RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update

November 12, 2015

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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Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian & Transit Access Plan

RFTA was awarded a FTA Section 5304 grant in 2014 to conduct a *Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian & Transit Access Plan,* herein RBPTAP, for the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valley region. Pitkin County, Eagle County and Garfield County are providing local cash match for the grant award. The purpose of the RBPTAP is to establish a region-wide vision with goals, objectives and a 25-year list of projects that integrate the bicycle and pedestrian system with the overall transportation system.

The final draft plan is expected in early November, and will be shared widely with member jurisdictions.

Regional groups are already utilizing the information. The LiveWell Garfield County Built Environment hired Alta Planning to conduct more significant public outreach and community bike/ped project planning throughout Garfield County. RFTA modified the draft plan to emphasize the importance of the LoVa Trail, in an effort to ensure that LoVa will be selected as one of the State's top-priority trails in the 16 for 16 Trails Initiative (see next section).

Colorado the Beautiful Trails Project: 16 in 2016

In June, Governor Hickenlooper announced state efforts to identify 16 priority trails, trail segments, and trail gaps by 2016. These 16 priority trail segments will fill gaps in our statewide trail system, promote active, outdoor recreation, and connect communities and visitors to important amenities. When the 16 trails are identified, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources will lead efforts and work in conjunction with Great Outdoors Colorado, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the Colorado Department of Transportation, and other entities to identify needed funding and construct the trails.

The LoVa Trail leading west from Glenwood Springs

The Lower Valley Tails Group (LOVA) and RFTA have promoted the LOVA Trail as one of the 16 priority trail segments. As the "16 in 16" effort progress and Pitkin County Open Space may be interested in submitting a nomination for the Crystal Valley Trail, south of Carbondale, as a potential statewide trail project.

Regional Planning Roundtable

Over the years, RFTA Planning Staff has conducted periodic Regional Planning Roundtables for timely updates and thoughtful discussion on topics of regional interest. The last meeting was held on 4/24/14 at the RFTA Carbondale offices. Attendees are mostly Planning staff from the surrounding counties and municipalities, and CDOT.

At the request of several jurisdictions, RFTA is hosting a Regional Roundtable in November 13. The agenda includes:

- Strategies to cultivate and Improve Regional Planning
- Grand Avenue Bridge Replacement Update
- Regional Travel Patterns Study
- RFTA Integrated Transportation System Plan
- Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian & Transit Access Plan
- Colorado the Beautiful 16 in 2016 Initiative

2015 TIGER Grant

Project selections for the seventh round of the USDOT's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program were announced on October 29, 2015. The Department will provide nearly $500 million for 39 projects in 34 states, with some projects spanning several states. As with the previous six rounds of TIGER, the competition was rigorous, with 627 eligible applications requesting $10.1 billion or 20 times the available funding.

RFTA submitted a grant proposal for $18 million to renovate and expand the Glenwood Springs Maintenance Facility (GMF). RFTA was unsuccessful. The State of Colorado received one TIGER Grant award. The City of La Junta was awarded $15,210,143 to add approximately 39 miles of new railway and rehabilitate an additional 20 miles of rail along the Southwest Chief Amtrak line. Together, the towns and cities along the route of the Southwest Chief in Colorado, New Mexico and Kansas City raised $9.234 million as a match for the grant, bringing the total to $24.444 million.

Aspen Airport Planning/Environmental Assessment

Aspen/Pitkin County Airport has re-initiated the Environmental Assessment process concerning improvements to the Airport. On September 9, 2015 Pitkin County Commissioners approved required FAA runway safety improvements and a new airport terminal as the primary focus of one environmental assessment (EA).

The EA will consider reconfiguring the runway to meet FAA design standards to accommodate aircraft with wider wingspans that will replace the commercial fleet serving Aspen in the coming years. It will also assess the need for a better terminal to address existing safety and functional issues and to better serve the traveling public. Based on estimated funding shortfalls the parallel taxiway, the 2nd Fixed Base Operator (FBO), and underground parking are not considered within the current planning horizon.

The proposed runway reconfiguration does not include a parallel taxiway on the airport's west side. Acquisition of Burlingame Open Space along Owl Creek Road will not be required for the runway project to move forward. Runway reconfiguration will still require a small portion of Owl Creek road to be realigned within existing right of way, while more extensive impacts on Owl Creek Road will not be necessary.

On Thursday, October 22, the Aspen Airport hosted a Community Input Committee meeting to provide an update and solicit feedback on four alternatives, which are focused primarily on terminal configurations. These alternatives include:

Concept	Pros	Cons
Single Level	• *Gate Lounge finish floor same elevation as aircraft apron grade* • *All program on single level*	• Large building footprint in north / south direction • Large grade transition required between Terminal curbside and HWY 82
Split Level	• Gate Lounge finish floor same elevation as aircraft apron grade • Finish floor split helps mitigate grade difference between air- and curbside	• Large building footprint in north / south direction • Medium grade transition required between Terminal curbside and HWY 82 • Stair / Escalator / Elevator required on building interior
Nested	• Gate Lounge finish floor same elevation as aircraft apron grade • Curbside at (or close to) HWY 82 grade • Reduced overall building footprint • Overall building mass is visually reduced • Better integration with future structured parking	• Stair / Escalator / Elevator required on building interior
2-story	• Gate Lounge finish floor same elevation as aircraft apron grade • Curbside at (or close to) HWY 82 grade • Smallest overall building footprint	• Stair / Escalator / Elevator required on building interior • Largest perceived building mass