RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update

September 10, 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~~ trail staff~~, CDOT (B~~b~~icycle~~ p~~ and Pedestrian Program~~staff~~) 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 ~~will set our region up for success~~ is intended to help leverage~~for~~ 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 meet the week of 9/7 to discuss plan details and a final draft plan is expected in middle to late September.

~~The final bike-ped plan has yet to be completed and there are already r~~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 ~~utilize State public health funds to dig deeper into~~ 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 and consultant proposals are due Sep. 22nd. 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 a great 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~~ amenities~~to promote active, outdoor recreation~~. 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. ~~There is currently a survey being distributed by the CO~~ The DNR is distributing a survey, which will close September 30~~Dep. of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Colorado~~

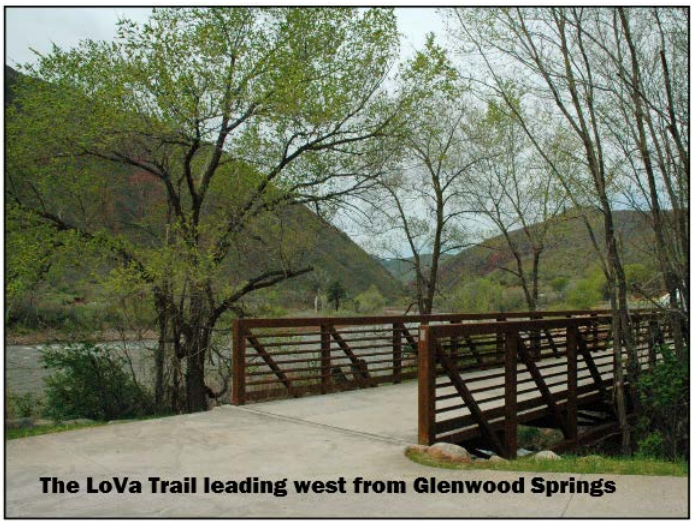
~~Dept. of Parks & Wildlife (CPW)~~: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1joE6FSI1GSakQ_5-erCM8kGbYwH49zSO7uQ_15LzXjg/viewform

~~There have already been great local conversations amongst~~ RFTA, the Lower Valley Tails Group (LOVA) and Western Garfield County jurisdictions ~~member jurisdictions to come together~~ have expressed interest in advocating ~~and present~~ the LOVA Trail (or West Garfield County Trail) ~~as the highest priority regional multimodal trail project for the Western Slope~~as one of the 16 priority trail segments. The LOVA Trail was ranked as one of the highest priority regional bike-ped projects, from Parachute to Aspen, in RFTA's recently completed regional RBPTA Plan~~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.

RFTA ~~Just about every Garfield County community~~ sees ~~great~~ significant mobility, public health, recreational and tourism potential in completing ~~this legacy trail project~~the LOVA Trail. The daunting project cost has been a stumbling block for Garfield County and its communities. LOVA and the regional jurisdictions have diligently applied for and secured ~~done a great job securing Federal, State and regional grant~~ funding and support ~~over the years~~ to build a few phased sections of the longer trail~~. However, these disconnected sections were built~~ as funding and engineering realities have allowed. ~~For example, bicycle commuters cannot currently ride from the West Glenwood Springs section of the LOVA trail and connect with the South Canyon Section about 2.5 miles west. These piecemeal trail sections will be very useful and heavily used once the larger trail project is continued to the Garfield County Line.~~

RFTA recognizes the mobility and accessibility benefits of the LOVA trail, particularly in conjunction with current and future transit infrastructure. RFTA is pleased to assist in~~Staff is in a favorable position to speak on behalf of its regional member jurisdictions by~~ advocating that the LOVA trail be included in the 16 priority trails and trail segments, ~~promoting regional multimodal projects and~~and to assist in identifying and ~~-~~applying for potential grant funding that ensues from this effort. Although the goal is to complete the entire 47 miles of trail, LOVA Director Larry Dragon believes that the South Canyon section, roughly from Glenwood Springs to New Castle, is the most important component. If this geographically challenging and expensive section can be completed, the remaining trail can be addressed more easily in the future. ~~competitive grant funds that other jurisdictions may not have the staff, budget or political will to submit applications. Over the next few months, RFTA Staff will create a list of talking points for the LOVA Trail and work with jurisdictions to vote for the LOVA Trail as a potential Statewide trail candidate for the Governor's ambitious 16 in 2016 Trail Program. Staff will also gather letters of support from regional decision makers that see great value in this regional trail project.~~ As the "16 in 16" effort progress, RFTA is willing to work with LOVA, Garfield County, and the western Garfield Count Communities as appropriate, to make the LOVA trail a priority project and help secure potential funding for design and construction.



Regional Travel Patterns Study

Background

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; RFTA is currently taking the lead on ~~a second~~the third update~~, incorporating additional information as requested by the local jurisdictions~~.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this project is to update the ~~2004~~ 1998 and 2004 studies~~Study~~, which detail~~s~~ how, why, and when residents and tourists are moving within the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys region from Parachute to Aspen. Public survey data questions include: where people live and work; the mode of travel (to work & other trips); employer policies (bus passes, parking, telecommuting); local walking & biking environment; transit use patterns and demographic information.

Status

The travel behavior component of the project has been completed, and the community travel profiles can be accessed here: http://www.charlier.org/index.php?id=1,347,0,0,1,0.

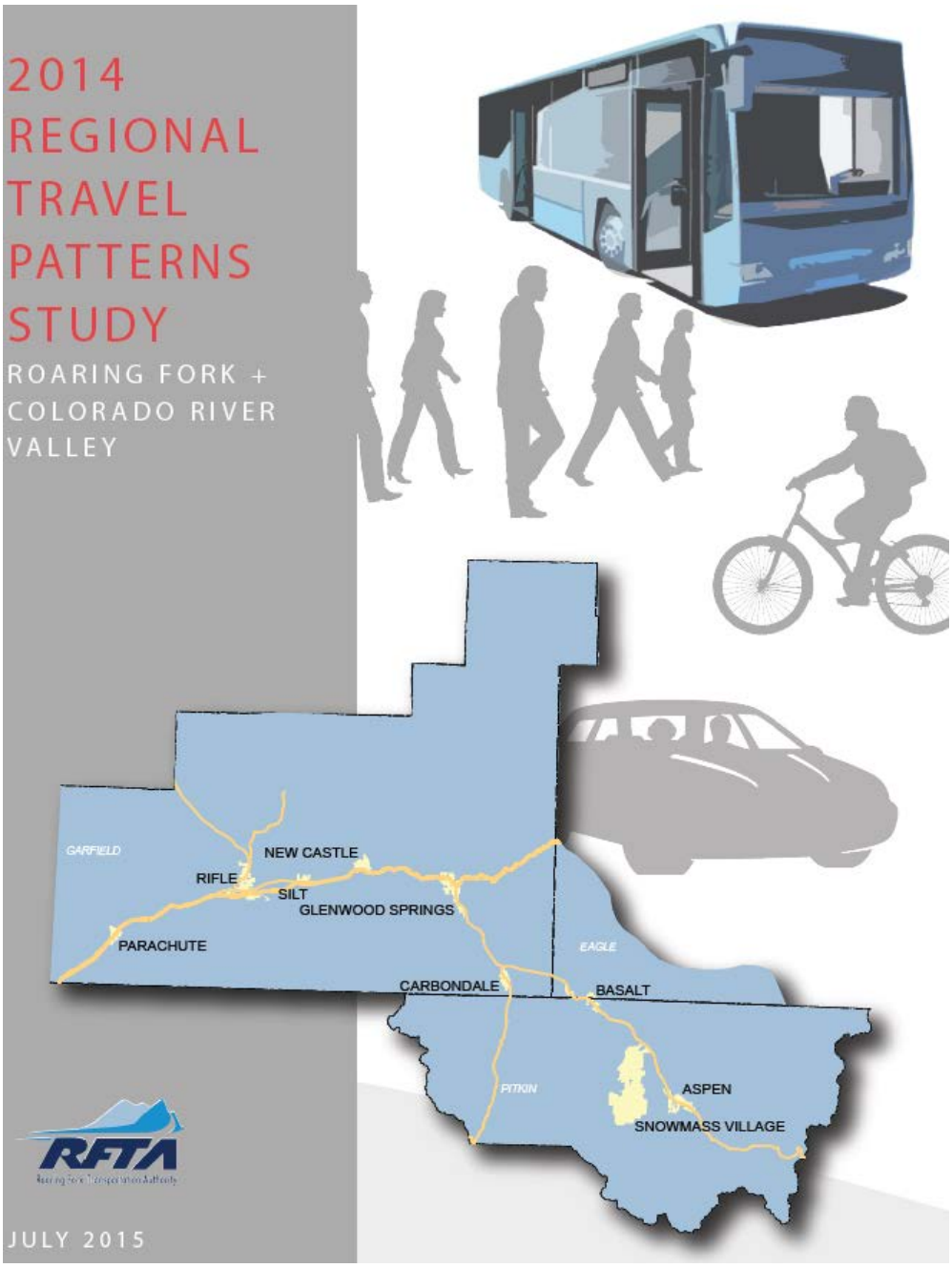
The Consultant team delivered the final draft report to RFTA on July 2. RFTA held a meeting with the technical advisory team on July 22nd to discuss the final draft report and ~~how the~~ other deliverables, and compare to the~~deliverables relate to the consultant team's~~ original scope of work and project schedule. Overall, the group was pleased with the process and it is encouraging to see that ~~this group of regional planners is already starting to use some of~~ the travel patterns data is already being applied ~~for~~ to local projects.

Geoff Guthrie, City of Glenwood Springs Transportation Manager, has used the data to ~~make a case for increased~~advocate for ~~travel demand measures~~ 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 ~~has been working on their own local level~~a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) study ~~and they are able to utilize some of the survey data from the RTPS for to answer questions about local travel~~ in and around Aspen.

The draft final report can be found ~~accessed~~ here: https://app.box.com/s/x4iydy02fa14by12trz4ubw0nnnr67ne.
~~The consultant team is wrapping up final work to the regional summary section of the final report, for the purpose of serving as an executive summary.~~ The final report is expected ~~in mid-September~~September 9, and will be distributed widely to the public and regional partners.

At the request of Garfield County Planning Staff, RFTA staff will present the findings of the RTPS at the Garfield County Economic Development Partners meeting at 8:00 am on Wed. September 16th at the Garfield County BOCC building in Glenwood Springs.


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~~
~~DOLA Energy Mineral Impact Assistance (EMIA) Program~~	~~GMF Construction – Phase I~~	~~4/29/2015~~	~~$1,500,000~~	~~August 2015~~	~~Mike H. presented to the Statewide Advisory Committee in Steamboat on 7/21. See below for other applications.~~
~~DOLA EMIA Program~~	~~GMF Construction – Phase I~~	~~8/1/2015~~	~~$1,500,000~~	~~Dec. 2015~~	~~This is very similar to the Spring 2015 application; notices of awards have not been announced for the Spring application. If RFTA receives $1.5 M from the Spring application then this Fall application will be withdrawn.~~
~~DOLA EMIA Program~~	~~GMF Construction – Phases 2 & 4~~	~~8/1/2015~~	~~$1,750,000~~	~~Dec. 2015~~	~~If RFTA does not receive funding from the Spring 2015 cycle, RFTA wishes to re-submit for Phase I and withdraw this application for Phases 2 and 4. If RFTA receives funding for Phase I from the Spring 2015 funding cycle, RFTA wishes to submit this request for funding Phases 2 and 4.~~
~~CORE Randy Udall Grant~~	~~AMF Geo-Exchange System #2~~	~~5/1/2014~~	~~$200,000~~	~~July 2015~~	~~This grant was not awarded~~
~~USDOT TIGER 7~~	~~GMF Renovation/ Expansion~~	~~6/5/2015~~	~~$18 million~~	~~November 2015~~	~~Staff is still awaiting grant awards~~
~~FTA 5311 FY2016-17 Admin/ Operating~~	~~General Operating Funding~~	~~6/5/2015~~	~~$1,065,278~~	~~September 2015~~	~~Staff received a notice of award on 9/4/15 that RFTA will receive $1,014,550 in Admin/Operating funding.~~
~~Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease~~	~~GMF Renovation/ Expansion~~	~~8/28/2015~~	~~$450,000~~	~~October 2015~~	~~Staff submitted the grant on 8/31/15. Grant awards are anticipated in~~

District (GCFMLD)					October.
DOLA Alt Fuels	Incremental cost of CNG for Carbondale Circulator Vehicle	8/1/2015	$35,000	August 1st	Grant was successfully submitted. Anticipated grant awards are in Sep/Oct.
Great Outdoors CO (GoCo)	Rio Grande Railroad Corridor/Trail improvements	11/5/15	$200,000	March 2016	The CPW Trails Grants applications will be posted in September

Grant Program/Year	Project	Deadline	Amount Requested	Projected Award Date	Status
DOLA Energy Mineral Impact Assistance (EMIA) Program	GMF Construction – Phase I	4/29/2015	$1,500,000	August 2015	RFTA did not receive funding, and reapplied on 8/1/2015.
DOLA EMIA Program	GMF Construction – Phase I	8/1/2015	$1,500,000	November 2015	Submitted
CORE Randy Udall Grant	AMF Geo-Exchange System #2	5/1/2014	$200,000	July 2015	This grant was not awarded
USDOT TIGER 7	GMF Renovation/ Expansion	6/5/2015	$18 million	November 2015	Staff is still awaiting grant awards
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Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District (GCFMLD)	GMF Renovation/ Expansion	8/31/2015	$300,000	October 2015	Submitted

DOLA Alt Fuels	Incremental cost of CNG for Carbondale Circulator Vehicle	9/1/2015	$34,000	December 2015	Submitted
Great Outdoors CO (GoCo)	Rio Grande Railroad Corridor/Trail improvements	11/5/15	$200,000	March 2016	The CPW Trails Grants applications will be posted in September