

NEWS RELEASE



RTD staff to present a proposal for a low/no-emissions transition plan

The facilities and fleet transition plan will guide the agency's future and outline recommendations

DENVER (April 7, 2023) – The Regional Transportation District's (RTD) Board of Directors will consider a proposal regarding the development of a low/no-emission facilities and fleet transition plan during its Operations and Safety Committee meeting on April 12.

The plan includes the development of a transition feasibility study and a facilities and fleet transition strategy. Once completed, the plan will also outline recommendations for fixed-route services by fleet type, a replacement schedule and overall cost projections.

"RTD is focused on transitioning to a sustainable energy future," said Debra A. Johnson, RTD's General Manager and Chief Executive Officer. "The agency is taking a monumental and necessary step to foundationally prepare for a comprehensive transition. This plan will consider all aspects of RTD's system, including its facilities, infrastructure and transit service delivery model. RTD has been a leader in low/no-emission vehicles for more than 20 years, and that commitment continues."

RTD's first steps toward a low/no-emission bus fleet transition were taken in 2000 with the deployment of hybrid-electric buses using compressed natural gas along the 16th Street Mall. In 2008, a subfleet of hybrid diesel-electric fixed-route buses was introduced to the system. Eventually, all previously used MallRide buses were replaced in 2017 by a fleet of 36 zero-emission battery electric buses. The agency has garnered operational knowledge through the deployment and maintenance of its low- and no-emission vehicles. This knowledge gained over the past two decades will support the development and eventual implementation of a comprehensive transition plan.

If approved by the Board, work on the plan will likely begin in September after a public solicitation and selection process. Retaining a consultancy with specific subject matter expertise will ensure the plan is not only comprehensive, but that it is specific to RTD's needs and operating environment, and it aligns with the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The anticipated timeline for completing the plan is the fourth quarter of 2024.

Additionally, during next week's Operations and Safety Committee meeting, the Board will consider taking action to terminate a contract with New Flyer of America Inc. for the purchase of 17 battery electric buses. Canceling the contract for convenience will allow RTD to take a temporary pause on acquiring a small sub-fleet of buses until the transition plan is developed.

"Rather than continue down a narrow path that limits the agency to one type of technology, this approach ensures that options can be maximized in a cost-efficient manner. We need to think beyond 17 buses," Johnson said. "RTD is now planning for tomorrow, and for tomorrows to come."

If the Board approves the recommended action to terminate the contract for convenience, notice will be issued to New Flyer of America Inc.

The Operations and Safety Committee will meet via Zoom at 5:30 p.m. on April 12.

#

ABOUT RTD

The Regional Transportation District develops, operates, and maintains a public transportation system that meets the transit needs of close to 3 million people within an eight-county service area in the Denver Metro region. For more information, visit rtd-denver.com, call 303-299-6000 and follow along on social media: [RideRTD](#) on Facebook, [@RideRTD](#) on Twitter, [@ridertd](#) on Instagram and [rideRTDco](#) on YouTube. For the most current RTD news, visit the News Stop, at rtd-denver.com/news-stop.

