

MINUTES
OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
November 13, 2025
530 East Main Street
Aspen, CO 81611

OSTB Present:

Graeme Means Dist. 1	Howie Mallory Dist. 2	Amy Barrow Dist. 3, Chair	Michael Kinsley Dist. 4	Wayne Ives Dist. 5
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Staff Present: Gary Tennenbaum, Jessie Young, Jami McMannes, Liza Mitchell, Ryan Mahoney, Paul Holsinger, Ry Neiley

Others Present: Matt Kuhn, John Spiess, Ashley Cline, Mark Frymoyer, Eric Mahoney

Amy Barrow called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Wayne Ives motioned for the OSTB to approve the 10/02/2025 OSTB Regular and Executive Draft Minutes. Graeme Means seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

Michael Kinsley entered at 9:10 a.m.

Brush Creek Park and Ride and Aspen Airport Business Center Connections

Gary Tennenbaum stated that the project aims to connect the Brush Creek area to the AABC with two proposed bridges to improve accessibility. A constructability analysis report is needed to assess the feasibility of the proposed designs and their impacts. He noted that the City of Aspen is funding 50% of the project costs to date.

Ashley Cline provided an infographic that illustrates the importance of connectivity between population centers and existing trails. The infographic highlights barriers to movement, such as the airport and river, and emphasizes the need for proposed bridges. The goal is to promote alternative transportation methods, including e-bikes and public transit, to reduce reliance on cars.

Graeme Means expressed the need to assess public support and the project's financial implications, based on the constructability report and community benefits. He recommended that the discussion includes the potential impact of new technologies on the project over the next 20 years, noting the importance of considering future advancements in e-bike technology and charging infrastructure.

Cline presented updated findings on the feasibility of the bridge and trail connections, including design and utility coordination. The new alignment for the ABC trail bridge was introduced, which aims to minimize utility and wetland impacts.

Mark Frymoyer provided the trail and bridge design overview, structural elements, and renderings:

- The proposed trail includes a 10-foot-wide paved platform with 1-foot shoulders, totaling approximately 1,500 linear feet.
- The design will ensure ADA compliance, with no segments exceeding an 8% grade for longer than 200 feet.
- Three bridge structures and retaining walls have been conceptually laid out, with the Brush Creek Bridge crossing the Roaring Fork River at 340 feet long.
- Renderings provided by Connect One illustrate the proposed structures, although final design elements like railings and finishes are yet to be determined.

Cline explained that a comprehensive utility study identified various utilities in the project area, leading to a decision against a switchback alignment to avoid multiple crossings. Coordination with utility owners has been positive, with all parties amenable to the proposed solutions.

Cline commented that SGM conducted a natural resource study, which confirmed that the proposed trail and bridge will avoid impacts to wetlands and threatened species. Minimal vegetation impact is expected, primarily affecting disturbed areas already impacted by utilities.

Frymoyer explained that Geotechnical investigations confirmed the feasibility of the proposed structures, with good bearing material identified for deep foundation support. Recommendations for retaining wall types were also confirmed as feasible based on soil conditions.

Cline noted that SGM staff had conversations with Roaring Fork Sage Passages regarding bridge design and wildlife connectivity. From those discussions, the proposed bridge design aims to provide 30-40 feet of clearance to minimize human-wildlife interaction. Additionally, the bridge will be located below the gas transfer station, ensuring wildlife can continue to traverse the area without disruption.

Cline stated that the project has a 30% contingency on the estimated \$12 million budget, with discussions on how to refine cost estimates as the project progresses. The complexity of the bridge design was acknowledged, and the need for detailed pricing discussions in future meetings was noted. Project costs are projected between \$28 to \$31 million, accounting for a 5% inflation rate and a 30% contingency. The increase in costs is attributed to longer bridge spans and market volatility affecting material prices. Discussions on potential funding sources include state grants, but federal funding is currently uncertain.

Tennenbaum explained that staff will continue to refine the constructability analysis and engage with stakeholders for feedback. A timeline of three to four months is anticipated to finalize the project details before moving forward.

Matt Kuhn stated that required closures of the Rio Grande Trail will occur during the off-season, specifically in winter. The timeline for closures needs to be clearly defined to inform stakeholders about the impact on access.

Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) Encroachment License Agreement
See board action below.

Open Space and Trails Climate Action Policy

Tennenbaum stated that the climate action policy, developed with staff input, is ready for adoption to facilitate ongoing projects. Implementation of the policy is already in progress, with metrics to be reported in the next budget cycle. The policy aims to address climate change while accounting for the county's charter constraints on open space.

Michael Kinsley asked about the future implications of converting open space for solar energy projects. Amy Barrow expressed concern with the environmental/wildlife impacts of converting Open Space. Dale Will stated that there is a process in the charter for conversions, whereas you can engage the voters on specific projects. Tennenbaum explained that the Climate Action Policy serves as guidance for staff and can be amended as needed, similar to previous discussions at the OSTB retreat.

Howie Mallory asked about the conversion of agricultural land for greenhouse use. Tennenbaum stated that the management of greenhouses is currently guided by management plans, with a focus on seasonal extensions rather than permanent structures.

Graeme Means emphasized reducing unnecessary trips and improving energy efficiency rather than solely focusing on transitioning to electric vehicles. Tennenbaum stated that staff are already implementing strategies to combine trips and improve operational efficiency.

Board action below.

BOARD AND STAFF COMMENTS

Tennenbaum stated that the Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition received \$86,000 for Early Wins Grant to initiate several projects in collaboration with local partners. The community is moving towards a more regional collaborative approach for funding and project implementation.

Amy Barrow shared positive feedback on recent Rio Grande Trail improvements and acknowledged the contributions of community members in conservation efforts.

BOARD ACTION

RFTA Encroachment License Agreement

Wayne Ives motioned to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the RFTA Encroachment License Agreement. Michael Kinsley seconded the motion. Motion passed (5-0).

Open Space and Trails Climate Action Policy

Graeme Means motioned to adopt the Open Space and Trails Climate Action Policy. Michael Kinsley seconded the motion. Motion passed (5-0).

ADJOURN

The OSTB meeting of November 13, 2025 adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

Approved:

Amy Barrow
Amy Barrow (Jan 11, 2026 22:46:55 MST)

Amy Barrow, Chair
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Board

Attest:

Kim Arensdorf
Kim Arensdorf, Administrative Specialist
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails

2025.11.13 OSTB Regular Session Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-01-12

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