

RTD Access Live – Peggy Catlin  
October 17, 2019

- Pauletta Tonilas: Good evening everyone, and thank you for joining us for this live telephone town hall meeting. Hosted by the Regional Transportation District, also known as RTD. I'm Pauletta Tonilas, Assistant General Manager of Communications for RTD and I'll be your moderator this evening. As we talk about the latest and greatest from RTD and also a new effort that we've just kicked off, Reimagine RTD.
- Pauletta Tonilas: We're taking a look at how we provide our service, to design the mobility of the future, and more on Reimagine RTD in just a couple of minutes. Joining me this evening is Peggy Catlin, RTD director for District N. Also sitting in to answer your questions are Brian Welch, Senior Manager of Planning and Technical Services. As well as Dave Menter Service Planner and Scheduler.
- Pauletta Tonilas: We're here to listen and answer your questions, your opinions are very important to us that's why we're on a call with you this evening. This is your opportunity to share your thoughts, and ask us questions about our service, concerns you may have, or why you really want us reimagining the future of mobility. So that it reflects how you want to get round the Denver Metro area.
- Pauletta Tonilas: Now this is your first time on a telephone town hall, here's how it works. To ask a question, just press star three on your keypad and you'll be transferred to someone who will take down some basic information and get you in the queue. Just stay on the line, listen to the conversation, and when I call your name, then the time to ask your question live.
- Pauletta Tonilas: Please keep it brief though, because we do want to get to as many of you as possible tonight. We're also asking you some questions through our live electronic polling when you'll use your keypad to press a number to correspond with your answers. So if you want to get into the queue, to ask a question, go ahead and press star three now. That's star three, if you'd like to get into the queue to ask us a question or give us a comment.
- Pauletta Tonilas: Now, this is a big year for RTD, RTD is celebrating our 50th anniversary this year. RTD was created in 1969 by the Colorado General Assembly and in those 50 years, RTD has grown with the Denver Metro area. We are now a region of 3 million people, 2300 square miles service area. Which is the largest service area of any transit agency in the country. And we cover 40 cities in eight counties and offer nearly 100 million rides a year. It is now my pleasure to introduce your RTD director, Peggy Catlin for District N.
- Pauletta Tonilas: Director Catlin, thank you very much for being on the line with us and our 50th anniversary year. It's been a big year, there's been lots to celebrate this year.
- Peggy Catlin: Yes, Pauletta thank you. Good evening, and thank you listeners for joining us. Yes, it's really been a busy year already and as we celebrate our 50th year, I'm reminded that the Broncos are starting their 50th year right now, and I suspect

that we might be in competition for some of our audience with the Broncos game starting tonight.

Peggy Catlin: But that said, in addition to celebrating 50 years of moving people, we opened the G Line. Which is a commuter rail line, from Wheat Ridge and Arvada and to Denver Union Station in April. That was followed by the extension of the E, F and R Lines, three stations opening from Lincoln into Lone tree. And what that means is that we've done six transit corridors in three years, which is pretty remarkable. As many of our fellow transit agencies across the country would attest.

Peggy Catlin: However, many of you have expressed concerns about the fare increases that went into effect this past January. With this new fare structure put in place however, there is now a youth discount for ages six to 19 have a 70% discount. And children five and under continue to ride for free, with up to three children being able to ride with a fare paying adult.

Peggy Catlin: So we think these are some enhanced benefits for our younger population. The other thing now is that you can purchase a three hour pass to replace what used to be a one way cash fare. This means you could take unlimited trips in multiple directions within the same three hour window. For the same type of fare, whether it's a local fare, a regional fare or an airport fare. That's really a great opportunity if you wanted to make a quick trip to downtown Denver for lunch on the G Line, and get back you could do that within a three hour window.

Peggy Catlin: We've also launched a new income-based fare program called LiVE, and that began this summer. This offers a 40% discount to riders at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. Those who qualify can apply through the Colorado State Benefits site known as PEAK. We believe that this was the most efficient way to administer this program, since RTD will not have to add additional staff to administer it. And the state already provides these services.

Peggy Catlin: So we're really appreciative of being able to partner with the state in this new venture. One more thing, we do continue the 50% discount for seniors, 65 and older individuals with disabilities and Medicare recipients. And what we found in the beginnings of this LiVE program, is that oftentimes people will qualify for a better discount than the actual 40% discount that the LiVE program provides. And so, this is an opportunity to get the best deal for our customers. We really do take your comment seriously and there are many more topics that we wanted to talk about, including the Reimagine RTD. So we hope that you can join in these conversations for your district. Thank you again for calling in. Pauletta.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much, Director Catlin. That is director Peggy Catlin, who is the RTD board member for District N. Excuse me. And so we are here, to listen to you folks and to get your feedback and input about RTD in general, but also as

we Reimagine our TD. What do you want us to think about? What should we be thinking about when we want to design the mobility of the future?

Pauletta Tonilas: And because most of us can do more than one thing at the same time. No problem, you staying on the line with us while you've got the Bronco game on, which starts in about 10 minutes. Feel free as we call upon you to give us updates on the score folks, because again we're all Bronco fans, right? Okay. So Director Catlin, we do want to talk about Reimagine RTD. This is really important for us at this stage of RTDs history. And so tell us a little bit about what are we trying to achieve here through Reimagine RTD

Peggy Catlin: Thank you Pauletta. RTD has made a lot of progress over the past 50 years with bus service, light rail service, and commuter rail service, our on demand services and a number of other things. But for the past 15 years since voters passed the fast tracks initiative in 2004, that's been the agency's primary focus to complete it. However much has changed since then, and the way people commute and use our services.

Peggy Catlin: So now is the time to really take a closer look at ways that we can integrate transit options. Better connect people to where we go, really address the changing landscape of how people travel. Where they need to go, and especially since the Metro area is expected to have a 30% increase in population by 2050. We just need to really figure out the best ways to optimize our system so that we can provide better mobility.

Peggy Catlin: So the Reimagine RTD initiative is our opportunity to optimize current and future services, that would be in bus and rail and special services. We want to evaluate our available resources, capacity and determine how all of these in your input come together to meet our regional needs. Pauletta will probably talk about this a little bit more, but this is a two year effort. And we will be hosting more events like this one, across the whole RTD district.

Peggy Catlin: As well as listening sessions, public meetings, focus groups. We'll be conducting surveys over the next two years, to hear from as many people as possible. But not only our customers, we really want to hear from non-riders, occasional riders, frequent riders and anyone who wants to share with us their thoughts on how RTD could better serve you, and plan for the future. You can engage any time and provide your input through our online engagement tool by visiting the Reimagine RTD website at [www.rtd-denver.com/reimagine](http://www.rtd-denver.com/reimagine). Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you, Director Catlin. The online engagement tool is really a pretty neat thing. So please do visit it on our RTD website, play around with it and you're able to give us comments right there on the engagement tool. You can even look at a map and drop a pin and give us a comment like at a specific location. So we very much would appreciate you giving us input, as we Reimagine RTD. Okay folks, we're going to go to the first person to ask a question this evening and that is Peter. Peter, go ahead.

Peter: Yeah. I was curious if you guys were contemplating perhaps using aerial trams in the downtown Denver area, to basically get over I-25 or navigate some narrow passages. Because as a driver downtown, there's just not much space for dedicated bus lanes. And then if you bring in another light rail, it also jams up the area.

Brian Welch: Peter, thanks for that question. This is Brian Welch. Yeah, as a matter of fact, we have had previous inquiries from people who actually build these types of systems and have done them in other parts of the world. When we've looked at them, our primary challenge has been, we don't know of a technology yet that can carry enough people, fast enough to achieve the kind of throughput that we would need.

Brian Welch: In other words, you'd need bigger vehicles to carry more people more quickly. That seems to be the primary hurdle right now. However, we continue to explore opportunities. And we're interested in staying abreast of that particular technology because you're right, it could be applicable. In some of the more congested corridors,

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks very much. That's Brian Welch, Senior Manager of Technical Planning Services. We are going to go now to the next person up and that's Joy. Joy, go ahead and ask us your question.

Joy: Thank you for the opportunity. I'm interested in solving the problem of the last mile. Many of the great light rail and bus routes get us far, but don't get us all the way there. And thinking about the population, say age and the needs to get to specialists and doctors. Wondering what the last mile opportunities look like for our future.

Brian Welch: Hi Joy, this is Brian Welch. That's a very good question, and something that transit agencies across the United States continue to address and are finding it pretty challenging. At RTD we have a service called the FlexRide, and we're actually one of the pioneers nationally in providing that type of service. Where you pick up and drop off people from our stations to get them to other locations.

Brian Welch: It's a difficult service, it's very challenging to operate primarily because again, you've got the difficulty of relatively many destinations. And vehicles that aren't going all the same place, at the same time. What we're going to investigate with Reimagine RTD, are the newer things that people are looking at. Newer subscription type services that we might be able to partner with, newer ways to use things like ride hailing or even scooters or bicycles or other options. That is going to be a major focus of our mobility plan for the future. You're really onto something there and we believe that it's going to be a key part, of achieving good use of our transit service. To finalize that first and last mile.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks Brian, if you'd like to get in the queue to ask us a question, go ahead and press star three on your keypad and you will get put in the queue. And then you just have to wait for me to call on you to ask a question. So again, star three on your keypad if you would like to get in the queue to ask us a question tonight.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay, we're going to go to our first electronic polling question. Now the way that this works is I'm going to call out the question, and then some answers and you will press the number on your keypad that corresponds with your preferred answer. So here we go, the first question is, how satisfied are you with RTD services? Press one on your key pad for very satisfied, press two for somewhat satisfied, press three for somewhat dissatisfied and press four for very dissatisfied. And if you go ahead and record your vote, we will give you the results in just a couple of minutes. Again, press star three if you would like to get in the queue to ask us a question. Okay, we're going to go next to Charles. Charles, go ahead and ask your question.

Charles: Hi, I was wondering if it's in the plans, the immediate future plans for having light rail from Denver to Boulder, Colorado.

Pauletta Tonilas: Well, thank you very much, Charles. Appreciate that question very much. Yes, this is something that we get asked a lot. So the FasTracks Program, is a transit expansion program passed by Denver Metro voters back in 2004. At that time, the most ambitious transit expansion program in the country. That would build out six brand new rail lines, light rail and commuter rail, a bus rapid transit line and enhanced bus service and then redevelop Denver union station.

Pauletta Tonilas: Well we have opened most of that program, about 70% of the FasTracks program is complete. Part of what is not complete is the line you're talking about, which is a commuter rail line that is planned to go from Denver to Boulder and then onto Longmont. Now the first segment of that line, which we call the B Line. The B that was named B years ago, the B Line is opened from Denver to Westminster.

Pauletta Tonilas: The rest of that line that's intending to go to Boulder and onto Longmont. We don't have the funding for right now, to implement that project. It is the longest line of the FasTracks program, the most expensive line. And it is incumbent upon us coming up with an operating agreement with BNSF Railway for us to operate our trains on their tracks. And so we've been working with BNSF for years, and they're a partner of ours.

Pauletta Tonilas: But this is all very complicated, and what we're looking at is seeing if there's a way, sooner rather than later to have what we call a peak level service. Which means we would operate a handful of trains in the morning and a handful of trains in the afternoon, as more of kind of a starter plan. And so that is still on our radar. Nobody would like to be able to finish FasTracks more than RTD.

Pauletta Tonilas: But we have four projects that we have unfinished, that we do not have funding for. The rest of the B Line up to Longmont, the rest of the in line, which the most of it will open next year. But that remaining segment, the Southwest Extension from Mineral to Lucent Boulevard into Highlands Ranch. And then the Central Corridor Extension to 38th and Blake.

Pauletta Tonilas: Those are the four pieces of FasTracks that remain, that we don't currently have funding for. But looking at how we address that is going to be part of our Reimagine our RTD effort that we are embarking upon right now. So thank you very much for that. We haven't forgotten about it, Charles. It's still on our radar and we're looking to see what we can do to make that happen. So thank you very much for your question.

Pauletta Tonilas: If you'd like to get in the queue to ask us a question, press star three and now we're going to share the results of the polling question that we asked you just a couple of minutes ago. We asked you how satisfied are you with RTD services? 38% of you say very satisfied, 24% say somewhat satisfied, 38% say somewhat dissatisfied, and none of you said very dissatisfied. So that's good news. But again, we know that we can always improve, we can always get better. We want to hear from you how we do that, so please think about that and press star three on your keypad to give us that information. We're going to go now to Debbie. Debbie, go ahead and ask your question.

Debbie: I'd like to know what can be done about the Access-a-Ride buses being late, and a bus pass like they do for the buses.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much. Yeah, Access-a-Ride, it is more expensive and that particular service is a very important service. As we offer it of course to provide mobility to some of the most transit dependent people in the Denver Metro area. We're always looking at how we can provide the most efficient service and make it as affordable as possible for all of our riders.

Pauletta Tonilas: We did go through a whole fare program, a pass program working group over a year ago and that was a group of people from across the Denver Metro area that came together and collaborated on taking a look at our whole fare structure. And what can we do to best optimize our fare products and what would be the most fair, fare products and fares overall. And the outcome of that, was the fare structure that we implemented in January. And we are always working to improve that.

Pauletta Tonilas: But we do have an online application for Access-a-Ride. Again, the important thing for people to remember also, is taking a look at our services and other fare products and if those work for people better. But we're happy to hear any other ideas people have. But a lot of what our fare structure is set at now, is what we can actually afford to offer. With being able to stay financially feasible. So these are all tough issues and we appreciate any comments that you want to offer. You also can press star nine if you'd like to go leave us a question or a comment,

even at the end of this meeting. So thank you very much. We're going to go now to Lisa. Lisa, go ahead.

Lisa: Hi, this is Lisa.

Pauletta Tonilas: Hi Lisa, go ahead and ask your question.

Lisa: I had a follow up question to the girl prior. That was, I'm asking about the Access-a-Ride services. My daughter is disabled and I help her with booking her trips for the week on that service. And the service itself is quite cumbersome in terms of, when you call in there's really extended hold times. Sometimes you get disconnected. It's not uncommon to be on hold for a half an hour, if the lines are busy. And also, just following up the prior conversation once you get those booked, the RTD service seems to have late.

Lisa: We've been using it for several years. I would say the last several months, has been the most difficult with drivers being late. It's hard for the person on the other end to know what's going on with the driver. Are they really coming or not? So my question is, are we moving towards a more automated system of trying to make reservations, follow up.

Lisa: Maybe be able to look at where the driver is, rather than being on hold for dispatch, which can be another 10 to 15 minutes. When you call in to find out if your driver is coming. So all of these, create a lot of anxiety and uncertainty with people with disabilities that are, in my daughter's case, trying to hold a job. And using Access-a-Ride as her exclusive service to and from work. Just seems like we could do a better job of creating an app or something that sort of more futuristic than the current service.

David Menter: Yeah, Lisa. Boy, you've really hit the nail on the head with that. That can be very frustrating, and we're aware of all of what you're talking about here. Our RTD web app folks have been looking at this for the last several years, and we are working on that and moving towards having a more online user-friendly app. And so that users can have more online information, just like you're saying. And that is exactly what we're moving towards in the future. So point well taken, and thank you for making that comment again.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much. That's Dave Menter, he is one of our great service planners and schedulers with our RTD service planning department. I want to ask Director Peggy Catlin, who is the Director for District N, for the RTD Board of Directors. I want to ask Director Catlin a question, so Director, when we talk about Reimagine RTD and us starting the engagement process and wanting to hear from people. We really mean that, because it's all about the people, and it's so critical for us to hear from... as you said earlier, not only our current riders but from non-riders on, why don't they take RTD, right. So this is critical for us.

Peggy Catlin: Thank you, Pauletta. Both Debbie and Lisa have echoed what I'm hearing from a number of constituents out in this area, that it is frustrating for their special needs family members to access Access-a-Ride. And, I personally have looked into what some other agencies across the country are doing, and we are working with staff to maybe optimize some of those systems. So thank you for the comment. But it is important that we hear broadly, across all service areas. What will make it easier for you to do the ride RTD and what will make you start riding RTD if you don't currently? I've heard a number of things that earlier caller are talking about. First and last mile in this particular district since it is so spread out.

Peggy Catlin: It's more like first and last five miles. But I think that's an important piece that we really do need to look at through the Reimagine RTD process. We do need your help and answering the question, what's next for RTD? Some of the things that we're going to be including in the next couple of months, which we're referring to as our listening phase. We're going to be reviewing all of our programs, the funding opportunities, the fiscal, and workforce constraints.

Peggy Catlin: Some of you may have heard that we are facing some budgetary challenges. We want to make sure that we're putting the dollars where it's doing the most good. We really want to look at RTDs existing bus, and rail services. And then also some of the future projects that Pauletta referenced with regard to the FasTracks projects. And one of the things that I want to remind everyone, including those internal to RTD is that the FasTracks also promised enhanced bus service, and we are facing challenges in that arena.

Peggy Catlin: But I think there are some great opportunities for other technology integration and that's where we would really appreciate thoughts from many of you on how we can best leverage some of the new technologies that we see emerging just at a rapid pace. Excuse me. So any mobility plan for the future needs to include partnering with our other transportation providers. For example, our local governments, cities, and counties.

Peggy Catlin: But the TNC, the Uber's and Lifts of the world, like Brian did scooters or bicycles. A number of these other things where we can really integrate a whole suite of services into mobility for the future. So we really do appreciate your input. RTD is going to be going into our communities will be hosting these listening sessions, pop-ups on our systems, community events.

Peggy Catlin: So if there are some opportunities that you see in your neighborhoods or communities where we could be providing information and listening to you, that would be great. I've also heard from some in this District N, in this community about concern over service from East to West. Currently most of our service runs from the North to the South. And so we're just going look at that a little bit more carefully as we evaluate and look at the plan for the future.

Peggy Catlin: This process is going to take about two years and so we have some time but it's really important that we hear from you early on what your concerns and thoughts are. And as Pauletta mentioned, you can make your comments right now by visiting [www.rtd-denver.com/reimagine](http://www.rtd-denver.com/reimagine).

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much Director Catlin, I do want to ask you about something you mentioned just briefly a few minutes ago. That one of the biggest challenges we have right now is our operators shortage. We have a significant shortage of light rail and bus operators right now. And this is because the economy is doing so well and unemployment is so low, that the pool of people looking for jobs is not necessarily wanting to go into this line of work.

Pauletta Tonilas: And there are many other industries that are challenged with this too, that rely on truck drivers for instance, or equipment operators. So Director Catlin we're doing all we can, but it is impacting our service and we don't like to do that, right?

Peggy Catlin: Oh, that's correct. In fact, I just had an email today from one of our constituents who's very frustrated about dropped trips. Particularly as the winter months are approaching, it's frustrating to be left on a platform, if there's a trip dropped for a light rail trip or something. And right now, unemployment as Pauletta mentioned, is at a historic low. It's about 2.4% or something like that down from over 6% in 2014.

Peggy Catlin: So it is very challenging to try and hire operators and we're competing with the construction industry, and we are competing with CDOT. Who just recently publicized that it is seeking a hundred new snow snowplow operators. My constituents you all are in District N, mainly in Evergreen and Conifer and South Jefferson County have expressed concern to me about some of the dropped routes and eliminated lines.

Peggy Catlin: But part of the reason for the dropped runs is truly the operator shortage. And at last count, I think we need to fill 61 light rail operator positions in about 80 bus operator positions, that's not insignificant. And what's that's doing is taxing some of our existing operators as they're required to work six days a week frequently and sometimes split shifts. And that results in operator burnout, so we're very concerned about that. The board and the staff.

Peggy Catlin: RTD is taking active steps to address recruitment and retention actively reviewing what we can do now and in the immediate future. But already RTD offers great benefits for operators, including 19.98 to 25, \$31 per hours starting rate. We get premium pay for those who do work split shifts or who work second and third shifts. There's a \$2,000 hiring bonus for best in train operators as well as mechanics.

Peggy Catlin: We actually pay for the training. It's very expensive to get a commercial driver's license or CDL. I know some agencies require the person applying to get that on

their own, but we pay for it and you're not required to have it in order to secure a job with RTD.

Peggy Catlin: RTD does provide full benefits, paid time off, medical and dental and retirement pension and more. As I said, there's no experience required. We just want willing and able and we'll train you on just about everything. I'm told that to get a CDL on your own, it can cost between 3000 and \$7,000 depending on the driving school. And I know that some of the folks that I knew at CDOT who were plow operators, thought that was a little bit of a prohibitive in entering the workforce. But if you have anyone or you are interested in working for RTD, please visit [www.rtd-denver.com/careers](http://www.rtd-denver.com/careers). Thank you. Let's get the word out.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much. Director Catlin. And we're talking about good paying jobs here folks. So if you're someone you know, wants to start out at least \$20 an hour, have great benefits of pension plan and work for a great organization, you might consider this coming to work for us at RTD.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay, we're going to go to our second polling question of the evening and what you'll do is just press the number on your keypad to correspond with your answers. So our second question is what can RTD be doing better? Press one for improved reliability, press two for enhanced bus rail connections, press three for provide better technology and apps, press four for improved safety and security on our system. And we'll share the results in just a couple of minutes. Now, Brian, I want to ask you to weigh in because when we talk about Reimagining RTD, this is no small feat. This takes a lot, to think about all of the components that it's going to take for us to create this mobility plan for the future.

Brian Welch: Yes, Pauletta. The district is 50 years old and while we have been fine tuning particularly our bus network, for all of those 50 years. It just seemed like the right time to take a big comprehensive look at it and do a more thorough examination of everything we're doing throughout the district. With expert help from our team, but also a huge outreach effort to listen to the people who were using the system. To tell us, what can make it better and then find out from people who aren't using it, why they would now on the rail side.

Brian Welch: We've built our rail system incrementally over the last 25 years. So now we have C and D and E and F and H and R and L and we need to look at whether or not that is the most efficient, effective way to provide service to our customers. For example, we've had people ask about can you do express service? Could you have a train for example, that started at Ridge Gate and only make one or two stops all the way downtown? Well, that's the kind of thing we think we need to look at and we'll be doing this thorough examination. It's a big effort, but we're ready to go and we want to hear from you.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks very much Brian. That's Brian Welsh, Senior Manager of Technical Planning Services. Okay, we're going to go to our next caller and that is Joel. Joel, you're up. Go ahead and ask your question.

Joel: Yes. I was wondering about the HOV lines, possibly on I [inaudible 00:35:08] they are going into. We could not charge people to use as HOV lanes to make traffic move better.

Brian Welch: Joel, thanks for that question. Of course RTD is allowed to use the lanes and there's no extra charge to us. The question now really is more directed at the Colorado Department of Transportation, through their High-Performance Transportation Enterprise. They are responsible for the toll rates and setting the tolls, but we can forward that question onto the Colorado Department of Transportation. To get additional information on, what it would take and what would be involved in making those lanes free at certain times. Thank you for the question.

Pauletta Tonilas: I think we're going to go now to Jesse. Jesse, you're up next. Go ahead. Hi there, Jesse. Are you there? Sounds like we could be having a little technical... Jessie, are you on the line?[inaudible 00:36:22] okay.[inaudible 00:36:26] Yeah, we are having a hard time hearing you.

Jesse: Oh yeah, somebody mentioned I had a bad connection, I guess you [inaudible 00:36:39] correctly. Yeah. I'm sorry about that. I think you touched a little bit, but I was wondering if you're exploring the possibility of bringing in more options for the monthly bus passes. And not just a single day or single month free for all. So perhaps one for the weekend or one for commuters or one for off peak hours. They kind of expand the options so that it becomes more affordable and accessible for others.

Pauletta Tonilas: Yeah, we did hear that question and thank you very much. So the question, for those of you that might had a hard time hearing is, are we looking at any other types of pass programs other than just the monthly pass as it is now? So for instance, a pass for commuters or maybe in off peak hours or something. We have talked about this and you're getting to something really good here.

Pauletta Tonilas: Because if it can help us make it easier and more convenient, and conducive for people to hop on transit, then this is something we need to look at. The market development group, which puts together the past programs and administers them is within our department of the communications' department. And so we're always looking for new ideas. For instance, partnering with hotels and seeing, for instance, if we can come up with a pass for people who are staying at area hotels.

Pauletta Tonilas: So that when they get to town, they have a transit pass that they can use on our mobile app. And again, a lot of people don't realize that we have a mobile app. So that is actually something that could be helpful to those of you that don't

realize that. You can go and download our mobile app, and that is a very easy and convenient way to store tickets or fares in your app. But yes, we are looking at any other kind of pass programs or products that we could partner with businesses or organizations to make it more conducive and efficient for people to ride RTD. So thank you very much for that question. Brian, do you want to add to that?

Brian Welch: In addition to what Pauletta mentioned. In addition to the types of the different types of monthly and daily and various types of options, we're also on the path towards modernizing greatly the way you pay for RTD services. So we anticipate over the next couple of years introducing much more flexibility. You'll be able to pay for a trip on RTD with your phone.

Brian Welch: You'll be able to pay for it actually, with almost any payment option out there, when we start going to our account-based ticketing system. It's going to be a really exciting innovation. So no longer will you have to even worry about the ticket vending machines. So we're going to have much more advanced, modern ways for everybody, whether they're banked or unbanked, whether they have a credit card or not. Whether they even have a smart phone or not, to pay for our services. So we're very interested in modernizing that aspect of our fares as well.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks for adding that, Brian. Okay, we're going to give you the results of the polling question we asked you a couple minutes ago, and the question was, what can RTD be doing better? 40% of you said improve reliability, 38% said enhanced bus rail connections, 19% of you said provide better technology and apps.

Pauletta Tonilas: So, thank you very much. No one said improved safety and security, but I will tell you safety and security as a core value at RTD and we are always looking at things that we can do to enhance the safety and security of our system. So just thought I'd throw that in. Okay. We're going to go now to Charles. Charles, go ahead.

Charles2: Thank you. Is it CDOTs job or will it be RTDs job to make it possible in the future for people to travel from Cheyenne to Pueblo and from Denver to Vail and Beaver Creek?

Brian Welch: Charles, thank you for that question. This is Brian Welch. The short answer is both. We look at a future where you'll be able to have a passenger rail system that would travel both North and South. And we think that RTD is going to be an important part of that. Now it could be as exciting as maybe even using part of our track for that, but at a minimum you'll be able to make seamless connections to and from the RTD system and any future front rail passenger rail system.

Brian Welch: We're limited of course to directly providing service within our district, but we are close partners with CDOT on all of their planning efforts, including North, South, as well as up into the mountains. So we're going to make sure that we do everything possible to make that kind of a project happen sooner rather than later.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks Brian. Dave, I do want to ask you to weigh in and explain to folks what we do three times a year with the tweaks that we do to our service. We call them service changes or service adjustments. And that's a little bit different than what we're doing with Reimagine RTD because that's on a little bit different scale. But every quarter or I guess not so much quarter, but every four months we do look at our system to make it the most efficient system we can. Right?

David Menter: That's right, Paula. This is David Menter and yeah, that is one of the things that RTD does really well. We're constantly looking at our data and rebalancing the system. For example, if a Walmart opens in Lakewood and another one closes in Arvada. We'll be looking at how ridership patterns change and we'll extend service where demand has increased to one part of the system.

David Menter: And if a ridership falls off on another part, we'll pair back service to meet demand on that part of the system. So we're always looking at the data and because riders want good service as well, but the general tax paying public also wants to ensure and wants to know that they're getting good value for their service. And so three times a year we look at all of our routes based on the available funding and we make minor tweaks and adjustments and recommendations three times a year.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you very much, Dave. Director Catlin, I have a question for you. So as we embark upon Reimagine RTD, and we've talked about how we want to hear from everyone, that's the whole point of tonight's telephone town hall meeting. What are you looking for? Anything specific from the constituents of your area or common things that you hear about from your constituents that you know are problems that we have to address?

Peggy Catlin: Well, it was touched on briefly before. I think what a lot of the constituents in our area are concerned about is just basic bus service. The communities of Conifer and Evergreen have some purely limited service. And part of it is because the densities up there do not lend themselves to ridership or to high ridership.

Peggy Catlin: That being said, sometimes people just really need to be able to rely on a trip. But I see some pretty exciting opportunities for the FlexRide services that we're looking at and being able to implement, some of those trips in lieu of the large fixed route bus lines. So I just think that the Reimagine just kind of opens up the window of opportunity, for a lot of different creative ideas. And I've heard some from a number of our constituents, and just encourage them to continue to

weigh in. Whether it be on the website or on these listening sessions or similar telephone town halls that we're having now and put your thinking caps on and really help us figure out the best way to serve you.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks very much, Director Catlin. That is Director Peggy Catlin, who is the Director for District N for RTD. We have 15 board members, each of them represents a different part of the Denver Metro area. Excuse me. And we are doing these telephone town hall meetings, directed at each of the 15 director districts across Denver Metro area.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay, we're going to go now to our third and final polling question for the evening. The question that we would like to ask is other than telephone town hall meetings like this one, which of the following ways would you be most likely to use to stay involved with RTD as we embark upon our Reimagine RTD process? Press one if you would use the interactive online engagement tool on the RTD website, press two read emails or e-newsletters, press three for attend a public meeting, press four for short surveys at stations and transit centers and we'll share the results with you in just a couple of minutes.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay. Folks, if you'd like to get in the queue, it is not too late. You can press star three on your keypad and just wait for us to call your name and we're happy to answer any questions that you have. Again, this is a live telephone town hall meeting by RTD. If you ever want information about RTD, you can also always just visit our website at [www.rtd-denver.com](http://www.rtd-denver.com).

Pauletta Tonilas: One of the things that we have recently launched is an RTD newsroom. We call this the News Stop. And you can get into it from the homepage of the RTD website. And this is our communications effort at making sure that you're informed and engaged and have the latest information about RTD, the good, the bad, and the ugly. So even the tough things that are happening, we want to be open and transparent with you and give you an opportunity to get all the information because sometimes you don't get all the information when it's shared across the Metro area.

Pauletta Tonilas: So, we want to give you that opportunity to empower yourself as informants for RTD. And so again, the News Stop is our new RTD newsroom. And so check it out. We have photos, we have some videos up there. It really is designed to act like a newsroom and we want to keep you up to speed on the latest at RTD. So, we're happy to hear what you have to say about that as well.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay. We're going to give you the results of the polling question that we asked a couple of minutes ago. The question was, other than this telephone town hall meeting, how else would you prefer to stay engaged with RTD through Reimagine RTD? 43% of you said that you would use the interactive online engagement tool, 43% said read emails or e-newsletters. None of you said attend a public meeting and 14% of you said short surveys at stations and transit centers.

Pauletta Tonilas: That's why we started doing these telephone town hall meetings several years ago at RTD. Because it really is a way for us to reach you and reach many people at one time. And it's more convenient for folks to participate by way of phone, than for them to physically leave their house or on their way home, stop at a public meeting. So we've learned that and we do hope that, this is helpful for you.

Pauletta Tonilas: Okay. Director Catlin, I do have another question for you. As you serve on the RTD board with 14 other fellow board members, you guys take your jobs as stewards of the taxpayer dollar very seriously. And it is not easy to make decisions as it relates to service, as it relates to service changes, as it relates to what comes next. So what are some of the things that the board keeps in mind when you are making these types of decisions? Director Catlin, we're just trying to connect with you. We wondered if you wanted to make some comments about the things that directors have to keep in mind when it comes to making the tough decisions.

Peggy Catlin: I apologize. I did not take my phone off mute. There are 15 directors and there were seven of us who were elected in November for four year terms. So they're fairly new. And then there are eight directors who are coming up for either re-election or they're term limited in 2020. So it's a collaborative board, and I think each of the 15 board members, takes their constituents, and their constituents interests to heart. But then at the same time they have to balance the needs of the district as a whole, both from service and fiscal responsibility.

Peggy Catlin: So it's a real balancing act and sometimes it means making some tough choices. And I think as we go through this Reimagine RTD process, there may be some of those interesting discussions that take place among board members. But we do try to keep in mind the entire district. The 2300 some square miles of service area as well as, all of our taxpayers and their needs. So it is a balancing act. Did that answer your question?

Pauletta Tonilas: Yes, I thought that was great. I think it's important for folks to know how the RTD board works. The thought that goes into the decisions that you folks make. So thank you very much for that. We are going to be opening our next rail line in 2020 and that's the N Line or the North Metro line. That will go from downtown Denver, up to Thornton at 124. And this line, we're going to be very pleased to open it in 2020.

Pauletta Tonilas: It is opening later than expected. We had hoped to open it in 2018 that was its original schedule. But as the case with many of these mega projects, there are a lot of things that happen that are unforeseen. In fact, I have never been involved with any project in transportation that hasn't had things happen that were unforeseen that we have had to address. And that is our job, to address them and face them head on.

Pauletta Tonilas: But sometimes that means that the schedule gets pushed out or that the project ends up costing more money or that you have to change the way the project is being built. So all these things could happen with projects. And Brian, as the Senior Manager in Planning. We see that in the planning process, but that also can happen during the construction process and as we get ready to open too.

Brian Welch: Yeah, definitely. There's a lot of time on these big capital projects that elapses between, when you plan the project and then when you actually build it. For a project like the N line, you can go back probably 20 to 25 years to when that project was originally envisioned. And key decisions were made about it and then over time, when you finally get the funding to build something substantially many things can change. And then when you get to the finish line and you're ready to construct it, even more things have changed.

Brian Welch: Now you try and do the most you can in the advanced planning process to anticipate, what can happen that will affect the operations of a line. But there are so many things that can change in terms of getting down to how much single track and double track. Are there going to be changes in work rules or is it going to be changes in the type of fleet?

Brian Welch: All of these things can have an impact on your ability to deliver the project when you thought you could. And what we do know is that we learn more on each of these projects, and we narrowed down some of the uncertainty and we do our best to balance getting the project to the people as quickly as we can, but at the same time ensuring that we don't do anything over. And that's always a big challenge.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thanks very much, Brian. Director Catlin, we're nearing the time of when we'll be wrapping up our town hall. So I wanted to give you an opportunity to make any final comments sharing with your constituents. Any messages.

Peggy Catlin: Thank you, Pauletta. First of all, I wanted to thank you all for listening and for asking very thoughtful questions. I know that your comments as well as those in the 14 other districts are really, going to be taken seriously by staff and the board. So we very much appreciate it. I just wanted to add that I can be reached by my email address, which is [peggy.caitlin](mailto:peggy.caitlin@rtd-denver.com) and that's C-A-T-L-I-N @rtd-denver.com. Or if you prefer you can reach me on my cell phone and that is (720) 656-0670. And I do try to pick up that number and if not, I will try to get back to you as soon as possible if you leave me a number. So I look forward to continuing this dialogue, I've enjoyed a year and a half of being your board member and have gotten some very good feedback from many of you constituents. So again, thank you very much.

Pauletta Tonilas: Thank you, Director Catlin. Director Catlin is a seasoned transportation professional and engineer by profession. Has worked many years in the transportation field. Worked at CDOT for many years, we are very happy to have her on the board of directors at RTD. As someone who understands and knows

transportation, and has worked well with stakeholders and community members across the Metro area, and across the state really for years.

Pauletta Tonilas: And it really is... excuse me, important folks that you stay engaged with us as Director Catlin mentioned. There are many ways to do that, not only through her personally but through the channels that we have available through the RTD website or by calling our customer care line at 303-299-6000. That's always a way for you to get your questions answered or leave us comments.

Pauletta Tonilas: And then through Reimagine RTD, we hope you'll participate in more telephone town hall meetings like this one. And also stopping off and taking a few minutes to take surveys at transit centers or at stations. And then you can always sign up for emails or for our Read-n-Ride newsletter that comes out every month on the RTD website. You can sign up for a lot of things, you can sign up for rider alerts for specific lines or specific routes.

Pauletta Tonilas: And then one of the best ways to stay engaged on what's happening at RTD service disruptions or enhancements or detours because of upcoming events or anything going on on our system. Is to follow us on Twitter, because our team who manages Twitter does a great job at getting information out and answering your questions.

Pauletta Tonilas: We thank you very much for joining us tonight for this live telephone town hall meeting. We hope you'll stay up on everything RTD, and thank you very much and good night.