

## RTD-Denver – Pass Program Working Group – Operating Protocols – February 9, 2017

### I. Mission

The Pass Program Working Group will make recommendations to RTD-Denver staff on revisions to all RTD pass programs. The working group will seek consensus recommendations to the RTD-Denver staff.

The Pass Program Working Group will:

- Revisit and refine goals for each pass program,
- Refine pricing and administration of each pass program,
- Recommend pass program policy revisions, and
- Recommend criteria for RTD to use in evaluating future proposals for new pass programs

### II. Topics

To make meaningful recommendations on the four items listed above, the Pass Program Working Group will need to give careful, thorough, data-driven consideration to a set of highly complex questions and topics, including the following:

- The state of RTD's Smartcard technology and the future of that technology
- The disparity between the annual costs and per/trip costs for moderate and low-income passengers and the annual and per/trip costs for current pass holders (taking into consideration the value of revenue from all pass purchasers in each pass program group and the cost to serve those riders)
- The complexities of creating and administering master contracts and pass groups
- The need for transparency in:
  - The value proposition for pass holders,
  - The ridership, revenue and cost implications for RTD of its current suite of pass programs and contracts
  - The ridership, revenue and cost implications for RTD of alternative approaches to pass programs
- Both the near-term future of transit passenger payment systems (perhaps as represented by programs in other U.S. cities and in other countries) and the long-term future of transit ridership and payment systems in the region
- The interaction between the levels of service throughout the region and the viability of pass programs
- The role of transit as a social determinant of health, as an important element in economic mobility, and as a part of the system of housing, employment, health care, education, child care, land use, air quality, and the quality-of-life in the region
- The tension between transit as a public good, provided by a public agency, and transit as a fee-for-service enterprise
- The price elasticity of demand for transit services and the ridership implications of different fare levels and pass-related discounts

### III. Guiding Principles – From RTD Senior Leadership Team

In their deliberation, RTD asks that the working group test their recommendations for these principles:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| ✓ Cost-effectiveness  | ✓ Meeting strategic budget plan targets   |
| ✓ Equitable access    | ✓ Brand loyalty                           |
| ✓ Convenience         | ✓ Revenue certainty                       |
| ✓ Increased ridership | ✓ Simplifying rider-operator interactions |

#### IV. Working group Membership

The working group members were selected for their connection to region-wide questions/interest groups/constituencies and their ability to bring a big-picture view of the pass program questions. They were selected for their level of interest in these questions and the depth of their experience with RTD. They were selected for their ability to work collaboratively, seek collective impact and build consensus. They were selected because the group reflects the diversity of the region. They are:

Carol Buchanan	Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council	Aylene McCallum	Downtown Denver Partnership
David Cook	University of Colorado	Scott McCarey	Boulder County
Heather Copp	RTD	Joel Noble	Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Mizraim Cordero	Metro Chamber of Commerce	Kathleen Osher	Transit Alliance
Crissy Fanganello	City and County of Denver Public Works	Dennis Polhill	Independence Institute
Felicia Griffin	FRESC	Nicole Portee	Denver Public Schools
Mark Imhoff	Colorado Department of Transportation	Doug Rex	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Susan Jordan	Children’s Hospital	Karen Stuart	North Area Transportation Alliance
Steve Klaussing	South Metro Economic Partnership	John Tayer	Boulder Economic Development
Ken Lloyd	Regional Air Quality Council	Michael Washington	RTD
Sheila Lynch	Tri-County Health	Dace West	Mile High Connects
Angie Malpiede	Northeast Transportation Connections	Dionne Williams	Denver Children’s Office
Bill Marino	West Colfax	Mary Young	Boulder

Though their primary organizational affiliation is listed above, members are appointed as individuals in keeping with the principles of the Chatham House Rule, <https://www.chathamhouse.org>. The Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, is an independent policy institute based in London. The Chatham House Rule reads as follows: “When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.” The idea is to unleash the participant’s creativity. The working group will employ the Chatham House principle as follows:

1. All participants and attendees – including members of the media who attend – agree not to attach any idea to any individual member or to that member’s organization
2. The task force members will participate as individuals – free from any previously held position, including any organizational policy position
3. The members will help RTD move toward the most effective and responsible policy choices by exploring options that advance the group’s core mission and the interests of all stakeholders and of the region, and not pursue solely their own, individual interest
4. The task force members will go where the data leads them
5. They will consider the short and long-term implications of policy options
6. They will work through implementation questions to maximize the potential for their policy recommendations to be successful

## V. Collaboration and Decision Making

In a spirit of collaborative problem-solving, the working group will seek to produce recommendations and advice that address the needs and interests of all participants and help RTD to advance successful implementation of the pass programs. To do this, participants will work to educate themselves and one another, build understanding regarding their values and interests, develop an understanding of essential information, let go of previously-held positions, and work to build agreements.

Collaborative problem-solving is most successful when three conditions are met: (1) parties agree that their major interests have been considered meaningfully; (2) participants have made every effort to address all parties' interests in any final recommendation, and (3) that the final recommendations or advice accurately characterize both areas of agreement and any remaining differences. The working group members will seek preliminary agreements-in-principle on individual topics. Once the group has addressed all topics, the participants will work to produce a full set of final recommendations that members can live with, stand behind, and advocate for.

Consensus decision-making processes can, sometimes, lead to lowest-common-denominator recommendations that are watered down to gain 100% of the group. To avoid this risk, a recommendation is adopted by the group if all but two agree. By agreeing to participate in this process, the members agree – before the fact – to support the group's work, even if the member finds him/herself among the two. (for more on this approach, see *A Short Guide to Consensus Building*, particularly Section 4.1 - 4.2.3 [http://web.mit.edu/publicdisputes/practice/cbh\\_ch1.html](http://web.mit.edu/publicdisputes/practice/cbh_ch1.html) and the writings of Lawrence Susskind.)

Of course, agreements are more robust when there is unanimous support for a proposed recommendation, and the group will seek unanimity whenever possible. If a working group member has reservations about a specific recommendation, s/he should create and put forward an alternative that the whole working group can support. If the working group doesn't reach the threshold of all-but-two, the facilitators will document points of, and reasons for, agreement and disagreement and submit these to RTD Senior Leadership.

## VI. Participant Roles

### A. Working group members

- Attend all full working group meetings (10 meetings over a 10-month period), and engage in subgroups as appropriate,
- Come prepared for each meeting (review materials in advance, respond to requests to review the agenda, etc.),
- Adhere to the protocols adopted by the group,
- Engage in collaborative problem-solving, and
- Serve as a conduit for information and support with their respective organization or interest group, including sharing meeting information and working group progress and building constituent support for the working group's recommendations

### B. RTD Participant(s) in the Working Group

- Serve as the working group's liaison to the RTD staff and Board of Directors,
- Attend all full working group meetings,
- Serve as a resource to the participants by explaining agency processes, agency sideboards and constraints, including applicable laws, and regulations,
- Share information with the participants, provide requested materials, and arrange for presentations by subject matter experts,

- Answer questions or offer opinions as requested by the participants, and
- Advocate for working group recommendations within the agency

### **C. Subgroups:**

Members may create subgroup to explore the details of an individual pass program or explore a subtopic. The facilitator will help the participants populate each working group. The groups will forward their work to the full working group; only the full working group can advance recommendations to RTD.

## **VII. Ground Rules**

### **A. Participants will:**

- Operate in good faith
- Conduct themselves professionally and courteously
- Work to find ways to resolve differences as they occur
- Explore, without committing, during the deliberation as a way of opening the collaborative problem-solving process
- Neither initiate nor undertake any action outside of the working group process intended to undermine the process
- Not publicly represent the views of other participants

### **B. During discussion, the participants will:**

- Respect the range of views and perspectives represented at the table
- Disclose interests
- Approach discussions with a “beginner’s mind” to expand the conversation
- Listen fully to understand
- Ask for clarification
- Look for ways to address one’s own interests and the interests of others
- Participate, share the floor, be concise
- Look ahead—acknowledge the past but don’t rehash it
- Be explicit and factual

### **C. No Surprises**

Members will make good-faith efforts to inform the full working group of any initiative in their organizations or constituencies related to the purpose of the working group, or that may impact other members of the working group. Notification can occur via email or other method, but members are encouraged to disclose the information during a face-to-face meeting of the full working group.

## **VIII. Meetings**

### **A. Meeting Preparation, Facilitation and Follow-up**

Mike Hughes, Hughes Collaboration, will facilitate working group meetings. To make meetings productive, the facilitator will:

- Provide neutral facilitation to ensure all interests are represented throughout the deliberation
- Work with RTD staff to develop draft agendas, distribute them, take feedback from the full group, and produce a final meeting agenda
- Ensure that the participants receive information in advance of each meeting
- Work with RTD and any other data provider to prepare presentations in advance of the meetings

- Assist the working group in collaborative problem-solving during and between meetings
- Summarize each meeting (without attribution to any individual) in draft, provide an opportunity for working group participants to finalize the summary, and produce a final summary
- Draft written recommendations and other communication from the working group to RTD
- Summarize agreements as they occur and at the end of each meeting
- Work with group to establish the meeting dates, times, and locations for all meetings that will accommodate the working group members with as much notice as possible
- Help the participants meet their responsibilities, listed above
- Assist RTD in record-keeping requirements

## **B. Observers and Public Participation**

Each meeting will be designed to engage the community and to provide for interaction between the working group and the public. Time limits will be determined by facilitators in collaboration with the working group. The facilitator will document these discussions in the meeting summary. The facilitator also will collect written comment from anyone who does not wish to speak during the meeting. The facilitator will ensure that written comments are distributed with the meeting summary. The most useful comments focus on agreement/disagreement with the issues at hand, the basis for agreement or disagreement, and a recommendation for an alternative. All meetings of the full working group will be open to the public.

## **IX. Media, Social Media and Outreach**

The RTD participants or the agency's selected spokesperson will serve as the working group's liaison to the media. For a specific topic, the working group may designate a spokesperson for the working group (other than the RTD staff member) who will respond to or initiate contact with media outlets as appropriate and serve as the point of contact for the press.

In communicating with to the media, elected officials, agency employees, or other external outlets (including social media), the working group members agree to represent themselves or their organizations only, making it clear they are not speaking on behalf of the working group, and not attributing any statement or point of view to another member of the group.

## **X. Meeting Content and Schedule**

Each meeting will take place in a different location and offer the opportunity for the group to hear from community members in that location for the first hour of the meeting. The topics will relate to the group's agenda. Community participants in the first part of the meeting will be free to leave or to stay for the remainder, but once the Working Group begins their deliberation, the community participants will observe, rather than participate in, the working session. The Working Group will begin with the follow schedule and milestones, and the facilitator (in cooperation with the group) will revise and give detail to this schedule as the work progresses.

Date	Milestone	Location	Agenda Details
March 13 2017	Process Agreement	Metro Chamber 1445 Market	Introductions, Goals for the Whole Effort, Participants' Perspectives, Review and Approval of Process Outline and Protocols, Charge to Technical Consultant, Public Comment
May	Framing the Problem; First Look at Data	Downtown Denver RTD – Blake	Hour #1 – Problem Identification with the Public  Agenda – Problem, Data, Scoping the Needs of All Stakeholders
June	Framing the Problem; Second Look at Data	Boulder	Hour #1 – Problem Identification with the Public  Agenda – Problem, Data, Scoping the Needs of All Stakeholders
July	Options	Globeville, Swansea, Elyria	Hour #1 – Needs of the Lower-Income Communities  Agenda – Generating Options
August	Options	DTC, Greenwood Village	Hour #1 – Needs of Suburban Employees/Employers  Agenda – Continuing to Generate, Specify, Enrich Options
September	Evaluation	Adams County	Hour #1 – Needs of Near-Center Cities and Their Residents/Employers  Agenda – Which Options Might Best Serve the Needs of All Stakeholders and Achieve the Mission?
September	Evaluation	Douglas County	Hour #1 – Needs of Residents/Employers Most Distant from the Center  Agenda – Which Options Might Best Serve the Needs of All Stakeholders and Achieve the Mission?
October	Narrowing Options	Airport Area: DIA, GVR, North Aurora	Hour #1 – Airport-Related Needs, Needs of Residents/Employers in Airport Area  Agenda – Which Options Have Lowest Potential to Serve the Needs of All Stakeholders and Achieve the Mission? How Might We Improve Most Promising Options?
November	Consensus- Building	Jefferson County	Hour #1 – Reaction to the Emerging Direction  Agenda – How Might We Improve Most Promising Option(s)? Implementation Discussion
December	Conclusion	RTD	Completing a Recommendation to the Agency  Last Hour – Reaction, Implementation Questions