



Citizens Advisory Committee

CAC Summary
November 13, 2025
3:30pm – 5:30pm

1. Introductions

The October Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting began with introductions from all the attendees.

2. Finishing FasTracks Report

Chris Quinn, Project Manager at RTD, provided a comprehensive overview of the FasTracks program, outlining its history, current progress, and the challenges associated with completing the remaining corridors. Approximately three-quarters of the program has been delivered. The unfinished corridors include the Northwest Rail Peak Service (B Line), the North Metro Completion (N Line), the Southwest Extension, and the Central Extension. Chris reminded the CAC that TABOR limits how much debt RTD can take on without voter approval, and that limit is now nearly maxed out, with only about \$3 million of borrowing capacity left. Because of this, RTD has very little ability to issue new debt to fund remaining FasTracks projects.

Chris explained that the remaining corridors require updated designs due to changing conditions since the program's inception. Updated cost estimates reflect 2024 dollars, and no funding plan currently exists to advance additional construction.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of system performance and schedule reliability in evaluating future corridor investments for FasTracks. RTD's schedule adjustments are informed by on-time performance data and historical system performance records, which have supported improvements such as signal timing changes and fixed-guideway planning. Broader considerations included projected ridership, cost effectiveness, and whether capital investment should prioritize expanding geographic reach or increasing service frequency on existing infrastructure.

The Finishing FasTracks Report, appendices, and comment portal (which closes on 11/14) are available at:

<https://www.rtd-denver.com/fastracks>

3. Winter 2025-2026 Proposed Service Changes

Jessie Carter, Senior Manager of Service Development at RTD, presented the proposed Winter 2025–2026 service changes designed to improve reliability and performance for both bus and rail service. Proposed adjustments include route extensions, schedule modifications, and operational refinements. Public engagement for this period included an online survey and several public meetings, with feedback incorporated into the final proposal.

The update included information specific to LD1, where there has been interest in extending service later into the evening. Public comments play an important role in shaping these types of service adjustments; however, the relative weight of public feedback is balanced with core operational factors, including operator availability, system capacity, and financial considerations. As a result, while community input guides RTD’s approach, final decisions must remain aligned with operational feasibility.

To support systemwide consistency, RTD maintains service-type-specific on-time performance goals, such as an 86% target for local bus service. Services performing below target are reviewed each service change period. Operational metrics—such as operating speed, passengers per hour, maximum passenger load, and dwell time—also inform service planning decisions. In addition, operator and customer input contributes to identifying improvements. Routes that are highly impacted by construction experiencing detours may be revised multiple times per year to maintain consistent performance.

More information on the proposed service changes is available at:

<https://www.rtd-denver.com/service-changes/proposed-jan-26-service-changes>

4. Update on 2026 Budget

Kelly Mackey, Chief Financial Officer at RTD, provided an overview of RTD’s proposed 2026 budget, describing its alignment with the agency’s strategic priorities and the collaborative cross-departmental effort behind its development. The budget proposal is built on conservative revenue assumptions and does not include speculative grant funding. The budget is currently open for public comment, and the RTD Board of Directors is scheduled to finalize the budget on December 2. The Finance and Planning Committee has already recommended approval of the proposed budget.

The presentation included an explanation of how sales tax contributions relate to service distribution. RTD’s network is designed as a regional system aimed at supporting travel patterns across district boundaries rather than matching service levels to community-specific tax contributions. Revenue projections for 2026 are supported by modeling from the Leeds School of Business, which provides optimistic, pessimistic, and mid-range scenarios for sales and use tax revenues.

Kelly also clarified why RTD often spends less than its annual budget: the agency budgets the full cost of multiyear projects upfront to secure contracts and vendor commitments even

though project spending occurs over several years. RTD staff will provide further revenue-related and budget-related clarifications upon request if emailed directly to RTD's project leads.

5. RTD Policy Department Update

Steve Martingano, Chief of Police and Emergency Management, provided an update on Transit Police operations and emergency management initiatives. He reviewed RTD's four-step action plan, the department's alignment with the agency's strategic priorities, and recent performance metrics demonstrating continued progress. Current policing data can be accessed at:

<https://rtd-denver.com/security-related-metrics>

Steve outlined the fare enforcement process, which begins with a warning ticket, followed by a citation depending on county procedures, and may ultimately result in the rider's suspension. Citation revenue flows to the county courts rather than RTD. Recent fare sweeps—coordinated checks where enforcement teams board vehicles or enter stations to verify that all riders have valid fares—indicate improved compliance.

6. Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Next Community Survey

Tom Worker-Braddock, Senior Transportation Planner with the City of Aurora, provided an update on the Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. East Colfax BRT is a major regional transit investment led by the Denver Department of Transportation & Infrastructure in partnership with RTD and the City of Aurora. The project will bring dedicated BRT service to one of Denver's busiest transit corridors, with the goal of improving speed, reliability, and accessibility for thousands of daily riders.

The project includes center-running and side-running dedicated BRT lanes, enhanced station platforms with level boarding and all-door boarding, improved pedestrian and bicycle connections, and integration with existing transit services. It is designed to replace and upgrade current bus operations along the corridor, significantly reducing travel times and improving service frequency. The project's estimated cost is approximately \$280 million, with completion anticipated around 2027. Aurora is supporting the project by contributing staff time but is not providing direct financial funding for this phase of work.

Tom encouraged CAC members to participate in the current community survey, which remains open through November 21. The survey and project website can be found at:

<https://engage.drcog.org/colfaxnext>

7. SB 25-161: Transit Reform – Accountability Committee Update

The SB 25-161 Accountability Committee has been meeting regularly since August and is preparing draft recommendations on RTD governance reforms. Current discussions include adjustments to board size and composition, with emerging interest in a smaller board that incorporates appointed members alongside elected representatives.

The committee will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, November 19, from 11:00am to 5:00pm at the Colorado Energy Office, accessible both in person and via Zoom. Draft recommendations will be made available following the meeting.

8. Final Remark

The CAC is planning a January event to recognize outgoing members and welcome incoming members. The next meeting will be held on January 15, 2026.