RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update
November 14th, 2019

RFTA Vision

Connecting our region with transit and trails.

RFTA Mission

RFTA pursues excellence and innovation in providing preferred transportation choices that connect and support vibrant communities.

RFTA Strategic Outcomes

Safety, Accessibility/Mobility, Sustainable Workforce, Financial Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Satisfied Customers, High Performing Organization

Current Planning Projects

Battery Electric Bus (BEB) Pilot Project Update

As the last two New Flyer battery electric buses (BEBs) are delivered, Staff continues to test the operational performance of each bus thoroughly before being put into revenue service. Early performance data reports that we will be able to operate an electric bus for a full shift on both the Hunter Creek and Castle Maroon routes. Following the start of the winter season on December 3rd, Staff plans to assign electric buses to those routes. Staff is also hopeful we will be able to operate one BEB on day shifts, and a second BEB on night shifts. The four BEBs purchased by the City of Aspen will be focused on shorter City routes, and RFTA intends to operate its four BEBs on short regional routes and possibly on Highlands, Buttermilk or on the new Flyer service.

For more information on this innovative project, please access *www.rfta.com/electricbuses/*. And don't forget to attend the in-service celebration at Rubey Park on Tues. Dec. 3rd!

Charge Ahead Grant

With approximately $70 million coming to the State from the VW Settlement Program, coupled with Governor Polis's aggressive transportation electrification goals, towns and agencies have some grant options. RFTA has submitted a Charge Ahead Colorado grant application to replace

the dated Level 2 electric vehicle charger at both the Carbondale BRT Station/Park-n-Ride and the New Castle Park-n-Ride. With encouragement from the Town of Carbondale and engineering assistance from Holy Cross Energy, RFTA also applied to install a new Level 3 DC Fast Charger at the Carbondale PNR. A Level 3 DC charger is a big deal for EV car owners because the charge time is 4x faster than a Level 2 charger. These EV chargers will also expand the regional EV charging network and increase the adoption of electric vehicles. Grant awards are projected for late December.

Intermountain Transportation Planning Region (IMTPR) Meeting

At the last IMTPR meeting in Eagle, on November 1, CDOT worked with the counties, municipalities, and transit agencies to prioritize projects. After a laborious effort, CDOT requested that each County reach consensus on their 2-3 highest priority transportation projects, and reconvene on November 22.

First and Last Mile Mobility

RFTA and City of Aspen met informally this month to discuss the City's micro-mobility strategies. This summer, the City instituted a moratorium on dockless mobility devices in the public right of way. Between now and the end of 2019, the City will gauge interest and hear any concerns about dockless mobility in Aspen. Feedback from this outreach will be provided to Aspen City Council in early 2020 along with a request for direction on next steps. RFTA will participate in the public open houses, scheduled for December 4.

The City's 2020 work plan includes a review of on-demand services. This item is likely to be discussed with the City Council in early 2020, and will likely provide input to RFTA's regional micro mobility planning and pending regional micro mobility study.

Glenwood Springs Corridor Study

Creating a balanced, safe, and affordable multimodal transportation system is a common goal to both the City of Glenwood Springs and RFTA. These mobility elements not only interrelate, but also tie directly to land use, economic vitality, economic sustainability, and quality-of-life goals identified by the City and RFTA.

Both entities are partnering on an effort to address several key and interrelated transportation elements: BRT extension, local transit service, intersection and traffic operations, pedestrian/bicycle mobility, and parking plans and facilities.

This study effort will provide a strategic blueprint to guide RFTA's and the City's near- and long-term infrastructure investments, and provide a foundation for design, funding and implementation initiatives.

This study is anticipated to begin in November 2019 and will be complete by end of 2020.

Aspen Airport Visioning: A Carbon-Free Aviation Future

On Wednesday, November 13, the Aspen Pitkin County Airport Vison Committee hosted a symposium on The Future of Aviation in a Carbon Constrained World. The event explored future innovations in aviation technology that will help communities reach goals of reduce carbon emissions, particularly from general and commercial aviation.

Grants Update

Currently, RFTA Staff across several departments are managing approximately 14 grant projects, in different stages of grant execution, with an estimated $22.6 million in total project costs.

Charge Ahead

Recently, Planning Staff submitted a Charge Ahead grant to update public electric vehicle charging stations at the Carbondale BRT Station and the New Castle PNR.

Consolidated Capital Call for Projects (CCCP)

By November 18th, Staff will submit annual capital call grants to replace 10 diesel buses, 2 Traveler cutaway buses and continue with Phase 3 of the GMF/RTC renovation/expansion project. During the Destination 2040 Plan, and Ballot Issue 7A, RFTA committed to funding $15 million of the roughly $30 million estimated project cost of the GMF renovation and expansion, and that approximately $15 million would come from grant sources. Statewide Proposition 110, which was turned down by voters, would have provided the other $15 million.

RFTA recently applied for approximately $9 million in grant funds through the BUILD grant program. On November 7, RFTA was notified that it was not awarded funding. RFTA must build this project incrementally with smaller grants. RFTA intends to apply for $2,976,000 in CCCP grant funds to construct a logical, incremental portion of the entire project: Grading, building demolition and roadway realignments. Estimated project cost is roughly $3.72 million.

27th Street Pedestrian Crossing, Glenwood Springs

RFTA and the City of Glenwood Springs will also be submitting grants to design and construct grade-separated pedestrian crossings of SH 82 and 27th St. near the 27th St. BRT Station. Construction of this crossing is a high priority for RFTA, the City of Glenwood Springs and for the region. It was programmed for 50% funding in the Destination 2040 plan; RFTA committed to funding the remainder of the project through grants and partnerships. RFTA has the unique opportunity to solicit the remaining funding from the following sources for design and construction:

1. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
2. CDOT Multimodal Options Funds
3. CDOT Regional Priority Projects Funding
4. Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District
5. City of Glenwood Springs

Current cost estimate is roughly $8million to $10 million, and will be refined as the design advances.

BUILD

The US DOT has begun to announce BUILD grant awards. Colorado was awarded two grants totaling $43.4 million: $25 million to Aurora to realign Picadilly Road and $18.4 million to improve highways in El Paso County. RFTA will request a de-brief within the next month from USDOT on RFTA's roughly $9 million proposal for renovation and expansion of the GMF. RFTA has applied for BUILD funding for GMF renovation and expansion for at least six years.