



## Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office

### **GVRTC Minutes for August 8, 2022**

**Attendees:** Dana Brosig, Kathy Young, Patrick Picard (virtual), Rachel Peterson, Brevin Currier, Scott Mai, Sarah Brooks, Rob Beck, Andy Gingerich, Valdon Lewis, Jay Valentine, Todd Hollenbeck, Rene Romero, Trent Prall, Mark Rogers, Lorraine Hutcheson, Thomas Hutcheson, and DJ Dicky.

**Roll Call:** Greg Mikolai, Chair – Town of Palisade, called the meeting to order. Dennis Simpson – City of Grand Junction, Ken Kreie – City of Fruita and Scott McInnis – Mesa County are present.

**Call Meeting to Order: 3:01 p.m.**

**Changes to the Agenda:** None

**Representative Reports:** None

**Transportation Commissioner Report:** Not present

**Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 3 Update:** Rob Beck, CDOT Region 3 Program Engineer reported that the North Avenue project is still in progress, running a little behind. CDOT is asking the contractor for a recovery schedule. The Clifton project is out to bid and construction should begin this fall. The Mt. Garfield CBC that needs to be replaced is costing about 300% more than the original estimate.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Adopt the minutes from the June 27, 2022 GVRTC Meeting.

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Dennis Simpson so moved and Scott McInnis submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

#### **Consent Item(s)**

The Consent Agenda is intended to allow the Committee to spend its time on more complex items. These items are generally perceived as non-controversial and can be approved by a single motion. The public or Committee Members may ask that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for individual consideration.

None

#### **Individual Consideration Item(s)**

Please limit public comment to a maximum of five (5) minutes per speaker (unless otherwise restricted by the Chair).

2. Approving Resolution 2022-009, A Resolution adopting the North Avenue Enhanced Transit Corridor Study and authorizing the Chair to sign- Patrick Picard, Fehr & Peers  
See presentation pages 3-21. Discussion of project goals and questions were asked about the concerns with how homeless and/or transients have taken over some transit stops such as the North Avenue

Walmart stop and sleeping on other benches. Options about what can be done to address these challenges while also making bus stops comfortable for transit riders.

Discussion of public outreach and focus groups common themes. Brief discussion of survey results and existing conditions which lead to discussion about e-bikes and scooter use on sidewalks. City of Grand Junction staff said the intent is to not allow them on sidewalks on portions of Main Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and Colorado Avenue in the downtown area but are allowed elsewhere, which is currently where bikes are and are not allowed. Concerns expressed with e-bikes and scooters being left at bus stops. In the RFP that the City of Grand Junction issued, asked for certain requirements such as geofencing, which can mitigate scooter and e-bikes being left in inappropriate areas. Discussion of how North Avenue will include a striped buffer but won't be an official marked bike lane.

Discussion of the 2011 street cross section vision vs current vision recommendation as well as recommendations for multiuse trail, pedestrian & bicycle safety improvements, adjacent sidewalk network, new signalized pedestrian crossings, new bicycle crossings, transit bus stop improvements, transit speed & reliability, and policies.

Discussion of having transit bus shelter with lighting, electronic sign, trash receptacle, and what additional duties this would cause for staff. Lighting would allow advertiser to charge more. Real-time bus info-more like e-readers, which shows information, and made to hold up against vandalism. These are only recommendations.

Discussion of cost estimates and timelines as well as 30% design for high priority segment.

The technical advisory committee was made up of staff from RTPO, CDOT, City of Grand Junction, and Mesa County. This study was funded with SB267 funds and local match from City of Grand Junction. Some funds for construction are available to proceed with improvements at least some of the prioritized segments. Other segments to be completed as funding becomes available.

Concerns brought up about which driveways get blocked, impact on businesses, ensure staff have done due diligence and residents along that corridor understand the impacts. This study does not include an access control plan as that's a separate document. CDOT did work property by property with access concerns for repaving and median project.

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Dennis Simpson so moved and Ken Kreie submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

3. Approving Resolution 2022-010, a Resolution of the GVRTC concerning the support for the 2023 Grand Valley Transit (GVT) Local Funding Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and authorizing the Chair to sign. – Dana Brosig, RTPO  
See presentation pages 22-34. This is a continuation of conversations from last GVRTC meeting. Transdev is asking for an increase of another \$1.50 from the 2022 contract amendment. Driver starting wage would be \$18.50 an hour. 4% increase for years 2024-2026.

Discussion of other transit costs outside of Transdev contract and that CARES Act funds have been expended. Discussion of funding for bus purchases and the increase of costs. Discussion of transit fleet maintenance facility funding.

#### Analysis discussion

- GVT driver wages have historically been lower compared to other transit agencies and local positions with similar qualifications.
- Many drivers come for their CDL and then leave for higher-paying jobs.

- Still seeing turn-over but starting to get more applications and more applicants actually coming to interviews, taking job and starting CDL training.
- The 2022 Mesa County Community Health Needs Assessment states that \$17.50/hr is the essential wage for household stability. Higher wages leads to more applicants and longevity in employment.
- With higher wages, hope to be able to restore DASH frequency and reduced Saturday hours.

Discussion of staff meeting with the managers and the ability to use general funds for existing service but would need to explore a tax or other outside funding in order to be able to expand service. The need to expand service in order to make any serious inroads for people to ride the bus. The current budget is not going to allow for an increase in frequency until circumstances change.

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Ken Kreie so moved and Dennis Simpson submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

4. Approving Resolution 2022-011, a Resolution of the GVRTC concerning the support for the 2023 Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GVMPO) Local Funding Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and authorizing the Chair to sign. – Dana Brosig, RTPO

See presentation pages 34-40. There has never been a formal IGA and there has not been any annual increases even though expenses are increasing.

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Scott McInnis so moved and Dennis Simpson submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

### **Briefing Item(s)**

Briefing items are intended to allow the Committee to give Staff guidance in the day-to-day operations of the Regional Transportation Planning Office, or to hear general presentations from others.

5. GVT Fleet Maintenance Quarterly Update – Jay Valentine, City of Grand Junction  
See presentation pages 41-46. Still seeing supply chain issues. Trying to schedule PM's 7-12 days in advance and not come in all at once.
6. Transit Fleet Maintenance Facility Update- Dana Brosig, RTPO  
See presentation pages 47-48. RFQ was sent out in June. Received public comment at the Transportation Open House on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Proposals have been received for the project. Interviews and discussion are underway for selection.
7. Zero-Fare August Program Briefing- Andrew Gingerich, RTPO  
See presentation page 49. State offered Colorado Transit agencies funding to operate fare free for the month of August. Staff determined that GVT should not participate as the driver shortage would make it untenable with the anticipated increase of demand. It was asked why this would increase demand to the point that it would affect drivers and buses. This increase would likely have affected demand-response/paratransit service, and going fare free for that service may create a situation that GVT would not be able to keep up with demand.
8. GVT Operations Report for June 2022 – Valdon Lewis, Transdev/GVT  
See presentation page 51. The increase in ridership was noted in the binder. Paratransit also saw an increase. The numbers are not back to pre-COVID levels, but they are rising. Overview of internal safety meetings; accident and injury metrics were reported very low. Still having some turnover, but recruitment is up. Several drivers are within two weeks of getting on the road, however, still short seven drivers. Is ridership up because of increase in population, or

are the same, previous riders coming back? It seems to be some of both. Gas prices may have also brought in more riders. Is the wage increase what has helped with recruitment and retention? Most likely. There are certainly different and more positive trends when talking with potential drivers.

9. 2045 Regional Transportation Plan- Amendment #1 Briefing- Rachel Peterson, RTPO  
See presentation pages 52-55. Gave background and reasons for the amendment to the RTP. Discussed the process, the call for projects, public comment period, and committee reviews. This amendment will be fully presented to the board for approval in September.
10. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan Grant Application- Rachel Peterson, RTPO  
See presentation pages 56-71. An overview of the grant was given as well as its history. The grant comes from the USDOT as a strategy to reduce/eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries of all users on all roadways. Overview provided on the grant process, who the partners are, the project budget, and how it helps open up opportunities for more funding over time.

### **Unscheduled Business:**

The Unscheduled Business portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for the public to speak about issues that were not on the main agenda. Please limit public comment to a maximum of five (5) minutes per speaker (unless otherwise restricted by the Chair). Testimony relating to scheduled agenda items will not be allowed during Unscheduled Business. The purpose of the Unscheduled Business portion is for the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee to listen to the public. The Committee Members do not generally engage in debate or make comments during the Unscheduled Business portion.

### Public Comment

- Lorraine Hutcheson – Was not aware that the paratransit service had been discontinued in the Redlands. Made comment on how this negatively effects the population in this area.
- Thomas Hutchison – Commented on increase in travel costs to and from work every day now that the paratransit service is no longer available to the Redlands. Wondered if there could be service in that area again.
- DJ Dicky – Explained how it was difficult to travel to social and recreational activities without transit or paratransit in the Redlands. Commented on how this part of the community is left out when it comes to transit, and to many other services as well.

**Meeting Adjourned: 4:49 p.m.:** Minutes submitted by Kathy Young and Brevin Currier.