



Citizens Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary
July 13, 2023
2:00pm – 4:00pm

Welcome

Attendees introduced themselves. Colleen noted Loretta will be retiring on August 18, 2023, and Jamie Zeimantz/Peak Consulting is attending today's meeting and will be taking over Loretta's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) role.

Introduction of Jack Kroll/Executive Manager, Regional Transportation District (RTD) Board Office

Jack is the new executive director of the RTD Board of Directors. He has been in his position for about a month. Prior to RTD, he worked professionally for about ten years at the University of Colorado and has extensive experience working with elected board members. He served on the University's elected governing Board of Regents for Colorado District 1 for six years and was the chair for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. RTD is one of three elected transit agency boards in the country, and the University is one of four elected university governing boards in the country, so there are a lot of similarities between the two boards.

Jack said the Board is drawing on his background as an elected official and experience in developing policy.

Jack noted the CAC was formed in 2004 as part of the FasTracks initiative, and there were revisions made to the committee's structure in 2016 after the FasTracks program was largely completed. He understands the CAC wants to continue to provide meaningful input to RTD and the Board of Directors.

CAC Feedback to Jack and Team on Bylaw Discussion and Role of CAC

Matt Appelbaum voiced the CAC's concerns about the committee's role to the Board at their June Board meeting. Adoption of the CAC's bylaws has been temporarily delayed because of potential conflicts between the bylaws and the governing rules for the committee. The governing rules were instituted some time ago and may not fit what the committee wants to be. He suggested a small subcommittee of CAC and Board members be formed to work on a resolution for the CAC's role and structure that works best.

The CAC would like to see a clear directive on their roles and responsibilities soon.

The CAC would like to provide input on topics and programs in time for the Board to consider CAC input when discussing those topics and programs at Board meetings. However, the Board's monthly agenda packet is typically released after the monthly CAC meeting has occurred, preventing the CAC from providing feedback to the Board in time for their consideration.

- John Fussa suggested that if the timing of the Board's agenda release doesn't work with the timing of the CAC meetings, perhaps the CAC could have a subcommittee quickly review agenda items and provide feedback to the Board.
- Brandon Figliolino reminded the group that nothing can be presented to the CAC before it has been presented and/or approved by the Board. The CAC's role is to provide feedback during the customer comment period that

is open to the public. Changing this would require a Board action and potentially a state action to allow the CAC to see proposals before they are presented to the Board.

- Jack noted the process for the agenda packet release is dependent on the actions taken by various RTD committees. The Board releases the entire agenda packet when it is 100% complete, usually the Thursday or Friday of the week prior to the Tuesday Board meeting.
- Jack said he is working on creating processes for major updates so there are fewer instances where something substantial is presented to the Board that the CAC and the public have not had time to review and provide input.

Brandon said the CAC resolution defined the CAC as an outreach group and an intermediary between RTD staff to share feedback from residents, neighbors, and community groups, but there is not a lot of that happening. He has sent invitations to the CAC for various events with limited interest from the CAC in attending.

Brandon will send the group the 2016 CAC resolution and a copy of the letter the CAC sent to the Board around that time.

Jack said he will get back with the CAC on how the Board would like to proceed with discussions regarding the CAC's role. He will hopefully set up a meeting in August or September between a few Board Directors and CAC members.

Zero Fare for Better Air Campaign Update

Brandon said there was a kick-off celebration of the Zero Fare for Better Air campaign in late June at Denver Union Station with Governor Polis and RTD General Manager Debra Johnson and several Board members. There has been a lot of positive news publicity on this campaign, and people have been sharing their trips on social media. The Taylor Swift concert and Yankees baseball games will have a lot of people using RTD's system this weekend. RTD did a great job on their Instagram page with a Taylor Swift lookalike riding the train to Empower Field.

"Transit Day" is on July 25, 2023, which is a partnership with Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and all the transportation management associations. There will be events throughout the Denver metro area.

RTD has published reports with the results of last year's Zero Fare campaign:

<https://www.rtd-denver.com/news-stop/news/rtd-submits-zero-fare-better-air-final-report-to-the-sta>

<https://www.rtd-denver.com/sites/default/files/files/2022-11/Zero-Fare%20August%20Impact%20Analysis%20Final%20Report%20-%202011.30.2022.pdf>

Zero Fare for Youth Pilot Program Update

Brandon said once the Board approves the RTD fare structure, on September 1, 2023, RTD will begin implementing the Zero Fare for Youth pilot program, which will eliminate the cost of fares for anyone under the age of 19. He will send out the details for a kick-off celebration in early August, probably at a Denver public school. RTD is busy connecting with recreation centers, libraries, and other organizations that focus on kids to promote the pilot program.

Open Discussion

The group discussed ways to encourage people to give up their cars and try transit during the Zero Fare for Better Air Campaign. One common excuse heard is "transit will take too long."

Instead of encouraging people to give up their cars, suggest they try short trips on transit and see how they like it. It may be enough to convince them to ride transit more often.

Sometimes it's easier to talk people into using transit for a longer trip than a shorter one (e.g., to the airport).

Saving money is also a good incentive for riding transit. It costs approximately \$.27 mile for car fuel and maintenance (not including car payments, insurance, etc.). Riding transit and/or taking advantage of e-bikes can add up to big savings.

Bryn Grunwald said her company is working on an online calculator for the benefits of electrifying homes. It will also have a component for calculating savings of being car free and using transit and e-bikes. She hopes it will be available in August and will share the link when it goes live.