RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update
September 8th, 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.

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Glenwood Springs Maintenance Facility (GMF)

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. 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. The GMF now serves 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.

RFTA intends to construct a state of the art facility on the existing 5.5-acre GMF parcel, and incorporating an adjacent 2.5-acre RFTA-owned parcel to the north. 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.

With support from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Fund, RFTA hired a design team (Shrewsberry/Iron Horse) to consider these future needs and functions for the GMF and the site constraints. The designers developed a unique and compelling plan that far exceeded RFTA's ideas and expectations. The design concept below shows the product: a roughly 3-4 story site plan incorporating office, training and administrative space; bus storage and circulation; bus maintenance improvements; and expanded public parking areas.

This design concept will be the basis for all future design, funding and construction plans. The opportunities afforded by the innovative design changes will help RFTA create a Regional Transit Center, accommodating the region's demanding transportation needs for the next 20 years.

RFTA is also renovating and expanding the West Glenwood Springs Park and Ride and trail, along Wulfsohn Road, adjacent to the GMF site. RFTA has been able to consolidate these projects, and combine approximately $1,750,000 in State and Federal grants. These grant funds will be used to complete the West Glenwood Springs PNR and trail, and complete Phase I of the GMF renovation and expansion. Construction began this summer. The contractor has been moving fill dirt from the GMF side of Wulfsohn Road, and placing the fill at the PNR side. This will facilitate the construction of the park and ride, and

create the space needed next to the GMF to stage buses for mitigating the impacts of the Grand Avenue bridge project, and for future GMF expansion.

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.***

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 expand transit parking at existing CDOT park-n-rides or on town-owned parcels near downtowns.

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 Environmental and Right of Way processes will require 3-4 months, and should conclude by end of 2016.

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.

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 be completed this month) to the east at the corner of SH 6/Burning Mountain Drive.

Figure 2: Schematic of Grand Avenue Bridge plaza redevelopment along 7th Street

Bustang

Bustang, CDOT's inter-regional bus service, celebrated its first anniversary of service July 13, 2016. CDOT reported that Bustang exceeded ridership, revenue and fare box recovery projections during its first year of service. Ridership outpaced Bustang's forecasted numbers by close to 15,000 passengers.

Ridership was particularly robust on the I-70 route from Glenwood Springs to Denver. Within the first six months of operation, CDOT expanded service from five days per week to seven days.

"We welcomed our 100,000th passenger on June 24th and couldn't be happier. As we hit certain targets, we'll continue to expand schedules and service options, just as we did in 2015," said CDOT Bus Operations Manager Michael Timlin.

Lower Valley (LoVa) Trail Development

LoVa, the Lower Valley Trails Group, arose in 1999 from a group of citizens, public officials and business people concerned about quality of life and recreation opportunities in Garfield County. It is a non-profit, primarily volunteer, organization composed of civic and naturalist minded citizens of Garfield County. Numerous citizens and public agencies throughout Garfield County support LoVa's mission. The group created a master plan and trail map in 2003, which is still the most comprehensive master planning document referenced in bicycle-pedestrian discussions. Over the last 15 years, LoVa has compiled grants and other public funds to build sections of the trail from West Glenwood Springs to South Canyon as funding and engineering realities allowed. The West Glenwood Springs trail segment is popular; however usage west of Glenwood Springs is low due to the non-continuous nature of the constructed segments.

When RFTA has reached out for feedback from I-70 communities during numerous regional planning projects, the number one priority for trail connections is completion of the LoVa Trail from West Glenwood Springs to Parachute. The LoVa Trail was also identified as the number one regional trail connection in RFTA's Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, and it was recognized as 1 of 16 statewide priority trail candidates in the Governor's 2015 *Colorado the Beautiful Initiative.*

In the last year, the City of Glenwood Springs and the Town of New Castle have taken renewed interest in seeking Federal/State grants for planning, design and engineering of various trail sections. An informal regional coalition of public and non-profit entities (RFTA, New Castle, Glenwood Springs, Garfield County, LiveWell and LoVa) is being formed to strategize on grant applications, with the goal in mind of concentrating on the 9.4 mile section of trail from Chatfield Park in West Glenwood Springs to Exit 105 in New Castle. The next grant application on the horizon is a Great Outdoors Colorado (GoCo) *Connect Initiative Planning Grant*. The City of Glenwood Springs is likely to take the lead on the application, due

Sep. 13th, for $100,000 in planning funds to further advance current planning, design and engineering for this crucial section of trail that will be a primary catalyst for the larger trail project.

Figure 5: South Canyon section of the LoVa Trail, along I-70 and the Colorado River