



**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT GUIDELINES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS DOCUMENTATION ON PROCESS FOR
HIRING/TRANSITIONING TO A NEW GENERAL MANAGER**

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Purpose:	This document provides and documents the processes followed by the RTD Board of Directors in hiring a new General Manager. This document is intended as a guideline for any future General Manager searches that will achieve the goal of providing a fair and transparent process.
Approval/s (if applicable)	

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DOCUMENTATION ON
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0. Process Overview 3

2.0. Current CEO Notification of Resignation/Retirement Process 3

3.0. Search Committee/Transition Team Selection.....3

4.0. Obtaining Stakeholder's & Employees Input on Important Traits for GM.....4

5.0. Hiring of National Executive Search Firm..... 5

6.0. Creating a Job Description/Candidate Profile 5

7.0. Posting of the General Manager Job 5

8.0. Selecting a Civic Leaders Panel..... 6

9.0. Selecting Prospects, Candidates, and Finalists 6

10.0. The Interview Process 7

11.0. Hosting a Stakeholder Reception..... 7

12.0. Selection and Notification Process.....8

13.0. Contract Negotiation..... 9

14.0. Search Committee Closeout 10



The Regional Transportation District Act, Section 32-9-114 (d) and 32-9-119, and Articles VII of the Board Bylaws establish the authority for the hiring and delegation of powers to the General Manager.

1.0. Process Overview

This document defines the process that was followed by the RTD Board of Directors for the hiring of a new General Manager following the resignation of the current General Manager. Prior to this time, a General Manager had not been hired in over fourteen years so no processes had been documented. This process addresses most of the major concerns during the transition and can be used as a guide for future hiring/transitioning to a new General Manager for the RTD transit agency.

2.0. Current CEO Notification of Resignation/Retirement Process

- Typically, the General Manager will notify the Board Chair. The Board Chair will notify the rest of the Board members in the most expedient and confidential manner possible.
- Board Chair will attempt to negotiate a forty-five day notice period from the General Manager or in accordance with the terms stated in the General Manager's contract.

Please refer to the General Manager Succession Plan located in Part VII (6) of the Board Governance Manual

- Board Chair and Executive Committee should discuss how to handle public relations. Determine what announcement or press release should be provided to the community, elected officials and stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively with the General Manager on message to be shared with employees.

3.0 Search Committee/Transition Team Selection

- Board Chair will appoint members to an ad hoc committee to focus on this transition. This Committee and members may be a newly appointed Committee or may be the activation of the General Manager Oversight and Performance Management Committee. Ideally members of this Committee will reflect the agency's goal for diversity.
- The Chair of the Transition Team will mobilize his team to develop a transition planning strategy—meetings, timelines, communications, etc. They will review the succession plan to see what it says about the interim position.



- To ensure transparent and ongoing communications with the full Board, assign a **Buddy System** with members of the Transition Team who will be responsible for informing and contacting their respective buddies following each meeting or point of critical decision. It is imperative that the full Board understands what is happening from start to finish and have a venue for providing input to the Transition Team.
- The Transition Team will determine what internal resources may need to be involved or conferred with during this process (i.e. procurement, Human Resources, Legal, Finance)
- The Transition Team will identify the external resources needed to assist or consult in the process (i.e. Executive Search Firm, Public Affairs/Public Policy Consultant)
- The Transition Team should identify funding sources and budget for this transition process.
- The Transition Team should initiate the RFP process with procurement for the selection of an Executive Search Firm and/or Public Affairs/Public Policy Consultant. (See copy of RFPs located in Procurement).
- The Transition Team should define the process for maintaining complete confidentiality throughout this assignment. A similar statement of "I have no comment at this time" should be given to any media inquiry.
- The Transition Team should confer with in-house legal related to the statutes and Open Meetings/Open Records Requirements for conducting an Executive Search. (i.e. Definitions and responsibilities based on Prospects, Candidates and Finalists). Legal representation will be present at most meetings as the Chair determines appropriate.
- The Transition Team will review the existing General Manager Contract and Payout and will validate the numbers with Finance. The Board Chair will be responsible for approving this payout. The Chair will follow the payout process as defined in the management directive under procedures for approving G.M. expenses.
- The Transition Team will establish Ongoing Communications with the full Board either through buddy system or timely updates as a critical part of their process.

4.0 Obtaining Stakeholder's & Employees Input on Important Traits for GM

- Board members will name the Interim General Manager as defined in the General Manager's Succession Plan or as determined by the approval of the full Board.
- Board Chair and Transition Team Committee Chair should meet with the Senior Leadership Staff for an open dialogue with the staff on the transition strategy and to hear any concerns they may have. If needed, follow-up with Senior Leadership on a one-on-one basis should occur to ensure their questions or concerns are being heard.



- Transition Committee (Subcommittee Working Group) works with Public Affairs/Public Policy Consultant to determine strategy for obtaining stakeholders and employee input (Develop Draft Outreach plan)
 - Develop key stakeholders list & contacts
 - Identify employee divisions including Contracted Services(i.e. Blake Street, FasTracks Offices, bus and rail divisions, District shops, Contractors, etc)
 - Develop strategic questions and script for Board members to use in their public contact with stakeholders and employees (questionnaire and interview forms)
 - Schedule Board Members to facilitate public forums with stakeholders and employees
 - Capture and summarize traits and concerns obtained from the stakeholders and employees
 - Review this Summary with the full Board members
 - Obtain full Board member Buy-in to the process
- Transition Committee Chair develops communications on process that is shared with internal and external stakeholders (i.e. Civic Leaders Panel and Stakeholder process)

5.0 Hiring of National Executive Search Firm

- The Transition Team will follow the RTD procurement process for submitting a Request for Proposal (RFP) and for the evaluation of the responses. They will define what weights to associate with the technical and cost proposals.
- The Transition Team with full Board silent participation as desired, will interview top Executive Search firm agencies.
- The Transition Team selects Executive Search firm.
- The Transition Team Subcommittee Working Group comprised of two Board members from the Transition Team will work with selected Public Affairs/Public Policy Consultant to develop ongoing work plans and timelines for the Transition Committee.
- The National Executive Search Firm participates in the planning process and builds appropriate recruitment schedules based on Board timelines.

6.0 Creating a Job Description/Candidate Profile

- The Transition Team will review the current General Manager's job description.
- The Transition Team will review the summary of important traits for the General Manager that was obtained from stakeholders and employees to consider in their draft of desired General Manager qualities and traits.
- The Transition Team will work with the selected Executive Search Firm to develop/update a General Manager job description or candidate profile that is inclusive of overall desired qualities and traits.



7.0 Posting of the General Manager Job

- The Transition Team will work with Executive Search Firm to develop and approve ads.
- The Transition Team will obtain full Board review and approval of General Manager Job description and ads for publication.
- The Executive Search Firm posts approved ads and job descriptions to Newspapers, Journals and appropriate outlets (i.e. Denver Post, Transit rags and Wall Street Journal)
- Prospects and recommendations of interest will be directed to National Executive Search Firm to ensure confidentiality.
- The National Executive Search firm begins contacting and interviewing potential prospects.
- Internal employees are encouraged to apply. They will be processed through the National Executive Search Firm process.
- The National Executive Search firm screen resumes and provide short list to Transition Team of prospects.
- The National Executive Search firm should strive for a diverse candidate pool with demonstrated and exceptional leadership skills both internally and outside of the transit industry.
- The Transition Team works with the National Executive Search firm and consulting Public Affairs to obtain competitive compensation information that includes full salary and benefits analysis.
- The Transition Team reviews the General Manager Compensation Philosophy and other benchmarking data. They will vet with the full Board to validate this is the model they want to follow.

8.0 Selecting a Civic Leaders Panel

- The Transition Team will work with the Public Affairs/Public Policy consultant to identify recognized community leaders (icons) for a representative cross –section of the constituency base (i.e. elected officials, economic development, business, community or grassroots). It is recommended that only one representative from each cross- sectional group is selected. A Civic Leaders Panel consisting of five (or 6) members will be solicited to interview the candidates and to provide feedback to the full Board in a confidential setting. Feedback from the Civic Leaders Panel and the Stakeholder’s Forum will be considered by the Board in making their final selection.
- Transition Team Committee Chair (or designated representative) will contact Civic Leaders and follow up with Letter of Invitation to participate on Civic Leader panel
- Transition Committee Chair and another Transition Team member will meet with Civic Leaders Panel to discuss the role of the panel and to answer any questions around process that the Panel needs.



- The Transition Team representative will provide confidential information to Civic Leader Panelists on candidates at the appropriate time (i.e. resumes, etc)
- The Transition Team will provide a private venue for Civic Leader Panelists to conduct interviews.
- The Civic Leader Panelists will be asked to sign a confidential form of non-disclosure.

9.0 **Selecting Prospects, Candidates and Finalists**

- The Transition Team and full Board need to be very clear in identifying the different stages of the application process. **Prospects** are defined in the early stage as individuals who may self-submit or come as recommended from others as a good potential for the position. Many of these prospects may be gainfully employed and a revelation of their names and interest could have detrimental effects on their career. During this early stage, the names of the prospects are treated in the most confidential manner and are not public information.

The names of prospects who show potential and have been screened by the National Executive Search firm could be presented on an intermediate short **Candidate** list (18-20) names to the Transition Committee for further screening and determination if there is an interest in interviewing the candidate (iterative process).

- The Transition Team will review the resumes and implement a process to determine if candidates from the short list meet their criteria. Approval will be obtained from the full Board on the short list of names for interviewing.
- All information is handled and processed as confidential on potential candidates including location, hotel and travel accommodations and interviewing venue.
- **Finalists** are considered those candidates who have been identified by the Board as the top 3-4 candidates and who they want to bring back for a final interview. Colorado State statutes require a public announcement to be made at least 14 days prior to appointing or electing a finalist to the position.
- Finalists will also have been screened, reference and background checks performed by the National Executive Search Firm. Finalists will be required to complete the RTD Employment Application Form.
- Press notification is made for public release of the names of the finalist/s.

10.0 The Interview Process

- The interview process is used to further screen potential candidates and to narrow the choices down to a critical few who may become finalists.
- One or several forms of interview types can be used to further drill in on a candidate's competency and his/her potential match to the position: phone interviews, Interactive Video, group interviews, and return interviews.



- The Transition Team may elect to conduct two forms of interviews: The “softball” approach where top candidates are asked to meet with the Board members in a more informal exchange manner to determine if there is mutual interest. The follow-up interview called the “Hardball” is used once this list of top candidates are narrowed down to the critical few or top finalists. Questions in this interview are intended to challenge the candidate in terms of visionary, strategic and out of the box thinking. The Hardball interview may be professionally video graphed.
- The Transition Team will solicit interview questions from the full Board and will develop a list of 5-7 strategic questions that will be asked of each of the candidates (Transition Team Working group). These questions will be handled and retained in a confidential manner until the day of the interviews. Copies will be limited and controlled distribution.
- The Transition Team will define the process they will use in the interview process (i.e. who will ask the questions, if the full Board will participant or only the Transition Team with the rest of the members as silent observers, how questions will be fielded, etc)
- Prior to the selection of the finalists, the maintenance of confidentiality is extremely important and Board members are strongly encouraged not to accept calls from the media or others related to this matter until press release has been made on the finalists (3-4). This discussion should be held with the full Board.
- When the Board has agreed upon the top 3-4 candidates who will become finalists, a press release announcement will be released to the General Public. According to Colorado Law, this public announcement should be made at least 14 days prior to appointing or electing one of the finalists to fill the position (CRS 24-6-402 (3.5))
- The Transition Team may also consider having members of the team to visit the home base of the top candidates for information gathering purposes.
- Discussions and interviews of candidates for the General Manager position can be held in executive sessions subject to the requirements of CRS 24-6-402 (4).

11.0 Hosting a Stakeholder Forum (Reception)

- Once the Finalists have been identified, the Transition Team will host an open stakeholder forum to introduce the finalists to the community (i.e. stakeholders, elected officials, employees, and Senior Leadership staff).
- This event will be publicized and interested parties will be encouraged to attend.
- The Finalists make a 5 minute introductory remark followed by an opportunity for the guests to ask more direct questions in a small group setting. Guests will be able to move around in various discussion groups with the finalists. Afterwards, the participating guests will be asked to complete a stakeholder’s comment card which will be summarized and results provided to the Transition Team (and full Board) the next day.



- Comments from the Stakeholder's Forum and the Civic Leaders Panel will be held until after the Board has completed their interviews to maintain objectivity.

12:0 The Selection and Notification Process

- The selection of a new General Manager will be made by the full Board based on a myriad of input sources and processes: Input from stakeholders and employees on General Manager's traits and qualities; Board assessment of leadership needed; Input from Civic Leaders Panel on strengths and weaknesses of the candidates; Input from participants at the stakeholder's Forum, evaluations from interviews and other sources of pertinent information.
- Board members will discuss and rank who they feel is the top person for the job. The goal will be to have full consensus.
- If an obvious leader does not emerge, Board members will revisit their process with the Public Affairs Consultant and the National Executive Search Firm to define next steps.
- Once a recommendation is reached the Board members will convene in either a special Board meeting or regular Board meeting for an official vote.
- All of the finalists will be notified of the decision via phone by the Chair of the Transition Team as soon as possible. This will be followed up by a letter to the Finalists thanking them for their consideration.
- A Press Release of the Hiring will be made by the RTD Public Affairs.

13:0 Contract Negotiations

- The Transition Team should identify the member/s of the contract negotiation team. It may be the Chair of the Board with assistance from the General Counsel.
- The Transition Team should provide the contract negotiation team with the parameters and compensation guidelines for the negotiation that was previously reviewed and approved by the full Board.
- The Transition Team/Negotiator should consider using an external employment attorney for the crafting of the contract and negotiation terms. If so, a RFP for competitive services is required.
- The General Counsel (or designate) will vet the proposed terms of the contract (i.e. salary, benefits, pension, etc) through appropriate entities such as the attorney over pension benefits, CFO, or the actuary and financial audit to validate the financial impact on the agency through the contract period.
- The Negotiator will work with the National Executive Search Firm as the intermediate to the selected General Manager. If desired, he may also work directly with the selected General Manager.
- The Negotiator will keep the Transition Team advised of progress and will solicit input from the Transition Team/Board on issues that may fall outside the guidelines and parameters of the approved negotiation.



- The Negotiator should target having a signed contract within 30 days of the announced selection.

14:0 Search Closeout

- The Transition Team Committee Chair will write thank you letters to finalists, Civic Leader Panelists and Committee team.
- The Transition Team will have a debriefing session to identify key learnings (i.e. what worked well, what did not, lessons learned etc).
- The Transition Team will document the Process.
- The Transition Team will transition to General Manager Oversight and Performance Management Committee, a standing committee with responsibility for the ongoing oversight and performance management of the General Manager.

15.0 Appendix: Reference material used in the interview and hiring process (not included in this document)

Job descriptions, Ads, Stakeholder/Employee Summaries of General Manager Traits, Stakeholder list, Communications on Stakeholder and CLP Panel, Press Release on CLP, Compensation Guidelines, Comparative Compensation Documents, Interview Questions, Top Candidates List and Resumes, Press Release on Selection of General Manager

Change History

Version	Date	Change Definition
BOD_01	1/10	Documents the process followed by the BOD in the Hiring of a new General Manager
BOD_02	8/10	Updated to reflect feedback and changes from Board members input and review