



## **Intercity and Regional Bus Network Study**

### **I-70 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Meeting #1 Meeting Minutes**

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#### Attendees:

Chuck Murphy, GrayLine, Co. Sprgs.  
Margaret Bowes, I-70 Coalition  
Bill Efting, Town of Frisco  
Tom Breslin, Clear Creek County  
Mark Rogers, CDOT Region 3  
Maribeth Lewis-Baker, Town of Breckenridge  
Tom Underwood, Jacobs Engineering  
John Valerio, CDOT DTR  
Suzanne O'Neill, TransitPlus

Tom Underwood provided an overview of the project and invited discussion throughout. John Valerio described financing for Regional Commuter Bus funding. There were questions about the source and stability of the funding. Mark Rogers described the FASTER funds and said it is one of the more stable sources. Discussing the various plans being undertaken, Mark Rogers noted that the Regional Plans for the Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) should also be added to the list of supporting plans, as they feed into the Statewide Transit Plan.

John Valerio described existing services, including the soon to start:

- US 550 service (to be operated by SUCAP) between Durango and Grand Junction (1 round trip daily), and
- Blue River Shuttle from Fairplay to Breckenridge (3 round trips daily).

Maribeth Lewis-Baker described difficulty with getting a seat on the Greyhound bus, noting that it is a problem in the region. She said there are several new providers operating from DIA to the resort communities - perhaps up to 12 licensed carriers although some have dropped out. She noted that FreshTracks is different from others in that they provide transportation between ski areas. Keystone used to operate service to other resorts but dropped their PUC charter license.

Chuck Murphy noted that the proliferation of carriers is a result of the internet. Providers are selling tickets online, picking up passengers at the curb, and avoiding facility costs. For example, maintaining a counter at DIA costs approximately \$50,000 annually - a \$4K monthly cost, plus utilities, phone, and insurance.

Margaret Bowes said she was aware of four ski buses/vans: Denver Ski Bus, Front Range Express, University Ski Bus, and Colorado Mountain Express. John Valerio noted that CDOT doesn't want to compete with these, but rather coordinate with them.

Maribeth noted needs for human service trips - Veterans to Denver, people commuting between Eagle and the Cancer Center, etc. Bill Efting noted that the counties have data on human service needs. Counties have been participating on the regional coordinating council. Maribeth suggested that Susan Juergensmeyer, their Mobility Manager be added to the TAG.

Chuck Murphy said he envisions motor-coach service from DIA to mountain communities with distribution provided by local services. Grayline no longer provides service; only charter service. Grayline does provide service from DIA, CO Springs Airport, and the Philmont Boy Scout Ranch in Cimarron, NM.

Margaret Bowes stated that it is important that recreational demand needs to be included.

Chuck Murphy asked about subsidizing service that is in competition with Greyhound or the private sector. Suzanne O'Neill noted that different carriers serve different markets and that the team is making an effort to identify what service is going to both meet the needs of the market and support the private carriers.

Tom Breslin asked if the same stops were assessed in the 2008 study. John Valerio responded that the 2008 study took a broader, statewide approach. Tom noted that Georgetown was not identified as a stop.

There was a brief discussion of facilities. TAG was asked to consider the importance of having facilities open to the public and available for the use of multiple carriers.

Maribeth suggested looking at smaller changes on I-70 so that the corridor will be ready for larger changes at a point in the future. Mark Rogers agreed, and noted the gaps between Gypsum and Glenwood and the gap between Rifle and Grand Junction as possible examples. Maribeth suggested prioritizing the I-70 services to build a successful service. Maintaining focus and commitment will be important.

In discussing the problem of buses getting stuck in the same traffic as cars, Margaret noted that expansion of the twin tunnels will provide an opportunity for a managed lane. This should ease some congestion and allow opportunity for buses to get preferential treatment, speeding up the travel time.

Bill Efting noted that he supports taking small steps, but is there a risk that the I-25 corridor will take all the funds if they go too slow?

There was some discussion of buses including fuel type, features, and configuration. Chuck was at the bus show and noted MCI still doesn't have drop down chains - although they are promising them.



It was discussed and decided that Margaret Bowes and Maribeth Lewis-Baker will share the assignment of attending TAC meetings. Each may participate via conference call for a majority of the TAC meetings.

The next TAG Meeting (#2) will be held March 6<sup>th</sup> in Frisco from 1pm to 3pm. A meeting agenda and conference call number will be provided in advance of the meeting.

