RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update
November 10th, 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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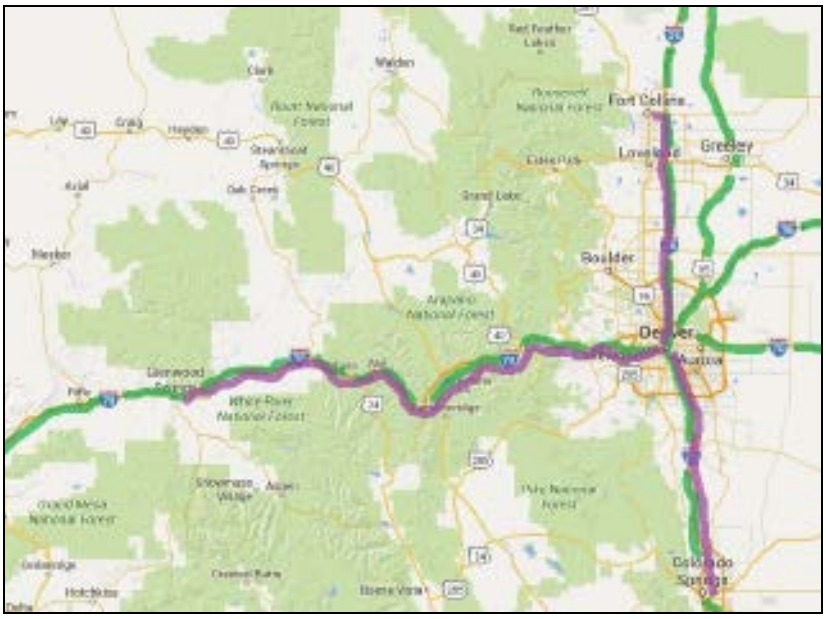
Bustang/Rural Regional Bus Network Plan (2016 to 2018)

Now that Bustang has established service on the I-25 and I-70 corridors, CDOT is considering how and where to expand the Rural Regional Bus Network. The initial phases of the Rural Regional Network will expand on Bustang and provide additional connections to regional activity centers such as Pueblo and Grand Junction.



Current Bustang Network

CDOT has solicited input from all TPRs over the last year regarding expansion of the rural bus network. Input received has been supportive with the following themes:

- Coverage valued over level of service (LOS)
- Fare structure similar to Bustang is acceptable
- Flexibility in service design (LOS, vehicle type, etc.) is looked upon favorably
- Desire to see CDOT support the existing providers in the corridors
- Look at other services where there are existing gaps
- Partnerships with Human Service Organizations will be important over the long haul
- (Two TPRs felt the funds could be better spent on rural roads)

Bustang specifically is funded by FASTER Statewide funds. Additional Rural Regional Bus Network operations will be funded by $1.6 m in FTA Section 5311(f), also called Intercity City Bus funds, rising to $1.7 million in 2017 and $1.8 in 2018. In addition, CDOT allocates $450,000

per year in FASTER funds. Additional capital needs, such as park and ride expansions, will be funded by SB 228. A list of SB 228 projects is shown below.

SB228 Projects

Cost	Project Description
Phase 1: State FY 2016-2017	
$2.0 M	Program & Construction Management of all the Phase 1 Projects below
$1.5 M	Winter Park Express Platform (approved Apr. 2016)
$2.5 M	Six branded over-the-Road Coaches, 30-35 foot
$5.0 M	I-25 Managed Lanes Project: Kendall Parkway replacement / expansion of existing Loveland park-and-ride at US 34 / I-25
$3.0 M	Woodmen Road PNR replacement / expansion in Colorado Springs
$1.5 M	Lawson / Telluride / San Miguel County park-and-ride
$2.5 M	Frisco Transit Center Expansion
$2.0 M	Rifle Park & Ride Relocation
	$20.0 M Phase 1 Subtotal
Phase 2: State Fiscal Year 2016-2017	
$1.5 M	Program & Construction Management of all the Phase 2 Projects Below
$4.0 M	Up to ten (10) Branded over-the-road Coaches for Rural Regional System
$10.0 M	Outer Loop Park & Rides --Idaho Springs / Clear Creek County --Castle Rock / Douglas County --Frederick, Firestone, Dacono, Erie, Longmont / Weld County --Potential Denver Tech Center Stop
	$15.5 M Phase 2 Subtotal
	$35.5 M Phases 1 + 2 Subtotal
Phase 3: State Fiscal Year 2017-2018 and Beyond if Funds Available	
$4.0 M	Pueblo park & ride for Bustang service extension
$2.0 M	Brush Creek Park & Ride Expansion
$3.0 M	GMF to include Bustang, USFS Shuttle, RFTA
$2.5 M	Harmony Road park-and-ride expansion
$2.0 M	Tejon park-and-ride expansion
$4.0 M	Monument PNR access improvements, saving Bustang 10 minutes per trip, each direction
	$17.5 M Phase 3 Subtotal
	$53.0 M Phase 1 + 2 + 3 Total

The Rural Regional Bus Network plan is broken into two phases:

Phase 1 – FY 2016/17

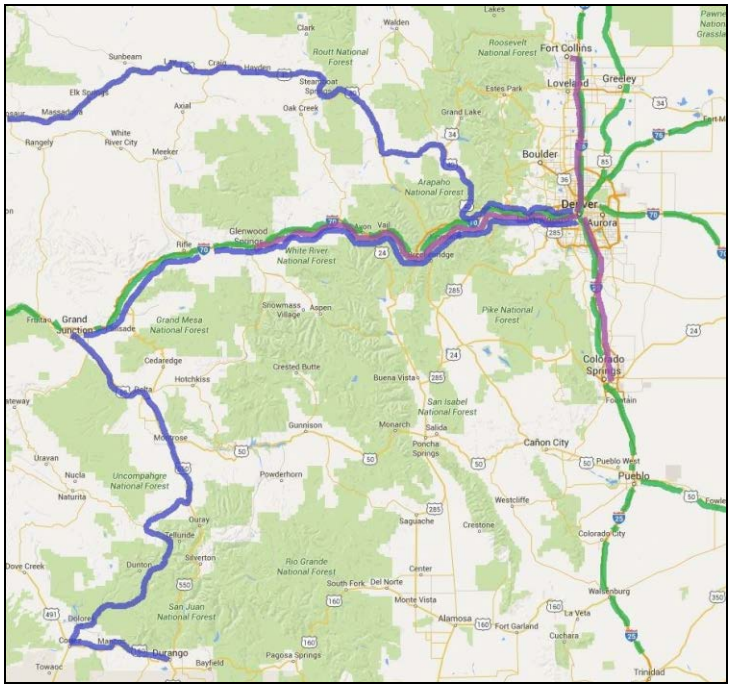
Deploy three new Bustang coaches and begin the reconfiguration of the current 5311(f) routes into a branded integrated service network.

Operations

- Eliminate the 5311(f) subsidy to the I-76 Route
- Apply the 5311(f) "savings" to Phase 2
- Maintain the status quo on Denver – Salt Lake via Steamboat
- Co-brand the Greyhound I-70 to Grand Junction with Bustang
- Also add a Vail-Denver short-turn Bustang route
- Improve SUCAP Durango-Grand Junction service reliability

Capital

- Use three new Bustang coaches which arrived in June 2016
    - 1 for Gunnison - Denver
    - 1 for Vail-Denver
    - 1 for short-term loan to SUCAP for Durango-Grand Junction
- Order six smaller (30-35 foot) over-the-road coaches for Phase 2



Phase I Rural Regional Bus Network Improvements (Including Bustang)

Phase 2 – FY 2017/18

CDOT plans to put the remainder of the current 5311(f) routes into a service package to be competitively procured and awarded to a private contract operator (similar to Bustang). Phase 2 will include implementation of the remaining elements from Phase 1 and two Bustang extensions.

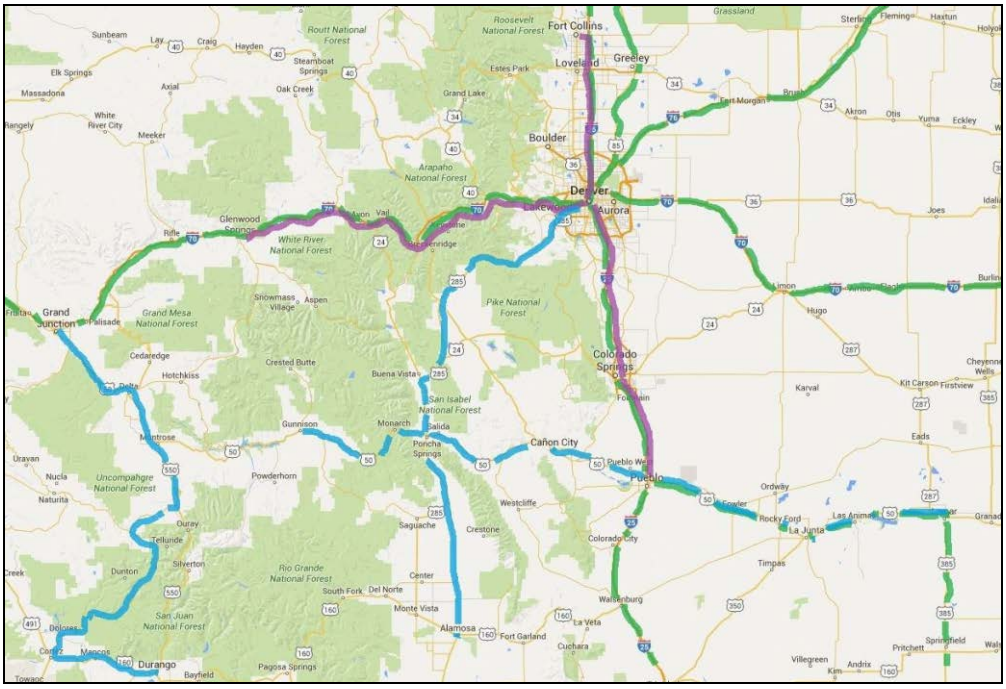
Operations

- Eliminate the subsidy for the Pueblo – Wichita Route
- Re-allocate funds to new Lamar – Pueblo Route

- Reconfigure existing Alamosa-Salida-Pueblo, Gunnison-Salida - Denver
- Add weekday round trip to the Bustang North Route
    - Requires return of Bustang coach on loan to SUCAP
- Add two round trips of Bustang South Route to Pueblo
    - One AM, one PM

Capital

- 2 new branded Rural Regional smaller over the road coaches to SUCAP for use Durango to Grand Junction route
- 4 new branded over the road coaches for supporting capital on southern Colorado routes: Gunnison-Denver, Alamosa-Pueblo, Pueblo-Lamar.

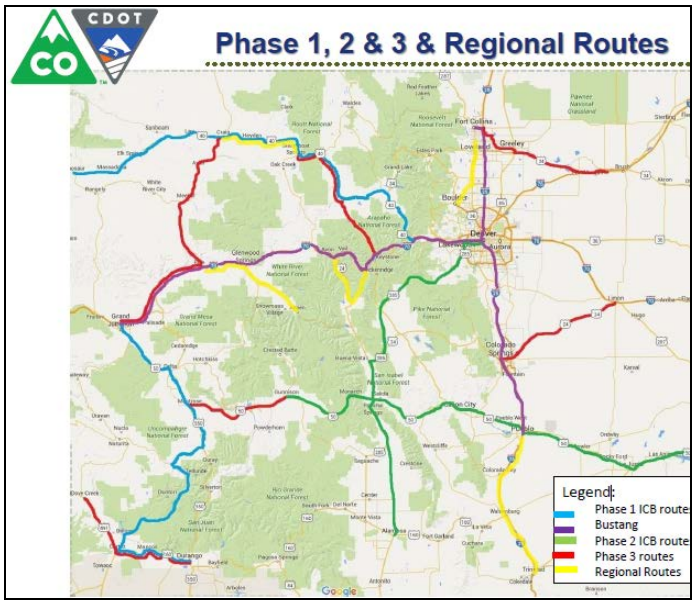


Phase 2 Rural Regional Bus Network

Phase 3

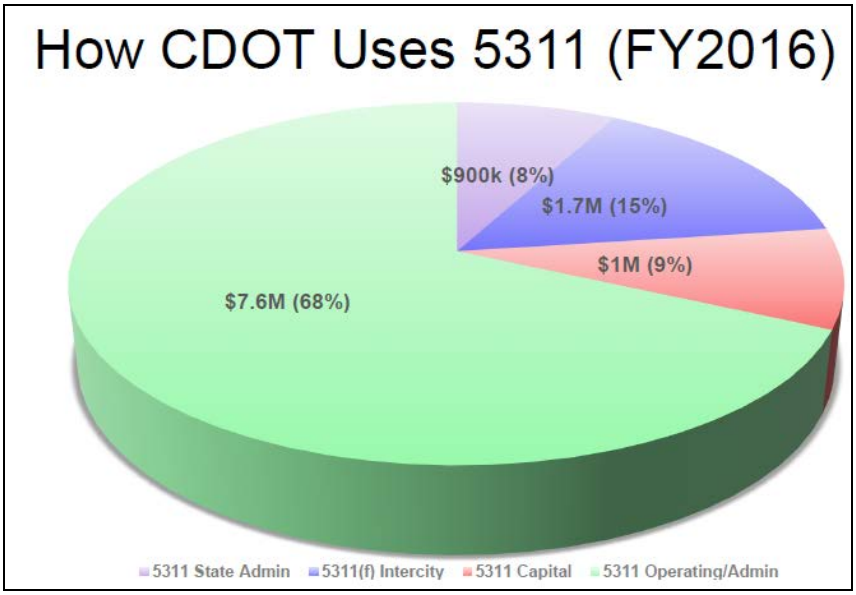
If funds are available upon completion of Phases 1 and 2, the following priorities include:

- Steamboat Springs to Frisco
- Fort Morgan to Greeley
- Greeley to Fort Collins
- Gunnison to Montrose
- Dove Creek to Durango
- Limon to Colorado Springs
- Craig – Rifle – Grand Junction

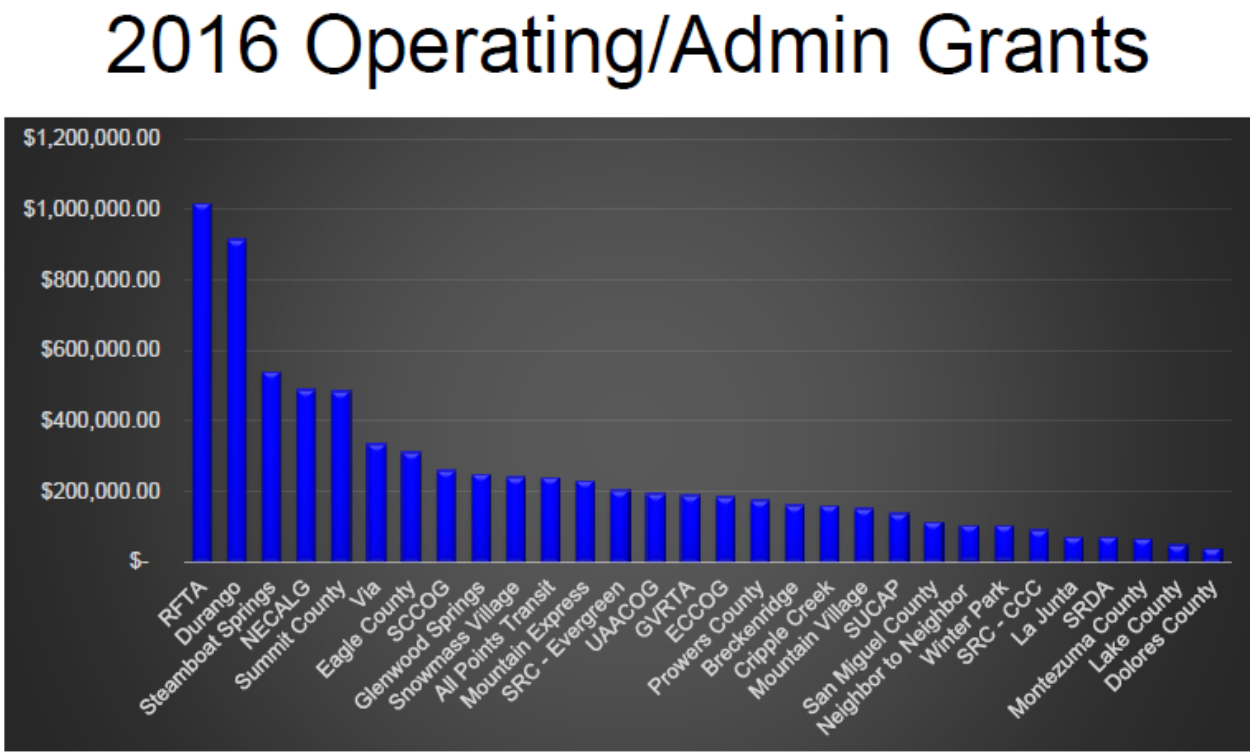


5311 Funding Redistribution

CDOT desires an equitable and simplified method for administering 5311 program funds. Section 5311 funding is the primary (if only) sources of funding for Colorado's roughly 56 rural transit agencies.



The chart below shows the distribution of CDOT 5310 and 5311 operating grants. Grant amounts range from $1.1 million for RFTA to $35,000 for Dolores County.



CDOT has listed a number of reasons for pursuing the change. Section 5310 and 5311 funds are forecast to grow at a slow pace, if at all. Meanwhile there is increasing competition for funding, and a number of transit agencies intending to enter the 5311 program, including:

– Archuleta County
– Telluride
– Bent County
– Estes Park
– Woodland Park
– Black Hawk
– Rural Weld/Larimer County

CDOT also cites limited transparency in the current formula. CDOT has developed a number of potential formula scenarios, shown below:

Scenario A (Based on national formula)	Scenario B1 and B2 (Variations on national formula)	Scenario C (Based on operating budget)	Scenario D (Various factors)
• Land • Population • Miles • Low Income Population	• Land • Population • Miles • Low Income Population • Performance	• Percentage of operating budget • Capped at $500,000	• Population • Miles • Hours • Passengers • Low Income Population • Performance

There is little concensus upon any formula at this point, and RFTA, Durango and several other agencies stand lose significant 5311 funds under all these scenarios. CDOT has agreed that a transition period is needed to help these agencies address the loss of 5311 funds.

RFTA has consulted with three other State DOTs. Their formulas are either over-simplified or discretionary. At the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee meeting on October 28, Jim Souby of the Colorado Rail Passenger Association commented that he used to assist in 5311 funding distribution for the State of Alaska DOT. They tried to create a formula, and finally agreed that an equitable formula was not attinable. He advocated not taking discretion off the table. Souby inquired if CDOT has developed different performance measures and scenarios for different transit operating categories, such as resort and demand response. CDOT they are considering that.

VW Settlement and CO Energy Mitigation Trust Fund

Volkswagen has agreed to settle its alleged violations of the Federal Clean Air Act, prompted by its sales of vehicles that emitted more air pollution than the Clean Air Act allows, and by cheating on federal emission tests. The affected vehicles exceed emission limits for nitrogen oxides (NOx), a pollutant that harms public health and forms ground level ozone or smog. The settlement is not yet final and must be approved by a Federal court in California before it takes effect. If approved, the partial settlement will require Volkswagen to pay $2.7 billion into an environmental mitigation trust fund. Colorado expects to receive at least $61 million from the trust between 2017 and 2027. The trust fund will be used to offset the excess air pollution emitted by some of the Volkswagen vehicles that violated the Clean Air Act.

The $61 million allocated to Colorado will fund certain eligible projects to reduce NOx emissions from the transportation sector. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

(CDPHE) is the state's lead agency to oversee distribution of funds. The funds will be used to achieve the maximum air quality benefits for the people of Colorado. In addition to cutting NOx emissions, the projects that receive funding are likely to reduce ozone concentrations and emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

CDPHE is working with the Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado Energy Office, and other agencies to establish a public process to administer the settlement. No decisions have been made about how to spend Colorado's share of the settlement or who will receive this money.

During the fall of 2016, state agencies will conduct outreach to potential beneficiaries, government officials, transportation organizations and the public. State agencies will solicit information and ideas about how the settlement money should be spent. Assuming the court approves the settlement and trust fund without delay, details about the application process will be determined in early 2017. CDPHE expects to begin accepting applications in mid-2017. Colorado anticipates that funds will be available by the end of 2017.

RFTA Staff has written a letter of support for this statewide process, and circulated an email invitation for RFTA member jurisdictions to listen in on the November 7th webcast and submit follow-up comments by the November 21st deadline. RFTA is simply a transit stakeholder in this high-level conversation; however RFTA is pleased to support increased incentives for clean energy projects that will benefit the region.