

RTCC Quarterly Meeting

November 5, 2025 Meeting Notes

Meeting summary

Summary

Transit Equity Bill Discussion

The quarterly RTCC meeting began with introductions and a discussion led by Ann Rajewski about a proposed Transit Equity Bill sponsored by Representative Joseph and an RTD board member. The bill aims to provide free or discounted fares for low-income individuals, establish a homeless partner pass program, and ensure language access, among other provisions. However, Ann highlighted significant concerns from transit agencies, including high implementation costs, challenges with managing homeless riders, and potential federal funding risks. She mentioned that a new draft of the bill might be less stringent and that agencies are awaiting further details.

Transit Bill and NEMT Updates

The group discussed concerns about a transit bill requiring 60% rider enrollment in a fair discount program, with Ann noting that rural agencies face particular challenges due to misaligned perceptions from bill sponsors. They agreed to review the next iteration of the bill once it's released, with Dana coordinating feedback from the group. Ann also shared updates about the non-emergent medical transportation (NEMT) program, including the upcoming transition to a new statewide brokerage system starting July 1, and mentioned CASTA's efforts to secure a bill sponsor for a rural transit zone initiative aimed at improving regional transit services in less economically driven areas.

Fare-Free Bus Ride Proposal

The group discussed a proposal to provide fare-free bus rides for veterans, military personnel, Medicare/Medicaid recipients, and ADA paratransit eligible individuals, replacing the current \$1 discount card program. Dawn clarified that the current select discount card program offers a 50% fare discount but requires in-person verification and cannot be used on the RFTA ticketing app. Mary and Dawn are developing proposals to streamline these services and will present them to RFTA soon. Ann encouraged everyone involved to attend the upcoming CMAC meeting in November, where a NEMT program manager will discuss using public transit to serve NEMT riders.

Western Garfield County Transit Planning

The meeting focused on transportation initiatives in Western Garfield County. Hanna presented findings from a community survey on public transit needs, which showed strong support for increased service frequency, broader schedules, and better access to bus stops. The survey results were presented to local councils and helped prevent funding cuts to the Hogback Line. The group discussed potential RFTA membership expansion and the need for further engagement with state officials. Dana introduced a new mobility resources webpage, which will be enhanced with a GIS map feature.

AI Projects and Budget Updates

The group discussed the sharing of a GIS example and website linking opportunities. Sam provided an update on Kuban Transit's AI-focused project, explaining that he did not receive expected funding for the One Transit Toolkit but has developed a new strategic playbook concept for transit agencies. The group learned about a [pilot program offering AI coaching services](#) for \$6,000 per group with applications due December 20th, and Dana indicated RTCC might apply as a region with a focus on transit network gaps. The conversation ended with a review of project spreadsheet and work plans, where Ann Findlay reported that her organization's Board of County Commissioners has been rejecting projects due to budget constraints, with only the bus barn facility continuing as planned.

Transportation Projects and Challenges Review

The group discussed several transportation projects and challenges. Sam led a review of various initiatives, including paratransit services to Aspen Snowmass, which Dawn explained is part of a comprehensive master planning process led by Hannah Klausman. Carly from Eagle County reported that work on improving the volunteer driver program is ongoing and will be incorporated into their aging well plan. Dana shared that Bustang increased trips from Denver to Grand Junction over the summer, but expansion of Outrider services to rural areas was not feasible. The group also discussed the need for alternative transportation options to Aspen Snowmass as the local airport is expected to close in 2027, with plans to explore Bustang service as a potential solution.

Transportation Coordination and Accessibility Updates

The group discussed transportation coordination challenges between Bustang and RFTA, with Dawn noting the lack of guaranteed connections and plans for a new West Glenwood Regional Transportation Center with nine shelters and nine platform slots. Sam emphasized their priority of securing a reliable one-seat public transportation ride from airports into the Valley, while Dawn reported positive accessibility outcomes in their service area, with microtransit and paratransit services meeting ADA requirements. Erwin provided updates on expanding rideshare initiatives, including a new ski carpool group for

Colorado resorts and parking integration efforts with Vail and Aspen, while Sam requested an update on the single app development for the Downtowner services in the RFV.

Regional Public Transit App Development

Mary and Dawn are collaborating on a project to develop a unified app for public transportation in the Roaring Fork Valley, which will include paratransit services and integrate with Downtowner's existing app. The project has received support from the FLMM Board Advisory Committee, and Mary and Dawn plan to discuss it further at an upcoming meeting. Sam emphasized the potential for expanding similar services to other areas in Northwest Colorado and encouraged collaboration among regional agencies. Dawn mentioned that Rifle is considering contracting with Downtowner for their paratransit services, and the group discussed the possibility of creating a regional information tool using AI to gather data on transportation services in other communities.

Transportation Planning and Recruitment Updates

The group discussed several key topics including COG Council meeting attendance, where Dana agreed to add Sam and Mary to future meeting invites to present updates. They reviewed the internal recruitment plan for fresh RTCC membership, with Erin planning to reconnect with Hope about creating recruitment materials. Sam shared updates on driver retention efforts in Snowmass Village, including a new recruitment video and adjusted pay scale based on experience. Jonathan reported positive developments in Steamboat, including the creation of a new RTA and a long-term funding agreement with the ski area, as well as completion of a driver's house. The conversation ended with Dana mentioning an upcoming email regarding the statewide Human Services Coordinated Transportation plan for review and consent approval.

Next steps

- Ann: Share new Transit Equity Bill language with Dana once it's available
- Dana: Send new Transit Equity Bill language to the RTCC group when received from Ann
- RTCC members: Provide comments on new Transit Equity Bill to Ann within a few days after receiving it
- Ann: Send NEMT statewide brokerage bulletin announcement to Dana
- Dana: Distribute NEMT bulletin to the group
- Ann: Invite interested RTCC members to November CMAC meeting about NEMT and fixed route transit

- Dana: Delete Teams link from future meeting invitations
- Dana: Add Bustang Outrider to the mobility resources website
- Dana: Send mobility resources flyer to the group in meeting notes
- Jon: Put Dana in contact with Jody for creating maps
- Mary: Send RFTA's GIS map example to Dana
- Dana: Work with website person to create a map for the mobility resources website
- Sam and Mary: Apply as RTCC for Steven's AI pilot program if interested members reach out to Dana
- Dana: Coordinate with interested RTCC members for AI pilot program application
- Sam: Fill out project plan for driver retention program and share resources with Dana
- Dana: Reach out to Ben at Bustang about service expansion updates
- Sam and Dana: Discuss offline about utilizing Steven's services for "What Are Other Communities Doing" information tool
- Dana: Invite COG membership to RTCC meetings
- Dana: Add Sam and Mary to COG Council meeting invites
- Dana, Hope, and Erin: Reconvene on internal recruitment plan for RTCC membership
- Dana: Send statewide Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan to group for consent vote via email
- RTCC members: Review statewide plan and notify Dana of any objections or additional changes