

March 6th, 2025

Denver City Council  
City of Denver  
437 Bannock Street, Room 451  
Denver, CO 80202

## **Business Arts Workforce Climate Aviation Services Committee Meeting Held Mar 5th, 2025 Peña Blvd NEPA Study Discussion Points**

Dear Denver City Council Members,

Greater Denver Transit (GDT) would like to respond to several discussion points from the Peña Blvd NEPA study discussed at the Business Arts Workforce Climate Aviation Services Committee meeting held on Wednesday March, 5th.

### **Geographic Catchment**

Denver International Airport (DEN) representatives repeatedly asserted in the meeting that a transit alternative was rejected in the early phase of planning because it would not serve its large catchment area. Keeping in mind that the A Line directly parallels this corridor, many more travellers from all over the metro could utilize the Park-n'-Ride at 40th & Airport if we invested in adequate service and parking infrastructure there. Currently many travellers park at offsite remote lots and take shuttles to the airport— scaling such a service along the A Line is entirely feasible and would free up capacity on Peña Blvd for local trips.

### **Trips Not Served By A Line**

We acknowledge that expanding the A Line does not provide a replacement for all trips currently driven on Peña Blvd. Local residents in Green Valley Ranch and Montbello still need to be able to use Peña as an access point for a variety of local and regional destinations, and many trips to/from the airport involve other constraints and preferences that do not make the train a viable alternative. Rather, expansion of the A Line is aimed at attracting enough mode shift to relieve congestion on the existing roadway, freeing up capacity for local residents, mitigating future induced demand, and reducing future roadway maintenance costs.

### **Funding Diversion**

We find it astounding that DEN continues to assert that the FAA would prohibit them from spending money on transit when Denverite reported that they haven't even [bothered to ask](#). In reality, DEN has it backward. The FAA will not allow DEN to fund roadway infrastructure to serve Coca Cola trucks and real estate developers, but precedent from San Francisco International Airport's BART project suggests they would likely approve funding for rail infrastructure that meets both of the core FAA requirements— infrastructure must be fully within airport property and support journeys exclusively to/from the airport. [Upgraded parking and rail between 40th Ave & Airport Blvd Station and DEN](#) fully meet these requirements and have the potential to significantly reduce airport traffic on Peña Blvd, freeing up capacity for the local community and businesses.

## A Line Capacity

The Peña corridor study must plan for Denver's transportation needs of 2040 and beyond, not just reinforce a struggling status quo. Claiming that we cannot invest in rail until it is at full 24/7 capacity undermines our city's multimodal ambitions. Former RTD CEO Phil Washington knows that our existing rail network was not built to relieve an overcrowded transit system, but as a visionary expansion to meet the needs of the next generation. Investing in transit to make it convenient and competitive, to become the natural choice for more travellers, will drive demand and should be the guiding light.

## RTD as a Partner

GDT shares concerns that RTD has recently lacked the ambition to improve its service and infrastructure. The new RTD Board notwithstanding, Denver should chart its own transportation future. For example, the East Colfax BRT project has been led by the city- funded and designed without active participation by RTD. The Denver Microtransit program is another example of our city leading multimodal expansion ahead of RTD.

## Supporting Colorado's 2035 Transportation Vision

By including a major transit alternative in this contract, the City and the airport will open the door to a sustainable transportation solution which would be aligned with the State's Transportation Vision as recently announced by Governor Polis which targets a doubling in non-auto mode share to 20% and an 83% increase in transit service. **No other project currently contemplated in the State promises greater mode shift.**

Our goal is not to preempt any solution. As CEO Phil Washington said at this week's committee meeting: "Let's do the study." Include a transit option to be put forward with the NEPA study, and let the best alternative rise to the top.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue,



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Greater Denver Transit



Richard Bamber  
Greater Denver Transit



Emma Griffin  
Greater Denver Transit



Joe Meyer  
Greater Denver Transit



David Mintzer  
Denver Bicycle Lobby

CC: Mike Johnston, Mayor of Denver  
Amy Ford, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure