



# Citizens Advisory Committee

**CAC Summary**  
**May 14, 2026**  
**3:30pm – 5:30pm**

## **1. Introductions**

The May meeting began with introductions from all attendees.

## **2. Partnership Program Overview**

Cory Schmitt, Partnership Program Manager, provided a May 2026 update on RTD's Partnership Program. The program was established to provide funding to local governments and Transportation Management Associations/Organizations (TMAs/TMOs) for projects and services that address local mobility needs. The program includes a dedicated annual budget and an equitable, standardized process for project intake and evaluation.

The presentation covered the program background, the 2026 call for projects, project impacts, future opportunities, and performance metrics.

CAC members discussed the visibility of RTD branding within partnership projects and expressed support for increasing RTD marketing and recognition through the program. Discussion also emphasized that one goal of partnership projects is to complement and strengthen RTD services.

The agency prioritizes incentive projects that connect riders to fixed-route services. It was noted that any unused funding does not roll over into the following year. CAC members expressed interest in understanding the program's boarding goals and what additional strategies RTD could pursue to increase ridership through these partnerships. RTD noted that these goals are currently being evaluated as part of the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA).

## **3. Joint Service Agreements Update**

Jack Kroll and the CAC co-chairs provided updates related to the Northwest Rail Agreement and Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR). Members discussed a recent RTD Board decision to approve funding to advance conceptual and 90% design work for rail improvements between Denver and Fort Collins.

The discussion highlighted ongoing coordination between RTD, CTE, CTIO, and other organizations that received funding through 2024 legislation. RTD is contributing approximately \$5 million toward the effort, which is expected to be repaid and treated similarly to a grant investment.

CAC members emphasized the importance of clear communication and public outreach regarding RTD's role in the project and how funding is being used. Discussion also included the potential timeline for a future ballot measure related to Front Range Passenger Rail, which may occur later in 2026. Members stressed the importance of ensuring that funds allocated for passenger rail remain dedicated to that purpose and that expenditures remain fiscally responsible.

Additional discussion included the possibility of RTD negotiating operational considerations such as train frequency or service distances. CAC members also discussed the importance of securing voter support for any future ballot initiative and noted that successful passage could allow additional flexibility for future transportation investments. If the FRPR ballot measure passes, the majority of the CAC recommends that the RTD board votes against committing construction or operations funding to joint service, and instead can offer some nominal amount of funding to increase connecting service to stations served by FRPR. The CAC expressed interest in developing a formal recommendation to the RTD Board at a later date.

#### **4. Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA)**

Jack provided an update on community engagement efforts related to RTD's COA. The presentation reviewed recent boarding discussions, the overall COA timeline, planned engagement activities, and the Board's role throughout the process.

The COA is intended to reevaluate how RTD's network should evolve in both the near-term and long-term to better align service with current community values and travel patterns. Key discussion topics included balancing service frequency versus geographic coverage and identifying how RTD can best meet regional mobility needs moving forward.

Jarrett Walker and Associates is supporting the COA effort and extensive regional engagement activities are underway.

#### **5. Shared CAC Email**

Jack discussed the possibility of creating a shared CAC email system monitored by RTD, while still allowing CAC members to connect their personal email accounts. RTD Information Technology staff advised that personal email accounts may carry additional cybersecurity risks.

Members also discussed the possibility of creating CAC member-specific email accounts to improve communication and consistency.

## **6. General Questions for RTD**

Eric asked whether RTD Police coordinates with the Denver STAR Program. Eric also asked about RTD's process for determining whether bus routes are operated directly by RTD or contracted to outside operators.

Matt raised questions regarding the development of the 2027 RTD budget and discussed the importance of identifying opportunities to increase transit funding.

Joe asked who community members should coordinate with regarding bus stop and platform upkeep, noting that volunteers are interested in assisting with maintenance efforts.

Eric Smith also suggested inviting the Burnham Yard's CBA to attend a CAC meeting within the next two to three months.

RTD staff will follow-up on these inquiries.

## **7. News from Your Community, Call for Timely Topics and Events, and Transit Wins (all)**

- Longmont CTE will start airport service from Longmont to DEN shortly!
- Members also highlighted increased ridership on Route 49 following recent service frequency improvements. CAC members noted that ridership data available through the RTD dashboard shows approximately a 50% increase in ridership over a four-month period following the service increase.

## **8. Next CAC Meeting: Thursday, June 11, 2026**

- Bus stop infrastructure accessibility assessment report and investment planning
- September 2026 service changes