



Gondola Subcommittee: Agenda

Monday, December 15, 2025

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting (Zoom Webinar):

<https://gbsm.zoom.us/j/82559576086>

Phone: (888) 475-4499 / Webinar ID: 825 5957 6086

- Item 1:** Call to Order, Determination of Quorum and Agenda Review
- Item 2:** Approval of November Gondola Subcommittee Meeting Summary
Presenter: Miles Graham
Item Type: Action (packet pages 2-5)
Allotted Time: 5 minutes
- Item 3:** Project Development Updates & 2025 Accomplishments
Presenter: Amber Blake
Item Type: Informational
Allotted Time: 15 minutes
- Item 4:** Project Benefits & Value Drivers
Presenter: Miles Graham
Item Type: Informational
Allotted Time: 15 minutes
- Item 5:** Updated Planning Cost & Funding Estimates
Presenter: Ed Parks
Item Type: Informational
Allotted Time: 60 minutes
- Item 6:** New Business / Other Business
Presenter: Miles Graham
Item Type: Informational
Allotted Time: 5 minutes
- Item 7:** Public Comment

Please note that the agenda and times are approximate and subject to change

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**Meeting Summary:
Gondola Subcommittee
Monday, November 17, 2025**

Item 1: Call to Order, Determination of Quorum and Agenda Review

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Town of Telluride (TOT):
 - Ashley Von Sprecken
 - Meehan Fee
- Mountain Village Entity (TMV):
 - Harvey Mogenson
 - Jim Royer
- San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART):
 - David Averill
- San Miguel County
 - Lance Waring
 - Mike Bordogna
- Telluride Ski and Golf (TSG)
 - John Miller

OTHERS PRESENT:

- TOT: Lance McDonald,
- TMV: Jim Loebe, Paul Wisor
- TMVOA: Anton Benitez, Allen Watson
- SMART: Amber Kyle-Blake
- AECOM: Ed Parks, Andy Paddock
- SE Group: Pete Williams
- GBSM: Miles Graham, Mavis Fitzgerald

Item 2: **Approval of October Gondola Subcommittee Meeting Summary**
On motion, the October meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Item 3: **Government Affairs Discussion**

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The group discussed passage of the ballot initiative for new 5% tax on lift select lift ticket sales, clarifying that it does not apply to season passes and merchant passes, with emphasis on the importance of using precise language to avoid confusion. Clarification was provided that the tax will be collected by the Town of Mountain Village regardless of where tickets are purchased. The group also addressed the use of funds, explaining that the money would be allocated to SMART with revenue dedicated to acquisition/construction of future gondola capital improvements and gondola operations/maintenance expenses. The measure is limited to select lift ticket sales, not to lodging, retail, or restaurants. The 5% rate is similar to excise taxes in other Colorado resort towns, such as Breckenridge and Vail

Also mentioned was the need to onboard new officials, including new Council seats in Telluride and new TMVOA representation in the Gondola Subcommittee in January.

Government Affairs Strategy

A discussion focused on advancing the gondola coalition's government affairs strategy for the project, building on conversations from October. The group reviewed definitions and goals, emphasizing the need for a unified approach and clear objectives to effectively engage with elected officials and agency leadership. They discussed the importance of coalition building and educating agency staff on project-specific issues. The conversation also touched on competing and complementary priorities in the region, such as wastewater treatment, parking infrastructure, and wildfire mitigation, while highlighting the need to align project timelines with resource allocation to maintain momentum.

Regional Infrastructure Funding Priorities

The group discussed potential projects to prioritize for federal and state funding, with a focus on transportation and water infrastructure. The goal is to effectively advocate for regional projects by considering interconnected needs, such as transportation and wastewater treatment. The team agreed to create two lists: one for projects eligible for federal funds and another for broader community issues. They also reviewed a situational assessment that will analyze strengths, challenges, opportunities and results with an emphasis on maintaining strong partnerships and leveraging existing relationships with key stakeholders.

Gondola Transit Grant Strategy Discussion

The group discussed the strengths and challenges of the gondola transit system, with an explanation that their pioneering use of gondolas as public transit helped secure Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program eligibility. Concerns were raised about potential perceptions of need and wealth in mountain communities affecting grant applications, while suggesting the need to continue refining a compelling narrative about the

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30-year-old gondola's critical economic, environmental and quality of life roles. The discussion highlighted challenges, including the Federal Transit Authority's (FTA) learning curve with gondolas as a new mode, the need for local funding commitments, and the importance of strategic communications to effectively present the project's value. Opportunities identified included the ability to reduce long-term financial burden through strong local match funding and the potential to enhance regional transportation networks.

Gondola Program Strategy Discussion

The group discussed the opportunities and challenges associated with the new gondola program, emphasizing the need to shape its development and align it with community priorities. They identified the three E's - economic, environmental, and equity - as key factors to consider in the program's strategy. The discussion also touched on the cost-benefit analysis of the Gondola compared to other transportation options, noting that a massive bus system would be unable to match the gondola's capacity. The conversation ended with a focus on measuring success through community trust, transparent messaging, and measurable improvements in connectivity and quality of life.

Gondola Project Communication Strategy

The group discussed the need to continuously communicate the unique public process for this project, distinguishing it from private corporate local projects. They explored success metrics for the gondola, including its role in facilitating year-round tourism, connecting two towns, reducing traffic congestion, and generating sales tax revenue. The team reviewed their strong relationships with key stakeholders, including congressional delegation members, state legislators, and federal agencies, while noting areas for potential future connections.

Item 4: Project Development Updates

Gondola Project Funding Update

An update on the planning cost estimation and potential funding was provided, focusing on the FTA Capital Investment Grant Program (CIG) and its differences from standard grant programs. The project development budget and goals for 2026 were outlined, including the need for local funding during the pre-project development phase. The structural analysis of stations 4 and 5 were presented. The team also discussed capital funding scenarios and definitions in preparation for the December meeting.

CIG Grant and Project Timeline

The group discussed the CIG grant process and project timeline, clarifying that preliminary construction work before grant approval is not reimbursable, though design work is eligible for reimbursement as soft costs. Concerns were raised about

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coordinating the timing of gondola construction with the Four Seasons ribbon-cutting ceremony. It was explained that the FTA mandates a two-year limit for project development to ensure timely project completion; and that the team is front-loading certain activities to avoid delays during the two-year development window and the group reviewed their goals for moving the project forward in 2026, including procuring a gondola vendor, completing environmental work, and conducting transportation demand modeling.

Gondola System Transportation Planning Review

The team discussed the transportation demand modeling for the gondola system, emphasizing its integration into the broader regional network. They reviewed the project's budget, particularly the significant increase in project development services, and outlined key components such as project management, gondola development, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) considerations. Questions about the grant program requirements were answered.

Mountain Village Gondola Replacement Plan

The structural analysis findings were presented, focusing on a comprehensive assessment of Gondola stations 4 and 5 at Mountain Village Center Station, which included structural, mechanical, and electrical system evaluations. A full facility replacement was recommended due to the age and condition of the mechanical and electrical systems, aligning with planned gondola upgrades. The group discussed construction sequencing options to minimize disruption, including potentially keeping one gondola operational while renovating the other. They also reviewed five funding scenarios for the project, ranging from full federal funding to complete local funding, with considerations for competitive grant programs and potential challenges in securing federal support for the entire system. The next meeting is scheduled for December 15th to review updated cost estimates and funding scenarios.

Item 5: New Business / Other Business

No new/other business

Item 6: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 10: The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

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