

# STOR D.3 Subcommittee

	Task
1	Identify possible infrastructure locations for each drainage. Create opportunity for mass transit to fulfill all recreation needs (including river access and associated gear for all activities).
2	North Village as a pilot site for infrastructure/amenity improvement for supporting access and management.
3	Peanut Lake pilot site for infrastructure/amenity improvement for supporting access and management.
4	Meet w/ Mtn Express Board to discuss overall goals of STOR Committee.
a	Understand guiding/chartering permitting process with USFS and other federal and state agencies; how those processes interact w/ local transit.
5	Outreach to White River National Forest to understand Hanging Lake and Maroon Bells access.
6	Understand USFS winter travel management planning/timing
7	Identify access areas that are vulnerable due to degrading conditions and plan for how those access points might be managed.

## D.3.1

Identify possible infrastructure locations for each drainage. Create opportunity for mass transit to fulfill all recreation needs (including river access and associated gear for all activities).



To group into manageable segments, the subcommittee identified Gothic considering it had a shuttle service and Peanut Lake since it is explicitly identified in D.3.3



Jeremy Herzog of Mtn. Exp was engaged to analyze potential structure/cost of a shuttle service to either location. Mtn. Exp has not committed to providing any service, we are utilizing their expertise.

## BASE OF THE PYRAMID for a successful transit program

- 1. Reasonable Frequency - 30 minute *maximum*, 20 preferred.**
  - *Ex. You finish riding 401 and pull up right as the shuttle drives off. 19 minutes isn't a terribly long wait, 29+ is.*
- 2. Parking/travel Restrictions – Unlimited parking availability does not encourage transit use.**
  - Making the shuttle *more convenient than SOV travel.*
- 3. Usability - Must be able to carry the people and their gear for recreating in the area. Bikes are essential!**

# What problems are we trying to solve?

Perceived or Actual?

- **Traffic volumes** - Anecdotal community feedback has identified the volumes of traffic on backcountry Rds have reached undesirable levels.
- Concerns for **user experience** due to parking congestion
- **Safety concerns** surrounding cyclists and traffic on roads
- **Resource protection** - Creep from cars parking further off the road has been identified as a concern in the community.
- Need for **increased maintenance** – Traffic volumes increase = road quality decreases.
  
- **Community values** - People in the community want to see less cars on the roads out all the drainages in the North Valley.

# Gothic Structure

- Three 15 passenger vans
- Trailer with 10 bike capacity
- 30-minute frequency
- 4 way > Mountaineer Square > Snodgrass > RMBL > Judd Falls > 403 > Rustlers > Reverse
- 8a-6p June 23<sup>rd</sup>-September 1<sup>st</sup>
- Capacity - 240 people/day, 16,800/season
- \$300,000 price tag



# Gothic Hurdles

- We do not have willingness from the USFS to implement parking restrictions along the Gothic corridor without a needs assessment that illustrates high, adverse use without alternative remediation options to warrant such action.
  - Rationale:
    - Numbers - Our area isn't close to areas where programs like this have been implemented. (Maroon Bells, Zion, Grand Canyon)
    - Equity - Restriction of use and access to Public Lands is not easy to implement
    - Multiple entry points/through road
  - This compromises the base of the pyramid substantially.
- Price tag.
  - Is this a \$300,000 problem?
  - Service must be free to the public to offer under "special use permit". If there is a fee applied to cover costs, it opens a whole new suite of federal regulatory oversight that would require a contractor to become a concessionaire. (D.3.a)
  - To attract a contractor, the frequency and duration needs to be worthwhile for them as well.
- **Opportunity**-Agency was open to-Identify areas in the Gothic Corridor where strategic boulder placement could keep parking organized in heavily utilized areas while reducing encroachment into undisturbed areas. Improve signage.

# Peanut Lake Structure

- Two 15 passenger vans w standard bike rack
- 20-minute frequency
- 8a-6p, June 24<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 4 way > 3<sup>rd</sup> & Elk > Trailhead > Reverse
- 360 people/day, 25,200/season
- \$215,000 price tag



# Peanut Lake Hurdles

- Parking Restrictions - Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners can close/open roads *but they have limited authority to close/open roads to particular uses/users*. They have limited roadway use by specific vehicle type (no OHV), weight, etc. but not 'special classes' such as residents only. Currently, there is not political will to pursue this within the county. No legal way close to SOV but not busses and or bikes.
  - A suggestion to annex the road into Town, which would allow it to be regulated under Town laws could achieve this. Town does not see rationale for annexation and is likely unwilling to shoulder this burden
- Need - Based on survey results from users in the area, we are not seeing a high volume of feedback saying this is a *major* issue. There are a handful of weekends each year where mid day timeframes are hectic.
  - For winter use we spoke with CB Nordic and their user base has not expressed a need for this.
- **Opportunities**
  - Improve parking areas and signage to encourage parking closest to town
  - Baseline data collection - Put together a program to count vehicles parked along the road and determine how often it is truly **full**. This could help down the road with identifying when we are hitting 'critical mass' with more frequency.
  - Enforcement - STOR, through BoCC could put together a request for the Gunnison County Sherriff to do more frequent parking enforcement during peak times. No parking in the ROW can be enforced
  - Survey of summer users about experience.

# Summary

- D.3.(1, 3)- Mass transit opportunities in identified drainages do not have political will or baseline requirements to be successful. We can structure some initiatives to improve the user experience and collect data for when areas are ready for more substantial change.
- D.3.4- The subcommittee did not meet with Mx board as there wasn't an 'ask'. We did engage with staff to develop realistic transit plans for Gothic and Peanut Lake.
- D.3.a- Chartering process w USFS agency was discussed at length. Shuttle services that are free and open to the public are straightforward. Utilizing a fee-based system introduces several additional levels of complexity.
- D.3.5- Spoke with agency staff about these programs and colleagues around the state about others. Hanging Lake and Maroon Bells visitor numbers are exponentially higher than what we see anywhere in our area, so these considerations have not been made. Programs in other areas around the state utilize Town/County owned lands to charge for or regulate parking that is adjacent to USFS lands.
- D.3.6- Winter travel management planning for the GMUG will not occur until the Forest Plan Revision is finalized, timeline currently undetermined.

# What Next?

- Identify other infrastructure opportunities in N Valley drainages, discuss river access points and potential improvements. D.3.(1, 3)
- Identify opportunities not on FS lands
- Put together data collection initiative for review. Peanut Lake & Gothic. D.3.(1,3)
- Consider a survey for data/user experience
- Meet with Agency staff at Gothic trailheads to identify improvements, develop a scope, and implement basic hardening
- Follow winter travel management planning timeline. D.3.5
- Build a user-based collection system to understand vulnerable areas and degradation. D.3.7