



Statewide TAC Meeting Minutes

Date: January 31, 2013
Time: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Location: CDOT Headquarters, Auditorium
4201 East Arkansas Ave.
Attendees: See attached sign in sheet

Meeting Summary

The following summarizes the discussion that occurred at the kick off Statewide TAC meeting.

Introductions

John Valerio welcomed the group and asked them go around the room with self introductions. A sign in sheet and handouts were passed around the room. The handout included an agenda, TAC syllabus, existing intercity bus maps, and meeting worksheet. There are two committees that will provide guidance throughout this project, the Statewide Transit Advisory Committee, and the I-70 Transit Advisory Group. An operator and station subcommittee will also be formed as part of the TAC and the TRAC Regional Commuter Bus Subcommittee will also provide input.

Roles and expectations of the TAC

Holly Buck reviewed with the group the meeting goal – the introduction the project, understand the role of the TAC and initiate discussion about issues that exist today with the system.

The TAC is expected to meet five times over a seven month period. A draft TAC syllabus is included in the handout. The TAC will be asked to:

- Review the analysis, findings, and recommendations
- Be actively involved in developing the goals
- Assist with evaluating alternatives
- Participate in prioritizing services and strategies
- Act as liaison to community and local stakeholders

Project intent, scope, and schedule

Suzanne O’Neill provided some background on the study. TransitPlus and KFH worked on the 2008 plan. This study will update that work. This study also has a separate focused effort to evaluate the intercity and regional bus needs in the I-70 corridor. The I-70 tasks will be completed parallel to the other work efforts. Two statewide public meetings are planned and three newsletters to ensure that the public remains informed and has opportunity to participate in the process.

Existing conditions

Suzanne reviewed the definition of intercity bus and regional bus with the group. These are not mutually exclusive services but ICB typically operates between cities, connects to the national intercity bus network, and transports passengers’ baggage. RB operates between communities, operates 20 to 60 miles and is typically schedule to service a specific market such as commuters.





Mike Timlin stated that there is another type of service called legacy intercity bus: curb-to-curb service such as Mega Bus. It follows the traditional Greyhound model by providing point to point service, primarily serving routes that are four to five hours. They have low fares, provide curbside drop off and pick up, reserved seating, and travel times competitive with automobiles. These services provide web fares and have no stations so their overhead is very low.

Fred Fravel provided a brief overview of the 2008 study findings and the existing conditions. The 2008 study identified two preferred networks the intercity bus network and the regional bus network. ICB service would have access to FTA 5311(f) funding but would be primarily supported by fares. The study found that there were more ICB services needed in rural areas. Regional bus services would be funded by local entities. The study found that more regional service was needed to support employment trips, reduce congestion, and build ridership for future fixed-guideway systems.

Since the 2008 study was completed a number of changes in the ICB and RB network have occurred. These include the following intercity services/stations:

New routes include:

- Alamosa/Gunnison to Denver route operated by Black Hills Stage Lines
- Pueblo to Wichita route operated by Prestige Bus Lines
- Salida to Pueblo route operated by Chaffee Shuttle
- Denver-Steamboat Springs - Salt Lake City route operated by Greyhound
- Durango to Grand Junction route operated by SUCAP - starts May, 2013

New stations include:

- Salida intermodal center
- Pueblo Transit station now accommodates intercity bus

Changes to regional service include:

- FREX, operated by Mountain Metropolitan Transit, was discontinued in 2012
- FLEX, operated by Transfort, was initiated in 2010
- Fresh Tracks is a new service serving the “resort-to-resort” trips for skiers
- IntraWest Resorts Employee Shuttle was discontinued
- Fairplay to Breckenridge feeder route operated by Blue River Shuttle will begin February 2013
- RTD’s West light rail line will open April 2013
- RFTA is opening their BRT service in the Roaring Fork Valley September of 2013.
- RTD’s commuter rail service to DIA will open in 2016

John Valerio provided an overview of CDOT’s evaluation of potential regional commuter bus (RCB) service. The preliminary look at this potential service indicates that it would focus on peak period commuters, and connectivity between regions. CDOT has identified that initial service would be a basic system on the I-70 and I-25 corridors. The estimated annual



investment of \$2.5 million and is to be funded entirely with FASTER statewide transit funds. CDOT is anticipating asking connecting transit agencies for in-kind contributions such as the use of stops, stations, overnight parking. RTD and Greyhound said that they would both be willing to consider allowing CDOT to purchase vehicles under their existing contracts. RFTA would be willing to help with fueling (diesel, gas, CNG), maintenance, cleaning, and storage of buses, if Glenwood Springs is an appropriate location for this activity.

Existing Statewide Issue Statements

The TAC was asked to break into small groups and identify issues that exist with the current ICB and RB system. These issues will be used to help the team more fully understand the problem and what recommendations need to accomplish, assist with goal setting, evaluate and prioritize alternatives.

Breaking into smaller groups, TAC members developed the follow list of issues:

- More service for short distance day time users for interregional trips
- Capacity limits at DUS
- Space concerns at Colorado Springs downtown station
- Access between intercity service and regional service (e.g. once east line to DIA opens, the AF goes away but ICB service will have difficulty connecting to east line at DUS.)
- Quality of service as a result of traffic
- Customer information does not include info on all modes.
- FREX has been eliminated – federal coverage for operations only lasted 3 years
- Need a link between Pueblo and Colorado Springs
- Need links regionally to games and events
- Need links to national parks
- Address air quality and pollution as a result of private auto congestion
- Gaps in service remain based on the needs identified in 2008
- No entity acts as coordinator between various systems and modes. CDOT should at least act as coordinator
- Facilities are out dated or missing completely
- City and County of Denver zoning does not allow street loading, cab pick up on street, etc.

In addition to these issues, the group also identified the following topics that they felt the study should address and a few questions the study should clarify. These were identified during the TAC meeting as well as based on comments received after the TAC meeting.

- Identify how facilities will be coordinated between CDOT and transit operators.
- Look at type of markets to be served
- What type of rider are we attracting? Can we attract choice riders?
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of CDOT and local public providers in the system
- Ensure adequate oversight
- Look at demand time points, departures to satisfy demand - lines on a map can be deceptive
- Where is the funding coming from, how much is it, and what's left for existing systems
- Is the service intended to be more of a Human Service transportation program to get older persons and persons with disabilities back a forth between where they live to/from hospitals at





some of the regional medical centers? Or does CDOT expect that commuters and tourists might benefit from it

- Is service meant to reduce congestion
- Might funds be better spent operating a robust Denver to Vail service on weekends during the winter in order to alleviate congestion?
- Provide a critical look at this service before going too far down the path towards implementation.
- Define what success look like. Provide service standards and describe what happens if the service can't meet them.
- How much time and funding are needed to provide a fair demonstration of the service's capability?
- Will this be the best investment of these limited funds?
- Would a more limited and targeted service area be a better way of dipping CDOT's toe into the Intercity Bus service water?
- Identify opportunities for implementing service in segments of corridors where there would be an almost immediate demand, and then continue to identify those types of service areas and gradually expand services as demand grows.
- MCI makes a CNG OTR bus, which is what I think CDOT should consider.
- How will the system handle transfers to/from the regional systems?

Wrap-up

The group discussed potential meeting dates. The next meeting will be held March 14th at 1:30 PM. The 2008 study, and the meeting powerpoint will be posted to the project web site. The team will be sending the existing conditions technical report in the next month.