



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together

Born in a Small Town

Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute
2013 Conference

March 8, 2013

Presentation objectives

- Articulate how and why transportation system development is different in small communities
- Case studies of tools for shaping the future you want
 - Community character
 - Economic competitiveness
 - Quality of life

Smart Growth

Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with **housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools.**

These strategies **support thriving local economies** and protect the environment.

What I hear about smart growth



Wengen



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Smart growth is ugly.



Riomaggiore, Italy



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We have no history with it.



New Orleans, LA



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Nobody would want to live there.



Aspen, CO



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It just doesn't work here.



Pearl District, Portland, OR



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Shut up and drive!



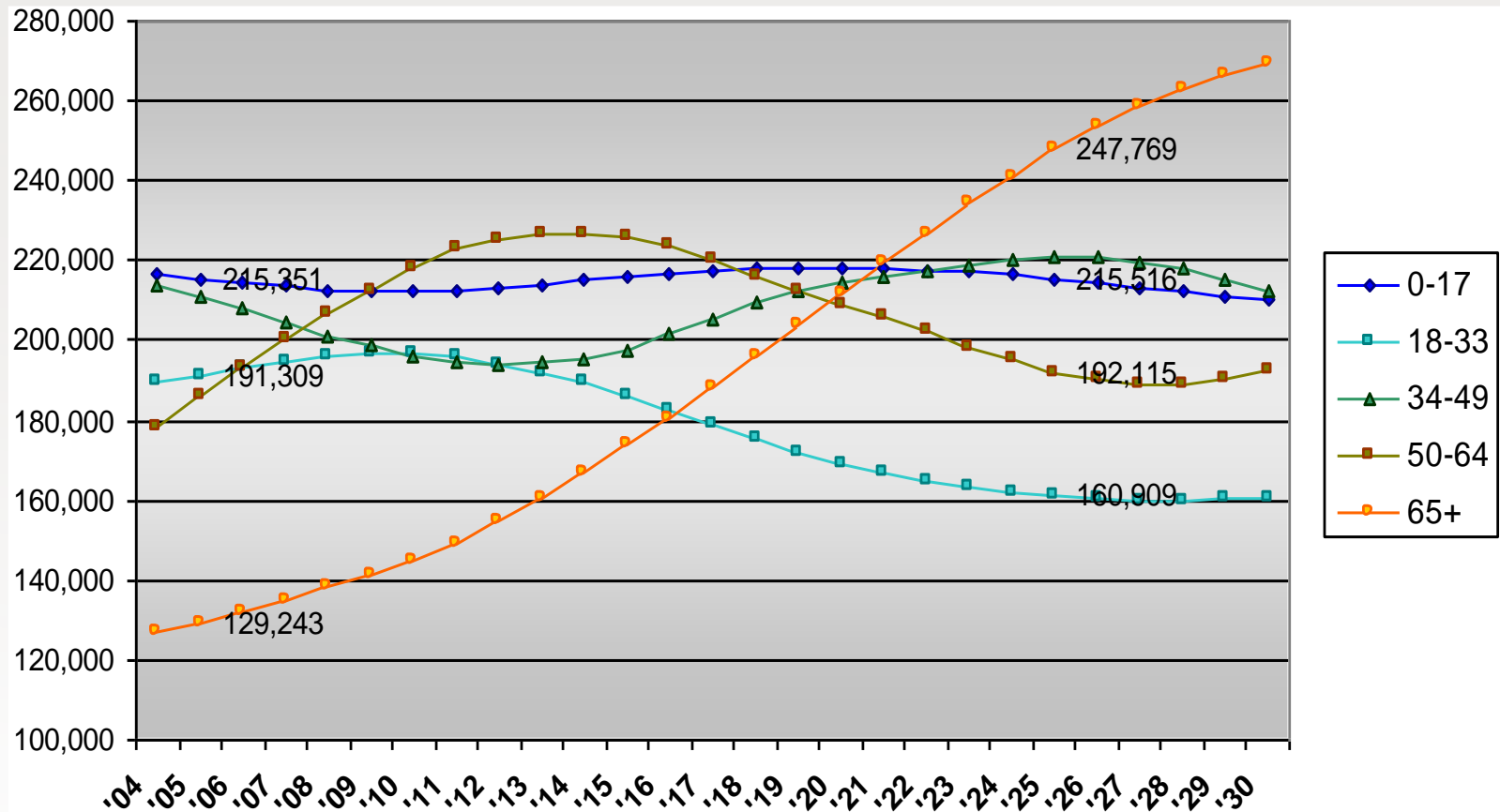
Rural/small town communities are different



The state we live in



Rural demographics



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005

Graph courtesy of Dr. Larry Swanson, O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West, U. of Montana



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Urban levels of traffic



Lack of transportation choice



Lack of housing for workers



Lack of housing for families



Infrastructure capacity



Environmental issues



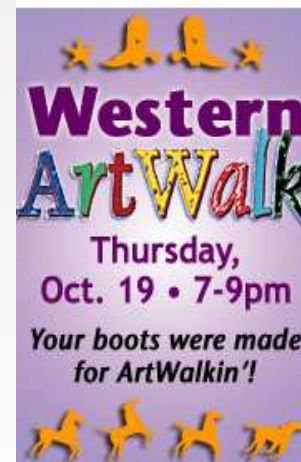
Economic viability of downtowns



Workforce development



A desire for a vibrant cultural community



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A need for lifelong learning and civic involvement



Remember why you live here...



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Shaping the future you want



The Problem



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Is transit a social service for people who have no other choice or a legitimate and thus larger part of the transportation system that everybody in the community uses?



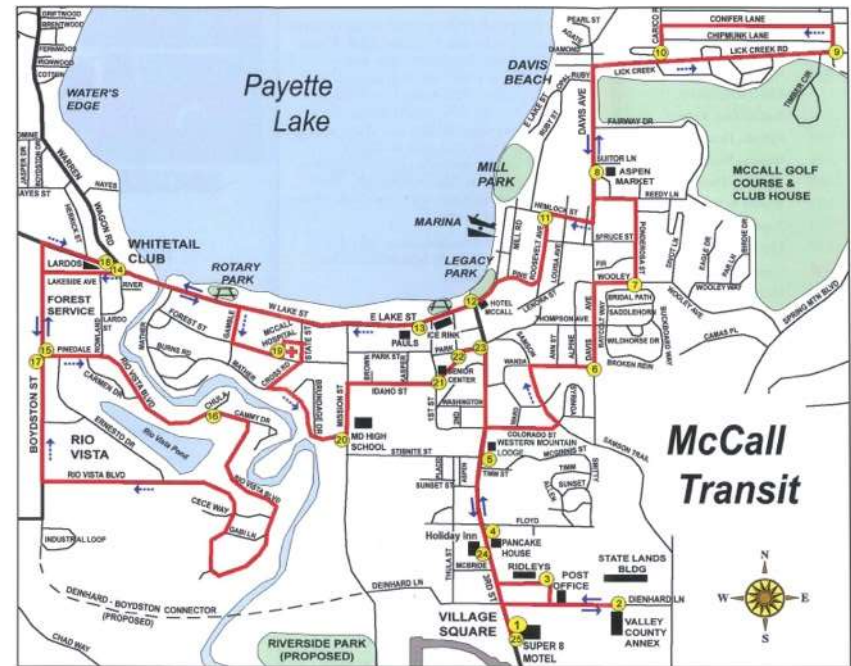
McCall, Idaho

- A community of approx. 3,000 people
- Boise metropolitan area, approximately 100 miles to the south
- A 5,500 acre alpine lake
- Three ski mountains and a lift served tubing hill
- Ponderosa State Park
- Established downtown
- Established second home community
- Airport with capacity for expansion
- Physical and civic infrastructure and a city government staffed to manage change
- www.mccall.id.us



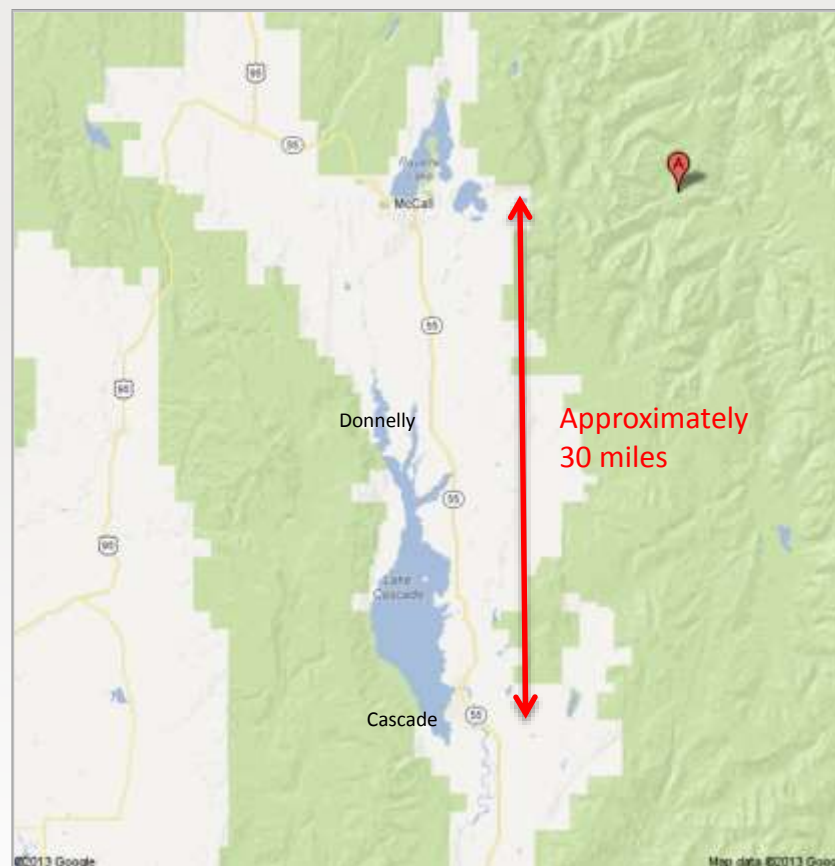
McCall Transit

- Fare free public transportation for the City of McCall
- 25-30,000 ridership
- 7:00am to 7:00pm
- 7 Days a Week
- Operating scenario
 - Regular route and schedule
 - Flag stop system; anyone who needs to use the service may flag the bus anywhere along the route where it is safe to do so
 - Route deviation to all patrons up to 3/4 mile from the published route



Mountain Community Transit

- McCall to Lake Fork, Donnelly, Cascade and back
- 25-30,000 ridership
- Monday through Friday
 - Peak hour service
 - 6:00 am to 6:20 pm
- Fares
 - Single trip \$1 to \$2
 - Day pass \$1 to \$3
 - Monthly pass \$24 to \$48
 - Discounts for students, seniors
- MCT does not operate Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.



Operations and funding

- Operated by Treasure Valley Transit
 - Rural transit provider for 8 counties in Southwest Idaho
 - Contract with ITD and City of McCall
 - CTAA 2012 Rural Community Transportation System of the Year
- Funding
 - FTA rural
 - City of McCall local option tax
 - Other cities, school district, misc.



Future plans

- Downtown transit center
- Bus maintenance and storage facility
- Regional service expansion
- Link to Boise



Blaine County, Idaho



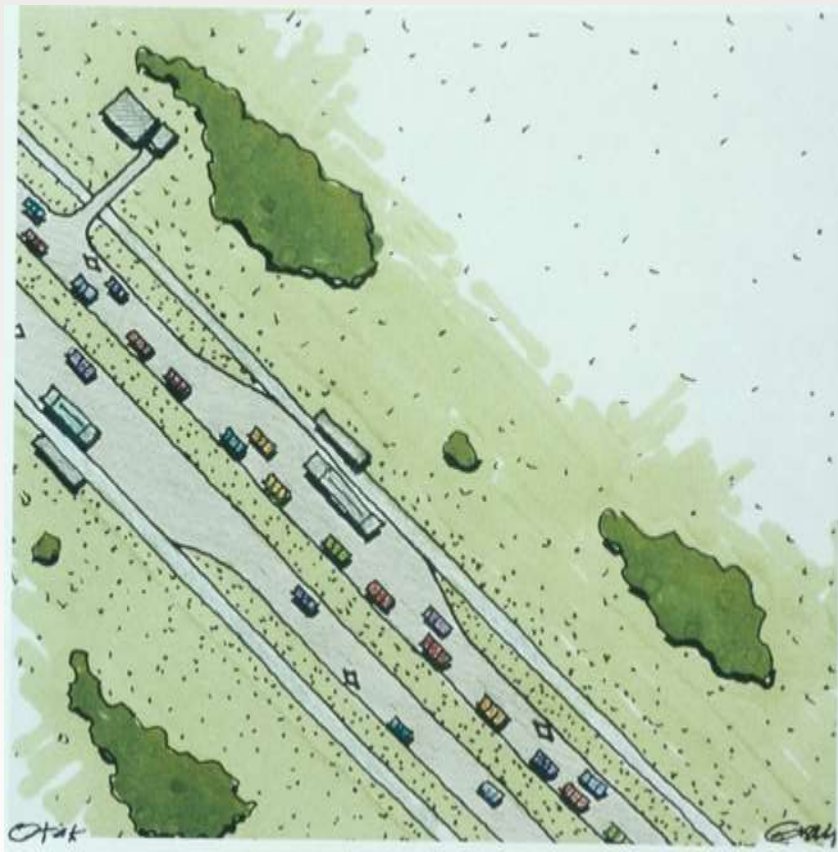
2001 Blaine County Plan (Within 2 years)

- Public education
- Enhanced KART service
- Enhanced Wood River Rideshare
- Teen Bus
- Peak-hour HOV lanes
- Active participation in ITD process



2001 Blaine County Plan (2 to 5 years)

- Local option transit tax
- Form RTA
- Peak-hour bus service
- Parking management in Ketchum
- Park and rides
- Implement ITD project
- Preserve fixed guideway corridor



2001 Blaine County Plan (5 years +)

- Extend RTA to adjacent counties
- All day bus service
- Peak hour bus service to Carey, Twin Falls
- Local circulator bus in Hailey and Bellevue
- Park and rides in Carey, Twin Falls
- Fixed guideway transit plan



The result

- Full-service, integrated, seamless public transportation provider
- Sustainable transportation backbone of Blaine County
- Improve the livability and attractiveness of the region for locals and visitors



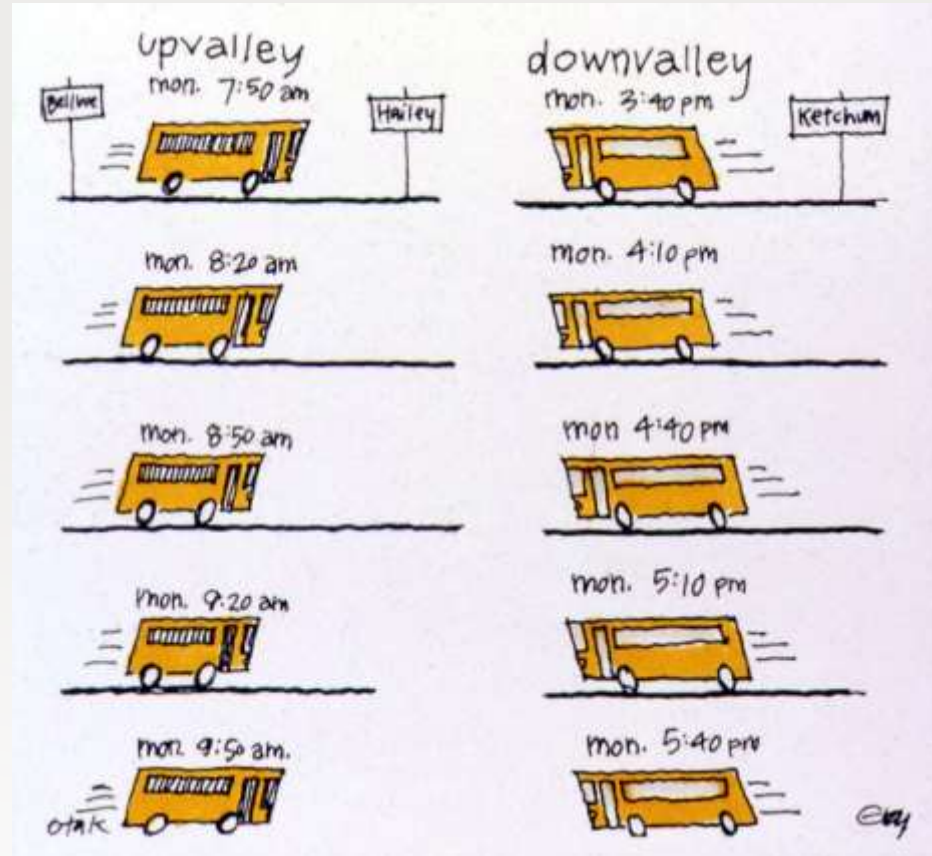
Mission

- Provide transportation solutions to those who live, work, or visit Blaine County
- Alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle that are environmentally sustainable, energy efficient, attractive, safe, convenient, reliable, and effective.



Goals

- Transportation solutions that reduce the number of single occupancy vehicle trips
- Short and long term, sustainable funding support
- Transportation solutions that meet the needs of the community
- Knowledge and awareness of the social, financial, environmental and community benefits of transportation alternatives
- Promote regional cooperation on transportation issues



Organizational overview

- Joint powers agreement
- Funding
 - Local Option Tax and general funds
 - Federal Transit Administration
 - Fares (for vanpool and Valley Route)
 - Miscellaneous grants
- Board of directors
 - Appointed by each city and the county, plus one at-large seat
 - Sets policies, high level goals, and strategic direction, as well as approving the budget and managing the Executive Director
- Executive Director and staff carry out the direction of the board



Services overview

- Overall ridership approaching 500,000 per year
- Growing at 12-15% per year the past 3 years
- Town Routes (Ketchum and Sun Valley)
 - Ridership up 10% in 2011
- Valley Route
 - ½ hour headways in peak hours
 - Ridership up 25% in 2011
- Hailey Route
 - Started in April 2010
 - Grew 300% in 1st year
- Vanpool
 - 7 peak routes from Twin Falls, Jerome, Gooding, and Shoshone
 - Route to CSI Twin Falls
 - Ski team vans



More than just buses

- Safe Routes to School
 - Getting more kids to bike or walk to school safely
 - Infrastructure projects, comprehensive education and encouragement
- Bike and Pedestrian
 - Bike Month Events
 - Community Bike Program
 - Bike Friendly Community
- Transportation planning & support
 - Passenger shelters, bike racks, pathways
 - Employer outreach & education
 - Public engagement (Smart Moves)
 - Trip planning



Recent accomplishments

- State of Good Repair and Livability grant awards in 2011
 - \$300,000 for new bus
 - \$240,000 for transit center and East Fork bus shelter
- America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funding
 - Mountain Rides received \$1.6 million in ARRA transit funds in 2009
 - \$1.2 million for new large buses for replacement and expansion
 - \$245k for new vans for commuter vanpool
 - Capital equipment needs are met for immediate future



Recent accomplishments

- Regional support and funding
 - Cities and counties committed
 - Joint Powers Agreement renewed
 - Federal rural transit funding
- Strong partnerships
 - BCSD, Sage School, The Community School
 - Allows all kids to ride for free during the school weeks
 - Sun Valley Co.
 - 4th year of our partnership that eliminated duplication of bus service
 - YMCA
 - Allows access to Valley Bus for YMCA members
 - Major employers
 - Sun Valley Co., Atkinsons, St Lukes, Webb, Forest Service
 - Non-profits
 - Center for the Arts, SVSEF, BCRD, Community Library, ERC



Future Plans

- Develop a financial plan that plans for future funding uncertainty
- Build or purchase a permanent maintenance/storage facility in Hailey or Bellevue
- Build a downtown Ketchum transit center that would create space for all routes to come together for transfers and would have bus shelters and kiosks
- Continue to improve safety and customer service
- Start a few more vanpool routes
- Build more partnerships with the community





Roaring Fork Transit & Trail Project



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Overview of the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority



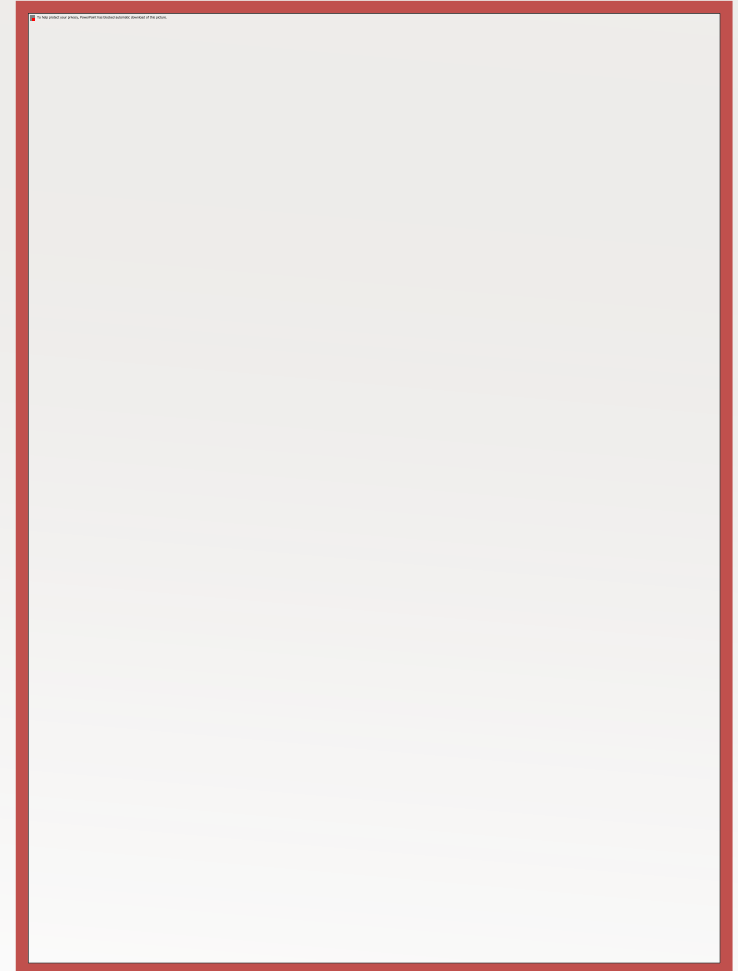
Overview of the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority

RFTA:

- 2nd Largest public transit system in Colorado after Denver RTD
- Believed to be the largest rural public transit system in the U.S.
- 1st Rural BRT System in the U.S.

2011 Information:

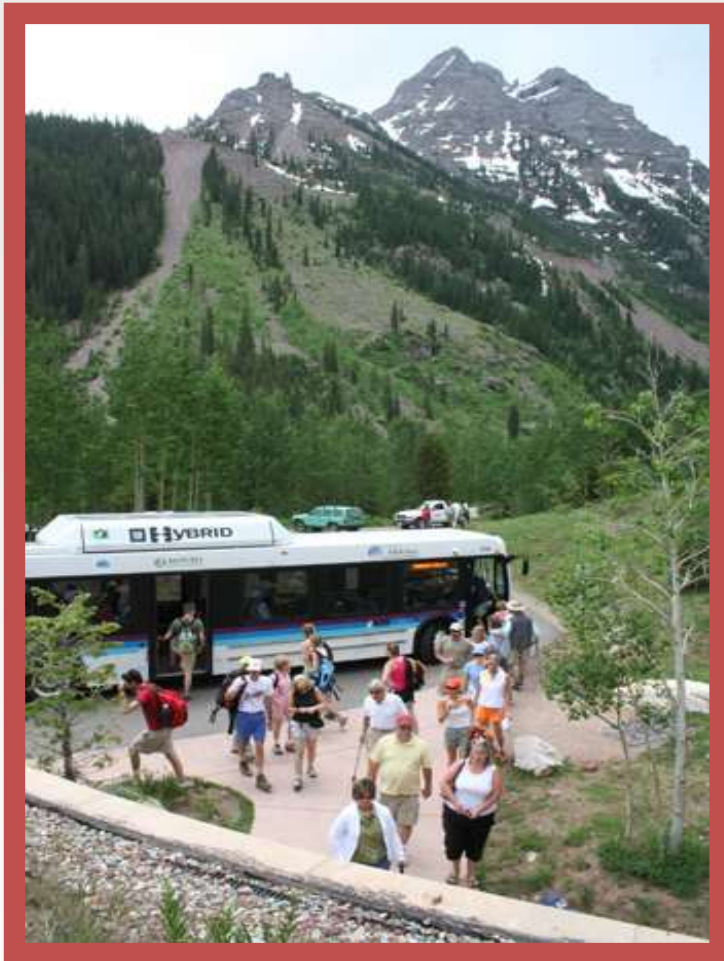
- 4.14 million passengers
- 3.68 million miles of service
- 250 employees during peak winter season
- 100 large transit vehicles
- \$31.8 million budget
- 70-mile corridor
 - Aspen to Glenwood Springs
 - Glenwood Springs to Rifle
- 34-mile Rio Grande Rail Corridor and Trail



Overview of the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority



Overview of the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority



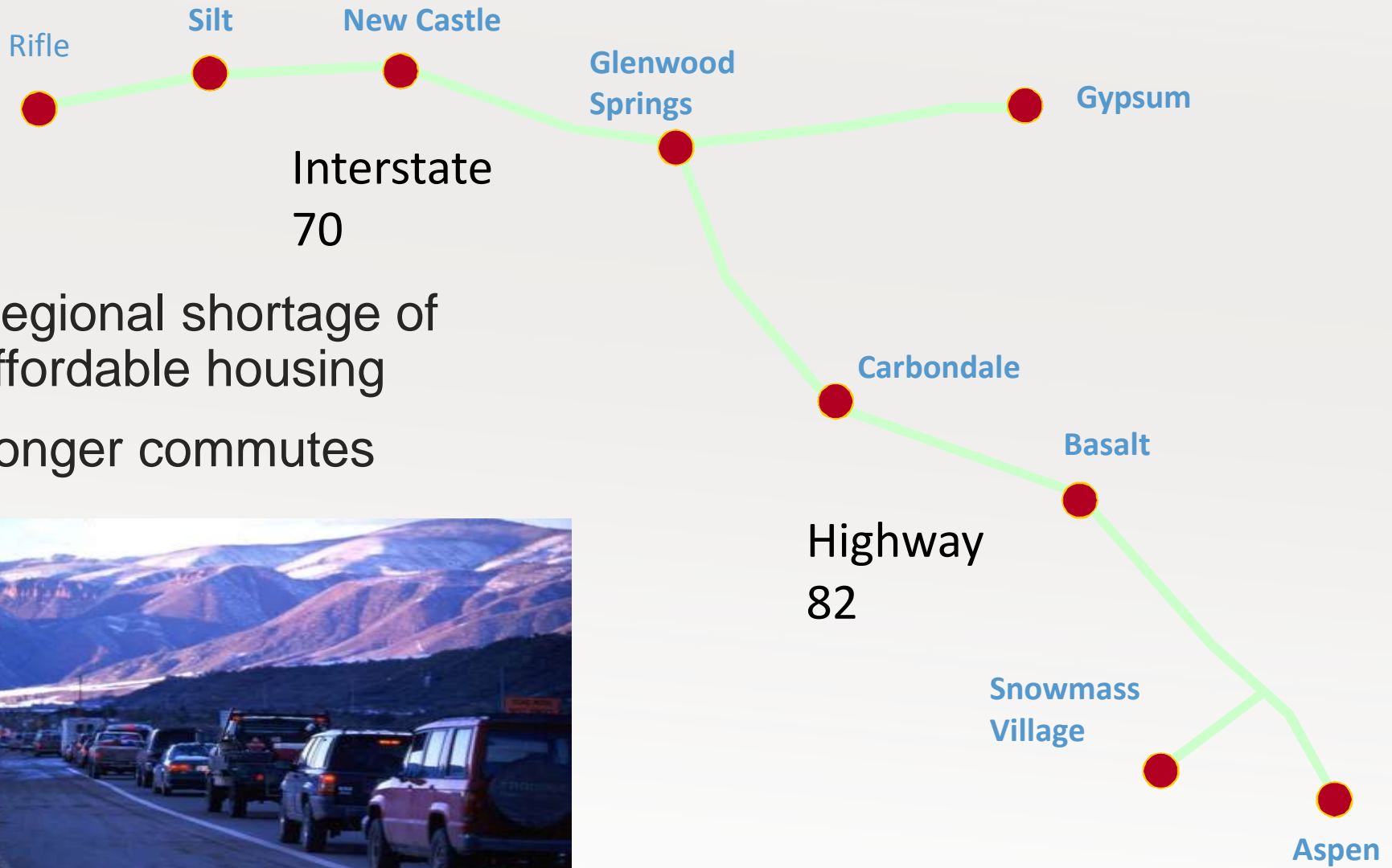
RFTA provides the following types of transit services:

- Regional commuter services in the Hwy 82 & I-70 corridors
- Municipal transit services under contracts with the City of Aspen and the City of Glenwood Springs
- Skier shuttle services under contract with Aspen Skiing Co.
- Senior transportation services through Senior Van/Traveler
- Maroon Bells bus tours in partnership with USFS



- Most congested rural highway in Colorado
- RFTA at capacity
- Air quality impacted
- Quality of life at risk
- Tourist economy threatened





- Regional shortage of affordable housing
- Longer commutes



*“ Our studies indicate that
by the time the four-lane
is finished, the Roaring Fork
will need a six-lane. ”*

Dr. Ray Chamberlain
Former Executive Director, CDOT



The Opportunities



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- Transit is key to moving more people on existing CDOT and local roads
- Transit is key to expanding access & reducing congestion with limited funding



- The region supports and uses transit - RFTA per capita ridership is two to three times that of RTD
- Rural Transportation Authority formed on first try, incorporating 7 jurisdictions

- Combined transit/trail an exciting amenity for regional and state economy
- Continuous historic 40 mile Right-of-Way
- Topography and historic townsites ideal for transit - 60 percent of jobs, 42 percent of homes within ten minute walk of transit corridor



... a long history of support ...

- 1969 - Pitkin County buys portion of rail right-of-way
- 1983 - RFTA formed
- 1994 - RFTA service extended to Glenwood Springs
- 1995 - CDOT Rail Feasibility Study
- 1997 – Region buys balance of rail right-of-way



. . . . a long history of support

- 1998 - RFRHA begins CIS/DEIS
- 1998-1999 - Over 100 public meetings to develop and test alternatives
- 2000 - Valley voters approve RTA and dedicated regional tax base
- 2001 - RFRHA folded into RFTA



. . . . a long history of support

- 2002 - RFTA service extended to Rifle
- 2002 - CIS/DEIS completed
- 2005 - CDOT completes Basalt to Buttermilk improvements



VelociRFTA BRT Cost / Funding

- FTA Very Small Starts Program
 - Projects up to \$50 million
 - Maximum \$25 million FTA share
- Project Financing:
 - Est. Project Cost = \$46.2m
 - FTA share = \$24.97m (54%)
 - RFTA share = \$21.23m (46%)
- Status of FTA Funding
 - FY2010 – \$810k Awarded
 - FY2011 - \$24.16m Awarded
- Regional voters approved a sales tax increase and bonding capacity in 2008
- RFTA issued bonds in 2009



Design Features



Transit Stations



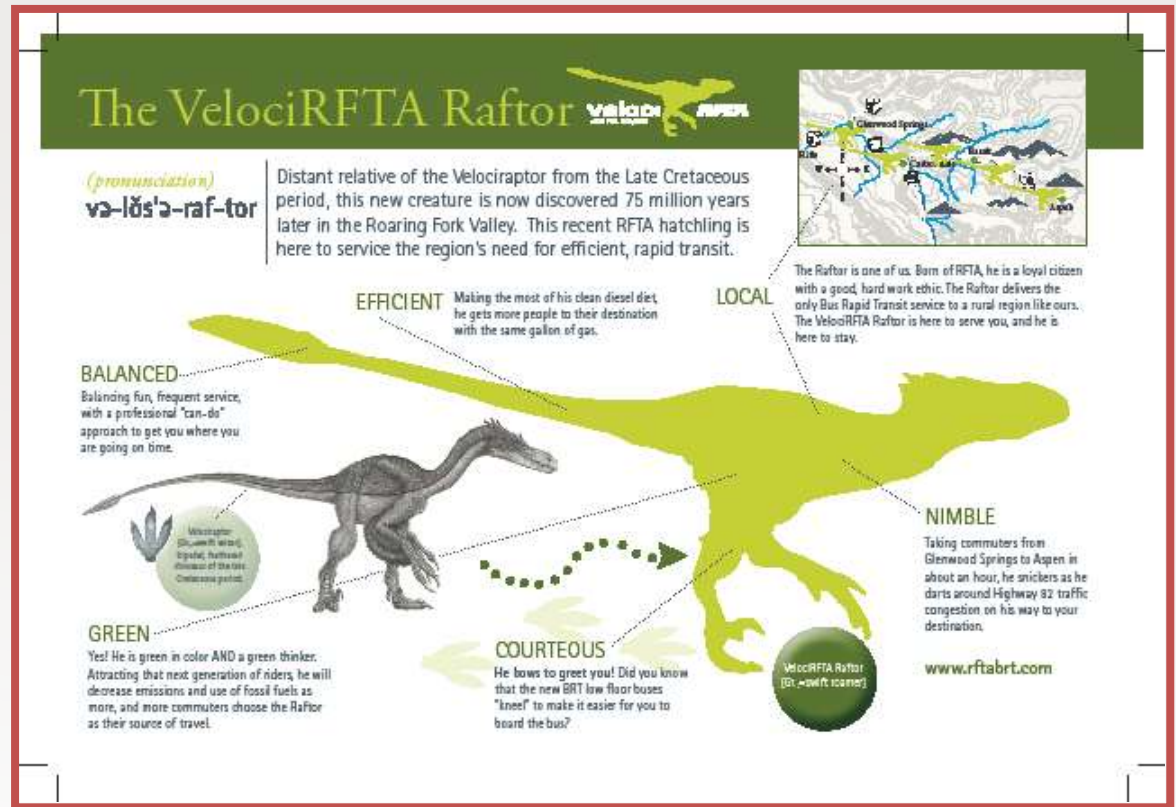
Branding Characteristics

– RFTA

- Reliable
- Practical
- Hardworking

– VelociRFTA

- Fast
- Fun
- Frequent



Transit Priority Measures

- Transit Signal Priority (TSP) at congested intersections
- Queue Bypass Lanes at congested intersections
- Use of Existing Bus/HOV & Exclusive Bus lanes



Information Program

- ITS Technology
 - Real Time Sign Information
 - Automated Vehicle Location
 - Automated passenger counters
 - Automated Annunciators
 - Electronic Fare Collection
 - Mobile Wi-Fi service
- Route Map Integration
- System Map Integration
- Schedule Integration
- Community Information

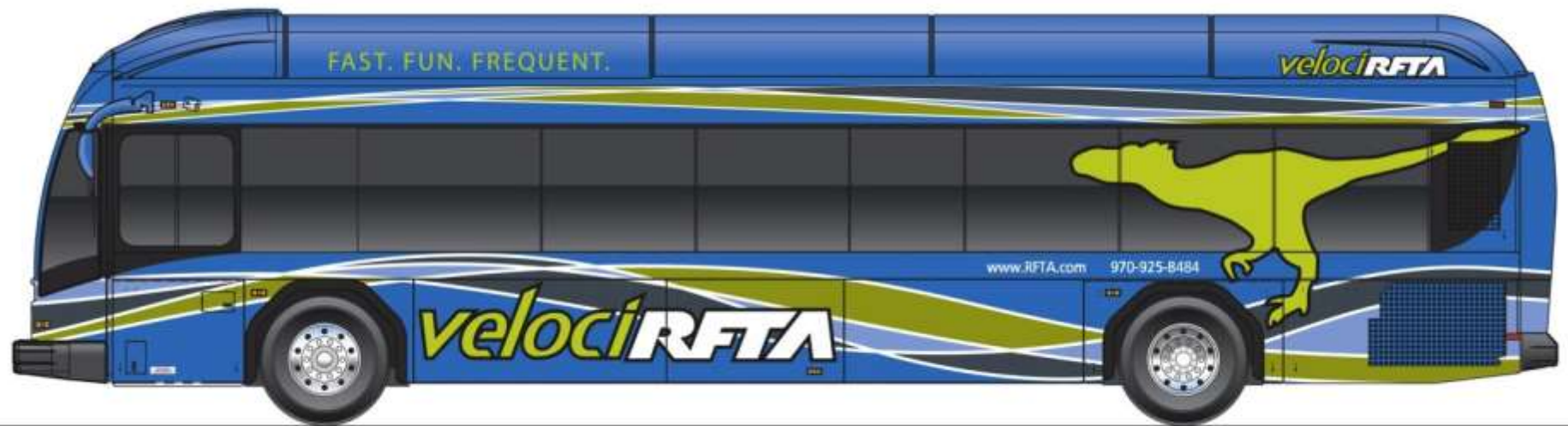


BRT Station Program

- Passenger Shelters
 - Ticket vending
 - Enclosed waiting and seating area
 - Lighting
- Bicycle Storage
 - Covered and uncovered
- Outside Seating
- Landscaping
- Trash and Recycling
- Optional Elements
 - Parking
 - Restroom Facilities



Carbondale BRT Station



BRT Service Plan

- Span of Service – at least 14 hours each weekday

Morning Peak	every 10 minutes
Mid-Day	every 15 minutes
Afternoon Peak	every 10 minutes
Evening	every 15 minutes



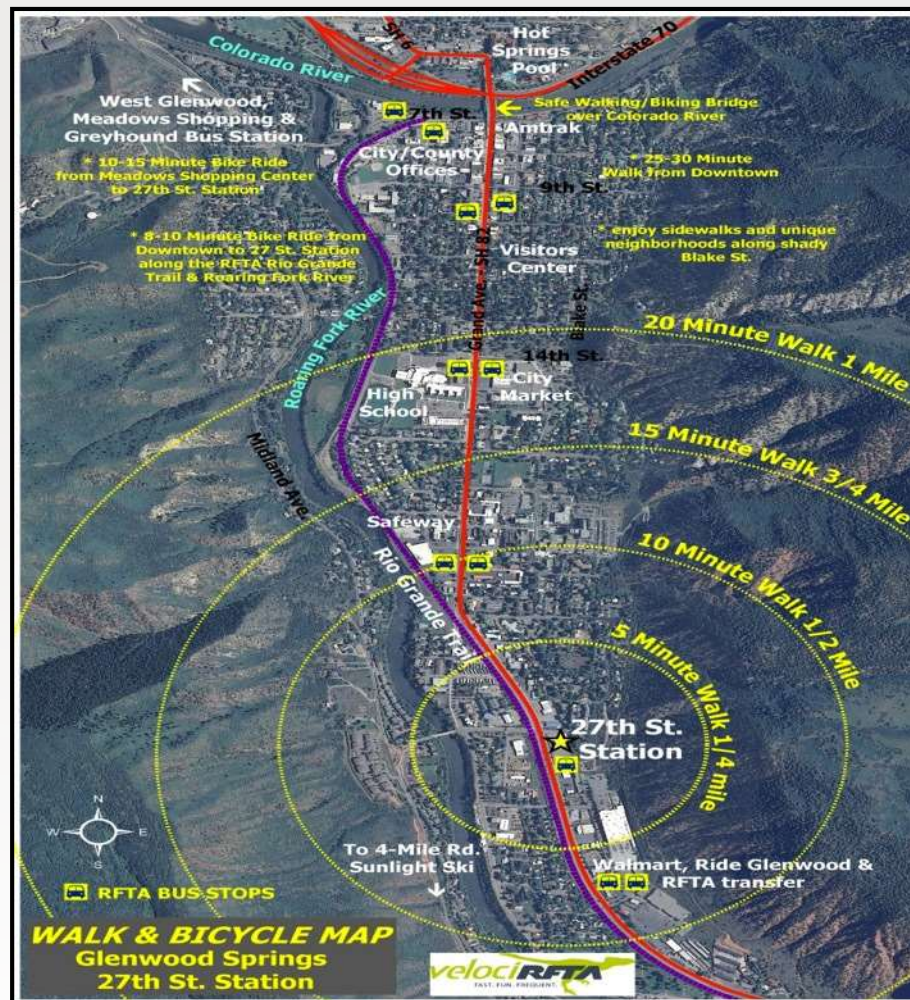
- Approximately 1-hour travel time between Glenwood Springs and Aspen
- Local valley bus service to continue every 30 minutes
- BRT service levels may be modified during the off-season and according to demand



BRT Service Concepts/Issues:

- BRT not intended to be a “Local” bus or it would not be BRT
- BRT will not directly serve commercial cores of:
 - Carbondale
 - Basalt
 - Snowmass Village
- BRT will have 2 stops in Aspen (Garmisch/Old Library & Rubey Park)
 - \$9 million in exclusive bus lanes – Buttermilk to Maroon Creek Roundabout
 - Priority routing through residential area, i.e. Garmisch Street
 - Outbound Main Street bus lane
- Glenwood Springs Concepts/Issues
 - 25 Up/Down Valley BRT trips from West Glenwood Springs
 - RFTA & Local Ride Glenwood Buses will make transfers to/from/BRT
 - People can walk and ride to BRT station
 - Hogback riders transfer at 27th Street, I-70 park in West Glenwood Springs

Promoting walking and riding to VelociRFTA whenever possible



RFTA CNG Transition Project

CNG Fueling Bay



CNG Compressor Station Building



Presentation objectives

- Articulate how and why transportation system development is different in small communities
- Case studies of tools for shaping the future you want
 - Community character
 - Economic competitiveness
 - Quality of life

We have the freedom to make informed, humane, and intelligent choices about the kind of world we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We also have the freedom to make uninformed, selfish, and stupid choices. Which will it be?
- Greg Pahl



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