RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update
July 14th, 2016

RFTA Vision Statement
RFTA pursues excellence and innovation in providing preferred transportation choices that connect and support vibrant communities.

RFTA Planning Department Vision Statement
We will work creatively, cooperatively and comprehensively with our partners in the public, private and nonprofit sectors and other groups to create healthy and vibrant communities.

CONTENTS

GLENWOOD SPRINGS MAINTENANCE FACILITY (GMF) 3

GRAND AVENUE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT & TRANSPORTATION MITIGATION 5

2016 ONBOARD PASSENGER SURVEY 7

GRANTS PROJECT ACTIVITY Q2 2016 (APRIL-JUNE) ..... ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

Glenwood Springs Maintenance Facility (GMF)

As RFTA's most critical facility asset, Staff is very focused on combining local RFTA funds with Federal and State grant funds to complete the 4-phase renovation/expansion of the Glenwood Springs Maintenance Facility (GMF); estimated at $27.5 million.

The GMF, originally constructed in 2002, was intended to be a small, satellite facility designed to accommodate a maximum of 30 buses for storage and maintenance. Now serving as the backbone of RFTA's CNG fueling and *Veloci*RFTA bus staging, the GMF accommodates about 60 buses, staged or parked on any flat surface around the building; with most buses sitting outside in harsh weather conditions. Transportation demands have changed significantly since the GMF was commissioned 13 years ago. Ridership has increased nearly 50%, VelociRFTA was implemented, and Staff is gearing up to expand service along the I-70 corridor.

With the existing 5.5-acre GMF parcel, and an adjacent 2.5-acre RFTA-owned parcel to the north, RFTA intends to construct state of the art facility that can accommodate current and future operational and administrative functions. The renovation/expansion project will double the amount of bus storage space, accommodating all buses in secure, climate-controlled conditions, renovate and expand maintenance capabilities commensurately, and establish office space to sustain long-term administrative needs. According to the benefit-cost analysis developed for a recent TIGER grant proposal, this project will generate an estimated net benefit of over $170 million.

With dwindling transportation and transit funding at both the Federal and State levels, Planning Staff is challenged to find grant funding programs with application guidelines that align with the GMF scope of work. Typically, grantors are interested in funding projects that are shovel-ready and include vertical elements that showcase the funding program. Staff first needs to perform foundational site civil work (grading, utilities, drainage, structure walls), followed by future "brick-and-mortar" building phases that will seem more attractive in competitive grant applications. By combining a $500,000 FTA 5311 grant with RFTA local funds, RFTA Staff has been able to aggregate the GMF project with the West Glenwood Springs Park-n-Ride and Trail project (across Wulfsohn Rd.) for the benefit of utilizing materials from adjacent project sites and providing project management efficiency. The engineering firms Shrewsberry and Iron Horse have been hired as RFTA's Architect/Engineering (A/E 1) team.

For construction management efficiency, the GMF Phase 1and the West Glenwood Springs Park and Ride and Trail Expansion have been combined into one project. The AE/1 team has completed final design of Phase 1A. RFTA intends to complete about $1.3 million in project elements, focused mostly on the Park and Ride Expansion, by Thanksgiving of this year.

Phase	Title	Description	Cost
I	Site civil work	Grading of entire site to support Phase II and Phase III improvements, utility relocation, drainage improvements, and retaining walls. Temporary outside storage for 20 additional buses.	$5 million
II	Maintenance building renovation and expansion	Expand maintenance building and renovate interior to accommodate newer technologies and space-saving equipment in order to increase maintenance capacity from 30 buses to 60 buses or more.	$3.5 million
III	Bus storage and parking deck, bus canopy enclosure	Create enclosed, climate-controlled storage for approximately 60 full-size buses at grade, with car and small bus parking above grade; purchase two 57-passenger Over-the-Road Coaches	$17.5 million (facilities) + $1.5 million (vehicles)
IV Future phase	*Office and Administrative Space Renovation and Expansion*	*Future Phase, not covered by TIGER Grant Proposal: renovate and expand Administration and Operations building*	*$6.5 million*
TOTAL *(excluding future Phase IV)*			**$27.5 million**

Figure 1: ***GMF Project phasing, as submitted for the TIGER grant.***

Figure 2: Iron Horse schematic (5/24/16) of new GMF site

Grand Avenue Bridge Replacement & Transportation Mitigation

In preparation for the Summer 2017 Grand Avenue Bridge closure (and significant pre and post closure construction) RFTA is working with the City of Glenwood Springs and CDOT to expand existing Grand Hogback routes, establish additional transit parking along the I-70 corridor and extend regular daily service to Parachute. These measures are intended to alleviate traffic congestion, particularly during peak hours, and to attract new long-term transit riders. RFTA Staff continues to work with CDOT and communities in Western Garfield County to expanded transit parking at existing CDOT park-n-rides or on town-owned parcels near downtowns. RFTA Staff is sensitive to downtown parking problems that towns are experiencing, even before free transit service is instituted.

On March 31st, Planning and Operations Staff met with a CDOT Region 3 engineer and local planners in Parachute, Rifle, Silt and New Castle. Staff continues to work with each jurisdiction to try and find parking solutions that work for CDOT, each municipality and RFTA.

In Parachute, CDOT, RFTA and the Town are concentrating on possible expansion of the CDOT Park-n-Ride/carpool lot on the north side of I-70, to the east of the rest area. CDOT has determined this parking expansion must be vetted through environmental and right-of-way processes. This process will require 3-4 months; the first stakeholder meeting is on July 18th.

In Rifle, all parties are concentrating on possible expansion of the CDOT Park-n-ride/carpool lot on the south side of downtown near the Railroad Avenue signal. There are currently negotiations with an adjacent private landowner. It had been determined that temporary parking near the CDOT I-70 rest area on the south side of the river poses public safety and bus access issues.

In Silt, the Town Council seems to endorse transit overflow parking at the old school site on Orchard Avenue/9th Street. The Town is currently leasing this site from the school district and it serves as overflow parking for town events. However, this significant detour may not work well for RFTA Operations. RFTA is considering parcels that may be closer to SH 6 and I-70. Staff will continue to work with the town planner to reach out to private landowners about parking options.

In New Castle, RFTA has communicated with City Market landowners to secure additional transit parking on the south side of the parking lot. Transit customers are already parking in the lot and there is efficient and safe pedestrian access to the New Castle Park-n-Ride, to the east at the corner of SH 6/Burning Mountain Drive.

Additionally, RFTA continues to work with the City of Glenwood Springs and a volunteer bike share advisory committee to implement public bike-share as part of the transportation mitigation process. Although the Town Council decided they will not be able to fund the startup project before the summer of 2017, all parties continue to seek grant funding opportunities and promote public awareness about biking and walking as alternative transportation options.

Figure 3: Schematic of Grand Avenue Bridge plaza redevelopment along 7th Street

2016 Onboard Passenger Survey

Since 2004, RFTA Staff has been conducting a semi-annual, onboard passenger survey in English and Spanish for a 24-hour period on all routes from Aspen to Rifle. The purpose of the onboard survey is to receive customer feedback on current operations/facilities and ask passengers how we might be able to improve our services. On average, Staff receives approximately 1,200 completed paper surveys with valuable feedback.

The 2016 survey was conducted on Wednesday March 23rd with great coordination among several RFTA departments. The survey data entry deliverables were returned to the Planning Department in late June. Staff received the most completed surveys to date: approximately 1,828 valid paper responses and 265 valid Survey Monkey responses. This was the first year that IT Staff was able to utilize the on-bus Wi-Fi splash page to direct passengers to the online Survey Monkey version. We had great feedback about this effort and Marketing Staff plans to utilize the Survey Monkey account for future surveys as well.

Preliminary data analysis reveals that the majority of passengers are locals riding VelociRFTA or Local routes for commuter trips. A large majority of all passengers are pleased with the overall operations of VelociRFTA service. There are always some personal feelings about drivers and road conduct; however there are considerably more positive comments about drivers that are willing to go out of their way to help.

Planning Staff will continue to organize the data and provide a more substantial survey synopsis in a future Planning Department Update.

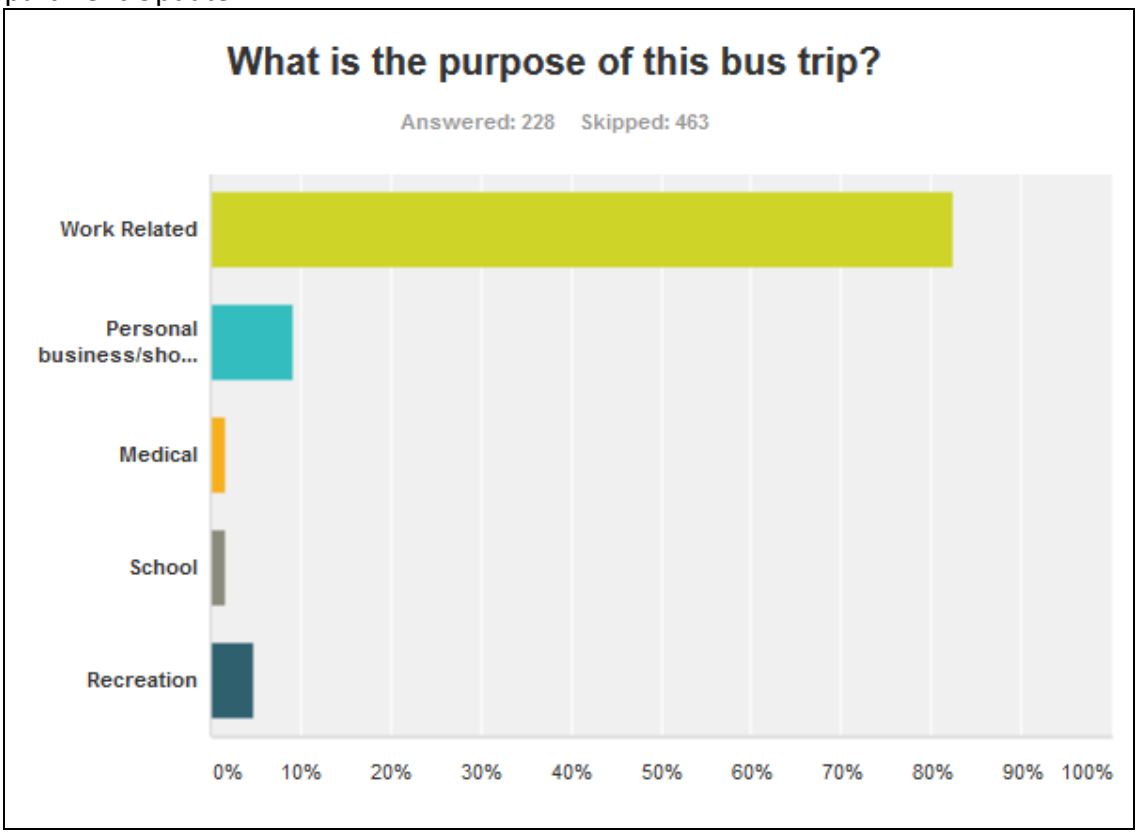

Figure 4: Sample question from 2016 Passenger Survey, using Survey Monkey online software