

GUNNISON VALLEY RTA TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE
SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP – THURSDAY, JUNE 12TH, 2008
CRESTED BUTTE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 6:00-7:30 PM
PRIORITY ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

The Gunnison Valley Rural Transportation Authority (GVRTA) and its consultant conducted two workshops on June 11th and June 12th, 2008 in support of the Transportation Plan Update. These community public workshops were held on consecutive nights in Gunnison and Crested Butte. The meetings were conducted by the GVRTA's consultant, Charlier Associates, with staff support and attendance from the GVRTA, County Commissioners, local government staff, transit operators, concerned citizens, and other transportation partners.

The objective of both workshops was to identify and prioritize key transportation issues, challenges, opportunities, and values that the planning process should address. The project team will use this input to guide the project's technical and policy focus and to develop prioritization and evaluation criteria.

After introductions by GVRTA Executive Director Scott Truex and an overview presentation by Jacob Riger of Charlier Associates, Jacob and his colleague Scott Burton led participants through an informal discussion using an index card exercise.

Participants were asked to fill out three color-coded index cards with the following information:

- Three high-priority transportation concerns or issues in the study area;
- Three possible solutions to the most important issue identified, noting which solution should be implemented first, and
- A creative mobility opportunity that would most contribute to their long-term vision for the community.

The following documents the major outcomes of each index card exercise. Given the small attendance, each comment received is incorporated in the discussion below.

PRIORITY ISSUES

Based on the conclusions of the workshop exercise, the following issues seemed to resonate most broadly:

- Address parking issues – constrained capacity on Elk Avenue, overflow into residential areas, and managing Mount Crested Butte-oriented intercept parking
- Multimodal connections to/from Crested Butte and communities to the south (CB South, Riverland, etc.)

- Managing traffic congestion through Crested Butte and to/from Mount Crested Butte and assessing the feasibility of options to address
- Bicycle/pedestrian connections and safety within Crested Butte and to/from communities to the south

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

After identifying priority issues and concerns, workshop participants identified the following potential solutions:

- Parking issues – Participants suggested that land could be acquired for intercept parking, residents could be provided parking permits to address overflow parking, and that single-occupant vehicle trips into downtown could be discouraged (or at least not promoted)
- Traffic congestion between Crested Butte and Mont Crested Butte – Participants suggested that vehicles be intercepted before they get to Crested Butte from the south. They also suggested that transit service be increased, particularly in coordination with parking management. However, it was also pointed out that buses can get stuck in traffic on Gothic Road just as much as cars. There was also consensus that mobility options between Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte are limited, and that some opportunities have already been lost (such as a gondola). In response, suggestions were made to consider tolls, widening Gothic Road, rail service, or an alternative travel corridor.
- Bus service to Crested Butte South and adjacent communities – Participants suggested that circulator bus service be provided that penetrated each neighborhood to maximize convenience and minimize travel time to/from Crested Butte. It was discussed that this option might be prohibitive on a cost-per-rider basis, but that residents won't ride the bus if access is not convenient. Other suggestions involved park and ride lots and the feasibility of encouraging biking and walking to bus stops along Highway 135.
- Minimize impacts from 6th Avenue traffic – Participants noted that 6th Avenue (Highway 135) can be a major barrier for east-west bicycling and walking through the heart of Crested Butte because of traffic congestions. They suggested minimizing these impacts by limiting development north of Town and east of 6th Avenue. Other suggestions discussed included tolls, traffic calming strategies, intercept parking, and increased bus service.

It should be noted that potential solutions were not identified for all priority issues discussed previously. Rather, the potential solutions noted above were those identified and discussed during this portion of the workshop exercise.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT MOBILITY OPPORTUNITY

Finally, participants were asked to identify the most creative mobility opportunity that would help make the study area a better place to live and work. These ideas were not

meant to be cost or otherwise constrained, but rather to provide a sense of core values and special aspects of the region that the community treasures. Major ideas identified were:

- Discourage automobile use in Crested Butte by incentivizing the use of bus service, walking, biking, and intercept parking
- Incentivize multimodal transportation use by creating a bike-sharing program, providing free bike tune-ups, paying people to ride the bus, and other means
- Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian travel within Crested Butte, particularly safety (such as grade-separated crossings and other strategies)
- Create better multimodal connections to/from Crested Butte and communities to the south (local bus service, commuting-oriented and recreational trails, etc.)
- Implement creative land use regulations throughout Gunnison County that promote density and urban design standards
- Create sustainable communities that are in scale to what transportation and water supplies can realistically support

WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

Workshop participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the workshop and to offer suggestions for improving future workshops. Approximately one-third of the 13 participants completed the evaluation form. The form asked for rankings on several topics on a scale of one to five (strongly disagree to strongly agree):

- The location for the workshop was convenient and accessible.
- Workshop materials were clear and easy to understand.
- There were many opportunities to offer personal input.
- The staff and consultant were receptive to input from participants.
- The exercises were useful and will provide good input for the plan.
- The experience was enjoyable and informative.

The majority of the evaluation responses were positive and participants either mostly agreed or completely agreed to the above statements. One participant suggested that workshop materials could have been clearer and the exercises more informative.

Suggestions for Future Workshops

The majority of suggestions were to increase attendance and to provide more examples from other communities. Other comments were positive regarding the discussion and workshop approach.

Public Outreach Strategies for Workshop

The majority of workshop attendees learned of the workshop through contact with staff, friends, or in the local newspaper.

DETAILED DISCUSSION RESULTS

The following is a verbatim list of comments received during the index card exercise.

PRIORITY ISSUES

- Bottleneck traffic between Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte regarding future development in Mount Crested Butte.
- Trail to Crested Butte South
- Intercept parking to keep cars out of Town (Crested Butte) – pedestrian friendly
- Local bus service to all neighborhoods south of Crested Butte
- Sustainable revenue source and a business plan that supports/maintains an essential level of service
- Low carbon dioxide emitting public transportation
- Bus service to Crested Butte South and Riverland
- Getting between Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte – the road reaches gridlock
- Prevent auto and truck traffic from “dividing” Crested Butte because of sheer numbers
- Confinement/limits of Gothic Road (between Crested Butte and through Mount Crested Butte)
- Effective alternatives to personal vehicle use
- Traffic volumes on Gothic road and through the Town of Crested Butte
- Transportation between Crested Butte South and Crested Butte
- Bus to Riverland
- Alternative fuel for buses – not gas guzzlers
- Limit parking in Crested Butte
- Parking – is it an issue? How do we discourage resident parking in Crested Butte?
- Traffic on 6th Avenue
- Encourage carpooling
- No traffic signs
- Parking in Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte
- Not creating such a barrier, via a road, that Crested Butte is divided and pedestrians can’t get from one side to the other
- Ensure that each community accommodates fair share of new development within it
- Ensure that new development pays for transportation impacts it causes
- Parking in Crested Butte
- Safe and extensive pedestrian and bicycle routes
- Transit, alternative modes, from outlying subdivisions within Gunnison County
- Need for parking lots in Town of Crested Butte, but there is a lack of space and money
- Reduce traffic from Crested Butte to Mount Crested Butte
- Bus to Denver - affordable mode – bus to Grand junction too
- Crested Butte Shuttle
- Recreational path
- Publicly funded transportation
- Funding sources for transportation
- Will a park and ride at Crested Butte South and SH 135 work?
- Kebler/Cottonwood improvements/provide winter access
- Clean mass transit valley-wide

- Parking in Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Intercept parking

- Acquire land – maybe already have it
- Give residents permits
- Tout place as pedestrian friendly – clean air, traffic free, etc.

Reduce traffic between Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte

- Intercept parking lot before entering Crested Butte
- Alternative to cars – rail and gondola
- Permits required and a toll to get from Crested Butte to Mount Crested Butte

Bus service to Crested Butte South and Riverland

- RTA or Mountain Express
- Park and ride lots
- Express bus to Crested Butte South

Local bus service to all neighborhoods south of Crested Butte

- Get a bus
- Provide service a couple of times an hour
- Year round – 7am until midnight

Prevent auto and truck traffic from “dividing” Crested Butte because of sheer numbers

- Limit new subdivision and developments north of Crested Butte
- Toll gate at Butte Avenue to discourage car use
- Flower boxes – traffic calming strategies on 6th Avenue

Traffic volumes on Gothic road and thru the Town of Crested Butte

- Intercept parking and transit south of Crested Butte
- Alternative route to Mount Crested Butte
- Park and ride lots

Publicly-funded transportation

- Funded mass transit (i.e. buses)
- They should produce low carbon emissions
- State and federal funding

Effective alternatives to personal vehicle use

- Mass transit to every neighborhood with park and rides as well
- Intercept parking lots
- Make parking harder than riding mass transit

Sustainable revenue source and a business plan that supports/maintains an essential level of service

- Transportation tax district (exempt those paying)
- Implement fee for service

- Merge mountain Express and the RTA into a single transportation authority

Prevent auto and truck traffic from “dividing” Crested Butte because of sheer numbers

- Increase bus service to Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte significantly
- Construct an intercept lot south of Crested Butte
- Construct a bypass under 6th street through Crested Butte

Confinement/limits of Gothic Road (between Crested Butte and through Mount Crested Butte

- Improved, encourage public transit
- Widen road by one lane
- Bypass around mountain through Brush Creek

Bottleneck traffic between Crested Butte and Mont Crested Butte regarding future development in Mount Crested Butte

- Create a residential permit parking system in the Towns of Crested Butte and Mount Crested Butte
- Get easements to widen Gothic Road
- Create an interbus system in Mount Crested Butte to keep Mount Crested Butte residents and visitors out of their cars

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT MOBILITY OPPORTUNITY

- Scale down development to what transportation and water can realistically support
- More land conservation
- Ban all vehicles on Elk Avenue
- Plan as if we do live in a finite planet with finite materials around us
- To improve the quality of life for residents and visitors
- Pedestrian friendly
- Mass transit
- Bikes people can ride and leave for the next person to use
- Create a true pedestrian/bicycle community north of Crested Butte South (supplement it with mass transit)
- Electric hybrid buses
- Subsidize bicycle use for those who ride to work, etc.
- Create land use regulations in the County that promote density and discourage disbursed development
- Developers should build in bus stops
- Few to no cars – people walking and riding bikes, this would include visitors
- Local bus service to Crested Butte South