

Meeting Log

Upper Gunnison Valley Transportation Plan - 2008 Update

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Southern Study Area Staff Meeting

April 1, 2008, 2:30 pm–4:00 pm

Gunnison City Council Chambers

Notes:

- After introductions, Jacob gave a brief overview of the project, the purpose of today's discussion, and how input received will help shape the planning process.
- Jacob and Scott then led the group through a facilitated discussion involving responses, thoughts, and input to several key questions. Each question and responses received are summarized below.
- Question: What has been the greatest success of regional planning efforts to date?
 - Formation of the RTA – it is a formalized mechanism for transit and airline funding. It has been a stable and reliable revenue stream.
 - The RTA facilitated regional planning and cooperation. It has been effective in bringing the communities together in terms of planning.
 - The bus is free. It is a great way to move employees between the upper valley communities. Transit is an “economic driver” for all communities especially for the ski resort. There is significant ridership in all directions. Perception has changed – people originally thought that most of the ridership would come from Gunnison, but there are now many people riding in both directions.
 - Mountain Express service has also been an ongoing success story.
- Question: What has been the most unanticipated challenge of regional planning efforts to date?
 - Meeting CDOT requirements for bus stops on state highways is a significant challenge in terms of stopping, separation from the highway, facilities, etc. Providing adequate and effective bus stops are a challenge. Proper facilities can encourage ridership. Stops should have lighting, benches, signs, etc. They should also be covered and conveniently located.
 - Another challenge is determining whether or not the RTA bus service should continue to be free or not. Current policy has been to keep the service free to encourage ridership, reducing drunk driving, etc. However, other regional systems charge a fare – is the RTA properly pricing its service?
 - Another major issue is building park and ride lots. Such lots would encourage ridership. Weather can deter people from walking to bus stops.



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- Question: What are the most important current transportation issues facing the region?
 - The character of downtown Gunnison should be preserved; doing so will involve transportation issues.
 - Getting people from DIA to the region (especially to CBMR) using mass transportation will help reduce vehicle traffic locally.
 - Commercial traffic is going to be a recurring issue, especially along Highway 135 and US 50 through downtown. Heavy commercial traffic discourages pedestrians from walking, especially downtown.
 - There needs to be a pedestrian connection between the community school and the recreation center in Crested Butte.
 - If the annexation occurs, transit circulation through town will be affected.
 - Bicycle safety between Gunnison and Crested Butte is an ongoing issue. Highway 135 is getting better but could still use additional safety/traffic flow improvements.
 - Providing access to RTA bus stops from the opposite side of Highway 135 – pedestrian safety is at great risk in crossing the highway.
 - Each community needs to improve parking management in its downtown. How should parking supply and policy be managed in the future. Parking is especially important in Crested Butte. Parking would be less of an issue if more people rode the bus. There are also different perceptions about parking between local residents and visitors/tourists.
 - Access to CB South from Highway 135 and the alignment/safety of the Cement Creek Road/Highway 135 intersection are important concerns.

- Question: What are the greatest long-term transportation issues and opportunities the region will face in the future?
 - How potential annexations and development will affect existing and potential transit service in Gunnison.
 - What impact would a national retailer (such as a big box store) have on the Valley's transportation system?
 - The potential for mining-related development and traffic is a major issue. Though understood that this is beyond the scope of this project, its impacts could be significant, especially through downtown Gunnison on Main Street/Highway 135.
 - The potential redevelopment of the airport and its impact on the surrounding roadway system are also important issues. However, given that this redevelopment may or may not happen, this issue is “not at the top of the list.”

- Questions: What final work products would be most useful to you? How should the success and usefulness of the new Plan be evaluated?
 - The plan should have realistic priorities and objectives.



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- Transit should be the major focus. The plan should assess transit funding possibilities.
 - Think outside the box in terms of transit/transportation funding.
 - Show why there is a paradigm shift on increasing travel options.
 - Develop tools/criteria that staff and officials can use to make decisions.
 - Need to address intercity travel.
 - Address the feasibility of various transportation options, including rail technology.
 - Discuss the private sector's role in terms of transit funding and prioritization.
 - Provide specifics on park-and-ride feasibility and locations.
 - How can transit serve the Gunnison area more efficiently?
- Jacob and Scott concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation and inviting additional input. They also noted that a second round of stakeholder meetings would be held later in the process to review draft concepts and recommendations.

