RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update

October 8, 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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The RFTA Planning Department is here to protect and serve in 2015!

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 technical advisory committee (TAC) consists of staff from RFTA, CDOT (Bicycle Pedestrian Program) and the three counties.

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. This plan does not intend to overstep local jurisdictions; rather this regional plan will bring attention to localized plans for the purpose of creating a seamless regional trail network in the future. A regional bike-ped plan is intended to help leverage future bike-ped funding at the Federal and State levels.

The consultant team, Alta Planning and Design and Design Workshop, began work on this project in early December 2014. To date, the team has completed the following tasks:

- Existing conditions maps for the study area (Nov/Dec 2014)
- Extensive outreach with staff and public (Feb. 2015)
- Condensed notes/maps from the outreach listing priority community projects (March 2015)
- An opportunities/constraints memo that distills feedback on priority projects (April 2015)
- Three technical advisory committee (TAC) meetings for project guidance
- Project prioritization criteria and weightings (June/July 2015)
- Cost estimation for top 10 priority projects (July/August 2015)
- DRAFT final plan for review (8/24/15)

Alta provided a draft final plan for review on 8/24/15. RFTA staff and the TAC will met the week of 9/7 to discuss plan details and a final draft plan is expected in early October. The plan will be shared widely with member jurisdictions.

Regional groups are eager to utilize the information. The LiveWell Garfield County Built Environment Working Group intends to use the Plan as the basis for more significant public outreach and community bike/ped project planning throughout Garfield County communities. Garfield County and Garfield County Public Health solicited the RFP on Aug. 28th; consultant proposals were due Sep. 22nd and a team will be chosen in early October. RFTA staff is hopeful that this regional plan will provide similar positive benefits in other communities throughout the study area.

DRAFT Final Plan delivered to RFTA on 8/24/15 for Staff and TAC review.

Colorado the Beautiful Trails Project: 16 in 2016

RFTA's Regional Bike-Ped Plan is being completed at an opportune time for both regional and Statewide level discussions about trail priorities and project planning.

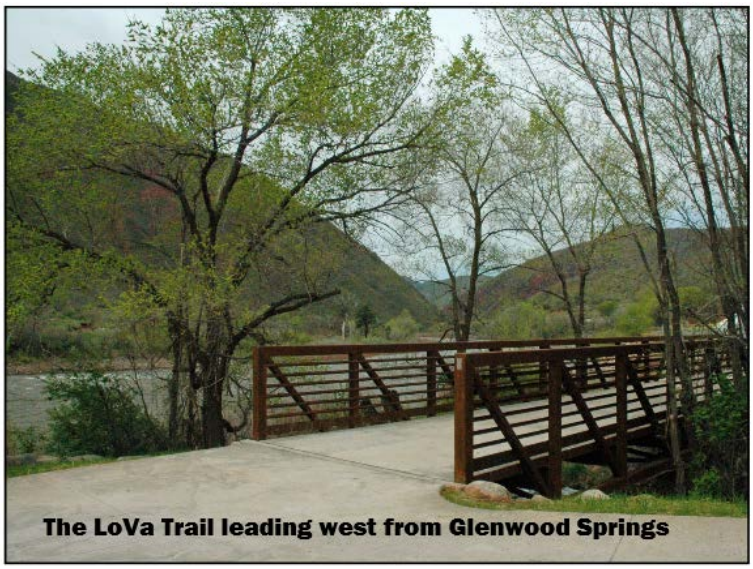
In June, Governor Hickenlooper announced state efforts to identify 16 priority trails, trail segments, and trail gaps by 2016. These 16 priority trail segments will fill gaps in our statewide trail system, promote active, outdoor recreation, and connect communities and visitors to important amenities. 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, local governments, non-profits, and foundations to identify needed funding, address ownership and access issues, and other obstacles to the construction of the trails. The DNR has posted an online survey to gauge interest from stakeholders; the survey deadline has been extended to October 10th https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1joE6FSI1GSakQ_5-erCM8kGbYwH49zSO7uQ_15LzXjg/viewform

The Lower Valley Tails Group (LOVA) and Western Garfield County jurisdictions have expressed interest in advocating the LOVA Trail (or West Garfield County Trail) as one of the 16 priority trail segments. RFTA has been assisting with promotion, as the LOVA Trail was ranked as one of the highest priority regional bike-ped projects, from Parachute to Aspen, in RFTA's recently completed RBPTA Plan.

Since 1999, the Lower Valley Trails Group (LOVA) has worked diligently to promote the development and use of non-motorized transportation and recreational trails and other designated routes connecting communities and destinations in Garfield County along the Colorado River Corridor. Specifically, the group has been focused on building a regionally connected bicycle-pedestrian trail from Glenwood Springs to the western Garfield County Line along I-70, SH-6 and the Colorado River Corridor. The most recently completed 2003 Master Plan estimated the total project cost of this 47-mile trail at $93 Million.

In spite of the significant mobility, public health, recreational and tourism potential in completing the LOVA Trail, the daunting project cost has been a stumbling block. LOVA and regional jurisdictions have diligently applied for and secured funding and support to build a few phased sections of the longer trail as funding and engineering realities have allowed. As the "16 in 16" effort progress, RFTA is willing to work with LOVA, Garfield County, and the western Garfield Count Communities to make the LOVA Trail a priority project and help secure potential funding for design and construction.

RFTA Planning and Trails Staff attended a Great Outdoors Colorado (GoCo) grant writing workshop in Denver on 9/29/15. Following the workshop, there was a listening session for the 16 X 16 initiative. The DNR and GoCo are working closely to solicit feedback on potential large-scale trails projects. RFTA staff distributed instructions to complete the survey questions for the LOVA Trail to area stakeholders. 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 as well. RFTA Staff will continue to monitor the process.


The LoVa Trail leading west from Glenwood Springs

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.

At a recent 7/22/15 project meeting for the Regional Travel Patterns Study, several attendees indicated an interest in re-convening a meeting this fall. Staff solicited an email to regional planning contacts to verify general interest for this meeting and to gather feedback on potential agenda items. The final agenda will be established based on participant feedback. Some draft agenda topics include:

- Grand Avenue Bridge Replacement: timing, operations, maintaining economic development, transit mitigation
- Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning: RFTA final plan, LiveWell BEWG RFP solicitation, LoVa nomination for 16 x 2016
- Regional Travel Patterns Study: Summary and Policy Implications
- RFTA Integrated Transportation System Plan (ITSP)
- Town of Snowmass Village Connectivity Plan

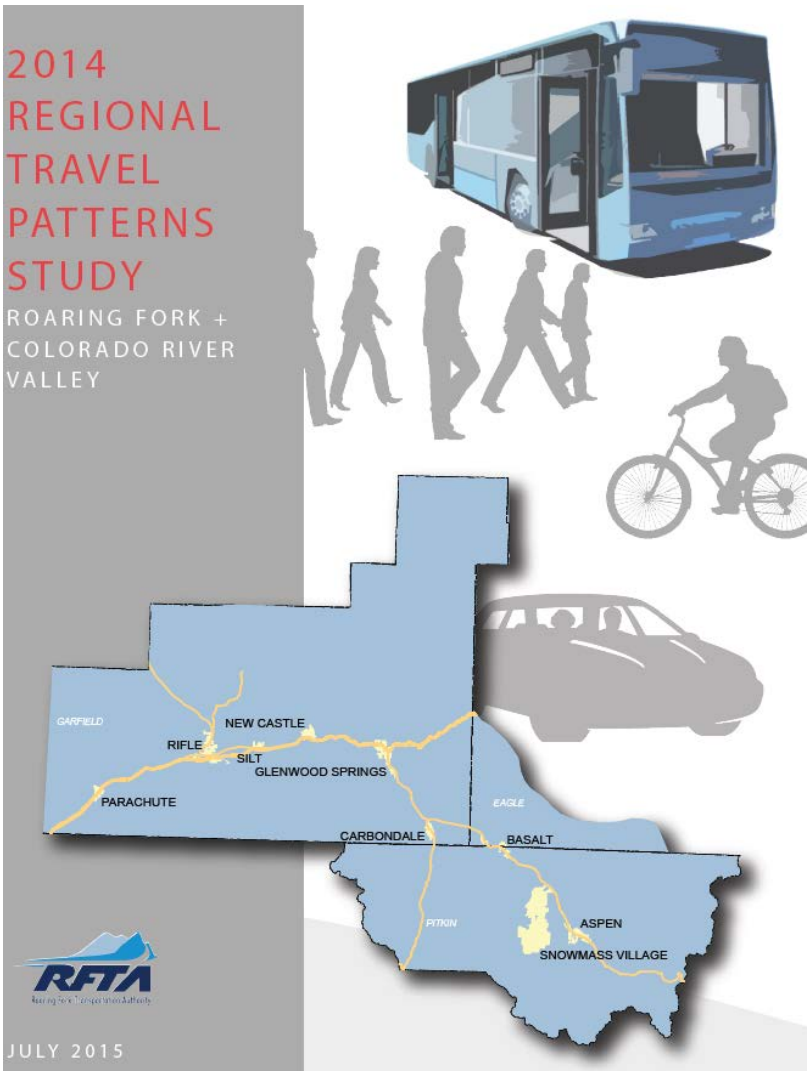
Staff plans to hold this meeting at the RFTA Carbondale offices, on a yet to be determined date in late October; a working lunch will be provided. RFTA Staff is pleased to be in a position to facilitate meetings such as these and learn from our fellow regional planners in RFTA member jurisdictions.

Regional Travel Patterns Study

The original ***Local and Regional Travel Patterns Study (RTPS)*** for the Colorado River and Roaring Fork River Valleys, from Parachute to Aspen, was conducted in 1998. In 2004, Garfield County led the update effort; in 2014, RFTA chose to take the lead on the third update. The Final Report, Executive Summary and other relevant information can be be accessed here: https://app.box.com/s/x4iydy02fa14by12trz4ubw0nnnr67ne.

Geoff Guthrie, City of Glenwood Springs Transportation Manager, has used the data to advocate for Travel Management (TDM) strategies, such as bike share and bus lanes, during the forthcoming Grand Avenue Bridge Replacement Project in downtown Glenwood Springs. The City of Aspen is applying the data to a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) study in and around Aspen.

At the request of Garfield County Planning Staff, RFTA staff presented the findings of the RTPS at the Garfield County Economic Development Partners meeting Wed. September 16th, and the information will be presented at the next EOTC meeting.


2014
REGIONAL
TRAVEL
PATTERNS
STUDY
ROARING FORK +
COLORADO RIVER
VALLEY
GARFIELD
NEW CASTLE
RIFLE
SILT
GLENWOOD SPRINGS
PARACHUTE
EAGLE
CARBONDALE
BASALT
PITKIN
ASPEN
SNOWMASS VILLAGE
RFTA
JULY 2015

Current/Future Grant Opportunities

Grant Program/Year	Project	Deadline	Amount Requested	Projected Award Date	Status
FTA 5311 Admin/Operating Program	FY2016-2017 General Operating Expenses	6/5/15	$1,014,550 ($1,065,278 RFTA match)	9/14/15	RFTA received a notice of award; the contract will be executed before the end of 2015
DOLA Energy Mineral Impact Assistance (EMIA) Program	GMF Construction – Phase I	4/29/2015	$1,500,000	August 2015	RFTA did not receive funding. Staff will continue to apply to subsequent grant cycles
DOLA Energy Mineral Impact Assistance (EMIA) Program	GMF Construction – Phase I	8/1/2015 and 12/1/15	$1,500,000	November 2015	Submitted. Staff will continue to apply to subsequent grant cycles
USDOT TIGER 7	GMF Renovation/ Expansion	6/5/2015	$18 million	November 2015	Staff is still awaiting grant awards
Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District (GCFMLD)	GMF Renovation/ Expansion	8/31/2015	$300,000	October 2015	Submitted; awaiting awards
DOLA Alt Fuels	Incremental cost of CNG for Carbondale Circulator Vehicle	9/1/2015	$34,000	9/24/15	RFTA received a notice of award; contract will be executed before the end of 2015
Great Outdoors CO (GoCo) Local Government Program	Rio Grande Railroad Corridor ArtWay, Carbondale	11/5/15	$75,000	March 2016	RFTA attended a workshop on 9/29. A supporting resolution will be signed at the 10/8 Board meeting