

January 6th, 2025

RTD Board Members
Regional Transportation District
1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO 80202

GM & CEO Short-Term Goals

Dear RTD Directors,

Greater Denver Transit (GDT) would like to respectfully submit to the Board our position on the GM & CEO's short-term goals for 2025. We see four essential and mandatory categories of goals that will determine the agency's success in 2025: (1) Ridership, (2) Organizational Excellence, (3) Safety & Security, and (4) Reliability and have therefore suggested goals below that fit in with these categories.

As a precursor, we would recommend the Board adjust the amount of points awarded for the successful completion of short-term goals by increasing the allotted points from 36 to 48. In the context of the four goal categories, this would mean 12 points per goal category achieved, and between 1 and 6 points per individual goal, contingent on the number of goals present in each category.

1. Ridership (12 points)

Ridership Goal 1: Increase Ridership (6 points)

Without reductions to overall levels of service within communities or lowering fares, increase annual total system ridership to 70M trips.

Background

This represents an ~8% increase over 2023 ridership which was at 62% of the 2019 pre-COVID levels, near the very bottom of ridership in comparison to RTD's peer agencies. For that same year in 2023, Sacramento, San Diego, Austin, Dallas, Houston, and Salt Lake City each exceeded 72% recovery, indicating RTD is both lagging behind its peers, and potentially missing major network upgrades and service improvements needed to bring back riders. This goal will be assessed on a pro-rata basis from February 1st, 2025 to October 31st, 2025.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Provide easy to understand, comprehensive maps of the system that include both rail and bus.
- Complete a revamp of the service planning & scheduling process that will conform to SB24-230 statutory requirements before Q4'25 to ensure the most impactful implementation of new service increases.
- Collaborate with state, city, and municipal partners to launch redevelopment initiatives of station parking lots as station destinations to encourage ToD development.

Ridership Goal 2: Customer Excellence Program (4 points)

By June 30th, 2025, introduce a Customer's Bill of Rights that sets expectations regarding safety, security, service reliability, on-time performance, transfers, information provision, temporary service disruption arrangements, cleanliness, customer service and management accountability.

Background

The rider experience needs to be central to RTD management decision making, and each of RTD's strongest-performing peer agencies in terms of ridership recovery such as Seattle's Sound Transit, Dallas-Fort Worth's DART, San Diego's MTS, and San Diego's NCTD each have Customer Excellence programs that are leading the way in increasing ridership and customer satisfaction.

Ridership Goal 3: Increase Fare Revenue (1 point)

Without raising fares, increase fare revenue to \$70M. This goal will be assessed on a pro-rata basis from February 1st, 2025 to October 31st, 2025. Increased costs associated with expanded fare enforcement should be deducted from revenue growth.

Background

RTD's farebox recovery ratio of 5.7% in 2023 is well below the 7.2% average of Western US peer agencies, which has strained RTD's operational resources.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Produce strategies that focus on customer-friendly fare collection rather than solely enforcement including mobile fare checking teams, fare gates, fare paid areas and the ability for staff to sell tickets on the spot.
- Fare enforcement decisions to be based on ensuring best fare revenue collection practices, not solely crime deterrence.

Ridership Goal 4: Introduce Contactless Payment in Ticketing (1 point)

By October 31st, 2025, implement or have a completion date agreed with a supplier for contactless payments ('tap to pay') for all RTD rail, fixed-route bus, FlexRide and Access-on-Demand services.

Background

Contactless fare payment is a widely-adopted best practice that has expanded the accessibility and ease of using transit across RTD's peer agencies, and is a major opportunity to expand ridership locally and increase customer satisfaction.

2. Organizational Excellence (12 pts)

Organizational Excellence Goal 1: Bolster Management Team (4 points)

By June 30th, 2025, publish a plan to respond to the 2024 Organizational Assessment's findings relating to how employees and departments can collaborate to better serve the agency.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Hire a Chief Operations Officer (COO) with transit leadership experience including bus route modernization programs, rail operations, and major transit capital projects (or equivalent management position).
- Hire a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) with demonstrated leadership from managing advanced information systems in the transit, freight rail, and/or logistics spaces (or equivalent management position).
- Hire a new Chief of Police.

Organizational Excellence Goal 2: Responsible Capital Projects (4 points)

By September 30th, 2025, publish a Capital Investment Program (CIP) book that includes a page dedicated to each project and shows how approved / appropriated funds for that project will be spent per year throughout the project's duration. The document should also clearly demonstrate how capital projects are prioritized in accordance with the Targeted Asset Management Plan (TAMP).

Background

This visibility is vital for informing RTD Board actions as well as bolstering confidence among state and city partners that RTD will improve the quality of its operations and the state of its property.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Hire an experienced capital program manager (CPM) (or equivalent management position).
- Expand in-house construction (design/build) and maintenance expertise to more efficiently address state-of-good-repair backlog.

Organizational Excellence Goal 3: Transparent Asset Management (4 points)

By October 31st, 2025, complete the cataloging of all of RTD's assets into a single asset management system.

Background

This current lack of consolidated detail is hampering the Board's ability to measure progress of the agency to maintain a state of good repair across the RTD system.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Hire a chief technology officer (CTO) (or equivalent management position).
- Hire a capital program manager (CPM) (or equivalent management position).
- Introduce / review / update detailed asset inventory policies and procedures to catalog assets.
- Introduce a staff training program on asset inventory / management.
- Introduce a system where members of the public can report faults / issues (e.g. graffiti), that feeds information into the same asset management system utilized by staff.

3. Safety & Security (12 pts)

Safety & Security Goal 1: Contact on Transit (6 points)

By October 31st, 2025, publish a plan for RTD Police, security officers, ambassadors, and customer service supervisors to engage in daily contacting and circulation of trains, buses, stations, and waiting areas during the full extent of RTD operating hours and ensuring the “Respect the Ride” Code of Conduct is being adhered to by all.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Review existing security contract with Allied Universal outlining allocation of hours to time on transit vehicles and coverage of the network, including during the early hours of the morning and late hours of the evening.
- Collect and analyze public feedback to identify and address both geographic and time-of-day gaps in security coverage.
- Follow up on the “Respect the Ride” code rollout with a compassionate rules education campaign.

Safety & Security Goal 2: Address Corrective Action Plans (6 points)

By October 31st, 2025, ensure that no Public Utilities Commission (PUC) mandated Corrective Action Plans (CAPs), unless closed, has been in the same status for more than six months. Previous lack of progress has garnered increased levels of scrutiny from state regulators which must be addressed swiftly.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Support the 2025 Colorado Railroad Accident Investigation Report Confidentiality Bill.

4. Reliability (12 pts)

Reliability Goal 1: Revamped Service Planning & Scheduling (6 points)

By June 30th, 2025, update and reissue the 2016 service planning document including stating how much transit service an in-District community can expect for a particular housing density and available public facilities (e.g. hospitals, schools, shopping malls). This visibility is needed for cities and municipalities to constructively weigh in on RTD's service planning and scheduling proposals.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Publish clear guidance on how the System Optimization Plan's proposals will be prioritized for implementation.
- Carry out a review of service planning and scheduling IT infrastructure, identify shortcomings and opportunities for modernization.
- Carry out a review of how timed transfers are assessed and planned in the District.
- For the September 2025 service changes, publish draft proposed schedules at least 90 days in advance, in time for public engagement.
- Publish preliminary schedules for all transit routes impacted during the Service Changes process in advance of Board Approval for public review. Every train and fixed-route bus must run to a publicly accessible and accurate schedule.

Reliability Goal 2: Represented Headcount (6 points)

Goal

By October 31st, 2025, implement or have a completion date agreed with a supplier for a new online-based route bidding system for operators that is capable of planning meal and bathroom breaks into operators' runboards. The system should offer users an easy way to arrange shift swaps and emergency replacements. The current pen & paper approach is vastly outdated and is exacerbating the lack of flexibility that is cited as core to RTD's operator retention challenges.

Suggested Actions to Achieve Goal

- Update the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) as appropriate.

Thanks for all you do,



James Flattum



Emma Griffin



Richard Bamber



June Churchill