

Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC)

Agenda

March 7, 2024 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Link to Attend:

<https://meet.google.com/mxc-ussa-khm?authuser=0&hs=122>

Attendees: Christa Curtiss - CDOT , Andrew Gingerich, Becky Karasko, Ben Gellman, Cody Hedges - CDOT , Cole Neder, Danny Katz, David Averill, David Johnson, Emily Barden, Emily Crespin, Erin Kelican - CDOT , Eva Wilson, George Gromke - CDOT , Glenn Krause, Jan Rowe - CDOT , Jeffery Dawson, Jonathan Flint, Joseph Parks, Kelly Smith, Lan R, Paul Desrocher, Robin Rocke, Sarah Collette, Shilpa Kulkarni, Vince Rogalski, Zachary Tapp-Wilson, Miriam Aranoff - CDOT , Scott Skinner,

Welcome (Paul)

- Introduction Emily Crespin, Assistant Director of Transit Grant Programs
 - *Started March 4th*
- Updated DTR Org Chart
 - *3 vacancies left to fill, then we will be 100% staffed*

TRAC Administration (Paul)

- Bylaws for consideration
 - *Currently soliciting feedback on bylaws*
 - *Membership roster updating, TRAC chair will be serving as a non-voting member in STAC*
- *Discussion:*
 - *Vince Rogalski: May and October are the in-person meetings for STAC. They are also holding elections now. I am the required TRAC member on STAC right now.*

Legislative Update

- **3.1.24 CDOT Legislative Update (1).pdf**
- *Danny Katz: For SB 32, it looks like it is a few million dollars short of funding the program and making sure it works. Will someone talk to the legislators about that?*
- *Paul Desrocher - CDOT : We have pointed that out to the legislators, and advocated for that, but as of yet they have not amended the bill.*
- *Danny: I would encourage this to be made into an official bill amendment request*
- *Paul: Absolutely, good idea*
- *Andrew Gingerich: I was reading through the housing and transit oriented development bill, but it is difficult to digest. Do you know if it affects Grand Junction? Could the definitions be made more clear?*
- *Paul: This bill was resurrected from last year. The main complaint was from rural communities, so we are trying to focus on urban areas, which should include*

Grand Junction. We do need to be better about language in these bills, but we specifically do not have much say in that.

- *David Averill: You may need to have at least 15 min frequencies for that to apply.*
- *Paul: Yeah, the bill does provide a kind of disincentive to higher frequencies in that way if communities didn't want to support higher densities.*
- *Andrew: Yeah, but otherwise I support the intention of the bill.*
- *David: Does anyone know what CCI or CML think of SB 24-032 this round?*
- *Paul: I'm not totally sure. The last feedback I heard was that it's still more of a requirement, since there will be a penalty eventually if the new policies aren't adopted.*
- *David: Sorry, I used the wrong bill number just now. But to follow up in the Ozone/Fare free program. Are we able to cover the gap in funding with new funding, rather than taking funding away from something else?*
- *Paul: We will try to cover that in an amendment to that bill that Danny mentioned earlier.*
- *Lan: We have similar concerns about the TOC bill. Because it is moving highway funds, if you don't meet TOC requirements, you may lose that highway funding.*
- *Paul: There are definitely groups opposing this bill or looking to amend it for this reason. We will talk to Emily, CDOT's legislative liaison about our stance on this.*
- *Paul: Other questions?*

DTR Branch Updates


- Grant Programs (Paul)
 - Contracting Backlog Progress
 - *We are expecting to get through our contracting backlog by June/July this year*
 - Capital Call for Projects
 - *CTE funds are included in this*
 - *Lan: Is CDOT going to take into account the updated FTA guidance for bus manufacturers when drafting grant agreements?*
 - *Paul: We will follow federal guidelines for fund distribution.*
 - *Lan: We were hoping for CDOT guidance, especially considering the manufacturer shortage on buses.*
 - *Paul: Definitely follow up with us, we can help with your specific situation*
 - *Eva: What is the status of contracting?*
 - *Paul: This will be addressed in a couple slides.*
 - Process Improvement Project (PIP)
 - *David Johnson: What is the timeline for this?*
 - *Paul: About 6 months, so around the end of this summer*
- Planning/Operations (Jan)
 - *Bustang DTC route has been canceled, south line is an alternative*
 - *5 new Bustang buses delivered, 20 more coming this year*
 - Transit Agency Local Manual (TLAM)
 - *David Averill: This is great, thank you for this*

- *Eva Wilson: Has Phase 2 expansion for the west line been implemented yet?*
- *Ben Gellman: Planning has begun, but we have not actually expanded the service.*
- *Eva: Is there a new estimated timeline for that expansion? Previously it was March.*
- *Jan: We do not have a hard deadline*
- *Paul: This will also rely on our new operator, who will start operating on November 1, and will take over at Phase 3*
- *Eva: So Phase 2 will have to be done by November 1, since that's definitely when Phase 3 will start, correct?*
- *Paul: Correct*
- *Andrew Gingerich: Is the TLAM aimed only at CDOT subrecipients?*
- *Jan: This should also cover your needs.*
- Transit Connections Study/ICB
- Bustang RFP
- Rail
 - State Rail Plan
 - *Final Rail Plan approved by Transportation Commission sent to the FRA for review and acceptance. Should hear back around May.*
 - Mountain Rail
 - *Currently looking to procure a consultant team to do Service Development Plan.*
 - *Mountain Rail Project Manager position still in hiring process.*
 - Front Range Rail
 - *New white paper out that outlines the feasibility of FRPR Northwest Phase 1*
 - *David Averill: Do we have an estimated travel time, say, from Fort Collins to Denver Union Station?*
 - *Cody: I don't have an exact answer, but we know the whole route from Pueblo to Ft. Collins will be competitive with current peak driving time.*
 - *David: I've also seen other alignments that include parts of the north Denver Metro instead of Boulder, are those completely off the table?*
 - *Cody: Functionally, yes. The Longmont-Boulder-Denver route is what came up as the best route in the alternatives analysis.*
 - *Vince Rogalski: HB24-1012 regards FRPR.*
 - *Cody: We are keeping an eye as that moves through the legislature.*
 - *Paul: I need to jump off the meeting now, I'll let Jan take over for round table.*

Roundtable Discussion

- *Vince Rogalski: The commission is supposed to approve the formula for MMOF funds. If you have a small project, you may want to start collecting information for a grant request. Also, with HB 1101, there will need to be a transit representative on each of the TPR boards. Agencies will need to make this election sometime this summer.*
- *Jan: Good heads up on those MMOF funds. We are working on our MMOF contracting process to help streamline the process.*
- *Vince: So this planning process will continue for another 10 years?*
- *Jan: That's good to hear, I'm not totally sure, but that would be a great source to have.*
- *David: We are looking to amend lodging tax to reduce the all inclusive clause, to allow us RTAs to get up to 2%. CDOT may want to look into this for funding rail.*
- *Vince: The RTA in Gunnison is doing well and growing. Their transit is free, due to a 1% sales tax*
- *Jan: Any other questions for the group? With that we will close the meeting until next time.*

Action Items:

- Paul DesRocher to send out:
 - Minutes
 - Bylaws  TRAC - Bylaws
 - Members
 - Timing (Opposite Transit Monthly/STAC?)
- Paul DesRocher to provide feedback on two legislative updates
 - *SB 32 appears to have a funding shortfall of a few millions dollars. Could impact the ability for the program to work.*
 - *TOC bill: 15 minute frequencies requirement may cause disincentive for higher levels of service to communities wanting to avoid higher densities. Additionally, the "sick" is If you don't meet TOC requirements, you may lose highway funding.*
- *Paul DesRocher to follow up with Lan Rao on updated FTA guidance for bus manufacturers in grant agreements*
- Paul DesRocher to provide Eva Wison/Margaret Bowes Update on Phase II/III start dates.