

2015 STRATEGIC PLAN 2020



RTD

MOVE | CONNECT | TRANSFORM

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Acknowledgments

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The RTD Strategic Plan reflects guidance and direction from the District’s Board of Directors, supplemented by extensive staff, stakeholder, and public input. Key contributions to the Plan are the result of outreach including the following: thirty employee Listening Sessions held at fifteen different facilities; an Employee Survey completed by 1,363 employees; meetings with our Customer Panel, Citizen’s Advisory Committee, and a Local Government Planning Meeting; and findings from our *2014 Customer Satisfaction Survey*.

**Adopted by the RTD Board of Directors
July 28, 2015**

Senior Leadership Team

- Dave Genova *Interim General Manager/CEO*
- Bruce Abel *Bus Operations*
- Rick Clarke *Capital Programs*
- Heather Copp *Finance and Administration*
- Terry Emmons *Rail Operations*
- Marla Lien *General Counsel*
- Scott Reed *Communications*
- John Tarbert *Safety, Security & Facilities (Acting)*
- Bill Van Meter *Planning*

Strategic Plan Working Group

- Brian Welch *Project Manager*
- Lacy Bell John Elias Genevieve Hutchison Bill Sirois

Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

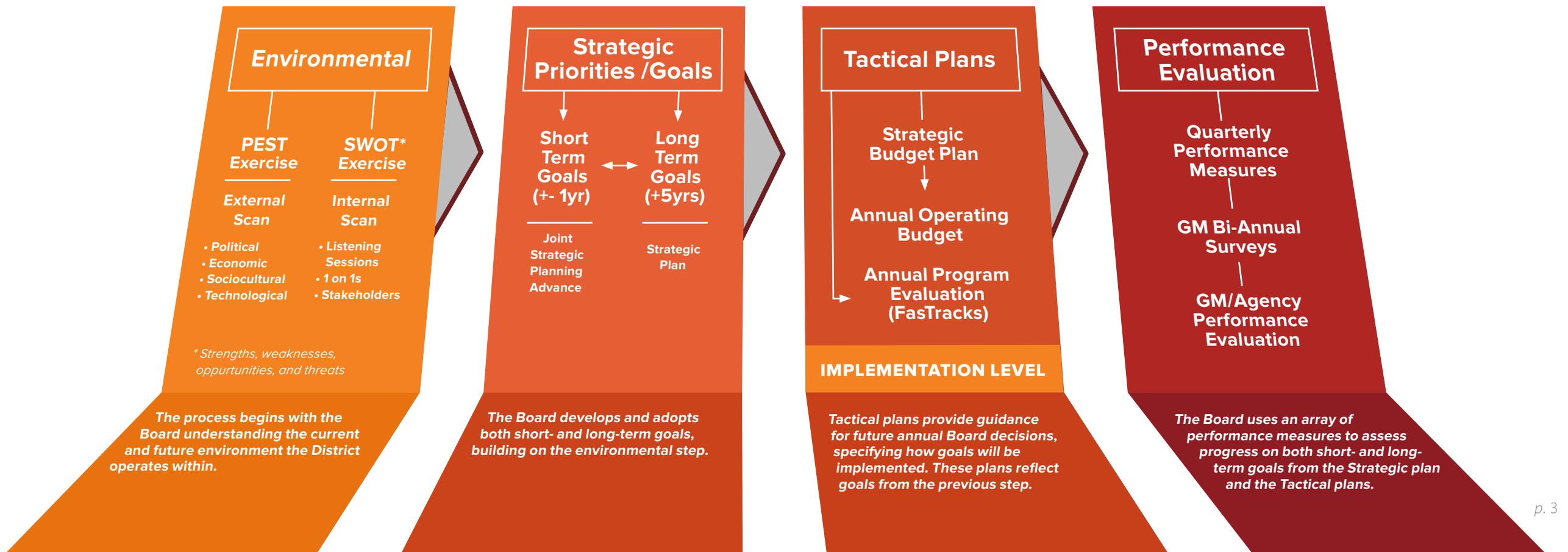
Rolf Asphaug, Gina Callahan, Jessie Carter, Beverly Lindsay, Robin McIntosh, Robert Medina, Jannette Scarpino, Cherie Sprague, Henry Stopplecamp, Walt Stringer, Pauletta Tonilas



Strategic Planning Process Flow

The exhibit on this page provides the context for the Strategic Plan within RTD’s overall planning and budgeting process. As shown, the Strategic Plan represents the District’s long-term strategy and vision, carefully integrated with the Board’s short-term goals established during the annual Strategic Planning Advance.

The Plan is organized around seven overall strategies serving RTD’s mission. Each strategy is accompanied by a goal statement, narrative describing the strategic theme in more detail, and a set of initiatives that articulate short-, medium-, and long-term implementation. Most of these initiatives are ongoing in nature, and will be a continuous effort during the five-year plan time-frame. Some of the initiatives involve actions that may not come to fruition until beyond the five-year time frame, but warrant action now.



FOREWORD



RTD Board Chair Chuck Sisk

On behalf of the RTD Board of Directors, we adopt the 2015 Strategic Plan. This Plan reflects the Board's collective vision for the District – for both the next five years, and for decades to come as well. The Board has identified seven strategies that help frame the District's big-picture goals, accompanied by initiatives to implement them. This Plan clearly and simply articulates those goals for our employees, stakeholders, and most of all, our passengers.

RTD is a complex organization, relying on hundreds of employees to serve nearly 3 million people spread over 2,340 square miles across the Denver metro area. This complexity, however, does not obscure the simple strategies and goals that are paramount to the District: customer service, safety, and financial sustainability. To these we provide additional strategies and goals that amplify and support our fundamental, basic mission. Included among these is our commitment to implement the FasTracks program approved by the voters in 2004.

It is the Board's hope that the Strategic Plan will be our guiding, aspirational document detailing how we will move forward together. In my previous role as a city Mayor, we always turned to our comprehensive plan to influence important land use decisions. The Strategic Plan should serve a similar purpose, helping us make sound choices that direct and shape what RTD is, what RTD does, and why we do it. This Plan focuses on the next five years, yet looks far into the future, and we will revisit it periodically as circumstances warrant. The Board is committed to making decisions based on sound public policy, and the Strategic Plan is a key tool in doing so.



RTD Interim General Manager Dave Genova

RTD was created in 1969 by the Colorado General Assembly to develop, operate, and maintain a mass transportation system. Since then, the District has made strategic decisions based upon careful budget planning, attracting and retaining a talented workforce, and never losing sight of our commitment to our customers and safety. From our beginnings as a bus company, we have added light rail, transformed Denver Union Station, and witnessed extensive development around our transit stations. The FasTracks program, which will add more light rail, new commuter rail, and new bus rapid transit, is carving an unmistakable mark on the Denver metro area. It is now time to adopt a Strategic Plan to move us into the next five years and beyond.

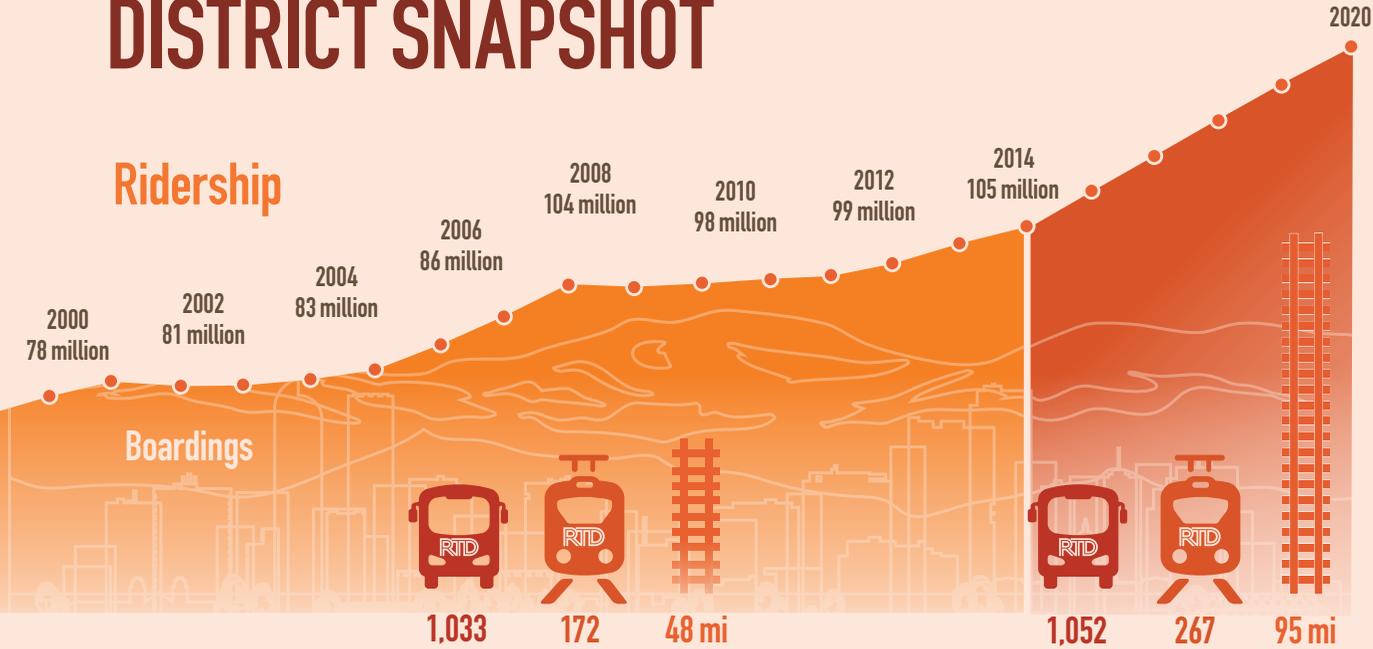
Between 2016 and 2020, RTD will undergo another period of transition as significant portions of the FasTracks program begin revenue service, and the bulk of our current major capital expansion program winds down. The Strategic Plan will be an important document as we move through this transition, since it identifies seven key strategies to focus our attention. We will build upon a solid foundation, particularly in the safety area, which the overwhelming majority of RTD employees understand is RTD's top priority. Additionally, this plan details how we will enhance customer service, use technology to improve the customer experience, optimize our growing system, continue to ensure financial sustainability, and maintain a dynamic workforce. Join me as we maintain RTD's position as one of the top transit agencies in the country and continue our strong legacy of providing safe, reliable transportation to the region.

RTD MISSION STATEMENT

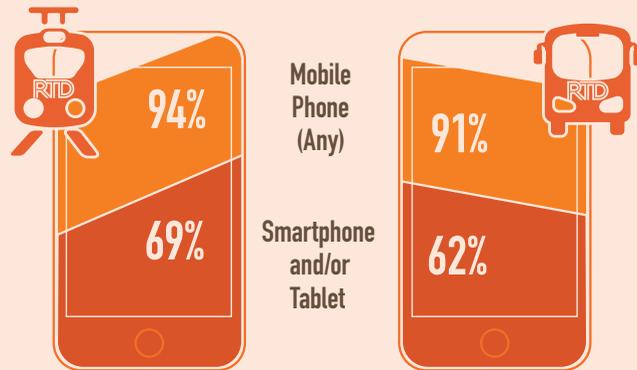
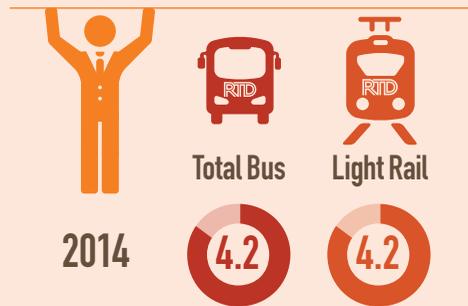
To meet our constituents' present and future public transportation needs by providing safe, clean, reliable, courteous, accessible, and cost-effective service throughout the District.

DISTRICT SNAPSHOT

Ridership

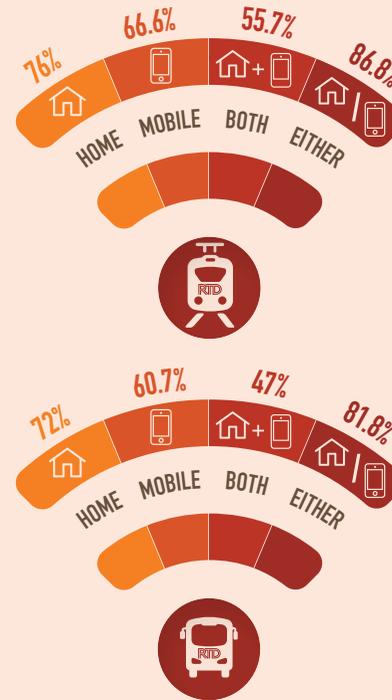


Overall customer satisfaction is high: 4+ out of 5



Electronic device ownership

Internet access



Percentage of Low-Income Passengers*

*RTD defines "Low Income" 150% U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Level.

Denver Metro Region

By 2040

Population *in millions*



500k+ new jobs increase demand



1 in 4 age 60+

RTD Operating Revenue – Base System

22% fares

18% operating grants

59% sales tax

1% other income & revenue





Customer Service

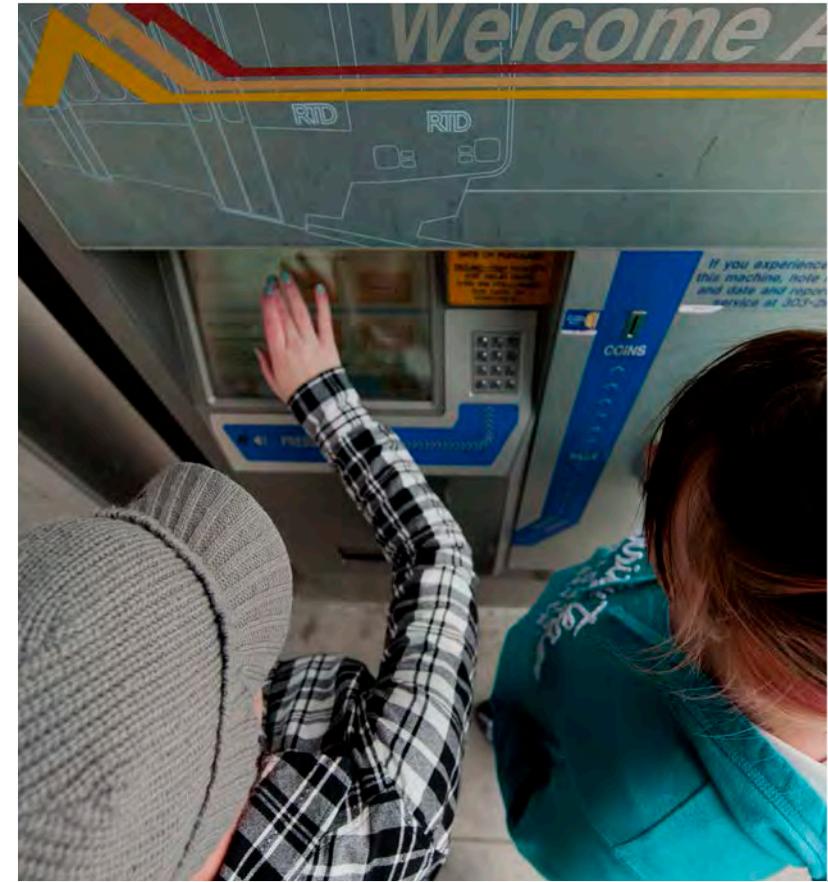
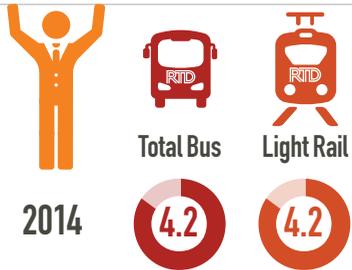
Strategy:
Deliver Customer-Oriented Service

Deliver safe, reliable, and efficient transit service District-wide. Engage our customers to improve services in an open and transparent manner.

RTD’s customer experience has to be safe and reliable for RTD to continue to maintain and grow its customer base. On-time performance and service reliability will allow RTD to build a competitive edge within the regional transportation system as vehicular travel becomes increasingly difficult in the future. Having a seamless interface between all RTD services—whether it be bus, Access-a-Ride, light rail or commuter rail—should be a high priority to ensure RTD customer satisfaction. RTD customers must feel comfortable and safe on any RTD service, whether it is run by RTD or one of its contractors.

Responding to customer needs is important in the 21st century. As rider expectations evolve, RTD must endeavor to meet their needs with a growing emphasis on technology and immediate, reliable information. It will be critical for RTD to proactively engage our customers to seek ways to improve our service, and to be transparent about the realities of how we operate our services. Finding new and improved ways to engage our customers will allow RTD to stay ahead of the curve and anticipate rather than react to customer needs.

Overall customer satisfaction is high: 4+ out of 5

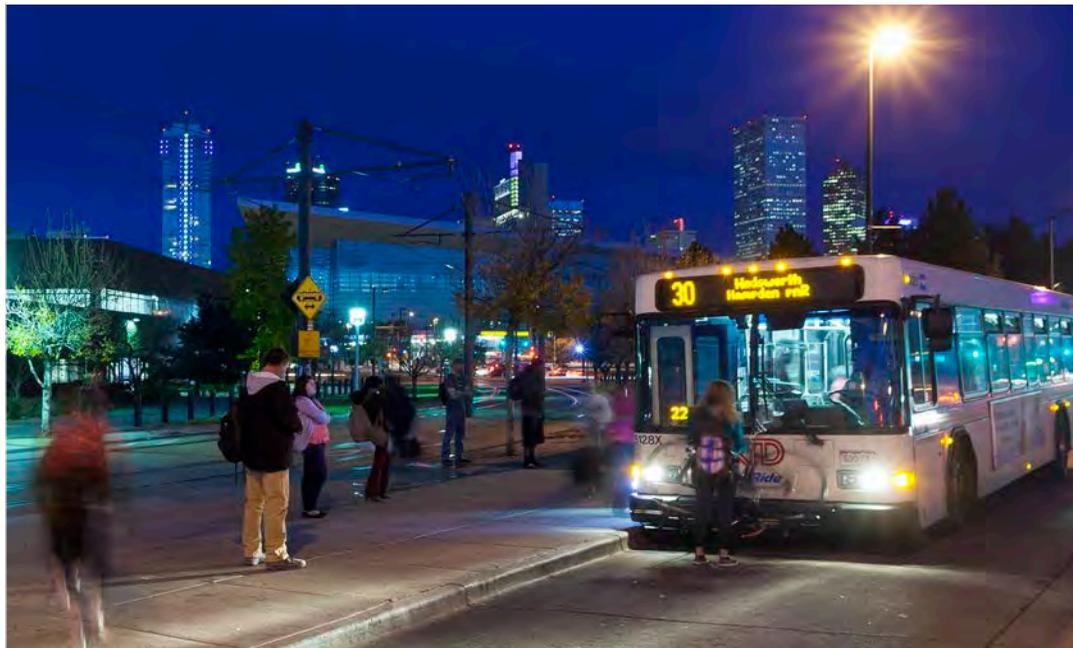


Initiatives

Provide a seamless customer interface between RTD and contracted services

Enhance policies for accommodating needs of passengers on vehicles

Provide opportunities for customer engagement





Safety

Strategy:
Foster a Safety Culture

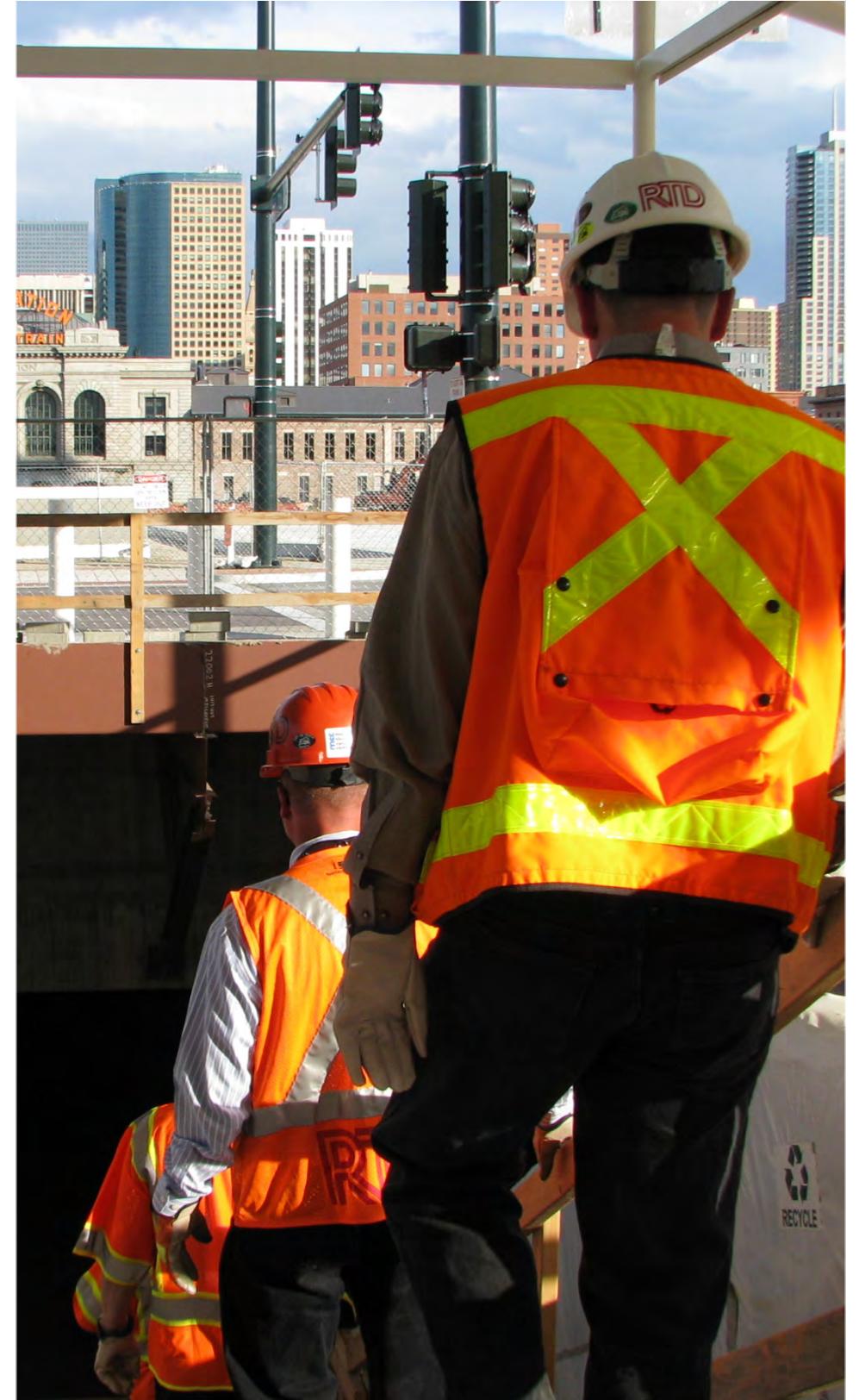
Continue to develop new approaches and new technologies to create safer environments for our riders and our workforce. Establish best practices with safety partners to develop a performance-driven safety culture.

“RTD is the best transit agency in the country because of our great team of employees and what you do every day to safely deliver our mission.”

Dave Genova

RTD recognizes that management and employee commitment is the hallmark of a true safety culture, where safety is an integral part of daily operations. To support safety’s priority in the agency, RTD will strengthen accountability systems and promote a safety culture. Safety accountability includes establishing safety goals, measuring safety activity, eliminating hazards and unsafe work behaviors, and proactively improving the safety environment.

In the recent employee survey more than 70% of employees responded favorably to questions about RTD’s safety priorities (72%), the safety of their work life (76%) and the ease with which they can report safety concerns (84%). Still, maintaining safe service requires constant vigilance and collaboration throughout the agency. Through the Strategic Plan, RTD looks to improve customer and employee safety by encouraging respectful collaboration founded on mutual trust. RTD has an organizational commitment to establish the core value of safety. RTD will further promote a positive safety culture where values, attitudes, competencies and patterns of behavior will improve the health and safety of employees and customers. RTD will continue to build on an already robust safety culture through enhanced employee engagement. Ultimately, safety is each employee’s responsibility.



Initiatives

Build a strong safety alliance and partnership between management, employees and customers

Establish and implement an internal safety audit system for Bus Operations

Create training modules for management and supervisory staff focused on safety training, accident prevention, team building, hazard recognition, and safety communication

Develop and implement a confidential, non-punitive safety reporting system for all employees to report hazards, unsafe acts, and unsafe conditions

Develop an enhanced safety communications and outreach program

Adopt and transition to a proactive safety management system (SMS) philosophy



Customer Service

Safety

Financial Sustainability

Equity and Accessibility

System Optimization

Technological Innovation

Workforce



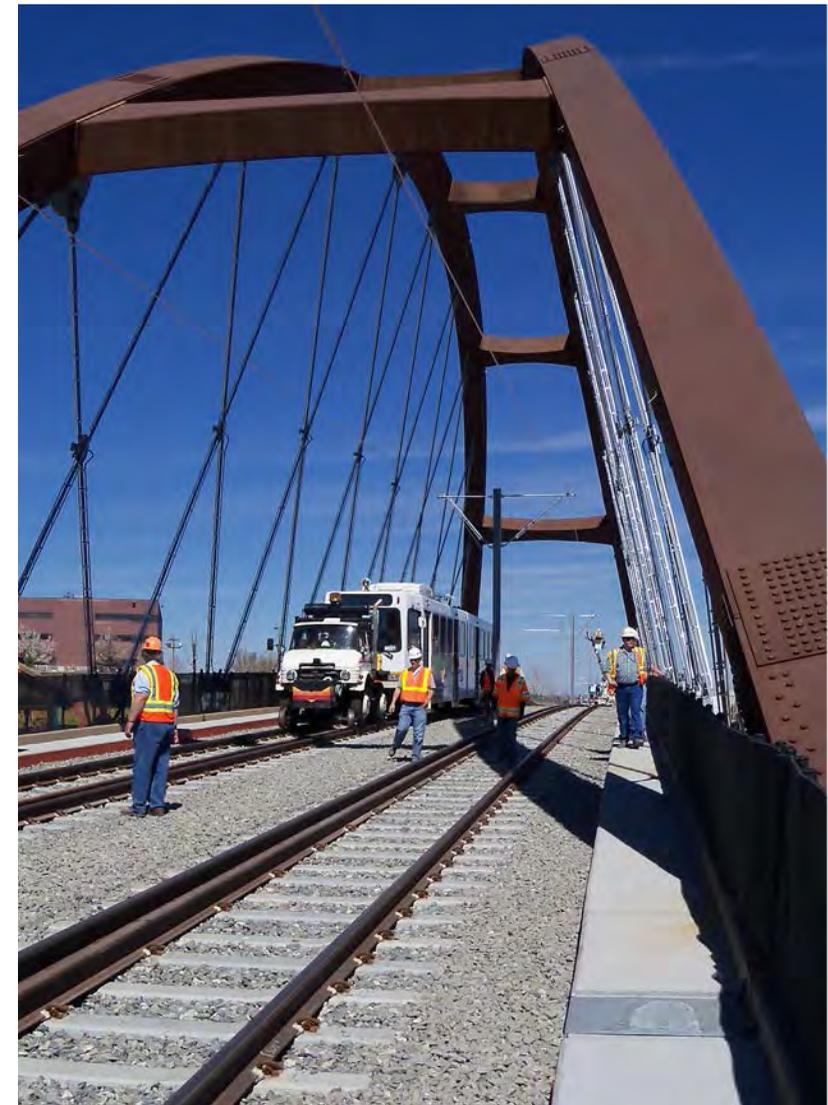
Financial Sustainability

Strategy:
Strengthen Fiscal
Resiliency and Explore
Financial Innovation

Ensure cost-effective and responsible use of funding and proactively pursue partnerships to supplement District resources. Strengthen fiscal resiliency and explore financial innovation to keep the system in a state of good repair and deliver better service.

RTD has the responsibility to use taxpayer and passenger dollars to provide the best possible public transit service. To consistently deliver excellent services and projects, RTD must maintain financial stability. Multi-year financial planning is vital to ensure that capital and service visions become realities. The agency can augment its finances by maximizing the revenues it generates through operations and by exploring new sources of income. Traditional funding sources alone will be insufficient to meet the long-term needs of the future RTD system. RTD must also continue to seek out non-traditional partnerships with public and private sector partners to leverage outside funds.

Even as RTD employs asset management programs and endeavors to keep the system in a state of good repair, ongoing investment must be sustained to keep its vehicles and infrastructure functioning and to maintain a robust system. These assets often require more frequent maintenance to ensure safety and ongoing functionality, which puts a growing burden on the operating budget. Reliable and sustainable funding will be absolutely necessary for RTD to make the critical investments that the region needs. A long-term comprehensive funding plan that takes into account both operating and capital needs is essential to creating a robust, modern transit system.



Initiatives

Direct funding to highest-priority projects and enhance strategic budget planning

Seek innovative funding opportunities to expand revenue sources

Preserve financial sustainability and maintain a structurally balanced long-range budget

Pursue financing opportunities to deliver better service and complete future system expansion projects

Attract and retain employees through competitive wages and benefits

RTD Operating Revenue – Base System

22% fares 

18%  operating grants

59%  sales tax

1%  other income & revenue



Customer Service
Safety
Financial Sustainability
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Workforce



Equity and Accessibility

Strategy:
Improve Customer
Access and Support
Transit-Oriented
Communities

Provide travel choices and mobility opportunities District-wide, balancing equity and accessibility needs for all. Promote vibrant places by connecting communities to transit and leveraging transportation infrastructure investment.

A balanced approach to accessing RTD facilities will be important in order to continue to expanding and increase RTD's customer base. Active transportation options such as walking, biking, car share, and ride share should be embraced as viable alternatives to access RTD facilities in addition to personal vehicles and buses. Improved first and final mile connections through partnerships with local jurisdictions, developers and other entities are essential to expanding multi-modal access and growing ridership.

Continued improvement of access for people with disabilities is important to preserve mobility for those with limited options. Best efforts to adhere to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design at all RTD facilities, and continued improvement of efficiency of RTD's Access-a-

Ride service and ADA access to fixed route service, are key to preserving mobility for the disabled community.

Promoting the creation of diverse transit oriented communities around our facilities serves RTD well by improving accessibility near stations and expanding RTD's ridership base. Local jurisdictions have prioritized development around RTD facilities as means to direct future growth. RTD should proactively partner with local jurisdictions and others to leverage this planning vision and create vibrant, walkable areas around stations. In creating these transit oriented communities, RTD needs to be sensitive to community issues such as affordable housing and transportation, and should work with local jurisdictions and others to find solutions to promote neighborhood diversity.

48%
new apartments
are within
1/2 mile
radius of an
RTD station



Initiatives

Support and coordinate investments to improve first and final mile connections to transit facilities

Foster livable, equitable, and accessible communities at transit facilities

Optimize District-wide parking resources

Support ADA Accessibility through adherence to Standards for Accessible Design and improved efficiencies with Access-a-Ride and fixed route services

Work with private and non-profit partners to collaborate on new technologies such as car and bicycle sharing, autonomous vehicles and other transportation innovations





System Optimization

Strategy:
Optimize Service
Delivery

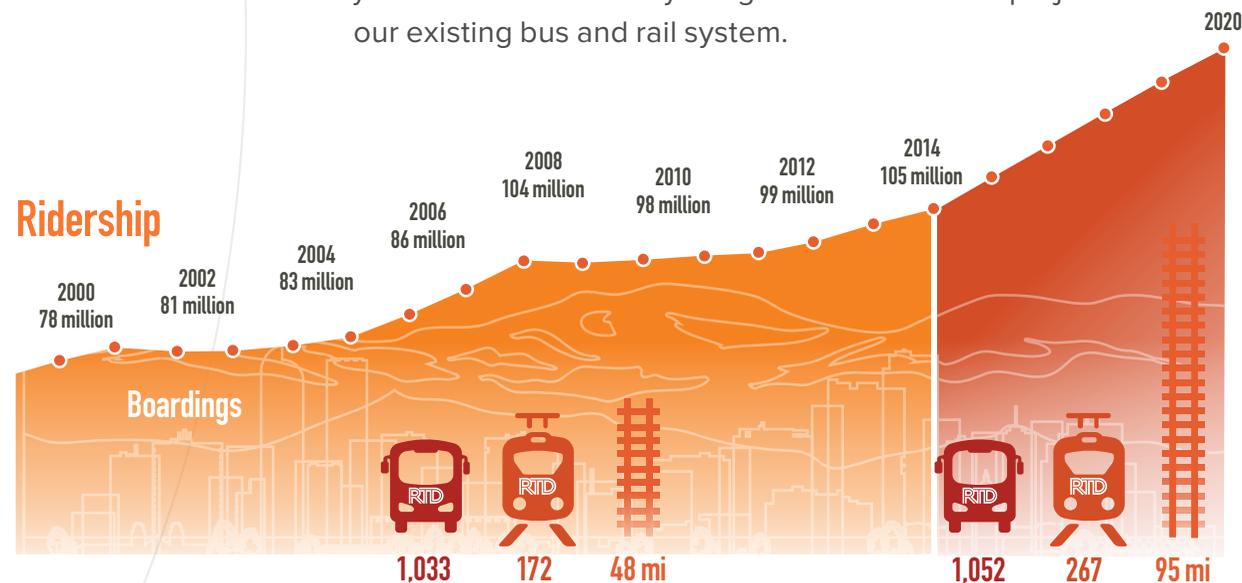
Balance competing mobility needs across the District to provide service in the most efficient manner possible. Work with partners to develop, fund and complete FasTracks and increase ridership.

RTD began as a bus company and has expanded with the Central, Southwest, Southeast, Central Platte Valley, and West light rail lines. The District has also added a variety of other transportation options, including Call-n-Ride, Access-a-Ride, Limited stop bus services, Express and Regional bus services, and an extensive Park-n-Ride system.

The FasTracks program represents one of the most ambitious, large-scale transit expansion programs ever undertaken in the United States. The combination of light rail, commuter rail, downtown circulation, and bus rapid transit capital investment projects—as well as Denver Union Station and its integrated transit oriented development—is destined to transform the Denver metropolitan region. A key effort over the next five years will be to carefully integrate the FasTracks projects into our existing bus and rail system.

While most of FasTracks will be in service by 2020, key components of the program will likely not be completed. During the next five years, the District is committed to exploring financial and implementation strategies to keep these unfinished projects in the forefront to fully realize the voters' 2004 vision. It is unlikely that RTD can fully fund these projects from FasTracks sales tax revenues in the near term, so partnerships with local governments and private companies will become an integral component of the funding strategy.

FasTracks, however, will not meet all the transit demands expected during the longer time horizon of 15 to 25 years. These 2040 transit needs, based on Denver Regional Council of Governments jobs and housing growth projections, must be planned for implementation a decade or more from now. Addressing these needs may require improving the existing system's capacity. Other needs will likely be met by a thorough exploration of bus rapid transit investments throughout the District, both on arterial streets and on State highways. Finally, RTD will need to explore visionary approaches to linking the District's light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit systems with other transit systems serving the rest of the Front Range.



Initiatives

Pursue ongoing enhancements and improvements to the existing transit system (services and facilities)

Work with partners to develop, fund and complete FasTracks and increase ridership

Continuously improve service delivery and reliability, including integration of new corridors with existing services

Continue long-term, advanced planning for system expansion projects

Partner with local communities to invest in transit-supportive infrastructure

Pursue a meaningful lessons-learned program to continuously improve project delivery

Maintain existing procedures that continually evaluate and adjust service, based upon evolving service standards and budget needs

Establish a leadership role with other agencies to integrate transit services throughout the State of Colorado



Customer Service
Safety
Financial Sustainability
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Workforce



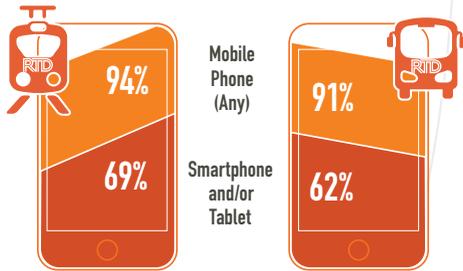
Technological Innovation

Strategy:
Use Technology to
Operate Efficiently and
Improve the Customer
Experience

Implement technological advancements to enhance the customer experience, operate more effectively, and improve communication. Modernize the transit experience with user-friendly technology to allow for more seamless travel across the region.

Employing technology can help RTD not only increase ridership but also better manage its business, assets, and operations. Customer expectations are changing with a shift in rider demographics, travel patterns and needs. Meeting customer needs means providing access to information, ensuring connectivity with devices throughout the system, and employing the technological innovations that have become the norm. A public transportation system that is easy to understand and use is not only important in attracting and retaining riders but also in increasing market share. Technology-based customer information tools are essential to inform riders about transit services and help them easily navigate the RTD system.

Just as technology can help customers make better decisions about travel, new tools at the system level will help RTD make and implement better strategic and investment decisions that can save time and money. The challenge is to systematically develop and introduce these new tools, for both customers and RTD processes, while staying up to date in new technological innovation.



Electronic device ownership

Initiatives

Develop a 5-year Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan to assess the current state of technology development in the District and establish a roadmap for future technology development

Integrate technology systems to automate data transfers and improve service delivery

Establish agency-wide information governance strategy

Improve the rider experience with easy fare payment options through Smart Card Technology

Implement real-time arrival information for bus and rail customers, providing riders with access from mobile devices, desktops, and public information displays





Workforce

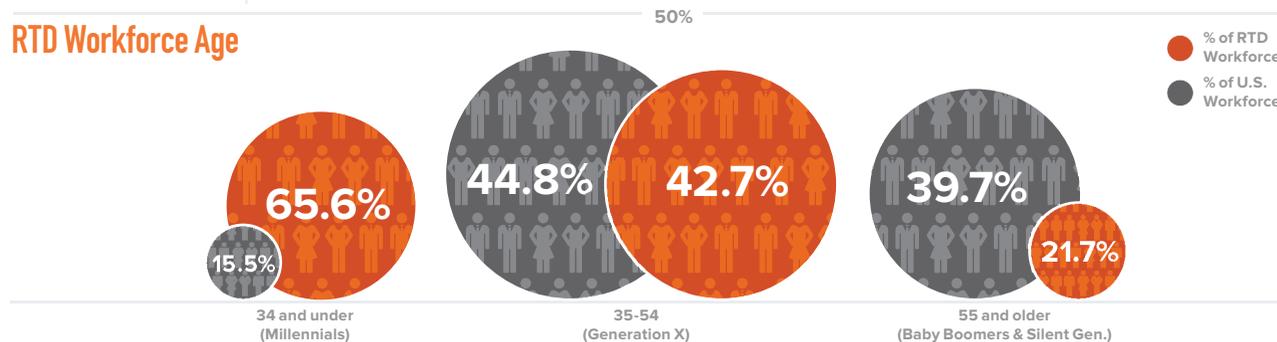
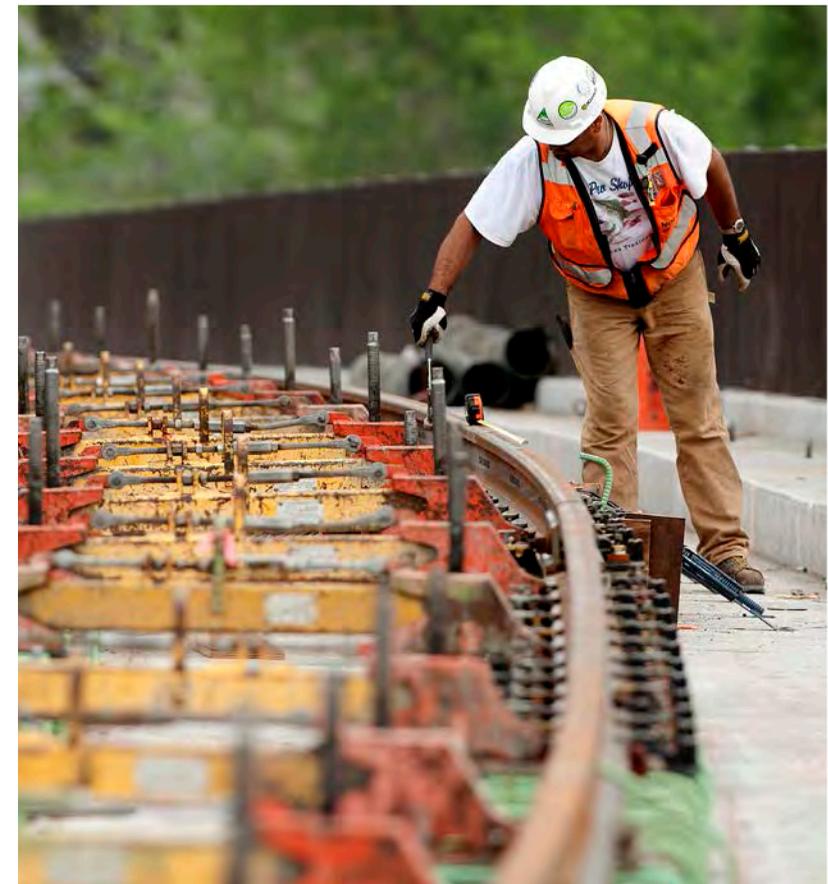
Strategy:
Foster a Dynamic and Sustainable Workforce

Attract and serve a dynamic workforce with competitive benefits and career advancement opportunities. Improve collaboration and communication between workgroups while transferring knowledge to the next generation.

RTD recognizes that our employees are the single most important asset in the organization. As the baby-boomer generation nears retirement, the agency needs an ever-greater focus on recruiting and training employees with competitive benefits while providing the knowledge and skills for those employees to build their careers in public transportation. Additionally, a coordinated effort to capture the experience and knowledge from the current workforce will pass knowledge to the next generation.

The upcoming completion of a large percentage of FasTracks will also require that RTD examine the best use of resources to shift focus from construction to maintaining existing and new assets.

Results from the recently-conducted employee survey show that the agency’s focus on safety and customer service are well-established at every level of the organization. However, that survey also revealed concerns about internal communication and collaboration. RTD has made a commitment to improve two-way communication to ensure that every employee’s voice counts.



Initiatives

Document institutional knowledge and develop knowledge transfer tools to ensure capacity is retained in the face of retirements and attrition

Strengthen workforce by building on the success of Leadership Programs

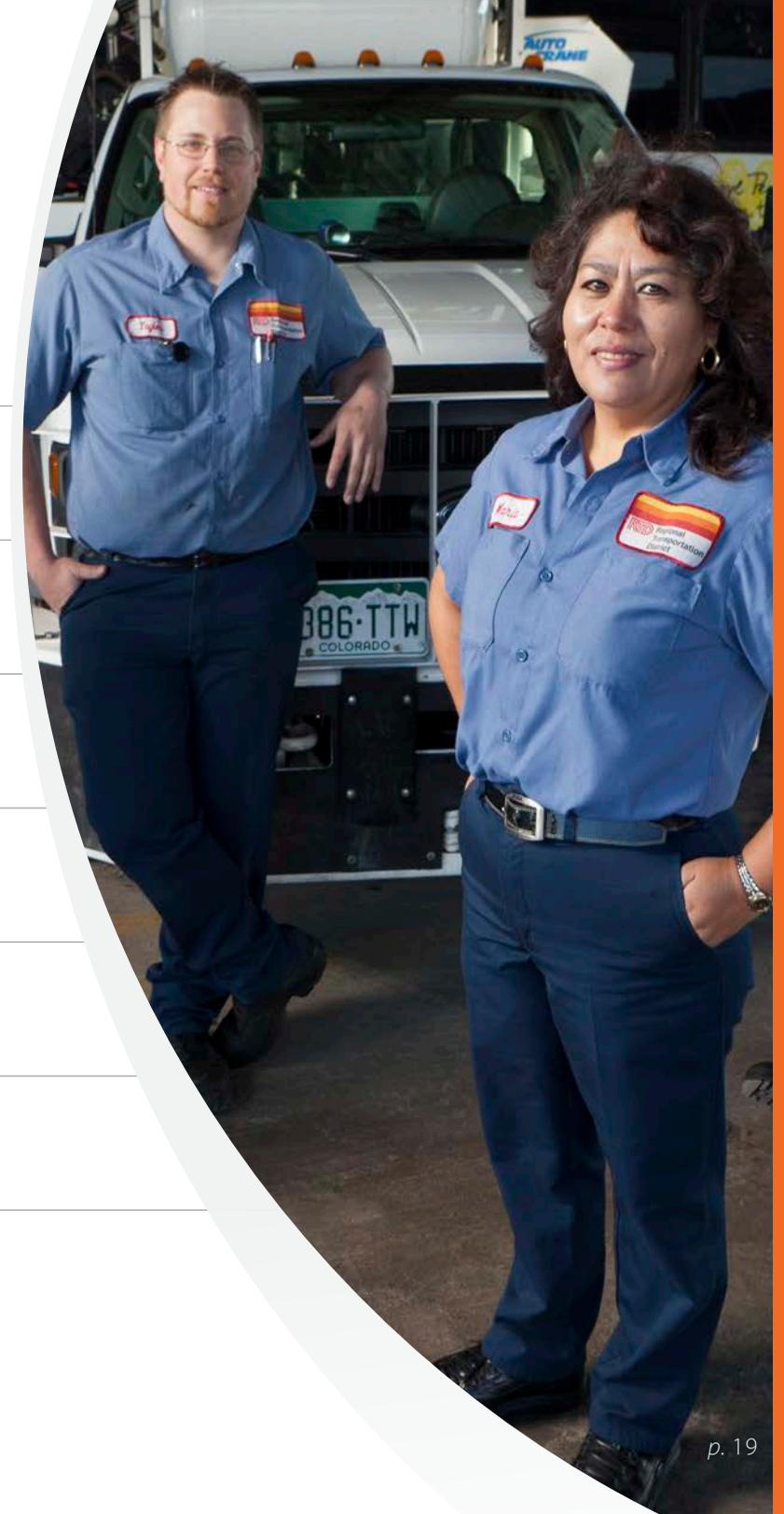
Establish transition paths for workforce as the agency evolves

Build on wellness and rehabilitation services to enhance employee health and safety

Optimize the workforce to match the age and maturity of the transit system

Attract and train skilled workers in key trades

Foster a two-way communication culture with every level of the organization, including enhanced opportunities for Board/staff interaction



Customer Service

Safety

Financial Sustainability

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Workforce

Afterword

Strategic Plan implementation will take place in a number of ways. A subsequent document will describe performance measures to monitor and report on the success of Plan initiatives. In addition, the Strategic Plan will be referenced during preparation of Board Reports, the Annual Operating Budget, and the Strategic Budget Plan. Finally, the Board will review the Strategic Plan annually during the Strategic Planning Advance to check on timeliness, relevance and content of the seven key strategies identified in this document.



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Infographics Sources: [RTD annual reporting and forecasts](#) (revenue sources, boardings – current and forecast, vehicles – current and forecast, apartments near stations), [2014 RTD Customer Satisfaction Survey](#) (overall satisfaction, % of low-income, device ownership and internet access), [DRCOG Metro Vision 2040 draft plan](#) (population and jobs 2040 forecasts).



2015 STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

