSTEM PERFORMANCE:

Budget Categories: Maximize, Expand, Pass-Through Funds/Multi-Modal Grants

#### MEASURES:

- Traffic congestion - Annual hours of delay above a congestion threshold on Interstate and NHS roadways
- Performance of Interstates – Reliability Index, the ratio of travel time to a threshold travel time
- Performance of NHS Roadways - Reliability Index, the ratio of travel time to a threshold travel time
- *Transit utilization - ridership statewide and by subcategory: large urban, small urban, and rural.*
- *Transit connectivity – revenue miles of service provided*

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain travel time delay on congested Interstates and national highway system (NHS) roadways at or below \_\_\_ annual hours of delay.
- Attain a Reliability Index of \_\_\_ percentile travel time in congested sections of Interstates and NHS roadways,
- Reduce incident clearance times by \_\_\_% per year.
- Increase person throughput in congested sections of NHS and Interstates \_\_\_% per year.
- *Small urban and rural grantees show a ridership increase of \_\_\_ % as a moving average over a \_\_\_year period.*
- *Maintain or increase statewide transit system connectivity, by preserving or increasing the total number of revenue miles of regional, inter-regional, and inter-city passenger service.*

Ridership Measure & Objective: CDOT has already committed to tracking statewide transit ridership within Your CDOT Dollar (YCD) on a year-by-year basis. This measure is an extension of the statewide measure, subdividing transit operators according to FTA funding categories. Large urbanized systems receive operating funding directly from the FTA, which manages performance reporting for these systems. CDOT is the oversight agency for funds passed-through to small urban agencies, rural operators, and for those providing specialized services for the elderly and disabled. The intent is that, with rare exception, transit agencies should have more ridership in a current year than a prior year. Growth in transit ridership would be expected to reflect general population and economic growth trends in the state—with exceptions for gas price spikes, large economic downturns, and areas experiencing population decreases.

Statewide Transit Connectivity Measure & Objective: System connectivity is the goal. The expectation of this measure is that only efficient and effective service will be operated in the long run. Similar to the road network, the State is primarily interested in transit services connecting parts of the state, operating on State Highways, the National Highway System, and Interstate Highways. With that expectation in mind, revenue service miles is a good indicator of transit services within transit service areas (regional), among different transit service areas of the state (inter-regional), and among cities nationally (intercity). This measure will capture passenger rail and bus services in all categories, including Amtrak, public and specialized transportation, and most private contracted services using public funds.

## **Statewide Transit Plan**

DTR kicked off the development of the Statewide Transit Plan in April 2013. As part of this effort the team will prepare local transit and human service transportation coordination plans for rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPR), conduct a survey to determine the transportation needs of elderly and disabled persons, and develop a statewide transit plan that integrates rural TPR as well as MPO transit plans. The statewide transit plan will also integrate several studies currently underway in DTR.

The plan development process includes data collection and analysis, funding and financial analysis, inventory of existing services, identification of transit needs and gaps, public involvement, agency coordination and a vision and framework for transit. To support the process, the team will conduct technical working group meetings (up to 3) and public open houses (2) in each rural TPR. A statewide steering committee has been created to bring together various agencies, providers and advocacy groups to provide advice to the process and help set the vision for transit in the state. The first meeting of the statewide steering committee was held on May 29, 2013. It is anticipated this group will meet at key points in the process (approximately 5 to 7 times).

A website has been created for the statewide transit plan. The link is:  
<http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/transitandrail/statewidetransitplan>

- Status: Developing schedule for the technical working group meetings and public open houses; creating a mailing list; conducting data inventory
- Duration: 15 months (April 2013 – June 2014)

### Calendar of upcoming events:

SWP TPR Outreach – see other document for dates, times and locations

Statewide Steering Committee

- August 7<sup>th</sup>, tentative, CDOT HQ

TPR Technical Working Group Meetings – not yet set, but probably in July

TPR Open Houses – not yet set, but probably in July

## **Regional Commuter Bus Plan**

The Regional Commuter Bus plan development is progressing. The Plan is being closely coordinated with the Colorado Intercity and Regional Bus Network Study. Our consultant is preparing recommendations on the service plan for both the I-25 and I-70 routes, with a focus on an initial phase to serve the Colorado Springs to Denver and North Front Range/Fort Collins to Denver markets.

The TRAC Subcommittee (expanded to include the seven major transit agencies along the corridors) met on May 9, and will meet again on June 11. There remains a significant concern with some members of the Subcommittee, including CASTA, that CDOT would utilize FASTER Statewide Transit funds to operate the RCB service, and that local providers who operate regional services are ineligible to apply for operating assistance.

One of the primary goals for a statewide transit program is the development of a statewide transit network providing connectivity throughout the state and linking local transit systems. This is the concept that inspired the RCB conceptual plan and investment strategy. To achieve the broad statewide goal, CDOT needs to encourage local entities to embrace the statewide transit network and connect into the system, including the operation of regional services that benefit their local areas. Many local transit systems already provide such service, and a few operate outside their jurisdictional boundaries to link with neighboring communities to provide access to jobs, medical facilities and shopping centers. Local budgets are tight and consequently the ability to adequately offer these regional transit services is strained. Those providing input are generally supportive of the CDOT RCB plan, but believe that operating assistance for other regional transit services should also be eligible.

A primary DTR concern is the limited amount of funds available and the potential number of regional routes statewide, as well as a reduction in funding set aside for capital. As scenarios are developed, eligibility criteria will be evaluated. We have received suggestions for operating assistance funding distribution, both for a competitive process and a formula process; both will be assessed.

In order to respond to the Subcommittee concerns, DTR has agreed to explore the possibility of dedicating a fixed amount of the annual FASTER Statewide Transit funds for regional service operating assistance. We believe the RCB Subcommittee is limited in perspective (I-25 and I-70 corridors only) and that this issue needs broader consideration with input from the full TRAC. With T&I concurrence, we will bring this issue to the TRAC at their July meeting. The annual cycle for FASTER Transit funding is expected to begin later this summer with the call for projects for FY 2015 and 2016. This timing suggests that IF a regional operating service program was created, the initial offering would be for FY 2016. This would give DTR staff and the Transportation Commission a year to develop the program.

## **FASTER Transit Program (FY 2015-16 cycle)**

Another round of FASTER Transit funding is fast approaching. Staff is currently examining a formula change for the allocation of FASTER Transit Local funds to the Regions, in response to the new CDOT engineering region boundary revisions. We are also revisiting our mileage and usage criteria for vehicle replacement requests in response to grantee feedback. Both of these issues are being reviewed by the TRAC Asset and Performance Measurement Subcommittee.

The schedule for the FY15-16 FASTER Transit call for projects will likely be similar to that used last year. We anticipate a call for projects to be issued late summer, due in mid-fall, with applications reviewed in late fall, and presentation to the Commission for approval in February 2014. This schedule gives ample time for local agencies to develop applications and for DTR and Region staff to conduct coordinated funding deliberations.