



VOTE YES on 5A- SUSTAINING OUR VALLEY'S TRANSPORTATION

The Gunnison Valley Rural Transportation Authority (RTA) has two primary missions that serve the residents of Gunnison County:

1. Maintain and manage a long term, energy efficient public ground transportation system.
2. Work with the airlines to maintain and grow air service to and from the Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport.

The RTA is a Special Taxing District (a governmental entity) and is funded by sales tax.

- The sales tax is collected on all retail sales in the district except for groceries and energy.
- The District includes the entire County except for Marble, Pitkin, and Ohio City.

Why 5A, Why Now?

- Many residents in Gunnison Valley including students and seniors enjoy the convenience and economic benefits of the RTA's free bus service, but it's not really free. Did you know it costs the Gunnison Valley RTA \$125 to run a bus one-way between Gunnison and Mt. Crested Butte? In fact, ridership has increased from 48,000 people to 118,000 people since 2011.
- It will cost over \$620,000 each to replace current vehicles with new buses better suited to the service (80% of the first bus will be paid for with a Federal grant from CDOT).
- A survey done several years ago showed that 35% of the ridership of the free bus was Western students (and it can be assumed that this number continues to go up each year as the bus schedule has expanded to accommodate more riders during ski season).
- Senior groups have approached the RTA about increased transportation options in the valley. This ballot issue is a direct result of those conversations and an attempt to address the need for better senior transportation. The ballot language mandates that the first \$250,000 of the yearly revenue from the sales tax be spent on senior transportation.
- The Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport is a vital part of the Gunnison Valley economy. The funds generated by the tax will go towards protecting existing flight service, and secure future flights to and from the airport. That means more flight options for local residents, and more tourism dollars going into our local economy.

- Research has shown that visitors to Gunnison Valley that come through the airport stay an average 7 nights and spend \$981. So increasing the number of seats and flights available into the airport is a direct way to grow our economy.
- The Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport has 149 direct employees and 249 indirect employees, resulting in \$14.3 million dollars in local salaries annually.
- The Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport generates \$177 million dollars in annual direct and indirect output, and \$5.5 million in tax revenue by commercial aviation visitors. These numbers can grow with additional funding.
- Except for United air service from Denver, the airlines require Minimum Revenue Guarantee Contracts to fly to Gunnison. The RTA needs the new revenue to secure those contracts and keep flight coming in and out of Gunnison.

Conclusion

On October 13th ballots will be mailed out and registered voters will be asked to consider ballot number 5A, a sales tax increase to generate additional funding for our bus and air service operations. This increase will be on sales tax, will not be reflected in household food purchases and will equal 10 cents on every \$10 purchase.

The last time a sales tax increase was approved to fund the Gunnison Valley RTA was 13 years ago in 2002 and renewed in 2008. Since then the cost of maintaining the bus fleet over time and negotiating deals with the airlines has increased significantly.

We encourage you to **VOTE YES ON 5A!**

What Can You Do?

- FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/voteyes5A and for more information and contact information visit www.sustainingourvalleystransportation.com
- Visit www.sustainingourvalleystransportation.com to sign up for a yard sign and for other ways to get involved.
- Attend our community party on October 15th- stay tuned via our website and Facebook page for final details.
- Campaigns are expensive! To make a donation to the campaign please send a check to Sustaining Our Valley's Transportation at P.O. Box 523 Gunnison, CO 81230