



# STAFF REPORT

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION  
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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To: Planning Commission  
Cc: Kevin Young, Cris Jones, Nora Shepherd, Cheri Coffey  
From: Julianne Sabula  
Date: November 5, 2016  
Re: Transit Master Plan Briefing and Request for Positive Recommendation

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The purpose of this staff report is to present the draft Transit Master Plan to the Planning Commission. This report is in preparation for a briefing on the Plan at Commission's November 9 meeting as part of the adoption process.

## REQUEST:

Mayor Jackie Biskupski requests that the Planning Commission review the draft Transit Master Plan, in preparation for adoption.

## BACKGROUND & KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN:

The Transit Master Plan is the first plan of its kind for Salt Lake City. The plan evaluates travel patterns and transit needs citywide in order to develop high-level recommendations for transit service, infrastructure, and supportive investments, programs and policies over the next twenty years. It also identifies strategies for implementation, including potential funding sources, key moves for early success and momentum, and a governance model. A key focus of the plan is to respond to and prepare for growth in population and jobs, the desire to improve air quality, changing demographics and transportation preferences, and the impact of transportation choices on health and household budgets.

The Transit Master Plan's primary recommendations include a grid-based network of high frequency transit corridors, development of alternate service models for lower-density residential neighborhoods and employment centers, and safe and convenient access to transit. It also recommends better information and system legibility, fare programs, and supportive land use and parking policies. The Plan's [Executive Summary](#) provides a high-level overview of the key recommendations. The full plan, including all appendices, can be found on the project website's [Project Documents](#) page.

The plan will be used by several of the City's agencies to provide guidance in implementing service and infrastructure improvements, as well as to strengthen our relationship and clearly communicate priorities with UTA. The new proposed plan will be used in coordination with the recently adopted Pedestrian & Bicycle Master plan, the City's overall Transportation Master Plan, Plan Salt Lake and area master plans throughout the City.

## PROCESS:

The Planning Commission was briefed early in the process, and the project team utilized input received there to develop the plan, particularly project goals and stakeholder coordination. Council have been briefed four

times prior during the plan process, with accompanying transmittals and presentations. These have included summaries of public engagement at each step.

The Salt Lake City Transportation Division now presents the draft master plan, along with a summary of the public and staff comments.

Revisions to the master plan based on the public and internal comment summarized below will be incorporated prior to transmitting to City Council for their consideration.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS:**

The Transit Master Plan builds on past plans, especially those developed and adopted in recent years, such as Plan Salt Lake, Sustainable Salt Lake, the Downtown Plan, the Westside Master Plan, the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, and Utah's Unified Transportation Plan 2011-2040.

Some of the transit and transportation demand management focused recommendations of this plan will be furthered in the upcoming Transportation Master Plan Update.

#### **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT THE PLAN:**

*A summary of the public process can be found on pages 8-9 of the Executive Summary and is described in detail in Appendix B, "Community Outreach".*

Throughout the planning process, the public has opportunity to shape the direction of the plan. Public engagement included stakeholder interviews with sixteen organizations, two public open houses, eighteen mobile workshops, and online questionnaire, and a unique online game in which over 1,400 participants developed and communicated their priorities for transit. In total we received about 2,500 comments, survey responses, map mark-ups and "sticky notes".

The plan also received input from an internal Steering Committee including representatives from Engineering, Planning, Economic Development, Sustainability, HAND, CAN leadership and communications team, the RDA, the Mayor's Office – including the Mayor's Accessibility Council – and the City Council Office.

The Transportation Advisory Board, Bicycle Advisory Committee (a standing committee of TAB), and Business Advisory Board have each received briefings to give input throughout the process, and the Transportation Advisory Board will provide a recommendation on the plan at their meeting of November 7, 2016.

Further summary of the public input at each of these stages was included in the four prior transmittals related to this plan, as sent to the City Council in March 2015, July 2015, October 2015, and July 2016.

The draft plan itself was publicized and available for public comment from October 18 through November 7, 2016.

In addition to those who viewed the plan directly through the project's website [www.slcrides.org](http://www.slcrides.org), the topic on Open City Hall received over 394 (as of November 4) unique views.

#### **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS:**

Each comment received is being considered independently in a comment resolution matrix. This matrix will show how the City will accept, accept with modifications, or decline each comment. This work is still in progress but will be completed prior to the Planning Commission briefing on January 14, and a tabular format will be available prior to the hearing.

The summary below highlights the significant and common themes from the public comment and internal comments on the draft plan.

- **Several people wrote with simple support for the plan** – citing improved transportation for themselves and their kids. There were some requests that the plan be implemented faster, and/or concern that area not served by the high-frequency network would not be served at all. Several people asked that facilities near their own residences, places of employment, and other specific destinations be prioritized, including those outside of Salt Lake City.
  - Incorporation of comments – We appreciate the support for the plan. The plan suggests phasing that we believe is attainable in terms of overall resources and community support for change. We will clarify in the plan that it does not seek to reduce nor eliminate service, but rather to provide frequent, all-day service where it is most likely to succeed and to support city goals, and to provide new service models and improved access for neighborhoods that are beyond the reach of the frequent network. We encourage those who live in other cities and counties to express their desire for local transit planning to their elected officials, and we are happy to be a resource.
- **Several people expressed a desire for robust transit and transit-supportive infrastructure, including new and improved transit centers, rail connections, dedicated bus lanes, and signal priority.**
  - Incorporation of comments – We have included high-level references to these in the master plan, and will delve into specifics through the corridor and site planning processes.
- **A few people wrote to express general opposition to the plan.**

Opposition was a minority opinion, and largely fell within two categories: a desire for a far more aggressive plan and general opposition to UTA.

  - Incorporation of comments – we believe the plan is aspirational but attainable given existing and potential new resources. Should new and/or expanded funding sources become available, the plan could be implemented on a more aggressive schedule. The plan is intended to enhance local control over where our investments can best serve our community and to be used to communicate our priorities clearly to UTA.
- **A few people had comments related to private auto travel.** Some prefer investments in signal timing and other improvements for vehicles, while others prefer more explicit policies to discourage auto travel.
  - Incorporation of comments – since this is a modal plan focused on transit, it does not delve specifically into the needs of motorists. However, increased transit ridership slows the growth in traffic and congestion, and signal improvements for transit can also benefit traffic flow for cars, especially those travelling in the peak period and peak direction. The plan does recommend Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, which are explored in more detail in the Parking Study (in progress) and TDM and auto travel will be further explored in the forthcoming Transportation Master Plan Update.
- **Integration of bicycles was a common theme** with several members of the public. The majority applauded the integration of bicycles, however some expressed the need to expand

and improve transit riders' ability to bring their bikes on transit, especially those who use a bicycle at both ends of their daily commute.

- No change to the plan recommendations. Active transportation is a strong component of the plan, and the plan emphasizes improvements over which the City has full control. That said, UTA has been exploring and implementing improvements to on-vehicle bike accommodations, including the installation of bus racks that hold three bikes instead of two and the testing of a variety of in-vehicle hooks and racks, especially on the rail system. The Plan's recommendations fully support these efforts.
- **Several suggestions were made to integrate the needs of the disabled community**, and comments on specific language that would raise awareness, reinforce the need to make transit better for those who experience the greatest transportation challenges, and shift the culture toward greater inclusivity.
  - Incorporation of comments – we will make numerous additions to the plan to include more explicit consideration of the wide variety of disabilities affecting people's access to transit, including the achievement of true accessibility with alternate service models, specific references to disabilities in Chapter 4 "Access", inclusion of disabled populations in Goal 5 "Provide Access to Opportunity for Vulnerable Populations", and consideration of needs such as the challenges of travel mobility devices, and better audio and visual cues.
  - The plan will also recommend that, outside this master plan process, the City should consider the finer details of accessibility as an integral part of implementation planning.