



MINUTES
October 20-21, 2022
Glenwood Springs, Colorado

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Thursday, October 20

I. Call to Order and Introductions, Dara MacDonald, CAST President

II. Managed Recreation: Reservations & Transportation

Elisabeth Lawrence, Commissioner, Summit County

Greg Hall, Transportation Director, Town of Vail

Ken Murphy, H2O Ventures

The Quandary Shuttle is operated through the Town of Breck and Summit County Open Space to address overcrowding at this 14er trailhead as it is a safety issue. The USFS is also engaged. The partners created a managed parking and shuttle system. Year 1, the County paid Summit Express to shuttle people and used the Town of Breck parking garage as the departure point. Folks had to reserve the shuttle in advance and there was peak, off peak, and a local's rate. Interstate Parking manages the parking which is free after 3:00 p.m. The County is paying for this out of the Open Space Fund and in 2022 the cost was just over \$162,000. They will continue the program next year with adjustments based on user feedback.

Booth Trailhead is in an East Vail neighborhood and parking routinely overflows into the neighborhood. In addition to parking issues, there is trail crowding and resource degradation. The USFS management plan from 2002 identifies the standard is for a hiker to only interact with 12 groups. Today, it is not unusual for a person to have 300 interactions. In 2020, 50,000 people hiked this trail with a 12 parking space trailhead. All Vail trails are served by Vail's free town bus service with 30 minute frequency. USFS has tried to move demand to other trails. A stakeholder group formed in 2019 surveyed users, and that led to the Front Country Ranger program that performs outreach about avoiding peak times and educating on proper wilderness use. The Town passed a new ordinance for a parking enforcement zone which brought the vehicle numbers down. Encouraging users to park at a nearby school still resulted in traffic from cars circling and hiker drop off. Currently, the trailhead and the school are closed to any parking and the only way to access the trail is via transit. The police went from ticketing violators to towing. They launched a promo campaign Bus It to Hike It. These management efforts have decreased numbers at Booth Trail.

Reservation Systems: Ken Murphy's business, H2O Ventures operates the reservation systems at Hanging Lake and Maroon Bells to manage the demand to flatten peak visitation times. The company works with many partners: CDOT, USFS, local governments, federal highways, chambers, etc. It is this P3 model where they have found success, but it requires operational flexibility. The facilities dictate how many people can be accommodated, most commonly toilets and parking. Self-drive is available but managed through the reservation system. The enhanced communications with visitors through the reservation system results in more informed and therefore prepared visitors and emergency services are seeing fewer calls. The revenue

from the reservation fees stay local with a percentage of the profit going to USFS and to H2O Ventures. They are audited for full transparency. HV has a call center, places staff on-site and staff maintains the restrooms. The Hanging Lake reservation system sits on the Chambers' website. Reservation systems are a great data collection tool and enable easy follow up/survey distribution. Having a database of visitors means HV can also communicate with them on road closures and other timely info. HV has 30 seasonal jobs and 2-year round positions. The cost of running a shuttle is very high and they have found success in managing demand through reservations, eliminating the need for a shuttle. The USFS agency is not designed to work with the public, unlike the National Park Service. There are structural issues with how the USFS is organized when it comes to these local programs, although the Forest Supervisor has a positive history of working with commercial outfitters.

III. Climate Action: MT2030 & Next Steps

Mountain Town Solutions Project

Jessie Burley, Sustainability/Parking Manager, Breckenridge & Frisco Town Council

MT2030 started in 2019 in Park City and it was a watershed moment for elected officials. The vision is all about leveraging collective work around climate action. Born from this conference is the Mountain Town Solutions Project (MTSP) is aimed at communities starting their climate journey, communities with no sustainability staff and communities that might not even have consensus around climate action on their Council. Data sharing and storytelling is important to demonstrate that solutions are working. MTSP is a six month program that ends with a climate action or sustainability plan. Participating communities need engaged staff and MT2030 will handle the facilitation, expertise, resources, and support. \$2500 is the cost and scholarships are available. The next session is January-June 2023.

IV. Crested Butte's Requirement for All Electric on New Construction

Dara MacDonald, Manager, Crested Butte

Crested Butte adopted code standards requiring new construction to be all electric, effective January 2023. The town intends to be net zero by 2038. They have worked to debunk the belief that natural gas is the greener choice. The grid in CB can accommodate these code changes. The City of Gunnison did not adopt similar standards because their grid cannot accommodate them.

The U.S. Department of Energy has funding for rural communities for large scale energy transition demonstration projects. Summit County will duplicate the Pitkin County program for the recycling of construction materials.

V. Other Business

Mountain Collaborative for Climate Action - This collaborative is represented by Vail Resorts, Alterra, Boyne Resorts and POWDR Crop. CAST sent a letter requesting they consider Transportation as a future climate initiative, specifically to consider the emissions from their customers driving to their resorts.

Destination Stewardship Council – Margaret Bowes was appointed to this new Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) council that will guide CTO's expanded focus on sustainable tourism.

Friday, October 21

I. Call to Order and Introductions, *Dara MacDonald, CAST President*

II. Welcome to Glenwood Springs, *Mayor Jonathan Godes*

III. Water Infrastructure Resiliency

Matt Langhorst, Public Works Director, City of Glenwood Springs

Glenwood Springs was the 7th city in the nation to go to 100% renewable energy. Climate-related events got the attention of residents – wildfire, mudslides, Interstate closures, etc. The City now weighs everything against environmental impacts. In an effort to make their water system resilient and redundant, the City made significant investments and improvements to their system. There were four phases of upgrading the very old infrastructure. This will give the City water during periods of drought and when the two watersheds (Grizzly and No Name) don't have water. Redundancy is critical and needs to be considered before that redundancy is needed. This was all paid for by State funds and they upgraded the entire system for \$3.8 M. Modeling a community's water system is a valuable exercise. Tiered water rates have mixed results on conservation. Water, sewer, roads, and bridges are all redundancy issues that Glenwood Springs is considering.

IV. Affordable Housing Policy: Hotel Conversion Project & STR Regulations

Hannah Klausman, Assist. Director of Community Development, City of Glenwood Springs

STR Regulations: The City had an STR moratorium in 2019 while staff and the public considered regulations. They started with the CAST STR Matrix and categorized the various regulations as “restrictive”, “balanced” or “encouraging”. They manage the number of STR permits by creating Buffer Zones, which is unique. Each zone has a cap which they haven't reached yet. The public can go to a website to see if their property is eligible for a license. The map shows where there are current STRs and a green color shows the buffer zone. If a property is in the green zone, they are not able to get a license. There is no waiting list. The City feels fortunate that the new regulation went into effect in 2019. They handle STR compliance in-house.

Hotel Conversions: Glenwood Springs has several aging hotel properties with underperforming occupancy. There was interest from developers to redevelop the properties as workforce housing, but there were too many challenges such as parking and open space compliance, system improvement fees for water/sewer/fire/schools and there was no category for extended hotel stays in code. They recently added an extended stay category for 180 day leases, and a new code waived the open space requirement. System improvement fees and parking remain the same as prior hotel use. The 180 day lease can be longer for government/quasi government employers. RFTA purchased a hotel in West Glenwood so the new codes will be tested there. The benefits to local employment outweigh the loss of lodging tax.

Steamboat has seen two hotels redeveloped into dorm-style housing. Durango had a right of first refusal with a hotel and partnered with a developer to redevelop the property. They got some federal funding and the city invested \$50K. Leadville just purchased a five bedroom house and is acting as the landlord. A 2019 housing study showed a great need at 100% AMI. Leadville would welcome input on how to structure guidelines for AMI restrictions.

V. Wildfire Mitigation: Status of Local & Regional Planning

CAST Members are asked to share their wildfire mitigation planning efforts.

Frisco just completed a water treatment plant and a first phase of wildfire mitigation. They are working with SE Group on a NEPA analysis for a wildfire mitigation and trails project. It remains to be seen how the new National Monument in the Ten Mile Range will impact wildfire mitigation efforts. Summit County has a voter-approved wildfire mitigation fund and prior mitigation efforts have saved Summit County neighborhoods. A Public Safety Fund offers additional funding. Summit County municipalities are looking at this issue at the county level via a Wildfire Council that looks at high risk areas and prioritizes mitigation. The USFS doesn't have capacity to do planning, so towns/county are doing it. National Forest Foundation is another partnership and they offer grants. Park City is updating their code to include Firewise and Waterwise codes. They are trying to work with Alterra and Vail Resorts but not getting much engagement on wildfire mitigation work. Utilities are another potential partner as they have an interest in wildfire mitigation. Denver Water has helped

cut through red tape of mitigation work on their property to protect the watershed. Gunnison County, outfitters ask clients if they want to donate to local natural resource management. Durango has a watershed protection fund. The City, County, and fire district operate under an MOU and have already gotten \$2M in grants with the goal of getting private homeowners to do mitigation. Crested Butte is updating their source water protection plan. Avon put wildfire sirens in residential areas to warn of wildfire. Mountain Village is waiving the building permit fee to replace shake shingle roofs and rebate up to \$10k for mitigation. Next year the Town is participating in LADAR and flight imagery that will direct where mitigation such as fire breaks are needed. Telluride's fire district is looking at a camera system on high peaks to watch for wildfire. The Bipartisan Infrastructure and Inflation Act includes funding. Julie Sutor, Rep. Neguse Office shared a handout on the funding opportunities. The Colorado Water Conservation Grants can help administer federal funds.

VI. Hot Topics Roundtable

Childcare: Aspen has a dedicated sales tax for childcare and is subsidizing provider training with support from Colorado Mountain College and the State. In Steamboat Springs their CMC offers free childcare certification. They are looking at getting high school students trained and then offer to pay for them to get a teaching certificate as a way to build the pool of elementary school teachers. Snowmass donated space to a private provider and other than the property, the facility is operating without subsidy. Breck offers \$400k/year in scholarships across four facilities. Summit County is building a facility in Silverthorne. Breck Ski Resort has reinstated childcare services. In Gunnison County, a Lodging Tax is on the ballot and childcare is specifically called out as recipient of tax revenue. In Jackson, childcare facilities are losing leases to more profitable uses. The Town offered an existing property for childcare, but they had no applicant providers due to the high cost of living and lack of affordable housing. The Town is considering combining child and senior care facilities. The Vail Valley Foundation is focusing on childcare and working with the Town of Avon to find land for a childcare facility. The State is funding daycare for older kids, and it will be interesting to see how that affects availability of childcare for younger children. Telluride has linked childcare facilities with a recent housing development, but they have not found a homeowner that wants to operate a center on that property. Estes Park sees workforce housing and childcare as connected. HB1117 requires workforce housing dedicate space for childcare.

Designating Workforce Housing for Public Employees: Estes Park gets pushback on this and asked how other towns justify it. The school district, hospitals, and transit agencies support their workforce with their own resources so municipalities and counties dedicating housing for their employees is no different. Tying housing with employment creates potential of “lose your job, lose your house, lose your community.” Housing city employees is like putting mask on yourself first. Employment-tied housing isn't perfect and perhaps one big fund with all partners participating is a better model. In Aspen, the resort, City, hospital, school district all provide housing. Crested Butte gives “essential employees” priority for city-provided housing and provides housing for 20% of town employees.

Growth & Carrying Capacity: What is the carrying capacity of our communities? Resort communities are experiencing a “churn of growth”. Growing economies/housing brings in more people, that leads to needing more childcare, and then a bigger grocery store and more schools, and then more/wider roads to accommodate traffic, etc. In Park City, locals used to work at the resorts. Now they have other jobs, and the resorts needs to import employees. Resort towns have become over-valued and only the wealthy or second homeowners can buy property. It is the locals that care for the community/make it a community, but they can no longer afford to live there. Our communities have become to upscale. Perhaps our towns should ‘dumb it down’ and ‘make it a little shittier’. Crested Butte staff is hoping to see more simple development. Less gentrified and more real. Avon is pushing for landscaping to be more xeriscape, but they get pushback. Endless flower baskets are not sustainable and not their community character but that is what some call for.

Has anyone looked at **monetizing air rights** where a developer buys rights for an existing building owner to go up more stories. Durango is exploring.

Shortage of Transit Drivers: This is a challenge across the state and the country. Steamboat's transit agency is fully staffed due to huge incentive with housing, bonus structure, ski pass, and good pay. Many agreed that the federal government doing away with drug testing for a Commercial Drivers' License would help. Some progress is being made and Rep. Neguse is working on it along with our Senators. The federal government is open to conversation as more states legalize retail marijuana. CDOT has a program to hire and train 18 year olds to create pipeline for transportation-related jobs.

Winter Park been successful with Short Term Fix where the town provides a master list of businesses looking for units and town provides that list to STR owners looking to switch. In Summit County, a business owner has sought out a master lease but then had landlord dramatically increase the rent when they heard it was a business.

VII. Business & Updates

- CAST Legislative Advocacy Update: Proposition 123, Wildfire Urban Interface
- Approval of August 2022 Meeting Minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- Upcoming CAST Meetings
- Member Updates Requests

CAST will send a letter to Senator Bennet regarding administrative issues with implementing the Federal Partnership Act. More time is needed to make application and up to 100 year leases will be needed to justify the investment of redeveloping the USFS administrative sites. Sen. Bennet welcomes feedback on this and other federal programs.

CAST will submit a letter to all of Colorado's Congressional delegation on increasing federal AMI so rural resort communities can take advantage of federal housing funds. Out of state members encouraged to make same request with their delegation. The letter should ask for immediate action.

Julie Sutor, Congressman Neguse representative shared that a New York delegation member is looking at a new formula for housing funds and is co-sponsoring legislation. Neguse would like to see a bipartisan commission that includes members with tourism-based economies.

CAST will send a letter to our U.S. Senators asking them to prioritize DACA. There is some urgency as current DACA recipients are facing much uncertainty.

Meeting adjourned at Noon.