



SB25-161 10-Year Strategic Plan

Initial Framework and Strategic Alignment



Executive Summary

In accordance with Senate Bill 25-161, concerning transit reform, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) is advancing statutory requirements to establish a 10-Year Strategic Plan by Sept. 30, 2026. RTD is fulfilling the legislative intent through a coordinated foundation of established agency processes, Board-adopted studies and ongoing initiatives.

Central to this effort is RTD's Comprehensive Operations and Network Needs Evaluation for Community Transit (CONNECT), the agency's Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) launched in March 2026, which evaluates network service redesign scenarios through 2032 and long-range visions out to 2056. Alongside RTD CONNECT, the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan and the annual Asset Management Plan (AMP) provide the statutory framework for fiscally constrained baseline delivery and fiscally unconstrained regional priorities.

This report outlines RTD's point-for-point actions addressing each requirement of SB 25-161, demonstrating active compliance, rigorous public stewardship and collaborative alignment with state and regional partners.



Statutory Alignment and Agency Actions

Bill Language: *In collaboration with local governments and the District Subregional Service Councils, identify performance measures and targets for service, ridership, enrollment in the District's EcoPass program and income-based fare discount program, and the percentages of residences and jobs within one-quarter mile of a frequent transit route. The performance measures and targets must align with state and regional goals for mode choice, land use, climate, equity, and safety.*

Spatial analysis and baseline proximity: Through the initial existing conditions analysis of RTD CONNECT, the agency has quantified the number and proportion of residents and jobs served by frequent transit.

Performance measures and scorecards: RTD currently tracks and publicly reports agency scorecard metrics – including perception of access to employment, equity, safety and security, and on-time performance – via [the agency performance dashboard](#). These baseline metrics establish the technical foundation for future formal targets.

Fare equity and affordability initiatives: RTD addressed low-income affordability through a [Systemwide Fare Study](#), which restructured fare brackets and expanded income-based discount programs, such as LiVE, and pass access across the region.

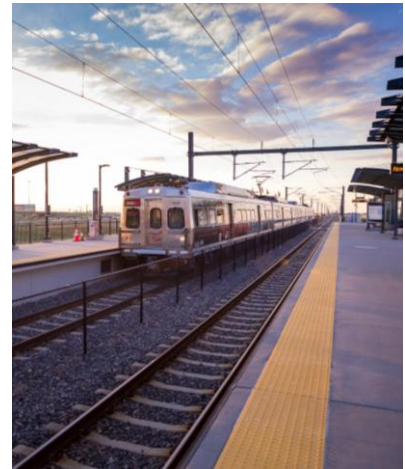
Collaborative target setting: Establishing definitive ridership and land-use performance targets requires broad policy consensus regarding service allocation priorities. RTD will engage local jurisdictions and the Subregional Service Councils throughout 2026 and 2027 to co-develop these targets in coordination with regional partners.



Bill Language: *Identify transportation facilities and services, including the expansion or improvement of existing facilities and services, required to meet service and ridership goals throughout the District's geographic service area over the ten-year period.*

System Optimization Plan (SOP): The [2022 SOP](#) established a fiscally constrained five-year operational roadmap – guiding service changes through 2027 - based on post-pandemic travel patterns, demographic shifts and regional stakeholder feedback.

RTD CONNECT network design: Launched in March 2026 as an 18-month study, [RTD CONNECT](#) builds directly upon the SOP foundation. The study explores dual baseline scenarios to create an optimized service framework for 2028–2032 and define long-term facility needs across the District's service area out to 2056.



Bill Language: *Include a fiscally constrained plan outlining the transit projects and services that are expected to be funded with the current budget, which must be updated periodically if the funding picture changes substantially.*

Transit Asset Management Plan (2026): The [TAM Plan](#) serves as RTD's federally compliant long-range capital framework for maintaining agency rolling stock, facilities, and rail infrastructure in a State of Good Repair (SGR).

Asset Management Plan and Five-Year Financial Forecast: While the TAM provides statutory policy and evaluation methodologies, the internal AMP process prioritizes rolling stock and system renewals into an annual five-year capital needs list.

Fiscal Integration and Reporting: Capital replacement priorities directly inform RTD's annual Five-Year Financial Forecast (FYFF) and operating budget. For specific programmatic investments and asset cycles, reference [Table series 18 starting on page 37 of the 2026 TAM documentation](#).

Bill Language: *Include a fiscally unconstrained option that describes service and investments needed to meet the District's identified performance measures and targets for service, ridership, and the percentages of residences and jobs within one-quarter mile of a frequent transit route.*

Long-range service vision: RTD CONNECT includes a 30-year unconstrained planning horizon that outlines transit service expansion independent of near-term revenue constraints. The service expansion is being developed to meet RTD's identified performance measures and targets for service, ridership and percentages of residences and jobs served by frequent transit.

Regional asset forecast: RTD coordinates with the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) to maintain a [30-Year Capital Needs Forecast](#), identifying unfunded facility replacement, electrification, and state-of-good-repair needs across the region.





Finishing FasTracks evaluation (2025): In 2025, [RTD produced](#) updated cost estimates, engineering requirements, and funding gap analyses for the voter-approved 2004 FasTracks plan. This includes detailed evaluations for the four unfinished corridors:

- Northwest Rail Corridor (B Line)
- North Metro Corridor Extension to 162nd/Highway 7 (N Line)
- Southwest Corridor Extension to C-470/Lucent (D/C Lines)
- Central Corridor Extension (L Line)



Bill Language: *Identify expected environmental, social, and economic impacts of the recommendations contained in the transportation plan.*

Integrated COA impact evaluation: As part of final scenario modeling, RTD CONNECT will calculate greenhouse gas reduction impacts, Title VI equity metrics - protecting transit-dependent and minority communities from disparate impacts - and regional economic accessibility benefits..

Bill Language: *For each service, facility, or capital project identified in the ten-year plan, the plan must specify and regularly update as circumstances change: (I) The time frame during which the project is expected to be completed; (II) The total estimated amount of funding required to complete the project; and (III) Funding opportunities that account for the total estimated amount of funding for the project, including the amount of funding from each funding source that has been allocated for the project or is anticipated to be allocated for the project.*

Capital programming: Program timelines, lifecycle estimates and funding allocations for transit vehicles, facilities and capital projects are tracked through the multi-year AMP and TAM programs, cross-checked against federal formula grants and local capital reserves.

Lifecycle costing: As documented in RTD's capital fleet modernization schedule, the agency has identified the phased replacement of standard 40-foot transit buses, detailing anticipated delivery horizons and revenue sources across upcoming capital budget cycles.





Bill Language: *The District shall update the ten-year strategic plan in conjunction with each major update to the Denver Regional Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan.*

MPO planning cycle synchronization: The 2022 SOP provided baseline transit inputs for DRCOG's [2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#). Upon completion in late 2027, the network recommendations and capital forecasts of RTD CONNECT will directly inform DRCOG's subsequent scheduled quadrennial RTP update.

Bill Language: *In creating the ten-year strategic plan, the District shall coordinate with the Department of Transportation, the Denver Regional Council of Governments, and local governments within the District's service territory.*

Intergovernmental coordination

structure: Ongoing coordination is conducted through technical committees and regular briefings with CDOT, DRCOG, regional transit partners and municipal planning staff.

Subregional Service Councils: RTD utilizes established Subregional Service Councils as dedicated forums for local elected officials and partner staff to evaluate service modifications, examine local mobility needs and ensure alignment between district operations and municipal master plans.



Bill Language: *In conjunction with the creation of its ten-year strategic plan, the District shall study and identify or contract with a third party to study and identify opportunities to increase the District's funding to achieve the goals, measures, and targets identified in the ten-year strategic plan.*

Financial capacity evaluation: Following the service scenario findings of RTD CONNECT, RTD will initiate a third-party study to evaluate potential revenue mechanisms, public-private partnerships, federal grant strategies and regional funding models necessary to support long-term transit expansion.



Conclusion

The completed and ongoing planning efforts described above address the core objectives and statutory framework established by Senate Bill 25-161. By anchoring the 10-Year Strategic Plan in data-driven initiatives, led by RTD CONNECT and supported by the TAM Plan and AMP, the agency ensures that future service goals remain both operationally sound and financially transparent. RTD remains committed to collaborating with the Colorado General Assembly, local jurisdictions and regional partners to balance system preservation with community mobility priorities.

