ACPD and APAC Joint Committee Meeting
November 11, 2023 – Time: 10:00 am – 12:15 pm
Microsoft Teams Remote Meeting

Minutes

Welcome, Meeting Protocol, Agenda Review

Gabe Christie, RTD ADA Manager, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. He provided the welcome, meeting protocol and agenda review.

Roll Call - In attendance

1. Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities:
   Earl Lee (Chair), Lynn Edmonds, Brenda Carney, Doug Wooley, Ericka DuBray, Kristina Ericson, Nicole Campuzano, Curtis Chong

2. Access-a-Ride Paratransit Advisory Committee – Jody Erikson, Facilitator
   Craig Towler (Center for People with Disabilities), Cynde Vaughn, Josh   , Julie Jennings, Lindsey Dent (Global Down Syndrome), Mary Sanders, Melissa Fishburn

3. Ex Officio Members:
   Joe Beaver, Colorado Cross Disability Coalition

4. RTD Board Members:

5. RTD Staff:
   Gabe Christie, Paul Hamilton, Larry Buter, Erin Vallejos, Gretchen Vidergar, Bill Sirois, Dave Jensen, Laura Clark, Eric Farrington, Jillian Knapp-Rhodes, Stuart Summers

6. Contracted Staff:
   Marcellinus Andrew (First Transit), Sarah Meredith (Transdev), Travis Menefee (Transdev), Lisa Bitzer (Via), Sarah Bohar (MTM), Denise Wright (MTM)

7. Others and Public:
   Jamie Lewis

Safety Moment – Gabe Christie, RTD ADA Manager

Gabe Christie, RTD ADA Manager, encouraged attendees to beware of the dangers of frying turkeys for Thanksgiving and practice fire safety as everyone prepares for the November holiday.

Public Comments

Jamie Lewis: It would be good to rename Civic Center Park for Reverend Wade Blank. Rev. Blank was part of the Gang of 19 ADA movement and a fixture in Denver disability history. The movie "Remember Me" made in the 1990s, shows his impact in the ADA movement ([youtube link](#)). He was partly responsible for models for independent living. There is already a plaque for Rev. Blank at the southeast corner of Colfax and Broadway, in Lincoln Park. I suggest a committee be formed to consider renaming Civic Center Park to be in alignment with Denver.

Access-a-Ride Paratransit Advisory Committee

1. **Updates:**

   a. **Q-Ryde Software**

      i. HBSS' QRyde will replace software that manages reservations, scheduling, dispatch, and eligibility. The current software is Routematch, which has become a legacy product won't be updated. RTD did a second launch of QRyde on September 23 and switched back to Routematch on October 7. There were significant on-time performance issues with QRyde with particular problems related to subscription trips (regularly scheduled trips). There were challenges with about 5-8% of trips, but those problems created a cascade effect that resulted in on-time performance across the system of around 60%.

      RTD's plan going forward: RTD will test the improved QRyde on multiple weekends in January 2024, starting on Saturdays. RTD will develop an interface between Routematch and QRyde to easily pass data back and forth. This will allow RTD to launch QRyde on Friday night, test on Saturday, and easily swap back to Routematch for the week. Working on a Saturday and being able to swap back and forth will decrease customer impacts during testing. Testing will be expanded into weekdays once weekend testing is going well.

      Web portal switch: The switch will not occur until QRyde software has been fully implemented and the QRyde portal (access to website online, not a mobile app) has been robustly tested. RTD's current web portal (access to online, not a mobile app) will be integrated with the QRyde software and continue to be used until the switch. The portal switch will mostly likely occur in spring/summer 2024.

      ii. Discussion
      Question: As the transition occurs are there any security holes?
      Answer: No security holes are anticipated; all are on internal RTD server/networks.
      Concern: The QRyde web portal had many accessibility challenges, it needs more real-time testing.
      Response: HBSS, the QRyde developer, has contracted a third-party accessibility tester. RTD will test a version of the QRyde portal, without making it live, during Saturday QRyde software testing. The current RTD web portal will be the live version, even during Saturday

testing, until QRyde software is fully implemented and the QRyde portal is robustly tested, likely May/June 2024.
Volunteers to help test: Cynde Vaughn, Jessica King, Mary Sanders, Sara Lee (ACPD).

2. **Discussion:**
   a. **Access-a-Ride APAC Suggested Service Improvements**
   In September 2023 APAC members provided suggestions for Access-a-Ride (AaR) improvement or identified AaR challenges for improvement. During the next year APAC agendas include some of the items APAC mentioned and review of RTD processed and/or identify further improvement details.
      i. **WAV Driver Previous Misidentification**
      This was an initial challenge when initiating all drivers to new Access-on-Demand (AoD) vendors and has been resolved. Initially not all RTD wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) AoD drivers had been approved/uploaded as drivers by the AoD vendors therefore, drivers had to log-in as already approved drivers. Now, all WAV drivers have been approved/uploaded by AoD providers and this should no longer be an issue. An APAC member corroborated it hasn't been an issue for a while.

      ii. **Late Pick-ups Process**
      Laura Clark, TransDev dedicated Paratransit Assistant General manager, provided background on dispatch and the process when a trip is late:
         1. **Capacity Background:**
            - 10,400 AaR trips scheduled in a week; on peak days, there are 270+ drivers are on the road during the day.
            - Peak days are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; peak times are 7-9am and 2-4pm. A third of a day's demand is between 7-9am and another third is between 2-4pm.
            - Dispatch has 15 staff and is staffed 24/7, 365 days a year.
            - Dispatch's responsibilities (some): moving a trip to another driver if vehicle break; finding a driver for trips where the driver cannot be there or is too delayed/late; manage emergency/1099 events like medical emergencies or vehicle accidents; will call requests; no-shows; etc.
         2. **When a pick-up is late**
            - Dispatch reaches out to a customer, but dispatch isn't always able to see a trip will be late until it is happening (ex., when delays are caused by traffic jams).
            - Changes in how trips are scheduled (by the Scheduling Team day before service) has seen improvements in both routing and on-time performance. On October 25 (W) 82% of trips were on time, by November 1 (W), using improved systems, 91% of trips were on time.
         3. **Discussion**
            - Concern: A dispatcher told a customer that if they canceled within the pick-up time window they would be penalized/receive a "service abuse", even though the customer could see that his vehicle would be over an hour late, after the pick-up window closed.

- A customer can cancel without a "service abuse" if there is reliable data that the vehicle will not arrive within the pick-up window. It is best to call dispatch to confirm this.
- If a driver is running late, a customer can request to keep the trip with an adjusted time based on ETA.
- If a trip is late, dispatch's goal is to find a replacement, but it can be difficult during peak times.
- Service abuse
  - IVR automatically sends a message if a trip is marked as a no show (within the pick-up window, which is a service abuse) identified by the system.
  - All service abuses are reviewed by management and may be corrected prior to finalizing details for service abuse review based on data the system doesn't automatically have at the time. The system doesn't always catch a delayed vehicles. If dispatch or management sees the vehicle was delayed with no way to arrive during the pick-up window the service abuse is removed (although no IVR is sent regarding the removal).
  - Suspension of AaR service occurs after 4 service abuses and greater than 10% of trips within a month.
  - During certification and travel training customers are reminded when scheduling a trip, it is important to let the reservationists know the time of an appointment, rather than just state the time you want to be picked up.

- *ACTION*: RTD will update the Customer Guide to clarify that if the vehicles is/will be delayed outside the pick-up window, a customer may cancel the trip without incurring a service abuse; that a customer may cancel within the pick-up window if real time data shows no vehicle can/will arrive within the pick- up window and dispatch shows no replacement is available within the pick-up window.
- Question: If a driver is an hour away, a customer has to wait before canceling; what if the customer doesn't want to sit around and wait in order to cancel?
  Answer: If the driver's real time ETA is outside the pick-up window, the trip can be canceled without incurring a service abuse, even if it is canceled within the pick-up window.
- Question: Are AaR vehicles pulled to meet AoD needs?
  Answer: No. AaR and AoD vehicles are dedicated fleets and do not address overflow for the other program.
- Question: Could RTD or the customer use AoD as a way to cover for AaR delays?
  Answer: RTD cannot schedule AoD trips for customer without AoD provider account. AoD is only for curb-to-curb capable customers. A customer could use AoD once there is reliable information that an AaR trip is delayed outside the pick-up window.

- Question: How do providers ensure there are enough drivers – do they use part-time staff?
  Answer: Providers have part-time staff they can schedule and/or call and even use road supervisors and other management staff if necessary. Right now, due to fall illnesses, 6-7 drivers call in sick a day, but we can't have 6-7 drivers on call/just-in-case, we work with what we have.

    iii. Possible Real Time Feedback Mechanism (Tabled)

    iv. Future Agenda Items (Tabled)

Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities

Updates for ACPD Committee:
  1. **Updates**:
  a. **Civic Center Station Renaming – Stuart Summers, Chief Communications and Engagement Officer**
    i. Stuart Summers introduced himself and clarified that he had been included on the communications to rename Civic Center Station for Rev. Wade Blank and came to the ACPD Meeting with the intention of sharing RTD's policy regarding naming conventions and determine next steps.

    Stuart stated that he appreciates the enthusiasm for the renaming of the station. He then clarified that RTD policy, set by the RTD Board of Directors, states that Stations names need to be easily identifiable, usually with a street name, a major intersection or a nearby geographic location. This is intended to ensure ease of access information so customers can clearly understand where they are traveling. The policy states that a stations core name must remain an identifier.

    With the policy parameters explained; Stuart stated that if this is an item of interest in the community it would be beneficial to set up a working group to discuss the proposed name, the related costs, and the efforts being undertaken by the City and County of Denver to ensure efforts are done in tandem. The RTD Board of Directors would also need to be considered and consulted as the project moved forward.

    Joe Beaver stated that he is very excited with the possibilities to honor such a great man in contrast Coloradans who have been honored in the past such as those who committed the Sand Creek Massacre or were members of the KKK. Stuart stated that he admires Mr. Beaver's passion and has read his emails and reiterated the need to coordinate with Denver to ensure consistency.

  b. **Elevator Outage Procedures – Dave Jensen, Assistant General Manager of Rail Operations**
    i. Dave Jensen, Assistant General Manager of Rail Operations, brought forward an update regarding the elevator outage procedures. Dave stated that his

goal is to address the specific concerns regarding a customer becoming stranded at a station and the communication of elevator outages which are both intertwined. He stated that customers should not become stranded at stations because RTD light rail staff are expected to communicate elevator outages to customers boarding at the high block. He stated that the only way a customer should become stranded as a result of an elevator outage should be because that elevator outage is unknown to RTD. The procedures should be adequate to address these situations. The ability to know about an outage is of paramount importance to RTD.

Once an outage has been reported, Rail Dispatch will provide a directive to all operators in the field to notify them of the outage. Once notified operators are required to inform any customer using a mobility device or entering through the high block of the outage to provide adequate time for that customer to plan an alternative route or get off a stop earlier to meet a bus bridge. Operators can also make verbal announcements to ensure that customers are aware of the outage. Outages are going to be communicated through the service alerts and work is underway to deliver information regarding the outages in live time to stations and transit hubs. Dave closed by stating that he is open to suggestions.

Curtis Chong stated that there is a basic assumption that customers are paying attention to or can see signs. For customers with visual impairments the verbal announcements are not sufficient as they are often drowned out by traffic or are simply not clear. He hopes that RTD will give some additional consideration to what he called 'a small hole' that could be plugged. Dave responded that the focus has often been on people using mobility devices and that the rail team can work to address poor signage. While he can address signage the request for additional announcements will be challenging.

Curtis stated that the station audio announcements are terrible while the internal train announcements are very good. The automated system currently sounds more like mumbling than coherent speech. Curtis asked that thought be paid to this during the revamps of the system.

Stuart Summers stated that the agency is working on the development of an impact team. This impact team would be easily identifiable and would aid customers during service outages in place of announcements.

Cindy Vaughn, APAC, stated that announcements on the light rail would be helpful before it is time to deboard the station. Dave stated this is something that could be worked through and addressed to ensure that announcements are timely and relevant.

Earl Lee, Chair, asked when will the procedures take effect; Dave stated that the procedures are in effect now. Earl remined Dave that he will be checking to ensure operators are following the procedures. Earl reiterated the value of providing announcements in advance of the stop on the train. He also brought up the poor quality of the outdoor announcements, specifically those located

next to highways or roadways. Earl stated that he has experienced difficulty at the Arapahoe Road Station as the elevator there is necessary to get access to the platform. He asked how RTD is notified of elevator outages when customers may not notify RTD when they notice it is non-functional and how quickly can a bus bridge be deployed.

 Dave Jensen stated that usually information comes from customer notification; following notification the bus bridge is immediately set up. There is a delay between activation of the bus bridge and the arrival of the bus which is not possible to time. RTD Police and Security monitor the elevators and communicate all outages to other agency staff.

Doug Wooley asked that we be aware of customers who may be stranded on elevated platforms as there is not a way to get off the platform. Doug brought up the lack of connection to an existing nearby bike path. Dave Jensen recommended that customers wait for the next train and inform the operator. He also stated that he would take a look at the Wadsworth Station.

2. **Discussion:**
   a. **Customer Safety – Earl Lee, Chair, ACPD**
      i. Earl Lee asked if anybody from RTD Transit Police was available to speak - Gabe Christie informed him that RTD Police Deputy Chief Martingano was unable to make it. Earl stated that he would like to speak to this more when a representative of Transit Police was present and that he would provide a brief statement.

      Earl stated that when he speaks to people and be a cheerleader for the Agency and find out why people are not using the service. The majority of what he hears is broken into two categories. The first is related to bus or train services not being available or convenient to the people he speaks too. The second is related to personal customer safety. People often say they are afraid to ride the bus or take the train especially when talking about going downtown. While they may have these fears, RTD has to work to quell them. Often the response has been we are hiring more officers we are adding more security or that it is not just a RTD or City of Denver problem. Earl stated that he believes that we need to address this as a community to develop new strategies and methods to make the community safer and there are methods to do that now with the resources that are available. Earl closed saying that this is an imperative issue to have Transit Police present for.

      Doug Wooley added that he agrees that the conversation around safety is tricky. He provided Sheridan Station as an example stating that we need to work with Transit Security and local law enforcement. Doug also stated that he advocates for other resources other than policing such as community outreach and other methods that are not all punishment focused.

      Sara Bohar said she thought it would be great to partner with community social services to do some outreach for some hot spot locations. Providing social service agencies from areas around stations would help members of the

community that should be investigated. When doing travel training customers, partners, children, guests, etc., always express worry but in her experience, they have not had any incidents during travel training. She also recommended doing a positive Public Relations campaign to highlight customers who have had positive experiences and safe experiences on RTD.

b. Access-on-Demand Uber Service – Paul Hamilton, Director, Paratransit Services

    i. Paul Hamilton, Director of Paratransit, stated that he was put on the agenda by Earl Lee to answer the question: "Does Uber and providing WAV Trips negatively effect Access-a-Ride?" which he believed he answered in the APAC Part of the meeting. Earl stated he agreed that the question had been answered.

c. Departures

    i. ACPD Members Aaron Pasterz and Lynn Edmonds have finished their terms on the ACPD.

d. Additions

    i. Newly minted ACPD member Curtis Chong begins his term on the ACPD.

I. Next Steps

2024 Schedule

APAC	ACPD	JOINT
January 9	*February 13*	March 12
May 14	*May 14*	July 9
September 10	*October 8*	November 12