

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

To: Clarence W. Marsella, General Manager
From: Tony McCaulay, AGM of Customer Services
Date: February 17, 2005
Subject: Approval of May 2005 Service Changes

Date
GM
Board Meeting Date February 22, 2005
ACTION X DISCUSSION INFO

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended by the Operations Committee that the Board of Directors approve the May 8, 2005 Service Change package as revised and summarized on Attachment A resulting in a net annual savings of approximately \$158,644, and, further, to authorize the General Manager to execute contract amendments as necessary for private operators whose service is impacted by these changes.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Board policy on service changes, plans for the May 8, 2005 service changes are included herein (Attachment A). The primary objectives are to: (1) to conduct system maintenance – which includes service increases to address overloads and normal maintenance; and (2) to implement selected service improvements.

DISCUSSION

Funding for increased system service hours in the 2005 budget has been set at 0.0% for fixed route service, instead of the more typical 2.5% of total annual hours (3-4% annualized). This is due to the continuing economic situation and the consequent decline in sales tax receipts. Accordingly, it will be necessary to balance requisite system maintenance (running time issues, non-functional interlines, overloads, etc. - normally around 1.5% of annual hours, dependent upon the metropolitan area's growth rate) with appropriate service efficiencies.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

DATE	LOCATION	PUBLIC ATTENDANCE
February 2, 2005	Boulder Senior Center - West	10
February 2, 2005	Lone Tree Lone Tree Recreation Center	1
February 3, 2005	Aurora Aurora Public Library	14
February 3, 2005	Brighton Brighton Recreation Center	9

DATE	LOCATION	PUBLIC ATTENDANCE
February 3, 2005	Lakewood Stein Elementary School	3
February 3, 2005	Downtown Denver RTD Administration Offices	8

Public Hearing Results

The public hearings were attended by a total of 45 members of the general public. Please see Attachment B for a summary of public hearing comments.

Proposed Revisions to original May 2005 Service Change Proposal

1. The Route R proposal has been modified to retain service on the current Bromley/Platte River/Kuner and westbound Eastgate Mobile Home Park routings.
2. The Brighton call-n-Ride has been added for a minor expansion in its span of service.
3. Route 145X proposal has been modified to retain service on 4th Avenue.
4. Route 52 has been added for some midday frequency upgrades to alleviate overloads.
5. Route 90X has been added for an additional early morning trip to alleviate overloads.
6. Route AT has been added for additional afternoon trips from DIA to Airport Boulevard/40th Avenue park-n-Ride and Colfax/Billings to alleviate overloads.
7. Route AB and BOLT have been added for schedule adjustments.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2005 RTD savings from the May 2005 service changes would be approximately \$105,752. Annualized savings would be approximately \$158,644. Note: The January 2005 service change resulted in an annualized cost (unfunded) of \$403,500. The annualized savings from the May 2005 service change would reduce this cost to \$244,856. This remainder will be addressed with the September 2005 service change.

SUMMARY OF SERVICE CHANGES – MAY 2005

I. SERVICE EFFICIENCIES

Route DASH – Boulder/Lafayette via Louisville

The DASH replaced Route 227 between Lafayette, Louisville, and Boulder in January 2003, as a CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funded high frequency experimental service. Frequency was upgraded from every 15 minutes peak/30 minutes midday, to every 10 minutes peak/15 minutes midday. Ridership response has been mixed, with ridership during the fall and spring, coinciding with class terms at CU, up from 41% to 79% within Boulder, but up only 2% to/from Lafayette and Louisville, the area which was the primary goal of the project. In addition, summer ridership was similar to the previous Route 227 despite the added frequency. With the agreement of the partner communities, service during the summer of 2004 was reduced to that of the Route 227, i.e. every 15 minutes peak and every 30 minutes midday. This service change (plus the subsequent change in September 2004) saved enough money to continue the CMAQ grant demonstration period until May 2005. At the same time, summer 2004 ridership was unchanged despite the reduced service.

Beginning in September 2004, new 'Direct' service was implemented between Lafayette and Boulder. Operating during peak hours and in the peak direction only, the 'Direct' trips operate on South Boulder Road, bypassing downtown Louisville, and saving through passengers 7-10 minutes travel time. It was considered possible that this faster service would attract more customers from Lafayette, where ridership response to the improved frequency was otherwise weak. Service via downtown Louisville was changed from 10 minutes peak/15 minutes midday to every 15 minutes all day.

Ridership checks taken this fall show ridership has not responded well to the new Direct service. Overall weekday DASH ridership was down 6.2% in September, then up 9.0% in October 2004. Ridership on the Direct trips ranged between 5 and 12 customers per trip directly benefiting from the service.

Overall DASH ridership averaged 30.6 boardings per in-service vehicle hour in November, 2004, which does not achieve the RTD's minimum Service Standard of 40 boardings/in-service vehicle hour required to justify a 10 minute frequency of service. For comparison purposes, note that the Route 227 (which the DASH replaced) averaged 30.1 boardings per in-service vehicle hour in November 2002. The majority of the DASH's passengers from Lafayette and Louisville rode in the peaks between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. Ridership within the City of Boulder (between Boulder Station and South Boulder Road/Manhattan Circle) constituted 68.2% of the entire DASH's ridership – and this ridership was fairly evenly distributed throughout the daylight hours.

Ridership has been sufficient for the RTD to continue the DASH route, with the proviso that the frequency and mode of service be adjusted in order to comply with the RTD's Service Standards. Accordingly, it is proposed to change the DASH service as follows:

- To/from Lafayette and Louisville, operate every 15 minutes peak (7:00-9:30 a.m. and 3:00-6:00 p.m.) and every 30 minutes midday, all year. All trips will operate via downtown Louisville.
- Within Boulder, between 14th/Walnut and South Boulder Road/Manhattan Circle, operate every 15 minutes between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., from late August to mid May. Service during the summer will be reduced to every 30 minutes midday.
- Schedule adjustments as needed.

Route 26X – I-25/Lone Tree Express

Due to low ridership performance, it is proposed that the Route 26X service levels be reduced from every 15 minutes during the peak period to a service frequency of 30 minutes. This proposal also reduces the base period and Saturday service to hourly from 30 minute frequency. The most recent farebox data show 264 weekday average boardings, translating to 2.72 boardings per trip. The RTD Service Standards require at least 10.2 boardings per trip (at the bottom 10% level). Saturday ridership data list an average of 58 boardings or .829 boardings per trip. Also, schedule adjustments weekday, Saturday and Sunday.

Route 473 – South Yosemite

Due to low ridership performance, it is proposed that the Route 473 service levels be reduced from every 30 minutes during midday and evening periods to an hourly service frequency. This proposal also reduces the Saturday service to hourly from 30 minute frequency. Current ridership data shows an average of 199 boardings weekday and 138 Saturday boardings, which translates to 6.71 boardings per in-service vehicle hour weekday and 4.94 boardings per in-service vehicle hour Saturday. RTD productivity standards list the minimal acceptable boardings per hour for an Urban Local service at 14.6 per in-service hour at the bottom 10% level. Also, schedule adjustments weekday, Saturday and Sunday.

II. MIXED SERVICE EFFICIENCIES/SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

Route 59Ltd – West Bowles Limited

In order to better utilize the service capacity on West Bowles Avenue, Route 59Ltd is proposed to be converted to local operation on its current alignment and its name changed to Route 59B (i.e. it would become a branch of the current Route 59). Only minor schedule adjustments would be needed. The number of trips on the route would not be changed. Note: Ridership on this peak period only route has been low. Changing it to local operation would increase the number of stops served and thus enhance its potential for increased ridership.

Route 120 – 120th Avenue

Reroute into new Brighton park-n-Ride as follows: From 4th Avenue, west on Bush, L – service road, L – Egbert, to 4th. Remove deviation to existing Brighton park-n-Ride at Strong/1st. Remove service from Eastgate Mobile Home Park in Brighton, due to very low usage (total of 6 boardings/alightings on 30 trips), delay to through passengers. Service still available on Bridge Street, at entrance to community.

Route R – Brighton/Denver

Reroute all trips into new Brighton park-n-Ride, from Bridge Street, via 1st/Main, Bush, service road, Egbert, and 1st/Main, back to Bridge Street. The new park-n-Ride will have 232 spaces (versus 42 in the current park-n-Ride which will be closed and no longer served). Also, remove service from entering Eastgate Mobile Home Park in the eastbound direction (a stop will be available at the entrance on Bridge Street). Service in the westbound direction will continue to enter Eastgate.

Route Stampede – CU/East Boulder

Reduce weekday frequency from every 10 to every 30 minutes during the summer. Service was reduced last summer to a 15 minute frequency level, but the low ridership level (15.2 boardings per in-service vehicle hour) did not justify continuation of a 15 minute frequency. In addition, to better serve afternoon customers returning from campus to the residential areas east of campus, the Stampede loop through the CU campus will be reversed to operate clockwise after 2:00 p.m.

III. SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

Route 17 - Jeffco

Schedule adjustments and extension of more trips to/from Ward Road park-n-Ride from Golden.

Route 52 – West 52nd Avenue/South Pearl

Add northbound trips from Bannock/Speer (Denver Health) to 15th/Champa on a 30 minute frequency from 9:46 a.m. to 1:16 p.m. These additional trips would combine with the existing trips to provide a 15 minute frequency from Denver Health to Downtown Denver and thus alleviate recently developed overload conditions.

Route 90X – Nine Mile Meadowood Express

Add a westbound trip from Nine Mile park-n-Ride at 5:35 a.m. to alleviate overloads.

Route 91X – Pheasant Run Express

This proposal extends the in-service alignment of the Route 91X along Chenango Avenue between Himalaya Street and Picadilly Road. The new terminal for this service would be located at Chenango and Himalaya. Access to the current terminal at Picadilly Road and Progress Avenue is routed along Chenango Avenue, which allows this service enhancement to be made at no additional cost.

Route 100 – Kipling Crosstown

An additional weekday northbound trip from Southwest Plaza at approximately 1:41 p.m. is proposed, passing through Cold Spring park-n-Ride at 2:22 p.m. This would permit running time adjustments needed due to increased traffic, while also assisting with school ridership further north on the route. Also, schedule adjustments.

Route 145X – Brighton/DIA

Reroute into new Brighton park-n-Ride on the north side of the Brighton Pavillions via current route to Bridge Street, then Main to Bush Street to service road to park-n-Ride. Southbound trips operate from the park-n-Ride, via Egbert to Main Street to Bridge Street and then current routing. Schedule adjustments to better meet work shifts at DIA.

Route 169 – Buckley Crosstown

This proposal would improve the weekday Route 169 service peak period frequency from hourly to 30 minute service. Current ridership performance on the Route 169 lists the weekday boardings at 770 boarding per day (28.4 boardings per in-service vehicle hour), which meets and exceeds the service standard required for half-hourly service on a suburban local route. The 30-minute service would operate in the a.m. from 6:00a – 9:00a and begin in the p.m. at 2:30p – 6:00 p.

Route AA – Wagon Road/DIA

Reroute via E-470 between 104th Avenue and Peña Boulevard, instead of using Tower Road. No passenger stops lose service. This change will save 2-4 minutes in each direction. Also, schedule adjustments.

Route AT – DIA/Mineral Station via DTC

A 1:03 p.m. trip from DIA to Colfax/Billings and a 2:35 p.m. trip from DIA to Colfax and Billings would be added to alleviate overloads.

Brighton call-n-Ride

Increase the current span of service (6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) to 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

IV. NORMAL MAINTENANCE

Route 3 – Alameda Crosstown

Schedule adjustments.

Route 6 – East 6th Avenue/North Pecos

Schedule adjustments.

Route 8 – North Broadway/Huron

Schedule adjustments.

Route 16 – West Colfax

Schedule adjustments.

Route 51 – Sheridan Crosstown

Schedule adjustments.

Route 52 – West 52nd Avenue/South Pearl

Schedule adjustments.

Route 58X – West 58th Express

Schedule adjustments.

Route 68X – North Pierce Express

Schedule adjustments.

Route 72 – 72nd Avenue Crosstown

Schedule adjustments.

Route 72X – Ward Road Express

Schedule adjustments.

Route 76X – North Wadsworth Express

Schedule adjustments.

Route 208 – Iris/Valmont

Schedule adjustments.

Route AB – DIA/Boulder via US36

Schedule adjustments.

Route AS – DIA/Stapleton

Schedule adjustments.

Route BOLT – Boulder/Longmont

Schedule adjustments.

Route BOUND – 30th Street

Implement normal reduction of summer weekday frequency from every 10 to every 15 minutes. The savings from this would reduce Boulder's "buy up" cost (i.e. the difference in cost between this frequency and the RTD approved frequency of 15 minute peak, 30 minute base). Also, schedule adjustments.

Route JUMP – Arapahoe

Implement normal reduction of summer weekday frequency within Boulder from every 10 to every 15 minutes all day. Reduce weekday peak frequency to/from Lafayette from every 20 to every 30 minutes. The savings from this would reduce Boulder's "buy up" cost (i.e. the difference in cost between this frequency and the RTD approved frequency of 15 minute peak, 30 minute base within Boulder and 30 minute all day to/from Lafayette).

Mall Shuttle

Schedule adjustments on Sunday mornings.

Route SKIP - Broadway

Implement normal reduction of summer peak frequency from 7 to 10 minutes (savings already included in the 2005 Budget).

School Service

Discontinue seasonal school service on the following routes: Routes 1, 6, 9, 11, 20, 24, 27, 28, 30, 30Ltd, 31, 40, 45, 50, 51, 51Ltd, 52, 59, 65, 66, 100, 121, 205, 206, 208, 209, 301, 302 and 303.

V. CLOSURE OF FOOTHILLS PARK-N-RIDE AND ASSOCIATED CHANGES

As part of the Boulder Transit Village project at Pearl/33rd, the existing Boulder owned Foothills park-n-Ride on Pearl Parkway at 47th Street will be closed. Sale of this parcel will help fund construction of the Transit Village, which will serve as the main Boulder Station for the Denver/Boulder/Longmont FasTracks commuter rail line. The following routes are impacted by this change and will require routing and schedule adjustments:

Route F – Foothills/Superior/Market Street Station

Route H – Foothills/Superior/Civic Center Station

These routes will operate via US 36, 28th Street, and Pearl Street north of the Table Mesa Park-n-Ride. They will originate or terminate on Pearl Street at 29th Street. Exception stops will be added on 28th Street as the City completes the necessary physical improvements.

Route S – Denver/East Boulder

Route S routing will remain unchanged, except for operating in both directions on Pearl Parkway to 29th Street instead of westbound on Valmont Road.

Route T – Boulder/DTC/Greenwood Plaza

Route T will originate/terminate at the Table Mesa park-n-Ride.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Boulder – February 2, 2005

Senior Center - West

Ten members of the public attended the hearing, plus RTD Board members Dick McLean (District O) and Lee Kemp (District I). Questions included the concern that the summer frequency reductions on Boulder Community Transit Network routes were permanent (no, higher frequencies will be reinstated in August), parking availability at Table Mesa park-n-Ride if the Route T is cut back (current counts show 200 spaces available at Table Mesa). There was also discussion of the pros and cons of reducing service on the Dash, but agreement that the increased frequency had not attracted sufficient ridership.

Lone Tree – February 2, 2005

Lone Tree Recreation Center

This public meeting was held at the Lone Tree Recreation Center at 7:10 p.m. with 1 member of the general public in attendance. After a brief introduction Mr. Jim Schmidt posed the question of if consideration had been given to operating either Route 473 or Route 26X down Yosemite Street in the Lone Tree area. Answering the question, staff explained that Yosemite Street had been considered, but the City of Lone Tree expressed reservations about service down Yosemite. Mr. Schmidt also described a problem he'd experienced using the Lone Tree call-n-Ride. Staff stated that his issue would be discussed and followed-up with the Special Services division. The meeting concluded at 7:25 p.m., with staff committing to follow-up with further contact with Mr. Schmidt regarding future service in Lone Tree.

Aurora – February 3, 2005

Aurora Public Library

Fourteen members of the general public attended the meeting along with Board Members Bill McMullen and Barbara Yamrick. There was one positive comment on the proposed service changes, a commendation for doubling the weekday peak period frequency on Route 169. Comments were also received regarding the difficulty of making RTD bus connections at Arapahoe Crossings and at Ulster and Tufts.

Ten of the general public were from Heather Gardens, and they were there to request the return of the Route 153 branch into Heather Gardens. Note: this branch was removed from Heather Gardens in January 2004 due to its very low ridership (i.e. 10 all day boardings). Instead, it was combined with the regular Route 153 on Chambers and then extended southward to Arapahoe Crossing and the Town of Parker. Since that change, ridership on the overall Route 153 has increased by 18%.

A new call-n-Ride is scheduled to begin serving Heather Gardens in September 2005. A meeting subsequent to the public hearing was conducted in Heather Gardens (February 8, 2005) to discuss this with the residents.

Brighton – February 3, 2005

Brighton Recreation Center

Ten people attended the hearing, including RTD Director Lee Kemp, Brighton City Councilman Dick Hodge, and Brighton Assistant City Manager Manuel Esquibel. Comments from the public included the need to keep Route R service serving the interior stop at Eastgate Mobile Home Park, and adjusting the Route 145X schedule to better serve work times at DIA. Advertising of the additional space and services at the new Brighton park-n-Ride should be done. Also, weekend service on Route 120 east of Wagon Road park-n-Ride was requested.

Lakewood – February 3, 2005

Stein Elementary School

Three members of the public and Director David Ruchman, District N, attended the February 3rd public meeting held in Lakewood at Stein Elementary School. One RTD staff member was present. The major item of interest was the status of the West Corridor rail project and related bus route possibilities. One attendee presented his disagreement with the proposed change on Route S in Boulder's industrial area.

Downtown Denver – February 3, 2005

RTD Administration Offices

Eight members of the general public attended the hearing, plus RTD Chairman Bill Elfenbein and Director Daryl Kinton. Two people had questions on the Route 58X (minor schedule adjustments) and provided suggestions for some rerouting (this will be addressed with the September 2005 service changes). One person requested that the Route 473 frequency of service be retained at the current level. Other comments/questions received were not related to the proposed May service changes. They included such items as complaints on First Transit's quality of service, on overloads on Routes 15 and 15Ltd because of students (this will be addressed with the September 2005 service changes), and requests for increased frequencies of service on Routes 10, 45, 52 and 153.

Additional Communications

Nine E-mails were received relevant to the proposed May 2005 service changes. Two were in opposition to the proposed SKIP changes. Three received were regarding the Dash. One requested both the 9:07 a.m. and the 9:22 a.m. trips be retained, and the other requested all times remain as they are. One e-mail requested that the 1:34 p.m. trip be retained on the 26X, one requested keeping the 26X at its current frequency, one opposing changing the frequency during peak hours but stated off peak changes are reasonable. Lastly, one stated that additional service on the 169 demands improved service on the 153.