

Submitted as Public Comment to the RTD Board Meeting, January 28th, 2025

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Julian Bouquet, RTD Board Chair
Regional Transportation District
1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Chair Bouquet,

Greater Denver Transit (GDT) would like to respectfully submit public comment on the following topics:

Northwest Rail Joint Service Overview

GDT has reviewed with interest the presentation relating to joint service on the Northwest Rail corridor. We are generally supportive of many of the key ideas in the presentation such as (a) having one operator, (b) one track access agreement with BNSF and (c) using the existing RTD commuter rail infrastructure between Denver Union Station and Westminster.

That said, we passionately support a vision for the corridor that includes BOTH the intercity style “express” service patterns that will serve fewer stations than those originally contemplated in RTD’s Northwest Rail Extension, but also view “local” rail service patterns as vital to be provided to fulfill promises to voters. Thus, we have concerns about the implied removal of two stations on the route in Westminster and Broomfield. The 10 originally identified stations in the Northwest Peak Service study all represent excellent opportunities to provide ridership, serve communities and encourage sustainable transit-oriented development. It would therefore be a big loss for the corridor to lose two of these sites because of a misapprehension that every train needs to be a “fast” service between Fort Collins and Denver.

It is possible to schedule “local” and “express” services on the corridor with not every trip needing to go all the way to Fort Collins and not every station needing to be called at by every train. Such a “mixed” service is currently operated by Caltrain where there are limited stop express services that provide an attractive end-to-end journey time between San Francisco and San Jose and also local trains, operated with the same equipment, which call at every station allowing the majority of communities along the route to receive service and therefore contribute to ridership.

Therefore GDT would like to respectfully remind Directors to question any proposal that claims we can only have a “one size fits all” passenger service on the Northwest Rail corridor.

GM & CEO Performance Goal Amendments

Weighting Amendment - Submitted by Director Larsen

GDT is in support of this amendment, which increases the weighting of the short term goals to 50 points. While all sections of the GM & CEO performance assessment are important, the vast majority of praise and criticism the agency will receive from the Board and the public will be about ridership and service delivery. Therefore the weighting of goals should reflect the priority and urgency that is placed in these metrics. Because of this, GDT urges all Directors to vote yes on it.

Goal 1 Amendment - Submitted by Director Nicholson

GDT is in support of this amendment which provides “hard number” percentage figures for commuter rail, light rail and bus reliability and on-time performance. GDT believes the proposed percentage figures are both reasonable and achievable and urges all Directors to vote yes on it.

Goal 1 Amendment - Submitted by Director Ruscha

GDT agrees with the aims of this amendment, however we believe the commuter rail, light rail and bus on-time performance targets would be better served by the amendment proposed by Director Nicholson immediately above which contains “hard number” percentage figures. That said, we also support setting a goal for Access-a-Ride on-time performance and urge the Chair to apply Robert’s Rules of Order so that the best features of both amendments are ultimately adopted.

Goal 2 Amendment - Submitted by Director Paglieri

GDT is in support of this amendment which provides a “hard number” target of 69,562,000 for annual ridership of the entire RTD system. GDT concurs with the detailed rationale provided in support of the amendment and urges all Directors to vote yes on it.

Additional Goal Amendment - Submitted by Director Larsen

GDT is in support of this amendment which creates a target for increasing fare collection through additional and better-directed fare checks. GDT members frequently observe situations on the system where fare checks are done in a less-than-thorough manner that allows continued widespread opportunities to evade paying fares and notes the continuing failure to equip conductors and security staff with mobile fare media issuing devices which would allow “honest mistake” violations to be cured on the spot. GDT therefore urges Directors to vote yes on it.

Additional Goal Amendment - Submitted by Directors Ruscha and Harwick

GDT is in support of this amendment which requires a robust Vision Zero plan to be produced. GDT has been a staunch supporter of implementing Vision Zero principles at RTD and urges all Directors to vote “yes” on it.

Goal 3 - Customer Survey Responses

GDT sees little value in this goal and is doubtful that it will spur decisive action to improve safety and security for riders as it sets a loose and easy to manipulate target of collecting customer feedback to assess if RTD provides a “welcoming transit environment”. Therefore GDT urges the Directors to make a motion to strike this goal from the performance assessment process entirely.

Thanks for all you do,



James Flattum



Richard Bamber



June Churchill



Emma Griffin



Joe Meyer



Keith Brooks

CC: RTD Board of Directors
Debra Johnson, RTD General Manager & CEO