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August 1, 2014

Therese W. McMillan, Deputy Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
East Building, 4th Floor
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. McMillan:

On behalf of New Castle, Colorado, I am writing to express my support for the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority's (RFTA) Ladders of Opportunity grant application, which will enable significant renovation and expansion of RFTA's bus maintenance facility in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

RFTA is the regional public transit agency serving communities in the Colorado State Highway 82 corridor from Glenwood Springs to Aspen, and the I-70 corridor from Glenwood Springs to Rifle, an area encompassing roughly 70 linear miles. RFTA is the second largest transit agency in Colorado and the largest rural transit agency in the United States.

Between 1976, when transit service first began in the region, and RFTA's peak ridership year of 2008, bus ridership grew from approximately 312,000 trips per year to nearly 5 million annual trips, a 1400% increase. In September 2013, RFTA implemented VelociRFTA, the nation's first rural BRT service. VelociRFTA has been so successful that monthly regional commuter ridership to date in 2014 is up approximately 30% over 2013 and breaking all-time records.

RFTA proposes to use Ladders of Opportunity grant funding to renovate and expand its bus storage and maintenance facility in Glenwood Springs, which is the primary facility used by the VelociRFTA BRT service. The project will significantly increase storage capacity and will deploy state-of-the-art energy efficiency measures and building sub-systems. With the renovation and expansion of its Glenwood Maintenance Facility, RFTA will be positioned to maintain and expand vital transit services in a highly sustainable manner to meet community needs for the next 20 years or more. The Ladders of Opportunity grant request of \$4 million will enable RFTA to conduct Phase 1, the foundation of the complete project. In this Phase, RFTA will complete extensive grading and retaining walls.

Robust local and regional transit services are critical to this region's mobility, economy, and quality of life. I encourage the Federal Transit Administration to support this worthwhile and much needed project by approving RFTA's Ladders of Opportunity grant application.

Sincerely,

Bob Gordon, Mayor