

Memo

To: Elected Officials and Staff, Town of New Castle

From: David Johnson, Planning Director, Roaring Fork Transportation Authority
Colin Laird, Director, Healthy Mountain Communities

Re: Update of Local & Regional Travel Patterns Study

Date: July 25, 2013

Request Summary

The purpose of this request is to secure local cash match to update the *Local and Regional Travel Patterns Study*. The study, conducted in 1998 and 2004, details how, why, and when residents are moving within the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys. Past studies have helped elected officials, public agency staff, and community leaders gauge progress toward local and regional transportation goals and evaluate transportation policies and investments. With this proposed update, RFTA also plans to start acquiring data and resources to budget, plan, implement, operate and maintain a regional travel demand model to help regional planners and decision makers to better understand and coordinate transit and land use decisions.

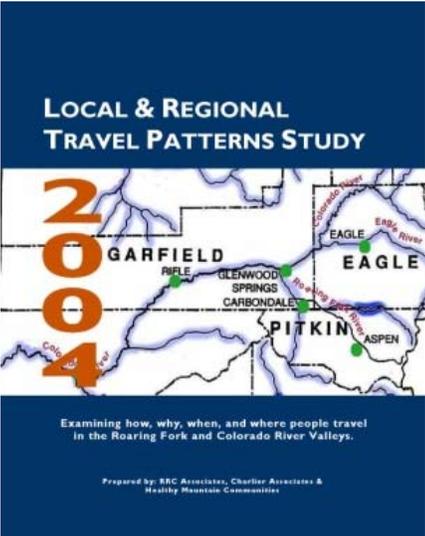
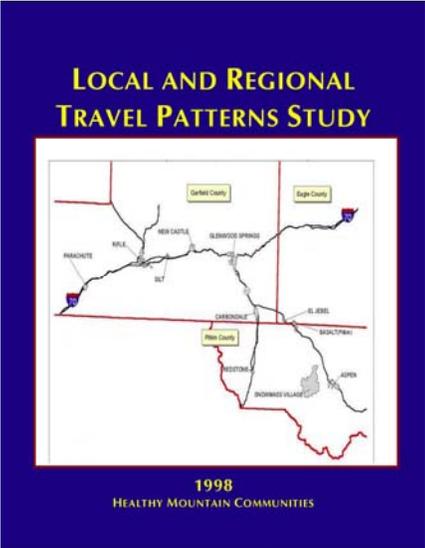
CDOT has awarded RFTA a \$75,000 grant for the study update. RFTA is requesting matching funds from local governments to complete the project, which we estimate will cost \$150,000. This budget will enable an expansion of scope from previous studies (e.g., including both winter 2013 and summer 2014 surveys). RFTA has budgeted a \$10,000 contribution to the location match. A consultant team will be selected through an RFP process coordinated by RFTA.

Background

In both 1998 and 2004, local governments partnered to implement the *Local and Regional Travel Patterns Study*. The purpose of the study is to give local officials in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys a more detailed view on the how, why, and when residents are moving within the region, gauge progress toward local and regional transportation goals, and inform future investments in transportation infrastructure.

Previous studies were instrumental in guiding regional transportation policy and investment. For instance:

- The 1998 study helped in the formation of the Regional Transportation Authority in 2000 by laying a better understanding of the similar



transportation challenges facing upvalley and downvalley communities as well as the value of increased investment in transit for the economic health of the region.

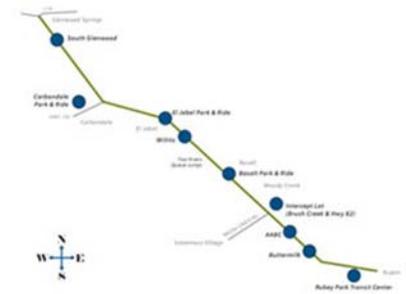
- The 1998 study illustrated how connected we really are as a region. For instance, in 1998, only 39% of workers in the Parachute to Aspen Region lived and worked in the same town. The study was included as evidence before the PUC to support local calling in Garfield County, which the PUC approved in 2003.
- The 2004 study helped confirm the value of BRT investment and the value of expanded regional transit service.

An updated and expanded Local and Regional Travel Patterns Study (to include Summer and Winter surveys) will determine:

- How travel patterns have evolved given the changes in economic conditions over the last several years;
- How travel patterns differ between Winter and Summer seasons;
- A benchmark for BRT startup and ongoing evaluation; and,
- How best to begin the foundation of a regional travel model.

Some things to remember about our region from previous studies:

- All communities in the region import workers that live in other communities. Some communities like Aspen and Glenwood import well over half their local workforce while some, like Rifle import about 40%.
- Bus mode share on a regional average is 12-13% and in some areas of the region such as Basalt to Aspen, bus mode split is 20%. This rate is 5-10X higher than what you would usually find in rural small towns in the US.
- Commuting via Carpool, Transit, Bike, or foot in our region is higher on a percentage basis than transit friendly places like Denver/Boulder and Portland/Salem.
- 1 in 5 Aspen and Snowmass workers use transit to get to work.
- Successful transportation options are vital to the economic health of the region and an integral part of the economic development of the region.



Suggested Local Match Contributions

<u>Regional Travel Patterns Study</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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Budget estimate for update and expansion of study (summer and winter)	150,000
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<u>Funding to date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
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CDOT	75,000	y
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<u>Local Match Estimates</u>

EOTC (Pitkin County, Aspen, Snowmass)	30,000
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Garfield County	10,000
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City of Glenwood Springs	10,000
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Town of Basalt	2,500
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Town of Carbondale	2,500
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Town of New Castle	2,500
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City of Rifle	5,000
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Eagle County	10,000
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RFTA	<u>10,000</u>	y
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Total	157,500
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Confirmed Local Match to date	10,000
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