

**ACPD and APAC Joint Committee Meeting**  
**March 8, 2022 – Time: 10:00 am – 12:15 pm**  
**Microsoft Teams Remote Meeting**

## Minutes

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### Welcome, Meeting Protocol, Agenda Review

Jody Erikson, APAC Facilitator, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. She provided the welcome, meeting protocol and agenda review.

### Roll Call - In attendance

1. Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities:  
Kyle Bradell, Brenda Carney, Timothy DaGiau, Aly DeWillis-Marcano, Lynn Edmonds, Earl Lee, Aaron Pasterz, Krystin Trustman,
2. Access-a-Ride Paratransit Advisory Committee – Jody Erikson, Facilitator  
Brenda Demattio (Laradon), Lindsey Dent (Global Down Syndrome), Tex Elam, Jennifer Fires (Rocky Mountain Human Services), Julie Jennings, Melisa Mascarenas (Shalom/Denver), Merv Martin, Dawn Russell (ADAPT), Craig Towler (Center for People with Disabilities), Cynde Vaughn
3. RTD Board Members:  
Kate Williams
4. RTD Staff:  
Tonya Anderson, Gabe Christie, Bob Grado, Carl Green, Kathyne Grove, Paul Hamilton, Dave Jensen, Doug MacLeod, Michelle Merz-Hutchinson, Mike Millage, Vivian Morales, Sean Moran, Christopher Quinn, Chris Sills, Bill Sirois, Henry Stoppelcamp, Pauletta Tonilas, Erin Vallejos, Gretchen Vidergar,
5. Contracted Staff:  
Marcellinus Andrew, First Transit; Al Klepadlo, MV; Joey Camp, Lisa Ford and Sarah Meredith, Transdev; Ty Coleman, Via; Sarah Bohar, MTM
6. Others and Public:

### Safety Moment – Gabe Christie, RTD ADA Manager

Gabe Christie, RTD ADA Manager, encouraged attendees to use Spring Cleaning as an opportunity to mitigate risks at home by replacing batteries and preparing for pest control.

### **Public Comments**

No public comments.

### **Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities**

Gabe Christie, ACPD RTD Liaison, called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

#### **1. Updates for ACPD Committee:**

##### a. ADA Specialist Introduction

Tameka McMillan Introduced herself to the committees. Tameka stated that she has been with RTD for 16 years, starting as a customer care representative, becoming a district liaison, and then joining the civil rights division. She is experienced with the divisions investigating complaints, concerns, commendations regarding operators in the district period now is the ADA specialist, she has spent the last month learning and getting to know the ADA.

Gabe stated that Tameka will represent the ADA office in numerous upcoming events and projects. He also stated that Tameka has been an incredibly impactful addition to the team and recommends that people reach out to her.

##### b. Englewood Elevator Update

Sean Moran, Manager of Contracted Public Facilities, provided information regarding the elevator repair at the Englewood station. Sean stated that the city of Englewood has received a variance from the water department to install a sprinkler suppression system in the elevator hoist way. The elevator cab has already been updated and call buttons are ready to be installed leaving the hoist way fire suppression system as the last portion of the repair. According to Sean, the City of Englewood applied for a construction permit in late January, so approval should be expected within the next two weeks. Once the approval is received, construction should take approximately three weeks, with an additional week for third party inspection. Once the third-party inspection is done the repairs will be complete. Sean expects the elevator at Englewood station to be functional by May.

#### **2. RTD Wayfinding Improvement Exploration**

Gabe Christie, ADA Manager, provided an update on the wayfinding improvement efforts being undertaken by RTD. RTD is investigating how to improve its stops stations and locations for customers, primarily for customers who have visual impairments. this project started in an

effort to determine the accessibility limitations of our stops and stations and has already inspired potential improvements; these include braille signage, signage location standardization, and bus gate indicators. The goal is to examine all RTD's stops, stations common locations in a holistic manner to provide solutions that will be able to be implemented widely across the district.

Gabe stated that the ADA office is seeking information from peer agencies about their current wayfinding techniques and strategies. While peer to peer feedback is valuable, customer feedback is more so in this project. To generate customer feedback both a focus group and series of survey questions have been developed. The survey is currently undergoing digitization, and a distribution list is being compiled, and a phone-based option is under investigation.

Craig Towler, Center for persons with disabilities, asked that the center be included on the distribution list; Gabe stated they would be. Doug asked if the committee members would receive links to the survey to distribute it as well; Gabe stated that yes, they would. Tex Elam stated that he Excited with the work RTD is doing, because it will change his life in the lives of people in the community for the better. Director Kate Williams encouraged Gabe to reach out to Bustang as they are also working on relocating stops and valuating their stop accessibility.

Brenda Carney asked if considerations were being made for improving light rail and commuter rail stations, namely validator locations. Gabe stated that RTD is investigating all possible avenues for improvement. There have been requests in the past for standardization, and that is being investigated, but Gabe does not want to make any promises yet as the project is still in its infancy. Brenda also asked if beacons or other high-tech solutions were being considered. Gabe responded by stating that beacons are not off the table for consideration, but solutions would be examined more closely once the survey had been distributed. Gabe stated that part of the goal of this project is to provide wayfinding improvements that will be used useful to all users regardless of technological acumen.

Earl Lee asked what the plan was for stations and locations that are not owned by RTD, as well as stations that are little more than a pole or post in the ground. Gabe stated that for many of these stops that are Co-owned, this will require collaboration with the local municipalities. While this is not something that is impossible to achieve, Gabe stay that he would like to see the results of the survey before approaching local municipalities with proposals. In response to Earl's question regarding bus stops, Gabe stated that improvements for many of these bus stops which have minimal amenities is outside of the scope of this particular project, but he would inform capital programs of the desire.

Gabe stated that the distribution list is not yet complete, and that if any participants have organizations or persons who they believe should be on the distribution list, to please provide

them to Gabe. Gabe encouraged anyone with questions to please come and meet with him as he is very enthusiastic about the project.

## **Access-a-Ride Paratransit Advisory Committee**

### **1. Systemwide Fare Study and Equity Analysis-Carl Green Jr & Christopher Quinn**

Carl Green Jr., Deputy Project manager, provided an update on this RTD study just getting underway. Chris Quinn, Project manager, and Bill Sirois, Senior Manager, were in attendance to provide additional information when needed.

- WHY - The project was initiated to respond to customer feedback that the fare structure was too expensive, and due to recent RTD changes that affect the agency's approach going forward (i.e., declining ridership, COVID-19 impacts, and increase in transit reliant customers).
- GOALS – RTD's priority is to achieve a fare structure that is Equitable, Affordable and Simple. The goals were developed from feedback from community partners and customers. These goals will direct development and evaluation of alternatives and determine success.
- HOW – The Study will: establish goals, review the existing fare structure/Title VI program, review other transit agency fare structures (benchmark, case studies, and strategies for COVID-19 recovery), identify fare alternatives, develop evaluation methodology, evaluate alternatives and preliminary Title VI analysis, provide a recommendation.
- ENGAGEMENT
  - WHO – Customers and the community are the priority, their feedback will guide all work, this includes an effort to engage more multicultural organizations who serve historically marginalized groups. The Study will also engage stakeholder groups (groups that represent others like: counties, cities, advocacy groups, organizations serving the community, employment centers), and existing RTD advisory committees (ACPD, APAC, CAC).
  - HOW
    - Customer and Community engagement – website and social media throughout, and outreach meetings and/or activities during three engagement milestones: #1 – Existing fare structure review to identify challenges and preferences; #2 – Conceptual options to gather initial feedback; #3 – Fare alternatives to identify trade-offs and provide preferences; and a formal public comment/hear process.
    - Stakeholder engagement - three Feedback Panels to provide initial input (engagement milestone #1), and to use customer input to consider and improve options (engagement milestone #2) and identify trade-off choices between alternatives (engagement milestone #3):
      - Equity Feedback Panel – black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), limited English, immigrants, low-income, houseless, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Questioning)

- Pass Program Feedback Panel – employer EcoPass, neighborhood EcoPass, College Pass, schools, nonprofit program
- Jurisdiction Feedback Panel – state, county, city and transportation management associations/organizations, and Denver Regional Council of Governments
- SCHEDULE
  - March 2022 – Online efforts and a survey
  - April 2022 – Engagement milestone #1: Existing fare structure review
  - June 2022 – Engagement milestone #2: Conceptual options
  - September 2022 – Survey #2 and Engagement milestone #3: Fare alternatives
  - January/February 2023 – Formal public hearing/meeting on recommendation
  - April 2023 – New fare structure announcement
- NEXT STEPS
  - RTD will distribute the survey link (when available) to ACPD and APAC members and encourage members to take the survey and to distribute to their communities.
  - RTD will return to the ACPD and APAC meetings in the future to provide updates and include members in the Study email updates and notifications of activities.

#### Discussion

- *Question:* How will the study align with the requirement that a certain portion of operating expenses are paid by fare revenue?  
*Answer:* The fare revenue requirement was removed via a bill pass by the legislature in May 2021 (recommended by the independent RTD Accountability Committee). This Study's priority is to look holistically at the fare structure, without a revenue target, and consider not raising fares to align with inflation but possibly even lowering fares.
- *Question:* Will customer engagement and Feedback Panel meetings be open to the public?  
*Answer:* Yes, all customer engagement and Feedback Panel meetings will be open to the public.
- *Question:* If the priority is to engage everyone's input, why are Feedback Panels focused only on certain groups (houseless, BIPOC, limited English speakers, etc.) and do not include people that have homes, are white, are English speakers, etc.?  
*Answer:* The engagement process is inclusive not exclusive; customer feedback is the priority. Customer and community engagement is inclusive and wide open to all to engage and provide input. One Feedback Panel (Equity) is focused is on hearing from those who have been traditionally left out and historically underrepresented; the purpose is to elevate historically non-heard voices. The other two Feedback Panels (Pass Program and Jurisdiction) have broader representation, also, all customer and community engagement will be inclusive and wide open to all to engage and provide input.
- *Question:* Which comparable agencies is the Study looking at to benchmark and get ideas?  
*Answer:* RTD is looking at ten: 1. DART (Dallas area, Texas), 2. TriMet (Portland metro area, Oregon), 3. Metro Transit (Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Minnesota), 4. MARTA (Atlanta metro area, Georgia), 5. Utah Transit Authority (Utah), 6. MTS (San Diego County, California), 7. VTA (Santa Clara Valley, California), 8. Sound Transit (Washington), 9. Houston Metro (Houston, Texas), 10. LA Metro (Los Angeles, California).

- *Suggestion:* If in-person meetings occur in engagement #2 and #3 provide a virtual alternative that offers as much engagement as in-person

## 2. Updates:

### a. Uber Pilot

RTD started a pilot for on-demand services with Uber in November 2021. The desire was to test ways to expand and improve the Access-a-Cab program. The pilot started with a small geographic area (four zip codes), limited vehicle types (sedans), and only at peak periods, to be able to identify and address challenges before expanding the pilot. In January 2022 the pilot was expanded to include the entire RTD service area and any time of day.

The pilot has been well received. At the end of January 679 Uber trips had been taken. By the end of February 2200 trips were taken; usage doubled in a month without any marketing campaign. Wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) conduct about 30 trips a month.

RTD will turn the pilot into a new program in the Fall 2022: the Access-on-Demand program. RTD will contract with eligible vendors to provide the services for the Access-on-Demand program (vendors may include Uber, Lyft, and Access-a-Cab vendors). The Request for Proposal for potential vendors is being drafted now.

The upcoming Access-on-Demand program and the current Uber pilot are curb-to-curb service, a user must be able to get to the curb (unlike Access-a-Ride). Currently RTD subsidizes/covers \$12 for Access-a-Cab, and \$20 for Uber pilot. The subsidy is not yet established for the Access-on-Demand program but expected to be similar to the Uber pilot.

### Discussion

- *Question:* Is the subsidy covered by tax dollars?  
*Answer:* Yes, the subsidy is covered by local funds.
- *Question:* Who provides the WAV vehicles for the Uber pilot?  
*Answer:* WAV vehicles for the Uber pilot are provided by Access-a-Ride vendors.
- *Question:* How are users getting access to Uber scheduling?  
*Answer:* Currently, a user accesses the Uber app on a smart phone. In the future RTD reservationist will be able to schedule Access-on-Demand trips.
- *Question:* How does someone access the Uber option?  
*Answer:* Process:
  1. A user signs up for an Uber account, with Uber, and provides a payment option – the payment option must be established to cover user portion of the trip.
  2. A user enrolls with RTD and sign a consent form – consent/allow Uber to share trip information with RTD). The RTD consent form can be started in one of three ways: email [paratransiteligibility@rtd-denver.com](mailto:paratransiteligibility@rtd-denver.com); online at [www.rtd-denver.com](http://www.rtd-denver.com) (on the access-a-ride page), or call 303-299-2530 and leave a message.
  3. RTD verifies current Access-a-Ride eligibility and approves it with Uber.
  4. Uber sends the user an email saying their account is ready.



- *Question:* Can a driver refuse service based ability to accommodate a collapsible wheelchair?  
*Answer:* RTD has not heard of this occurring.
  - **ACTION:** RTD will check with Uber about the ability to refuse if a collapsible wheelchair cannot be accommodated.
- *Question:* What is the feedback mechanism for Uber trip complaints and quality?  
*Answer:* If a rider has any issues, they should call RTD and lodge a complaint. The Complaint will be investigated.

b. Subscription Service Restarting (starting with larger service agencies)

Subscription services are for those with at least three same time/location trips in a week. RTD put these on hold in 2020 due to COVID impacts to riders’ travel. RTD restarted subscription services with larger service agencies first, then will restart the for all riders later in the year.

c. Trip Negotiation Restarting

Trip negotiation, based on ADA, allows for transit agencies to schedule trips one hour plus or minus around their original pickup or drop off time. This was put on hold in 202s due to COIVD impacts. RTD has reinstated this in order to meet increasing demand.

d. Access-a-Ride Vendors – New Contracts Award Committee

Every five years vendors are selected to provide Access-a-Ride service by means of a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. RTD is currently drafting the scope of work for a new contract scheduled to commence on October 1, 2022. Once the RFP is released, vendors will bid on the RFP and a selection committee will review all proposals and recommend vendors for the next 5-year terms.

- **ACTION:** At the next APAC meeting, RTD will request a volunteer to join the committee as a non-voting member, someone who is willing to read through all proposals, attend all award committee meetings, and provide input to the committee on proposals.

**Other Matters** - No other matters presented.

**Next Meetings:**

APAC	ACPD	JOINT	STEERING
May 10	May 19	July 12	June 14
September 13	September 22	November 8	October 12

**Closing Comments/Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.