

AGENDA

JOINT WORK SESSION CITY OF ASPEN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONS & PITKIN COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

**Rio Grande
Aspen, Colorado**

May 6, 2010

8:30 AM WORKSESSION

1. Review of the Aspen Area Community Plan update
 - a. Scheduling Update
 - b. Review Transportation Policies & Action Items

12 PM ADJOURN WORKSESSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Aspen Planning and Zoning Commission;
Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Ben Gagnon, City Special Projects Planner
Jessica Garrow, Long Range Planner, City of Aspen
Ellen Sassano, County Long Range Planner

THRU: Chris Bendon, City Community Development Director
Cindy Houben, County Community Development
Director

DATE OF MEMO: April 22, 2010

MEETING DATE: April 27, 2010 at 4:30pm in Sister Cities

RE: Transportation

BACKGROUND: The P&Zs met on April 13th to continue review of the Transportation chapter. The group reviewed changes proposed by staff regarding various Policies and Action Items, and completed the following topics: Public Transit, Bike & Pedestrian, User Groups & Transportation Demand Management, Parking, and Funding.

The remaining Transportation topics are: Airport, Managing Growth, Education & Public Outreach, Entrance to Aspen and Data Gathering. Please see Exhibit A to review these sections for discussion on April 27.

ATTACHMENTS:
Exhibit A: Updated Transportation draft.

TRANSPORTATION DRAFT CHAPTER

VISION

The community seeks to provide a balanced, integrated transportation system for residents, visitors and commuters that reduces congestion and air pollution. Walking, bicycling and transit use is promoted to help us reach that goal.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy of transportation comes largely from our identity as a small town, and the desire to maintain a quality of life that reflects how a small town looks, feels and functions. We don't want our small town to be overwhelmed by daily traffic jams, by lines of idling cars and trucks. We welcome people to Aspen, but if we are to preserve what attracts people to come, we must continue to limit the number of vehicles coming into town. Aspen's future should be one in which the automobile plays a smaller role in people's everyday lives. We should not build additional highway lanes to accommodate more vehicle-trips, but should increase the percentage of person-trips made via alternative modes of transportation throughout the region (e.g. public transit, biking, walking, vanpools, carpools, etc.).

If we are to achieve this goal, we must continue to make public transit and our pedestrian/bike trail system more convenient, efficient, comprehensive and enjoyable. The City, the County and RFTA have worked on improving transportation alternatives for decades, and this work must continue. Public transit and trails allow us to accommodate and even increase "person-trips," while limiting "vehicle-trips." Our commitment to public transit also helps improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote public health, and reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil.

We also acknowledge the Airport as an import component of the overall transportation system and support its mission to provide safe, efficient, reliable and environmentally responsible airport services and facilities to meet the community's needs. We recognize that the Airport offers an opportunity to help achieve some of the community's transportation goals by reducing the number of people coming to our community via vehicles, from other airports. Once in the valley, better integration of the Airport with transit and other alternative modes of transportation will promote the use of transit and diminish reliance upon rental vehicles.

It is important to recognize that transportation is inextricably linked to land use issues, and the policies of other chapters in this community plan were at least partly crafted to help reduce pressure on our transportation network. Decisions about development have a direct impact on transportation patterns, and congestion levels. This community plan includes policies that pace construction activity on an annual basis, that limit potential build-out by capping house sizes and further regulate construction on mountain slopes and in riparian areas. New construction should take place only in areas that are, or can be served by transit, and new development should

fully mitigate for its short and long-term transportation impacts. Another important factor in reducing congestion is limiting the displacement of workers through a strong Community Workforce Housing program.

While the economic downturn has reduced jobs and traffic congestion, we have to assume that congestion will return, creating an environment that not only frustrates mobility but can seriously damage our small town quality of life. This community's consistent record support for public transit and trails should continue into the next phase of planning for Bus Rapid Transit. We must build upon the significant achievements of the past, and future physical improvements should be consistent with preserving community character.

Just some of the past improvements have included the doubling of RFTA ridership in the 1990s; building 22 miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails in the Aspen Area; establishing a downtown paid parking system that has reduced vehicle trips; dedicating bus lanes on Main Street in 2006; approving two miles of dedicated bus lanes from the airport to the roundabout in 2007; moving forward on a runway extension to increase aircraft efficiency, and approving funding in 2008 for the next phase of RFTA improvements, known as Bus Rapid Transit. Our flexible public transit system makes it possible to hold major special events that help sustain our resort economy.

The City, the County, and RFTA must be active partners as Bus Rapid Transit is implemented. We must give BRT the best possible chance at success. Transit vehicles operating in the Aspen Area should be clean and quiet. BRT should be integrated into all transit hubs including connections to air, road, and pedestrian access points, encouraging our community to use public transportation for their many activities.

We must identify all the various unique user groups, and understand their perspective and their needs. We should take a practical and pragmatic approach to reducing vehicle use by focusing carefully on each user group, using proven and reliable principles of Transportation Demand Management. We should continue to develop and use technology to foster a well-informed debate about potential future improvements.

Although this community plan does not include a specific plan for the Entrance to Aspen, there are Policies and Action Items that provide guidance for future decision-making.

Perhaps most important is the continuing evolution of our individual transportation habits. There is no question that the way people get from one place to another has changed dramatically in the Aspen Area over the past 30 years. More people walk and bike on our regional trail system, more people take the bus to get to work and to our four skiing areas. Just as we learn to bring our own canvas bags to the grocery store, we should all consider how our individual transportation habits affect the greater good.

Continuing to improve the efficiency and convenience of public transit and the regional pedestrian and bicycling system will provide more opportunities to make better choices.

POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

The following policies and action items are adopted to address the following critical issues: 1) Public transit, 2) bikes and pedestrians, 3) User Groups and Transportation Demand Management, 4) Entrance to Aspen 5) Managing Growth, 6) Parking, 7) Education & Public Outreach, 8) Airport, 9) Funding, and 10) Data Gathering.

The action items are arranged alongside the policies, so the purpose of the action item is understood. Each Policy is numbered, while the associated Action Items are lettered. For instance, Action Item “1.a” is associated with Policy “1.” Because this is a ten year plan, the action items are prioritized in terms of “immediate” (I) and “longer term” (LT), so that there is immediate progress made to implement the immediately necessary policies of this section, while still allowing for development of ideas and legislation that may further the broader policies of the plan in the long-term. The government department or agency responsible for any given action item is indicated as follows: City Transportation (T); City Manager; County Manager; Open Space and Parks Departments (OS/P); County Public Works (PW); Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA); Planning (P); City Engineering (E).

Primary Transportation Policy:

Continue to limit Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) to 1993 levels at the Castle Creek Bridge, and strive to reduce peak-hour vehicle-trips to 1993 levels. Additional person trips should be accommodated using alternative transportation methods.

<p>I. PUBLIC TRANSIT POLICIES</p> <p>1. Improve the convenience, reliability, comfort, affordability, safety, capacity, and quality of experience of transit services.</p>	<p>I. PUBLIC TRANSIT ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a The City, County, Snowmass Village, EOTC, SkiCo and RFTA must be active partners in order to implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). (I – T, County Manager, City Manager, Town of Snowmass Village, RFTA, SkiCo, PW, Airport)</p> <p>1.b Maintain free bus service from Aspen to Snowmass and explore other options for free bus routes within the Urban Growth Boundary.</p>
---	---

	<p>(LT – T, RFTA)</p> <p>1.c Procure vehicles that maximize passenger comfort and convenience. (I – RFTA)</p> <p>1.d Create bus stop shelters that incorporate safe, comfortable and abundant waiting areas, storage of bicycles, real-time information on transit schedules and road conditions, and other amenities. (I – RFTA)</p> <p>1.e Incorporate public art at BRT stations within the Aspen Area. (I – RFTA, T, PW, City Manager, County Manager)</p> <p>1.f Remodel Rubey Park to improve passenger waiting areas. (I – RFTA, City Manager, T)</p> <p>1.g Use new technologies, including cell phones and PDAs and ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems), to provide real-time information on transit services and road conditions. (I – RFTA)</p> <p>1.h Coordinate traffic signals to allow free-flow of BRT buses, including priority queuing. (I – RFTA, C-DOT, City, County)</p> <p>1.i The City, County, Snowmass Village, and RFTA should collaborate with law enforcement agencies to enforce HOV lanes. (I – RFTA, T, PW, Police, Sheriff)</p> <p>1.j Review RFTA’s fare system to achieve greater simplicity and clarity for customers and to ensure affordability (LT-RFTA)</p> <p>1.k Increase the ability of buses to carry bicycles (LT-RFTA)</p>
--	--

<p>2. Plan for the location and construction and/or expansion of Park n’ Ride area(s) considering cost, effectiveness, ease of intermodal transition and quality of experience.</p> <p>3. Actively promote public awareness of transit alternatives for visitors and second homeowners.</p> <p>4. Maintain the reliability and improve the convenience of in-town transit services.</p>	<p>1.1 Make public transit more intuitive for visitors. (LT – City, RFTA, Airport)</p> <p>2.a Conduct a study on behavioral “demand patterns” of commuters to help determine optimal location(s) of Park n’ Ride areas. (I – RFTA, T, PW, Snowmass Village, SkiCo)</p> <p>2.b Research Best Practices for the use of technology (from cell phones, bus stop information, electronic highway signs) to encourage use of Park ‘n Ride areas. (I – RFTA, T, PW)</p> <p>2.c Develop cost comparisons for Park ‘n Ride locations. (I – RFTA, T, PW)</p> <p>2.d Plan for bicycle storage/lockers at Park n’ Ride area(s). (I – RFTA, T, PW)</p> <p>2.e Explore options for enhancing the transition between modes at Park ‘n Ride locations that would improve the quality of the experience. (I – RFTA)</p> <p>3.a Collaborate with ACRA, SkiCo, lodges, and property management companies to increase the quality and availability of information on summer and winter travel options (i.e. transit, lodging shuttles, walking, bicycling etc.) provided to visitors. (I – RFTA, T, ACRA, SkiCo, etc)</p> <p>3.b Provide information on travel options to visitors using multiple languages and using international symbols. (I – RFTA, T, Airport)</p> <p>4.a Improve bus stop shelters and passenger amenities in the City of Aspen. (I – T)</p>
---	--

<p>5. Identify the location and amount of space required for bus parking, maintenance, staging areas for RFTA.</p>	<p>4.b Replace transit vehicles that have met or exceeded their service life, and add vehicles to meet demand. New vehicles should be clean and quiet. (LT – T)</p> <p>4.c Support consistent operating hours for in-town transit routes. (I – T)</p> <p>4.d Ensure the in-town bus services remain free for users. (I – T)</p> <p>4.e Utilize new technologies, including cell phones and PDAs, to provide real-time information on transit services and road conditions. (I – T)</p> <p>4.f Explore the demand and funding available for extending in-town transit services to the AABC. (I – T, PW)</p> <p>4.g Explore increasing the frequency of certain in-town transit routes, while minimizing impacts on neighborhoods. (LT – T)</p> <p>5.a Remodel Rubey Park to improve bus staging areas. (LT – T, RFTA, City Manager)</p> <p>5.b Explore opportunities for bus parking and maintenance throughout the Aspen Area. (LT – RFTA)</p> <p>5.c Ensure any new facilities are compatible with our “small town character.” (LT – RFTA)</p>
--	---

<p>II. BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN POLICIES</p> <p>1. Integrate bike and pedestrian trails with the public transit system.</p> <p>2. Expand and improve trails that can be used for commuting purposes.</p> <p>3. Expand and improve bicycle parking/storage throughout the Aspen Area.</p> <p>4. Improve the convenience, safety, and quality of experience for bikes and pedestrians on city streets and trails.</p>	<p>II. BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Identify bike and pedestrian trail improvements with the greatest potential for integrating with and complementing public transit services, to assist in annual budgeting decisions. (I – T, OS/P, RFTA, PW)</p> <p>2.a Identify bike and pedestrian trail links and improvements with the greatest potential for extending commuter trails, to assist in annual budgeting decisions. (I – T, OS/P, RFTA, PW)</p> <p>3.a Amend the Land Use Code to determine the “trigger point” for establishing a requirement of bicycle parking/storage. (I – P)</p> <p>3.b Require all publicly-funded development to provide space for bicycle parking/storage in prominent locations. (I – P, T)</p> <p>4.a Develop a comprehensive plan for convenient bicycle parking/storage in downtown, including replacing some vehicle parking with bike parking. (LT – T, OS/P)</p> <p>4.b Explore adding bike lanes to existing rights-of-way, including looking for opportunities to eliminate some on-street parking and replacing it with bike lanes. (LT – T, Streets, P, Eng., City Manager)</p> <p>4.c Use cash-in-lieu funds to implement the Downtown Enhancement and Pedestrian Plan (DEPP). (I – P)</p>

	<p>4.d Improve the safety and quality of experience of crossing main street in the downtown area and at Highway 82 at Airport & AABC. (I – PW, T, OS/P, P, Airport)</p> <p>4.e Explore establishing a system of free bicycles throughout the UGB. (I – T)</p>
<p>III. USER GROUPS AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES</p> <p>1. Reduce the impacts of employment, special events, school, recreation or other activities that generate demand for travel at the Entrance to Aspen and in our neighborhoods.</p> <p>Note for Final Document: Define TDM, define TOP</p>	<p>III. USER GROUPS AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Amend City and County codes to require all new major development to implement a customized Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan that sustains their commitment to alternative transportation modes. [Establish trigger for size of application.] (I – P, T)</p> <p>1.b Expand membership and participation in the City’s Transportation Options Program (TOP), through outreach and incentives, with a specific emphasis on large employers and school-related impacts. (I – T)</p> <p>1.c Ensure all businesses in the Aspen Area receive information about the City’s Transportation Options Program by adding the Transportation Department as a required referral and contact before annual business licenses are issued. (I – T, Finance Department)</p> <p>1.d Establish a City-County agreement for funding of City-provided TOP services implemented in the County portion of the Aspen Area. (I – County Manager, PW, T)</p> <p>1.e Establish a menu of TDM requirements for special events to be</p>

<p>2. Reduce the impacts of construction-related congestion at the Entrance to Aspen and in our neighborhoods.</p> <p>3. Reduce the impacts of Aspen Area resident trips within the UGB.</p> <p>4. Reduce the impacts of public and private school related congestion at the Entrance to Aspen and in our neighborhoods.</p>	<p>implemented by Special Events Committee. (I – T, Special Events Committee)</p> <p>1.f Implement new TDM measures , including real-time online car-pool matching, public and/or private vanpooling, dynamic carpooling/slug lines and other measures. (I – T)</p> <p>2.a Update the City and County’s Construction Management Plans and related Codes to address construction-related trips and impacts using principles of Transportation Demand Management (I – T, E, PW, P)</p> <p>2.b Ensure funding and staff resources exist for enforcement of Construction Management Plans. (I- City Manager, County Manager)</p> <p>3.a Gather relevant data needed to define the impacts of Aspen Area resident vehicle travel. (I –T)</p> <p>3.b Identify TDM strategies to reduce Aspen Area resident vehicle travel. (I – T)</p> <p>4.a Expand coordination and communication between the schools and City/County/RFTA regarding regular school use and school events to reduce and/or mitigate the transportation impacts those event have. (I – T)</p> <p>4.b Incentivize school membership and participation in TOP. (I – T)</p>

<p>IV. ENTRANCE TO ASPEN POLICIES</p> <p>1 A list of community objectives should be used to evaluate any physical plan for the Entrance to Aspen, as part of a public process.</p>	<p>IV. ENTRANCE TO ASPEN ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a The following community objectives should be used to evaluate any proposals for physical solutions to the Entrance to Aspen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Highway 82 as a two-lane facility for general purpose traffic with extra capacity reserved for mass transit use only. • Any future improvements to the Entrance to Aspen must increase the reliability and convenience of our public transit system and our pedestrian and bicycling system. • Reliable cost estimates regarding both capital costs and long-term operational costs should be provided, to the extent possible. • Any built solution must include a carbon-footprint analysis that includes the construction phase as well as annual operations. • Any built solution should use traffic modeling simulations to illustrate whether new transportation alignments could improve the flow of vehicular traffic. • Any built solution must retain a sense of small town character, and must minimize adverse impacts to open space and historical resources.
<p>V. MANAGING GROWTH POLICIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt changes to the City and County Land Use Codes to manage the pace of growth, in order to maintain quality of life and reduce pressure on the valleywide transportation network. 2. Adopt changes to the City and County Land Use Codes to limit total build-out through new caps on house sizes and restrictions on building on mountainsides and in 	<p>V. MANAGING GROWTH ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Amend the City and County Land Use Codes to establish annual limits on construction activity. (I – P)</p> <p>2.a Amend the City and County Land Use Codes to establish new house size caps and restrict development on mountainsides and in riparian areas. (I – P)</p>

<p>riparian areas in order to maintain quality of life and reduce pressure on the valleywide transportation network.</p> <p>3. Structure new growth in the community in compact, mixed-use patterns that enable and support travel by foot, bicycle and public transportation for all types of trips.</p>	<p>3.a Amend the Land Use Code to adopt this standard of review. (I – P)</p>
<p>VI. PARKING POLICIES</p> <p>1.Manage the supply of parking to limit the adverse impacts of the automobile.</p>	<p>VI. PARKING ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Establish automatic increases in paid parking costs when vehicle trips over the Castle Creek Bridge exceed a certain threshold, to be defined by City Council.</p> <p>1.b Expand designated paid parking areas in town, and decrease maximum parking periods. (I-T)</p> <p>1.c Explore methods of separating on-site parking spaces from the purchase or lease of residential and commercial units; parking spaces would become an optional amenity that individuals or businesses could rent or purchase separately. (I – P, T)</p> <p>1.d Establish maximum parking requirements rather than minimum requirements, starting in downtown zone districts and explore other zone districts. (I – P)</p> <p>1.e Phase out preferential parking for hybrid and electric vehicles. (I – T) (See Env. Qual. Section)</p> <p>1.f Explore eliminating on-street vehicle parking spaces and using</p>

	<p>them for other transit options (bike lanes/bike parking). (I – T)</p> <p>1.g Explore expanding the pedestrian malls.</p>
<p>VII. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH</p> <p>1. Ensure that effective methods of educational outreach, including the latest technologies, are available to build public awareness for the purpose of well-informed public decision-making.</p> <p>2. Ensure that users of the valley transportation network are aware that <u>every</u> means of transportation is government-subsidized.</p> <p>3. Ensure that users of the valley transportation network understand the costs of vehicles versus BRT, in terms of cost, the environment and time.</p>	<p>VII. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH</p> <p>1.a Build an animated traffic simulation model of the transportation network that illustrates vehicle trip levels, traffic flow, public transit element and bike/pedestrian trail integration. Identify data needed to build effective model. (I – T, City Manager)</p> <p>2.a Develop a simple website with information illustrating government subsidies for transit as well as government subsidies for repair and maintenance of roads, highways and parking areas. (I – City Manager)</p> <p>3.a Develop a simple website with information illustrating cost/benefit of BRT, in terms of finances (gas, parking, repair and maintenance), carbon footprint, reliability (bus lanes) and time (parking spaces). (I – City Manager)</p>
<p>VIII. AIRPORT POLICIES</p> <p>1. Improve the efficiency, reliability, and quality of experience of Airport services.</p>	<p>VIII. AIRPORT ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Complete the environmental evaluation and decision making process regarding the potential runway extension the purpose of which is to improve the operational efficiency of the Airport to enhance the user’s air transportation experience, and to reduce the per passenger noise and air emissions.</p>

<p>4. Strengthen the Airport’s role in the regional transportation system.</p>	<p>3.d Work with CDOT, RFTA and AABC on alternatives for a grade separated pedestrian crossing between the Airport and the AABC.</p> <p>4.a Work with RFTA to determine how the Airport can best participate in the implementation of the BRT project and other future mass transit options.</p> <p>4.b Continue to reserve room on the Airport property for future commuter parking needs to support the mass transit system.</p> <p>4.c Continue to preserve the opportunity to accommodate a future dedicated mass transit system such as light rail or other similar transit technologies.</p> <p>4.d Collaborate with ACRA, SkiCo, lodges, and property management companies to increase the quality and availability of information on summer and winter travel options (i.e. transit, lodging shuttles, walking, bicycling etc.) provided to visitors.</p>
<p>IX. FUNDING POLICIES</p> <p>1. Increase funding for public transit so that service is consistent and reliable with a preference for more stable and sustainable revenue sources.</p>	<p>IX. FUNDING ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Evaluate the sustainability of existing and prospective transportation revenue streams to determine if they are sufficient to accommodate demand. (I – City Manager, County Manager, RFTA, Transportation)</p> <p>1.b County should strongly consider seeking voter approval to increase Construction Materials Use Tax from .5% to 2.1% for the purpose of funding public transit. (I – Pitkin County Manager)</p>

	<p>1.c Explore federal grants available for pedestrian and bike access to public transit. (I – City Parks, County OS & Trails)</p> <p>1.d Set parking revenue goal so parking operations area only a portion of funding stream, with excess to fund public transit operations. (I-T) (work on wording)</p> <p>1.e Considering dynamic revenue sources, budgeting for transit operations should prepare for impacts of recession. (LT -- City, County, RFTA)</p>
<p>X. DATA GATHERING POLICIES</p> <p>1. Ensure that enough clear and understandable data is gathered and compiled for the purpose of well-informed public decision-making.</p> <p>2. Build a better understanding of the ratio of user groups on the transportation network, in order to better customize TDM strategies.</p>	<p>X. DATA GATHERING ACTION ITEMS</p> <p>1.a Establish an accurate baseline of traffic data between Brush Creek and Aspen on Highway 82, including all relevant feeders.</p> <p>2.a Craft a survey to determine origination and destination of users of the transportation network.</p>

Thoughts RE: Discussion Points Suggested at Last Meeting

- **How do we address the issue of rental cars?**

1. Having rental car operations here, allows the Airport to work with rental car companies on ways to make rental cars more compatible with community values; e.g. modify the fleet to be more fuel efficient and generate fewer emissions.
2. Keeping rental cars as part of the ground transportation mix may result in more people flying to Aspen as opposed to flying somewhere where they can rent the vehicle they want and driving on Highway 82 to get here (we also have no influence over what type of rental vehicles are brought here by those travelers, as discussed above).
3. ? Any other ideas?