FARE STUDY AND FARE POLICY UPDATE

RFTA
ROARING FORK TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

RFTA Board Meeting
March 14, 2019

PURPOSE & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Outline potential changes to fare policies
- Discuss potential fare technology investments
- Consider direction for future analysis

RECOMMENDATIONS

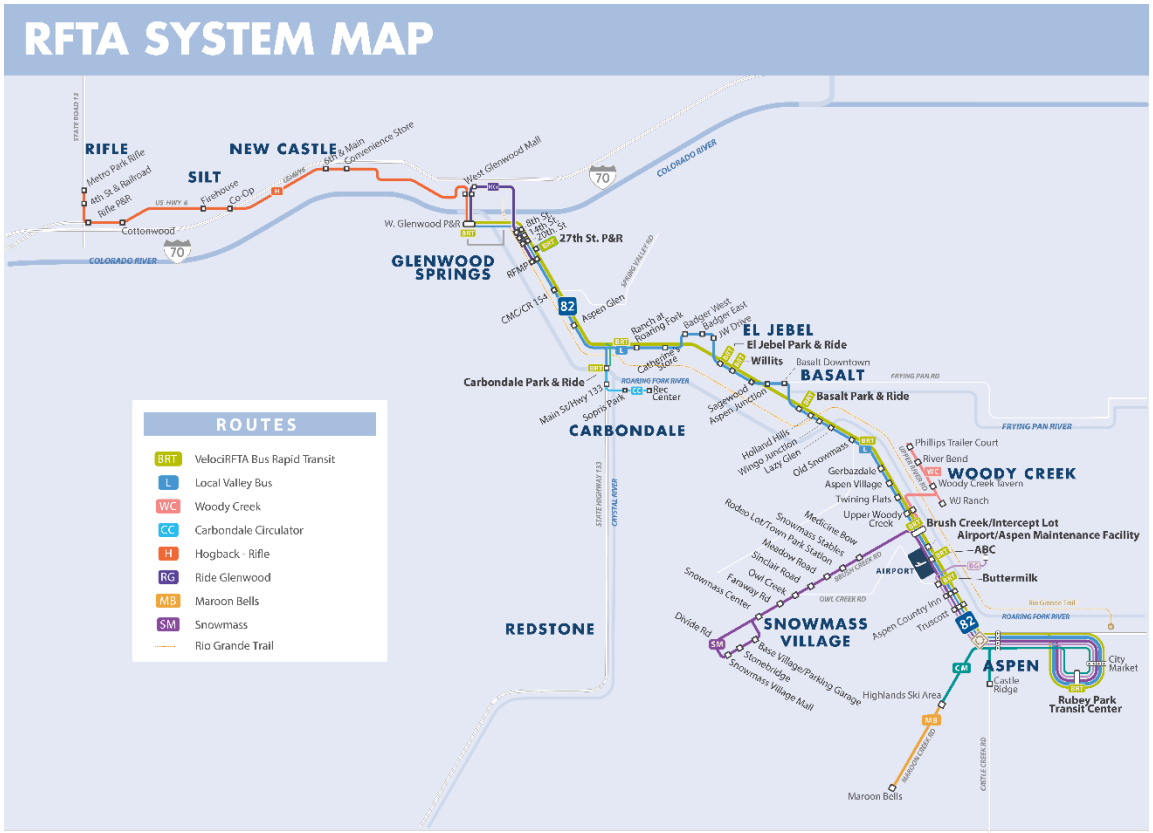
- **Fare Policy:** Direct staff to begin drafting Fare Policy

- **Fare Technology:** Direct staff to begin researching the implementation of a contact-less card system

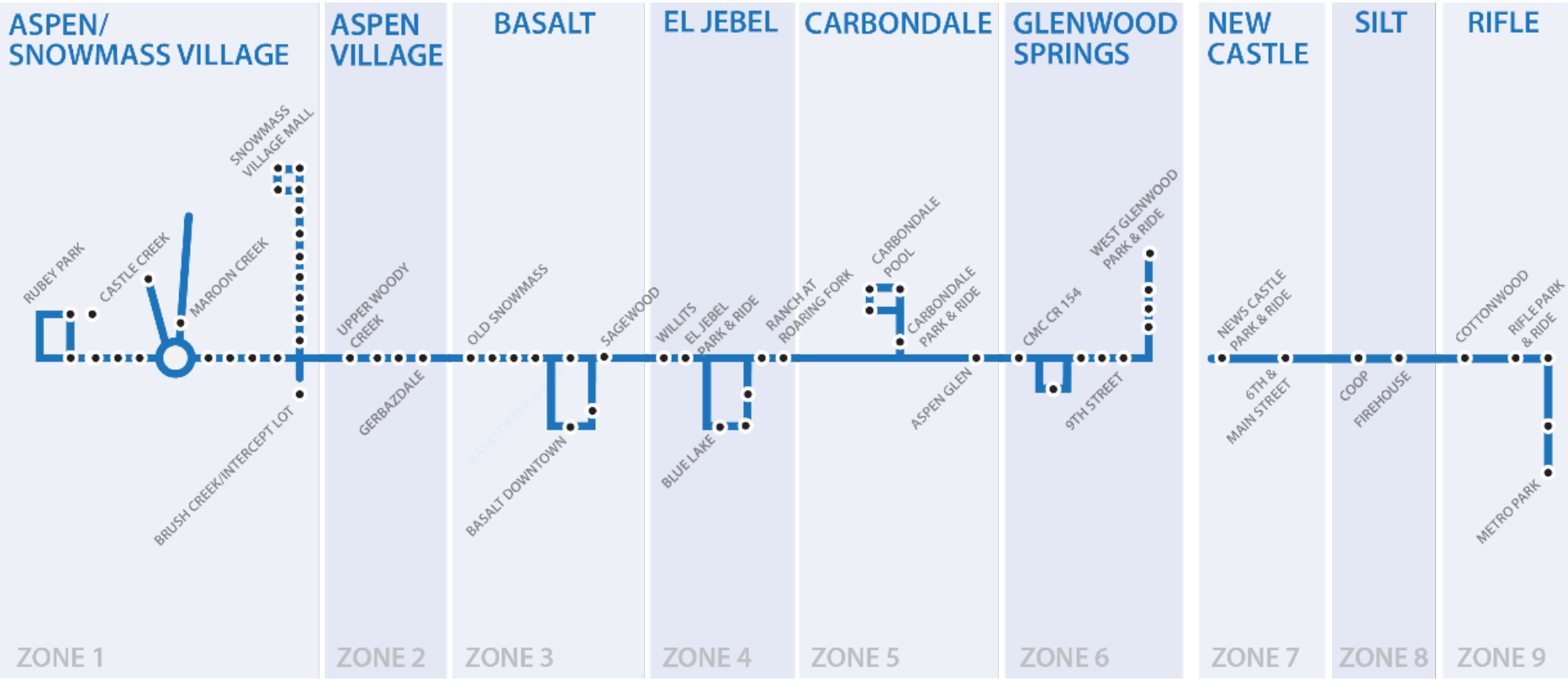
BACKGROUND

Complex Fare Structure

- 70-mile corridor, 9 fare zones
- BRT, Regional, Express, local, circulator routes
- Approximately 2.2 million annual fare-paying trips on regional commuter services
- 24 hours/day operation
- Variety of trip purposes and patterns



FARE ZONES


ASPEN/ SNOWMASS VILLAGE
ASPEN VILLAGE
BASALT
EL JEBEL
CARBONDALE
GLENWOOD SPRINGS
NEW CASTLE
SILT
RIFLE
RUBEY PARK
CASTLE CREEK
MAROON CREEK
SNOWMASS VILLAGE MALL
BRUSH CREEK/INTERCEPT LOT
UPPER WOODY CREEK
GERBAZDALE
OLD SNOWMASS
BASALT DOWNTOWN
SAGEWOOD
WILLITS
EL JEBEL PARK & RIDE
BLUE LAKE
RANCH AT ROARING FORK
CARBONDALE POOL
CARBONDALE PARK & RIDE
ASPEN GLEN
CMC CR 154
9TH STREET
WEST GLENWOOD PARK & RIDE
NEWS CASTLE PARK & RIDE
6TH & MAIN STREET
COOP
FIREHOUSE
COTTONWOOD
RIFLE PARK & RIDE
METRO PARK
ZONE 1
ZONE 2
ZONE 3
ZONE 4
ZONE 5
ZONE 6
ZONE 7
ZONE 8
ZONE 9

CASH FARES

RFTA FARE CHART FOR THE ROARING FORK VALLEY & GRAND HOGBACK

ZONE	Rifle	Silt	New Castle	Glenwood Springs	Carbondale	El Jebel/Willits	Basalt	Aspen Village	Brush Creek/Hwy 82 Intercept Lot	Snowmass Village	Aspen
Rifle	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Silt	3.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	9.00	9.00
New Castle	4.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
Glenwood Springs	5.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Carbondale	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
El Jebel/Willits	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Basalt	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Aspen Village	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Woody Creek	10.00	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	FREE	FREE	FREE
Brush Creek/HWY 82	10.00	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	FREE	FREE	FREE
Snowmass Village	10.00	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	FREE	FREE	FREE
Aspen	10.00	9.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	FREE	FREE	FREE

Fare: $1.00 in zone, first zone change add $2.00, then $1.00 each additional zone.
Seniors (65 and over) and infants (5 and under) are free.
Youth ages 6-16 receive a $1 discount on fares over $1. Bike loading is an additional $2.00 per bike.

*These fares have been valid since 2009

OTHER FARES

Fare Type	Grand Hogback: Rifle-Glenwood	New Castle-Aspen	Glenwood-Aspen	Carbondale-Aspen	El Jebel-Aspen	Basalt-Aspen	Aspen Village-Aspen
30-Day Zone Pass	$98	$163	N/A	N/A	$150	$120	$62
Winter Season Zone Pass	N/A	$731	$711	$661	$644	$520	$287
Winter Season Zone Pass (Chamber Discount)	N/A	$694	$675	$628	$612	$494	$273
30-day Youth (Age 6-16)	$64	$89	Or $1 off regular fare				
Stored Value Card	$20 in Stored Value for $14.75; $40 in Stored Value for $29.00 (26% Discount)						
Age 65+	FREE						
US Military Veterans and Persons with Disabilities	50% off all fares,cards and passes with RFTA Select Discount Card						

*These fares have been valid since 2009 (with minor changes to Aspen Village and Basalt/El Jebel zones)

FARE POLICIES

Warner Transportation Consulting (WTC) studied RFTA's Fare Structure and other fare-related issues. Topics for potential improvements included:

- Fare Technology
- Fare Enforcement
- Fare Changes

➢ **Specific changes are not recommended at this time** (Note: 30-day Public Notice and Public Hearing required before implementing fare increases)

CURRENT FARE TECHNOLOGY

- Current Automated Fare Collection System installed in 2013
- Streamlined administration and collection of fares and zone passes
- Created more fare options and methods of payment for passengers.
- However, limits online purchases, use of mobile phones or contactless fare cards, and RFTA's ability to change fares or fare policies.
- Bus operators take great responsibility for fare administration and enforcement

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

- Chip-based contact-less card system is a potential change
  - Passengers can purchase and re-load fares from smart phones or computers.
  - Migrates all non-electronic "flash" passes to contactless cards
  - Streamlines the process for future fare changes
  - Reduces the potential for boarding dwell times, fare evasion, and driver responsibility to collect and monitor fares
  - Potential to integrate the fare systems of We-Cycle, Bustang, RTD and other systems with one fare card or a mobile phone
- **Pre-requisite to a tag-on/tag-off fare system, if desired**

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

Tag-On/Tag-Off System

- Passenger "tags" the farebox or validator when boarding and alighting
- System deducts the proper fare (if passenger does not tag off, the system deducts the maximum fare)
- Reduces potential fare evasion by precluding a traveler paying for fewer zones than travelled.
- A fare card can go negative; passenger must restore a positive balance (options for auto-renew or online fare payment) before boarding again.
- Slows down boarding and alighting

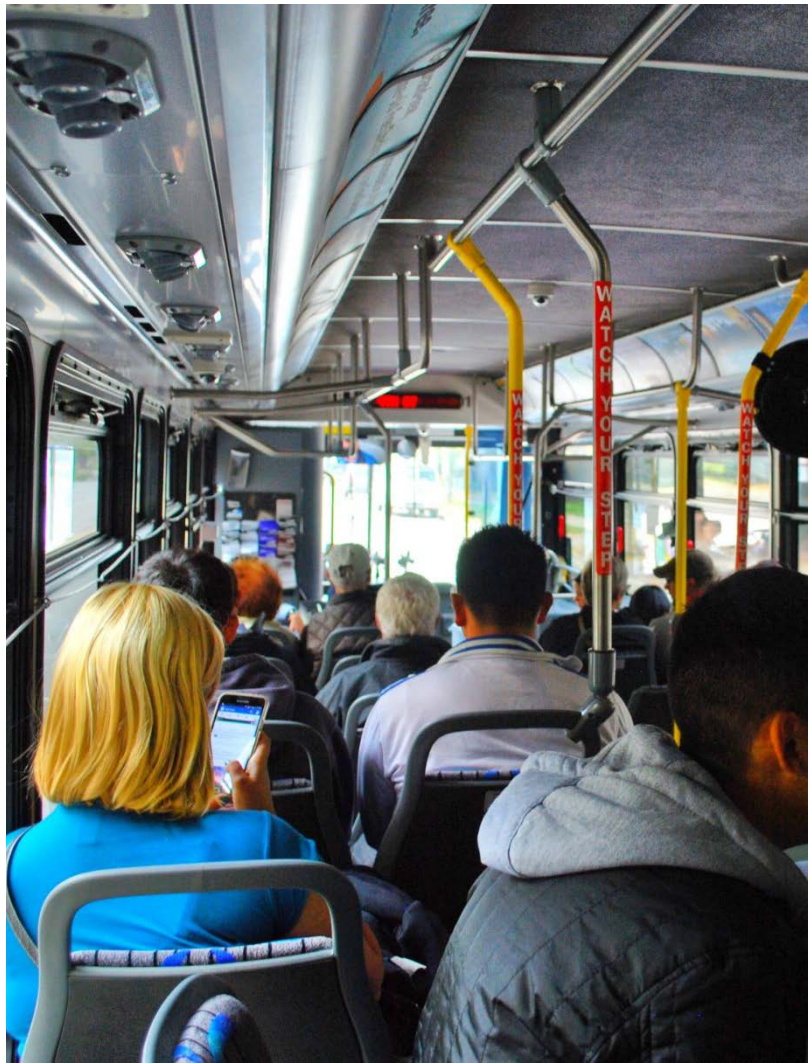
FARE EVASION & ENFORCEMENT

RFTA's complex fare system creates loopholes for potential fare evasion. Based on observations of the fare system, passenger behavior, and driver surveys, the following are the most likely sources:

- Staying on the bus past the Aspen-Snowmass fare free zone
- Traveling in more zones than declared
- Improper eligibility for youth, senior or Veterans discount
- Claiming Ticket Vending Machine is broken
- Using passes outside of allowed Zone

FARE EVASION & ENFORCEMENT

- RFTA lacks a reliable estimate of fare evasion or fare loss. Calculating would require a speculative, time-consuming and potentially invasive process.
- Contactless card system and new fare policies would reduce the potential incidence of evasion
- Fare inspectors on buses might reduce fare evasion; cost would offset to some extent the recovered revenue



FARE CHANGES

WTC recommended consideration of the following fare changes

- **Age 65+ Fare**: RFTA-issued Photo ID for a nominal annual fee (preferably a contactless card), similar to ECO Transit policy, or $1 off fare, or 50% off cash fare or some similar discount, or full fare during peak hours and half fare or free during off-peak periods
- **Youth Fare**: Extend age to 18, deeper discount
- **Weekend Pass**: Two youths age 18 or younger ride free with one regular adult fare
- **Low Income Pass**: Discount to passengers able to document household incomes up to 185% of Federal poverty level

FARE CHANGES

WTC recommended consideration of the following fare changes:

- **Down valley Pass**: Introduce a single 30-day down valley pass for travel anywhere between Glenwood Springs and Aspen Village.
  - Alternatively, RFTA could offer a reduced off-peak, off-direction fare
- **CMC Student Discounts**
- **Adjustments to 30-day, Seasonal and Zone passes** for more consistency and equity
- **More frequent, smaller, and equitable general fare increases** (not whole dollar amounts)
- Staff recommends consideration of: **Consolidation of the Basalt/ El Jebel Fare Zone**

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- **Direct staff to begin drafting Fare Policy**
  - Addresses general fare policies, potential farebox recovery targets, future changes in fares, triggers for fare increases, future changes in fare technology, etc.
- **Direct staff to begin researching the implementation of a contact-less card system**
- No specific changes in fares, fare enforcement of technology recommended at this time