



Citizens Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

April 11, 2024

3:30-5:30 PM

1. Welcome

Opening remarks and introductions of attendees.

2. Legislative Session

- a. House Bill 1447, aimed at reforming the RTD board and enhancing coordination with DRCOG, has been introduced. It proposes RTD coordinate service change plans with DRCOG; requires CDOT to conduct a study on service delivery, similar to the previous Reimagine RTD study; and revises the Board governance.

The reformed Board would have 11 voting directors, 2 of whom would be governor appointees, and 3 non-voting directors in the transition years of 2025 and 2026. Starting in 2027, the Board would consist of 7 voting directors, 2 of whom would be governor appointees, and 3 non-voting directors. The bill also mandates RTD develop a 10-year strategic plan focused on increasing ridership.

- CAC members raised concerns about coordinating service changes with DRCOG; DRCOG is not a transit planning agency.
 - CAC members raised concerns about CDOT's lack of experience in transit planning and the lack of funding in the bill for CDOT to conduct the study; Reimagine RTD was a \$4.5 million study.
 - CAC members raised concerns that 3 directors elected from districts is too few directors to represent RTD districts.
 - CAC members noted that a strategic plan focused on ridership and efficiency could result in unexpected outcomes, including cutting low ridership routes and/or service to some districts. RTD Board has already dismissed the idea of entirely cutting service to some areas because the entire RTD district pays into RTD and there are transit dependent people reliant on service in low ridership areas. The RTD Board wants to provide service to as much of the district as possible, and low frequency routes are a way to provide this in lower ridership areas.
 - CAC members are concerned that the bill provides no additional funding to RTD.
- b. Senate Bill 184 concerning Front Range Passenger Rail is under consideration in the Senate. The bill directs RTD to collaborate with Front Range Passenger Rail and CDOT to deliver

passenger rail service to Fort Collins. RTD's Board has taken the position that RTD funding cannot be committed to service outside of RTD's district boundaries (which do not extend to Fort Collins).

- c. House Bill 1313, concerning Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC), remains under discussion in the House Appropriations Committee. RTD has not actively engaged in external discussions regarding this bill, although Chessie Price, who oversees the TOC program for RTD, has provided expertise. The bill faces challenges due to its entanglement with local politics, with opposition from groups like the Colorado Municipal League and Colorado Counties Incorporated. The bill's fiscal note complicates matters further, especially given the current budgetary constraints of the legislature. Despite these challenges, the bill remains a priority for the governor's office.

3. Referred Measure on TABOR

- a. The CAC had originally planned to provide input to the Board's Finance and Planning Committee regarding a TABOR ballot measure in November; however, polling results haven't yet come in regarding public sentiment on RTD debrucing. This discussion will be shifted to the May CAC meeting.
- b. The CAC will discuss developing a resolution to send the Board in support of a ballot measure aimed at debrucing, to maintain the district's revenue sources.
- c. At the March 26, 2024, RTD Board meeting, updates were provided on revenue diversification and the TABOR issue. The CAC expressed support for a TABOR ballot referral measure, advocating for the preservation of the district's revenue sources. This stance was communicated to the board as part of the CAC's update.

4. Customer-Facing Signage

- a. The Board Operations and Safety Committee will be discussing improvements to customer-facing signage at their May meeting. Stuart Summers provided an overview of RTD signage improvement planning, including static signs, shelter boards, and digital signs like variable message signs (VMS). Existing signage systems have outdated technology and maintenance issues. Goals of signage improvements include aiding wayfinding, providing service information, ensuring safety, and promoting agency initiatives. Plans include installing GPS for real-time information on transit arrival times and replacing outdated signs. See attached presentation.
- b. RTD's bus stop improvement projects aim to assess and enhance bus stops, evaluate accessibility, add informative signage, and improve real-time information availability through text alerts and mobile apps. A comprehensive bus stop assessment will identify ownership of all bus stops (9,750 stops of which 8,200 are active) and maintenance responsibilities, with the goal of improving maintenance and accountability.
 - CAC members noted concerns about current signage readability, accessibility, and the need for better real-time information at bus stops. Suggestions for improved customer signage:

- Put QR codes on signs to access travel time data
 - Install electronic signs with real-time updates
 - Have a phone number on bus stop signs that riders can text to get real-time updates
 - Bus stop signs are too high for people who are shorter or in wheelchairs to read, and it feels unsafe sometimes to ask other waiting passengers what the signs say; signs should be lower to be readable to all
 - Consider building in information redundancy at light rail stations because it's often hard to hear verbal announcements due to nearby auto traffic
- RTD encourages riders to sign up for the Next Ride app on their phones to access real-time data and service alerts. CAC members noted that Next Ride takes users to RTD's website for many functions, which is clunky.
- c. RTD's Adopt-A-Stop program allows organizations to take ownership of bus stops for maintenance tasks like snow removal and trash cleanup. Emphasis is placed on the need to coordinate with municipalities for any changes to bus stops, ensuring compliance with permits and safety standards.

6. Updated CAC Charter for Board Action

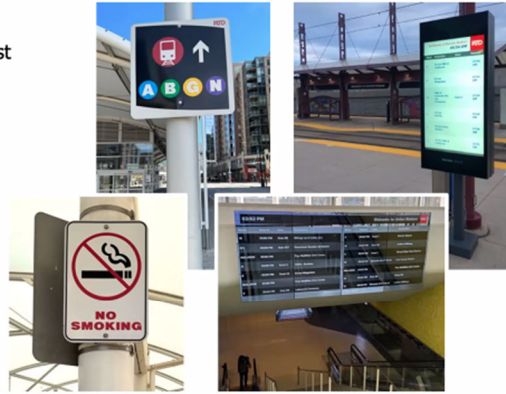
The CAC co-chairs received final comments on the CAC Charter last month and will submit the updated charter to the Board for action at the April Board meeting.

7. 2024 CAC Work Plan

The proposed CAC Work Plan for April 2024 – March 2025 (attached) was discussed. The CAC agreed that the focus of the work plan is appropriate for the coming year. CAC members requested the work plan include specific action points and timeframes for each activity prior to finalizing at the April CAC meeting.

Customer-Facing Signage Goals

- 1. Wayfinding and Navigation**
Identify stations and stops, entrances/exits, connections, points of interest
- 2. Service Information**
Schedules, disruptions, fares, boarding instructions
- 3. Personal Safety and Security**
Customer Code of Conduct, emergency notices, safety instructions
- 4. Promotions and Marketing**
Special offers, events, partnerships, and initiatives



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Sign Categories



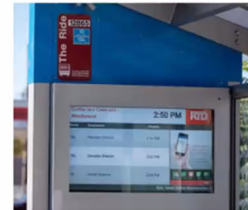
Static Signs

- Stop and station names
- Route numbers and rail lines
- Wayfinding
- Customer Code of Conduct
- Accessibility signs



Shelter Boards

- Service maps
- Schedules
- Fare information
- Non-English language support
- Contact information



Digital Signs

- Arrival times
- Service disruptions and cancellations
- Special events and promotions
- RTD promotions
- Paid advertisements

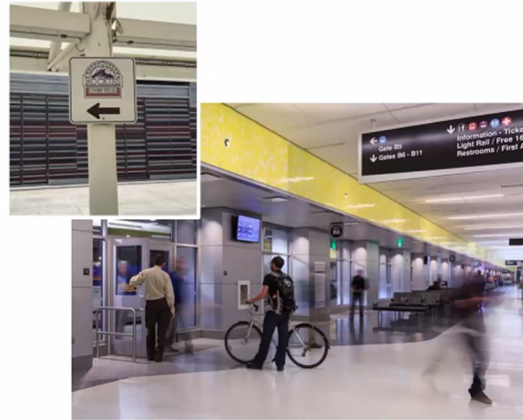
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Static Signs

- Identifies rail stations or bus stops
- Provides wayfinding directions
 - RTD connections and nearby points of interest
- Shares Customer Code of Conduct guidelines
- Communicates accessibility options



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RTD

Shelter Boards

- Updated three times a year as part of RTD's service changes
- Available at all rail stations and select bus stops and park-n-rides
 - Approximately 1,050 shelter boards
- Displays service schedules and system maps
- Communicates fares and discount programs
- Provides language-access information
- Includes contact information for Customer Care, Civil Rights, and Transit Police



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Digital Sign Categories



Variable Message Signs (VMS)

- Installed at all light rail and commuter rail platforms
- Displays 1-3 lines of text



Public Information Displays (PIDs)

- Installed in RTD facilities and at select bus stops
- Customer- and employee-facing content
- Displays schedule information and other must-know content



Universal Advertising Totems (UATs)

- Available at rail platforms
- Communicates schedule information and agency promotions

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Public Information Displays at Bus Facilities

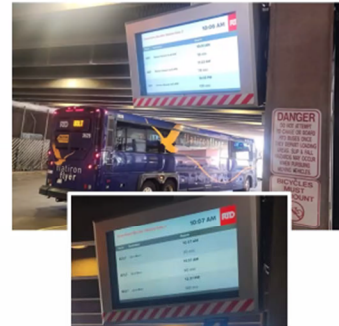
Denver Union Station Underground Bus Concourse



Civic Center Station



Downtown Boulder Station



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Light Rail: Schedule Information

- Displays the same schedule information as the Next Ride app
- Predicted times (if available) or schedule times (backup option)
 - Predicted times currently utilize track sensors (less reliable)
 - GPS is currently being installed on all rail vehicles, with a goal of incorporating it into the real-time prediction algorithm in summer 2024
- In 2023, VMS began showing trip updates from Service Alerts
 - For example: trip cancellations show as "Cancl'd" on the digital signage
- Ability to display free-text alerts for larger disruptions and utilize text-to-speech



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Commuter Rail: Schedule Information

- Displays predicted countdown in minutes to the next departure
 - If predicted feed is not available, the signs revert to a scheduled countdown
 - Canceled trips are factored into the countdown minutes
- Precise time predictions (if available), schedule information, and Service Alerts are included in the Next Ride app
- Ability to display free-text alerts for larger disruptions and utilize text-to-speech audio announcements



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RTD



VMS Replacement Project

- RTD's variable message signs (VMS) are original to the light rail system
 - Many of the signs are beyond useful life and often out of service
 - Sourcing replacement parts to make repairs is difficult
- The first shipment of 30 new VMS arrived in March 2024
 - RTD prioritized installing the new signs along light rail lines impacted by upcoming maintenance projects
 - Goal is to have at least one working VMS at every platform
- Additional signs have been ordered and it is estimated that all signs will be replaced in 6 to 12 months



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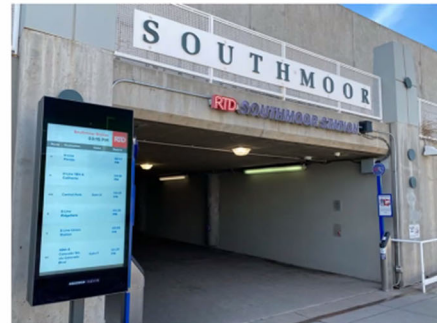


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Universal Advertising Totems (UATs)

- All costs associated with installing, operating, and maintaining the large screens rests with Lamar
 - RTD has a 10-year system advertising agreement with Lamar
- Currently display schedule information
 - Real-time information update is planned for mid-April
- All content is scheduled and deployed using a cloud-based management system called Elevate
- 50% of the screen's content is reserved for agency information and promotions
 - Share-of-voice is achieved through 10-second rotations



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UAT Installation Project

- The first pilot installation was on May 9, 2023
- As of April 1, 2024, Lamar has installed 61 UATs
 - Screens are available in two sizes: 55" and 75"
 - 45 additional screens are in the planning stage or awaiting approval
- 130 total UATs will be installed as part of this project
 - All screens are on track to be installed by Q4 2024
- Depending on the location, some platforms include multiple
- Lamar submits a separate installation proposal for each screen, which is reviewed by RTD staff prior to approval



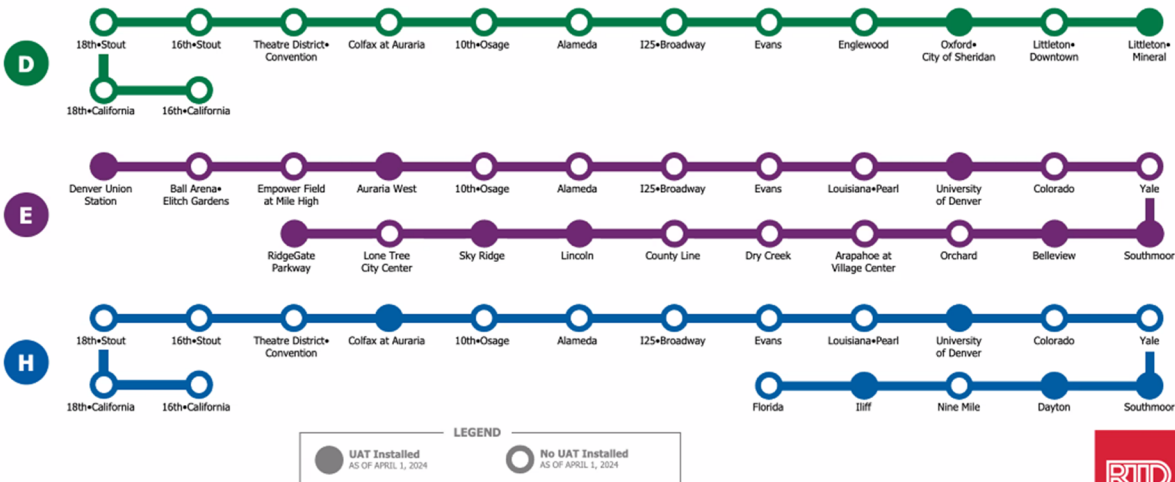
Universal Advertising Totem (UAT) at Denver Union Station's Light Rail Platform

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UATs at Light Rail Stations



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UATs at Light Rail Stations

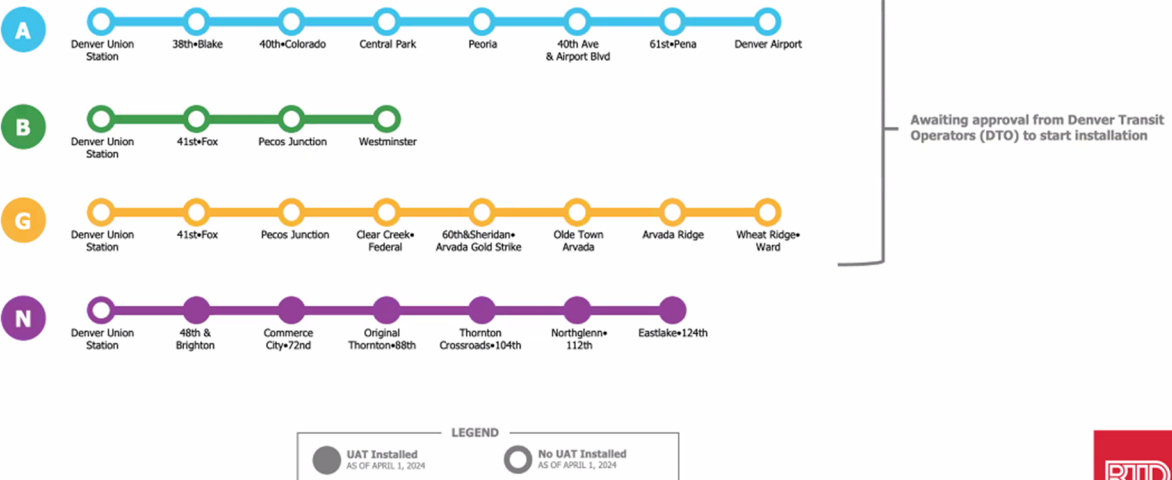


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UATs at Commuter Rail Stations



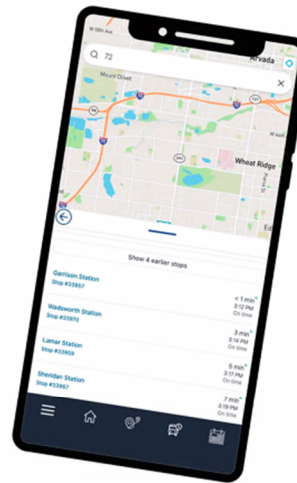
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Next Ride App

- The web-based app is available in multiple language
 - English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, and Russian
- Service Alerts display notices by bus route, rail line, station, or facility
- Commute section displays predicted arrival times for all modes
 - If predicted times are not available, defaults to scheduled times
- Ability to see real-time vehicle locations on a map
 - Depending on mode, uses either track sensors or GPS



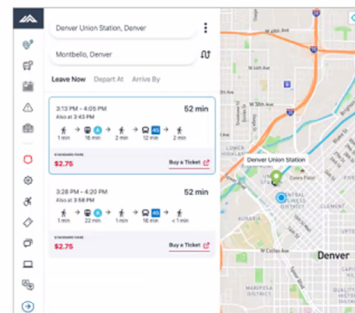
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Next Ride's Trip Planning Functionality

- In April 2024, RTD will add Next Ride's trip planning function directly on the agency's home page
- Ability to plan trips for future dates and times
 - Displays total cost (not including discounts) and provide an option to directly purchase fare online
- Trip planning accounts for the current trip-status and most disruptions
 - Includes cancelled, suspended, or skipped stop/station
- The app does not currently factor in bus shuttles in a rail trip's overall schedule
 - Enhancement is coming in 2024 after an upgrade to Open Trip Planner 2.X



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Light Rail Station Review

- In March 2024, RTD launched a customer amenities and experience review
 - The initial review includes the 25 light rail stations with the highest customer boardings
 - Stations in the downtown loop were excluded in the first phase
- Staff are visiting each station to review the wayfinding signage, shelter boards, benches, trash cans, translated materials, lighting, audio announcements, branded amenities, etc.
- The goal is to identify opportunities for potential improvement that will enhance the overall customer experience



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Denver Union Station Wayfinding Assessment

- With consultant support, staff will assess customer wayfinding at DUS
- This project updates an assessment conducted in 2016 and will align with future infrastructure enhancement
- Project Scope
 - Assess current wayfinding elements
 - Research wayfinding best practices and form recommendations
 - Develop a scope and cost estimate to implement recommendations
- The wayfinding assessment supports a welcoming transit environment
- RTD has selected a consultant to support this exploratory project



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Bus Stops in RTD's Service Area

- There are approximately 9,750 bus stops in RTD's eight-county service area
 - ~8,200 are currently active, with most of the stops only having a pole and signage
- RTD owns and maintains approximately 300 of the locations
 - The remaining bus stops (97%) are the responsibility of local municipalities, CDOT, or adjacent property owners
- RTD is focused on ensuring all bus stops provide a welcoming transit environment and access for customers



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Bus Stop Infrastructure and Accessibility Assessment

- In June 2023, RTD's Board of Directors discussed plans to develop a systemwide bus stop assessment
 - The assessment launches in 2024 and includes a review of all bus stops (~9,750) in RTD's service area
- Establish a comprehensive set of data, review existing amenities, examine accessibility gaps, and identify strategies for enhancing locations



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CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2024 DRAFT WORK PLAN

The 2024 CAC Work Plan is aligned to the 2024 activities of the RTD Board of Directors and focuses on those topics for which CAC member experience and input are most relevant.

Key topics the CAC will focus on in 2024 are:

- CAC Charter update and associated Board action approving charter update
- RTD plans for revenue diversification and potential referred measure on TABOR
- Safety on the RTD system, focused on conversations with the RTD Police Department
- Transit service changes and Subregional Service Council Partnership Program projects
- Customer bill of rights
- RTD public-facing return on investments dashboard