Yampa Valley RTA Update

Craig City Council

September 12th, 2023

AGENDA

Project Recap

Background, schedule, existing conditions takeaways, regional and local priorities

Initial Project List

Initial list of projects the RTA could potentially take on

Next Steps

Looking ahead to finishing public outreach process, project list refinement, and RTA formation strategy

Discussion

Reactions to process, projects, public input, etc.

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What is an RTA?

Regional Transportation Authority

An organization, enabled by Colorado state statute, that can be formed with the approval of a majority of voters with defined geographic boundaries.

The "authority" is an agreement between at least two governmental entities that forms a third governmental entity.

Once approved, the RTA can plan, finance, implement, and operate a regional transportation system within RTA boundaries.

The transportation system can include transit, bicycle, pedestrian, roadway, airport ground transportation, air service, and railway transportation services / infrastructure.

Project Background

1998

The Northwest Colorado Transportation Plan includes aspects of transportation for State and Federal grants, but lacked Yampa Valley transportation needs.

1999

A transportation group identifies projects including airport updates, airline guarantee programs, SST operation/expansion, services, parking, regional transportation

2008

"Transportation Solutions" is formed and create a wish list for what an RTA would address

2019

City discussions on the formation and operation of an RTA, in conjunction with talks about fiscal sustainability, the Climate Action Plan, and the Transportation and Mobility Study

2020

The Innovative Transportation Task Force is established to develop recommendations for transportation solutions with sustainable funding sources

Project Goals

1 Evaluate how to balance and determine ideal transit service levels, locally and regionally

2 Identify fleet needs and impacts on route operations and maintenance needs

3 Identify infrastructure needs and associated capital project costs

4 Improve speed and reliability of transit operations, especially relative to new bus stop or service requests

5 Understand land use patterns and growth predictions

6 Plan for integration of transportation modes

7 Identify partnerships and coordination with other transportation providers and modes such as air

RTA Process

Under Colorado law, municipalities, counties, and special districts can join forces to create an RTA through:

1. Establishing the members of the potential RTA and holding public hearings within each of the potential member jurisdictions

2. Writing a contract defining the RTA term, members, functions, and boundaries and submitting to CDOT for review

3. Putting the formation of the RTA to the voters for approval at either a general or special election

4. Collecting revenues in January following voter approval

RTA Funding Mechanisms

Mechanism	Description	Potential Revenue
Sales or Use Tax	No more than 2% on every transaction, but likely 0.5%-1.5%	$$$
Annual Motor Vehicle Registration Fee	No more than $10 per vehicle, but likely closer to $5 per vehicle	$
Visitor Benefit Tax	No more than 2% of the price of an accommodation, but likely 0.5%-1.5%	$$
Property Tax Mill Levy	No more than 5 mills on taxable property, but likely 0.5-1 mill	$$
RTA Enterprises	Funding generated by enterprises owned by the RTA through bonds and contract with other governmental / private entities	$
Bonds	Funding issued by the RTA	$
Federal and State Grants	Grants applied for by the RTA, and should not be the sole funding mechanism	$
Fares, User Fees, and Public-Private Partnerships	Fares and user fees are paid by users of the RTA, Public-private partnerships is additional funding with different interested institutions, corporations, and other private entities.	$

Existing Conditions Summary

1 Regional transit demand is growing

2 Summer transit service has opportunities to grow, especially with increased ridership

3 Strong growth at the airport provides transportation opportunities

4 Highway 40 is a top traffic and safety priority

5 Craig residents have more unmet transportation needs, based on demographics

6 South Routt has unique transportation challenges

7 Jobs and population mismatch – Steamboat jobs, especially service-related, are filled by non-Steamboat employees

Top Regional Priorities

(from stakeholder input)

1 **Regional Transit Improvements**
- Expand during peak <u>and</u> off-peak times
- Ensure frequent service competitive to driving times
- Intentional bus stops, park-n-rides, and housing development

2 **Roadway Concerns**
- How can RTA support maintenance and safety improvements on roadways?

3 **Ballot Issues**
- Transparency about goals and specific projects is key
- Accountability measures

4 **Ground Transportation to the Airport**
- Lack of MRG support but consistent support for connections to airport
- Focus on airport employee traffic

Additional Local Priorities

Steamboat Springs

- Improve in-town transit circulation
- Increase park-once parking lots
- Direct connections to housing
- Expand the active transportation network for commuting and recreational purposes

Craig

- Demand for in-town circulator route
- Increased connections to regional transit outside of commuter trip purposes

Hayden

- Partnership with RTA for stops, park-n-rides, maintenance facilities
- Increased transit opportunities = increased employment opportunities

South-Routt Communities

- Non-commuter transit connections
- Transparent RTA benefits on ballot and impact on small communities

Other Topics Discussed

- Logistics of financing RTA
- Support for commuter rail
- Coordination opportunities
  - Hayden with transit facilities
  - CPW with roadway wildlife warning signs

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Initial Project List:
Operational Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Cost
High frequency Craig-Steamboat Springs Route Bus	Increasing the existing express bus on US-40 to **30-minute frequency during the peak hours and 60-minute frequency during the off-peak hours**.	$$
Local Craig Circulator Bus Route	Local circulator bus route **within Craig with 30-to-60 minute frequency all day**. Provides connectivity within Craig with connections to the regional route.	$
South Routt Transit Services	1. Bus route connecting to communities in **South Routt with 1-2 roundtrips per day**. 2. Weekend activity bus **connecting Yampa/Oak Creek/Stagecoach** for 10 weekends in the winter season and 5 weekends in the summer season, **primarily targeted for recreation**	$
Steamboat II Fixed Route Bus	Local route around Steamboat II connecting to Steamboat Springs and the resort with **30-to-60 minute frequency all day**.	$$
HDN Airport to Steamboat Springs Ground Transportation	Bus route **connecting the Yampa Valley Regional Airport (HDN) with Steamboat Springs with 6-8 roundtrips per day**. Operating only during the winter and summer seasons, **primarily targeted for travelers**.	$
Craig to HDN Airport Ground Transportation	Bus route **connecting Craig with the Yampa Valley Regional Airport (HDN) with 3-4 roundtrips per day**. Operating only during the winter and summer seasons, **primarily targeted for employees**.	$
Passenger rail between Craig and Steamboat	Passenger rail line **connecting Craig and Steamboat Springs** with 4-6 roundtrips per day.	$$$$
Employee Vanpools	1. Commuter vanpools from **North Routt area for employees**. 2. Commuter vanpools from **South Routt area for employees**.	$

Initial Project List:
Infrastructure/Partnership Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Cost
Fare-Free Regional Transit	Subsidy to make existing Craig-Steamboat Springs **regional route free**.	$
Safety Fund for Roadway Improvements	Tactical safety improvement **fund for roadways (inclduing wildlife crossings)** within the RTA boundary. Specific projects could potentially be coordinated/awarded through the CDOT TPR process.	$
Transportation Innovation Fund	Funding to support transportation **innovation, private or public,** within RTA boundaries such as electric vehicle charging, digital communication improvements, etc.	$
Air Service Minimum Revenue Guarantees (MRGs) Funding	Funding to airlines to **support ongoing or new air service** out of the Yampa Valley Regional Airport (HDN).	$
Improvements to Existing Bus Stops and New Bus stops	1. Improvements to existing bus stops along the Craig-Steamboat regional route, including **shelters, passenger amenities, crosswalks, sidewalk connectivity**, etc. 2. Installation of **new bus stops** along the existing Craig-Steamboat regional route in Hayden and West Steamboat	$
Park-and-Ride Lots in Craig, Hayden, and Milner	Park-and-Ride Lots in Craig, Hayden, and Milner to **support regional fixed route service**.	$
New RTA Maintenance and Administration Facility	New facility to **support transit operations**, similar to existing SST facility but appropriate to RTA service levels.	$$
Rail Yard and Rail Stations	Construction/upgrading the existing rail yard and rail stations to **accommodate passenger rail** between Craig and Steamboat Springs/Oak Creek and Steamboat Springs.	$$
Develop Yampa River Core Trail	Extending the **bicycle/pedestrian path** between Stagecoach and Dinosaur for **recreational and commuter purposes**.	$$$

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Public Outreach: Website/Survey

Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority

Yampa Valley RTA

We are seeking YOUR input to identify priorities for the RTA! Learn about the project below, and provide your input!

Click HERE to provide input!

About the Project

Jointly, Routt County, the City of Steamboat Springs, and the City of Craig are studying how the formation of a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) would benefit residents, visitors, and workers in the Yampa Valley.

What is an RTA?

- Regional Transportation Authority
- An organization, enabled by Colorado state statute, that can be formed with the approval of a majority of voters within the clearly defined geographic boundaries of the proposed RTA. The "authority" is essentially an agreement between at least two governmental entities that forms a third governmental entity that administers the transportation system.
- Once approved, the RTA can plan, finance, implement, and operate a regional transportation system within the RTA boundaries.
- The transportation system can include transit, bicycle, pedestrian, roadway, airport ground transportation, air service, and railway transportation services / infrastructure.

How can an RTA help me?

- An RTA could provide numerous benefits for those living, visiting, or working in the Yampa Valley Region, including:
  - Improved transit options for getting to work, school, and activities

SUBSCRIBE to learn how the formation of a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) could help coordinate and grow regional transportation service in the Yampa Valley!

First name

Last name

Enter your email address

Submit

We are seeking YOUR input to identify project priorities for the RTA!

Click HERE to provide input!

Learn more about the project and provide your input at any public open house!

Monday, September 11th

11AM to 1:30PM

Routt County Health and Human Services Building –

Please complete all three of the activities below: Fund Operational Projects, Fund Infrastructure/Partnership Projects, and the Survey. Make sure to SUBMIT after each activity.

INSTRUCTIONS:

These activities are intended to help you understand the relative cost of projects.

- Not all projects will be funded due to various limitations, so we need your help to identify your top priorities.
- Some projects cost more and require more funding coordination.
- You are given a budget of 100 points to fund various operational projects (the daily tasks of transportation services).
- The points you are given are a rough, high-level approximation of what the local share of operating and capital costs may be.
- Some projects exceed available points, so you may choose to partially fund certain projects, and you may use the "sort by" tool to sort projects by cost.
- **Make sure to SUBMIT after each activity**

Fund Operational Projects

Your remaining points:

1 0 0 pts

MINIMUM SPEND
80 PTS

Sort by

High Frequency Craig-Steamboat Springs Route Bus (10 years of service)

Vehicle Example: Gunnison Valley RTA; Gunnison, CO Read More

0 pts

5 pts — 45 pts

Local Craig Circulator Bus Route (10 years of service)

Vehicle Example: RoundAbout; Idaho Springs, CO Read More

0 pts

1 pts — 10 pts

South Routt Transit Services (10 years of service)

Vehicle Example: Village Shuttle; Snowmass Village, CO Read More

0 pts

1 pts — 5 pts

Public Outreach: Open Houses

Visit us at an open house!

Monday, September 11th
11AM to 1:30PM

Routt County Health and Human Services Building – Community Room
135 6th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO

Monday, September 11th
5PM to 6:30PM

Center of Craig

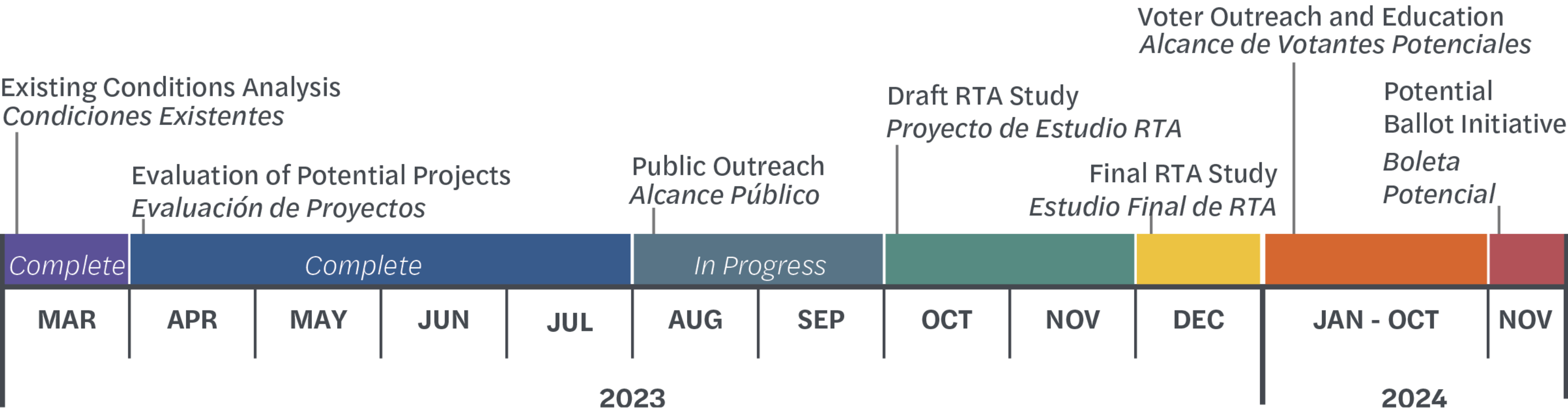**601 Yampa Ave**
Craig, CO

Wednesday, September 13th
7AM to 9AM

Hayden Town Hall

178 West Jefferson
Hayden, CO

Wednesday, September 13th
5PM to 7PM

Oak Creek Town Hall

129 Nancy Crawford Blvd,
Oak Creek, CO

Schedule

Existing Conditions Analysis
Condiciones Existentes

Evaluation of Potential Projects
Evaluación de Proyectos

Public Outreach
Alcance Público

Draft RTA Study
Proyecto de Estudio RTA

Final RTA Study
Estudio Final de RTA

Voter Outreach and Education
Alcance de Votantes Potenciales

Potential
Ballot Initiative
*Boleta
Potencial*

Complete	*Complete*	*In Progress*			
MAR	APR · MAY · JUN · JUL	AUG · SEP	OCT · NOV	DEC	JAN - OCT · NOV

2023

2024

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Reactions to:

1 Process

2 Project List

3 Public Input

4 Questions?