

Transit to Trails: Opportunities in the Cottonwood Canyons

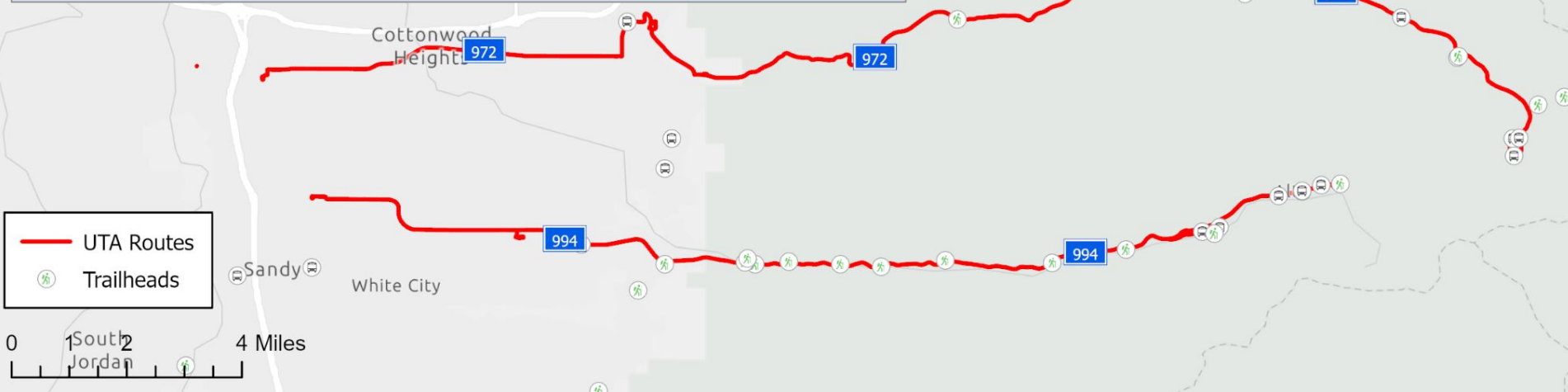
Transit ideas to connect our communities to recreational opportunities in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons

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Issue Summary


- **It's not all about skiing!**
 - Summer weekends see heavier use than winter weekends in Big Cottonwood
- **Transit network to canyons is inadequate for many uses:**
 - Routes 994/972 are winter only routes with poor access to many trails
 - Route 972 1.5hr headways and limited stops
- **Current planning efforts don't offer solutions**
- **Equitability is lacking**

Donut Falls (BCC) individually saw 2000 hikers on an average Saturday during the 2021 summer, and **61k hikers total over the whole summer.**



Traffic volumes have increased more than 30% over the past 20 years and are expected to continue increasing

- 22% increase in avg. annual daily traffic (AADT) from 1990 to 2000
- 34% increase in AADT from 2000 to 2019
- 21% projected increase by 2030
- *Source: wfrc.com*



Congestion at trailheads is projected to increase

**Parking reductions will increase congestion at trailheads
(BCC MAP, LCC EIS)**

Surrounding Planning Context

- Central Wasatch Commission Mountain Transportation System Draft Alternatives Report (2020)
- UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (2022)
- Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (2023)



CWC MTS Draft Alternatives Report (2020)

Recommendations were made for a **year-round transit** service for BCC with services to trailheads with either 15 or 30 minute headways.



UDOT LCC EIS (2022)

There is
**no trailhead
access** included
in any of the
proposed or chosen
(Gondola B) transit
alternatives for LCC



Final EIS Alternatives Summary

Little Cottonwood
Canyon ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT
S.R. 210 | Wasatch Blvd. to Alta

Alternative	Initial capital cost 30 year life-cycle cost*	Total transit time to Alta (On dry pavement)	Fare to ride	Tolling (Estimated \$25 - \$35)	Improves air quality	Stops at trailheads	Low impacts to watershed & wildlife crossing	Climbing boulders removed
Enhanced Bus (No widening)	\$355M \$720M	54 min	Not determined Fare significantly less than toll	✓	✓	✗	✓	0
Enhanced Bus (Widening for bus lanes)	\$510M \$780M	36 min	Not determined Fare significantly less than toll	✓	✓	✗	✗	41
Gondola A (From LCC Park-and-Ride)	\$561M \$757M	63 min	Not determined Fare significantly less than toll	✓	✓	✗	✓	5
Gondola B (From La Caille)	\$550M \$569M	55 min	Not determined Fare significantly less than toll	✓	✓	✗	✓	2
Cog Rail (From La Caille)	\$1.06B \$1.1B	55 min	Not determined Fare significantly less than toll	✓	✓	✗	✗	116

*Life-cycle cost analysis does not include Wasatch Boulevard improvements (\$62M)

Proposed Alternatives

Expansion of the existing UTA routes to include year-round, full canyon service

1

Year-round, trailhead specific shuttle service with seasonal routes

2

Our pick for the most adaptability, ease of implementation, and cohesion with existing infrastructure

Additional trailhead-only UTA bus route in each canyon

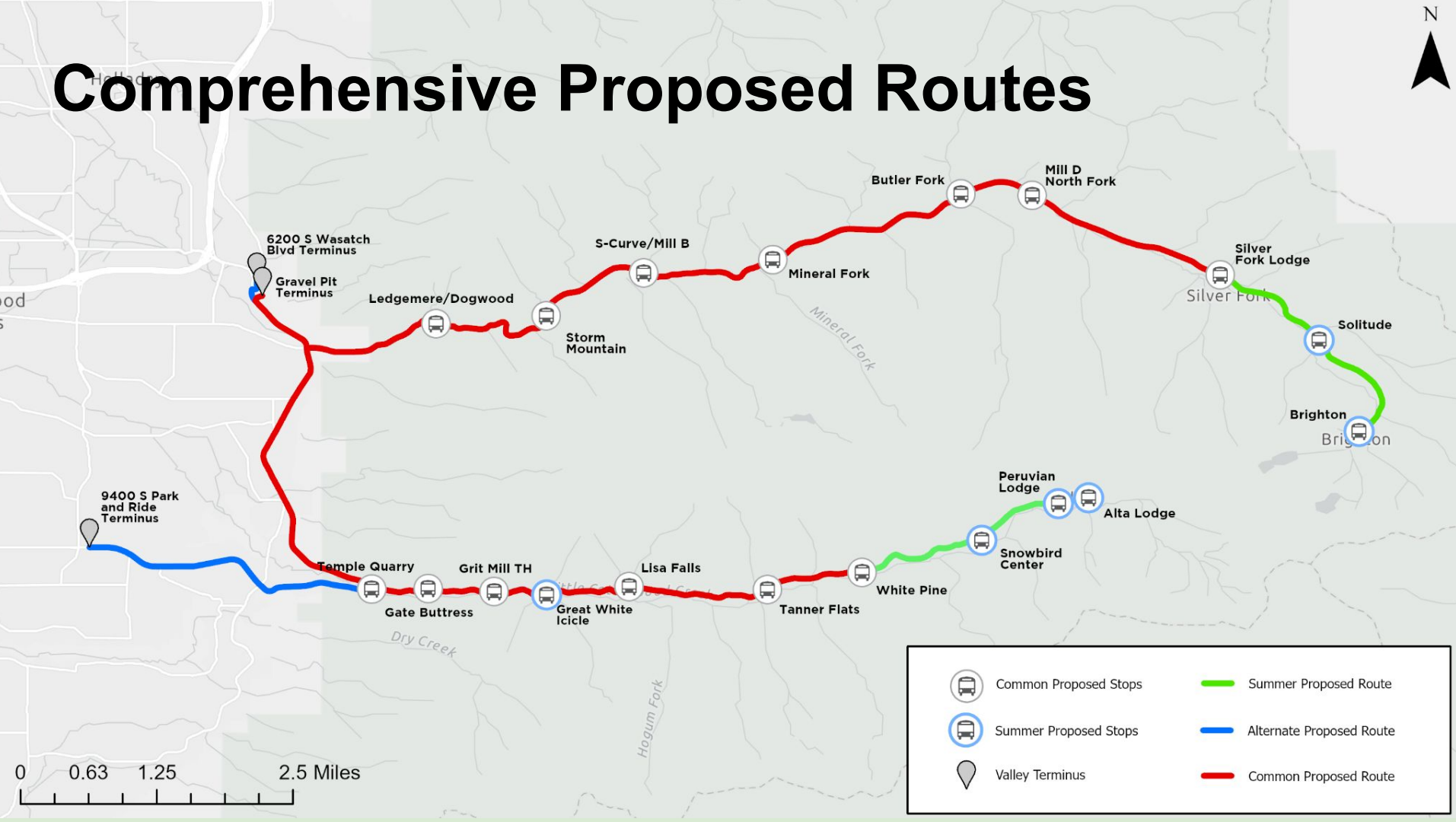
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Considerations for Alternatives

- **Vehicle size/capacity**
- **Flexibility of Service Levels**
 - Rider fee levels
 - headway/frequency of stops
 - Stop locations
 - Summer vs. winter service
 - Bike/Ski transportation options
- **Compatibility with existing plans**
 - Bus pull-outs/stops at trailheads
 - Gravel Pit mobility hub



Comprehensive Proposed Routes



Do shuttle systems to trailheads work?

Shuttles have been taking passengers to trailheads at popular national parks for over two decades. [Grand Canyon, below. Zion, right]

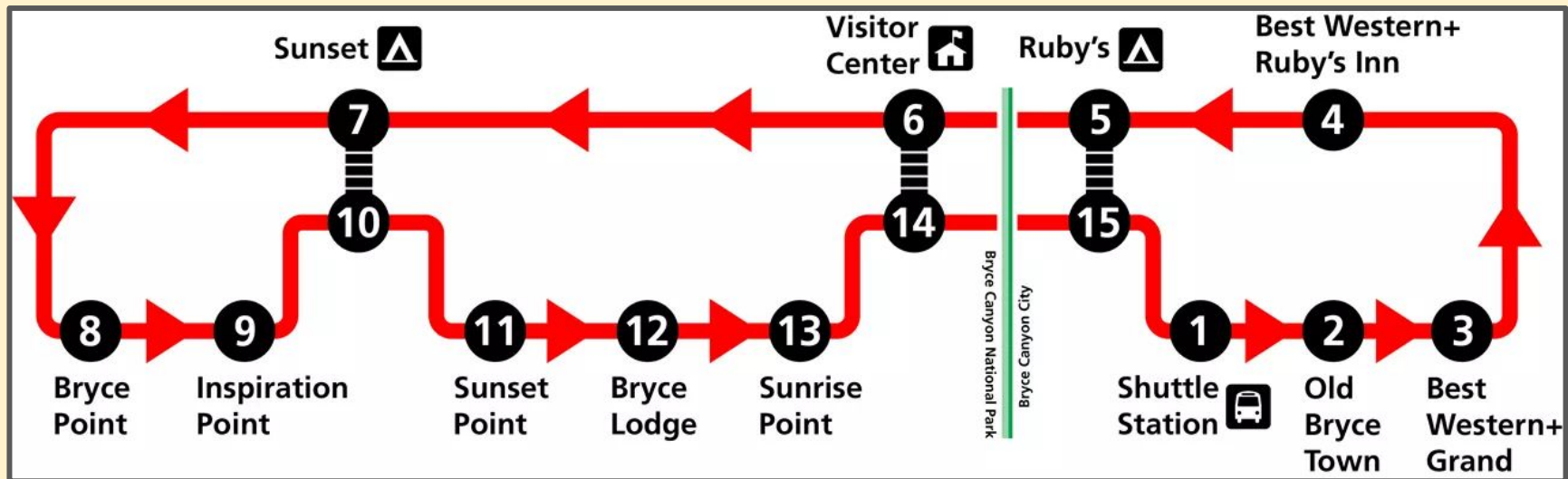


NPS SHUTTLES AT BRYCE, ZION, AND GRAND CANYON

Headway: typically 10-15min

Pets: not allowed

Benefits: reduced congestion at parking areas, decreased or reduced private vehicle use on park roads, fewer social trails, less noise pollution, improved air quality, enhanced interpretive opportunities.



BRYCE CANYON TRANSIT MAP

Similarities between NPS and Cottonwood Canyons objectives:

Concentrated use: in the NPS examples and in the Cottonwoods, destinations are all located on one major road with hubs just outside of the concentrated area for pick up

Recreational demand: Similar user groups

Environmental concerns: Sensitive air quality, unique physical environments

Parking and traffic challenges: Transit as a solution to parking lot and road congestion





This **FREE** service is intended for winter recreators looking for transportation between the Bonanza Park neighborhood and Empire Pass. Service is provided Thursday-Sunday.

THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS

PICK-UP RETURN

10:00 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m.	12:00 p.m.	9:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.	12:30 p.m.	10:00 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
11:30 a.m.	1:00 p.m.	10:30 a.m.	12:00 p.m.
12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.	11:00 a.m.	12:30 p.m.
12:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	11:30 a.m.	1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	12:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	1:00 p.m.	2:30 p.m.
	4:00 p.m.		3:00 p.m.

SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

PICK-UP RETURN

9:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
9:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
10:00 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m.	12:00 p.m.
11:00 a.m.	12:30 p.m.
11:30 a.m.	1:00 p.m.
12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
12:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m.	2:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m.	3:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
2:30 p.m.	3:00 p.m.

P **PARKING**
1376 MUNCHKIN ROAD,
PARK CITY, UT 84060



EP **EMPIRE PASS TRAILHEAD**

This service is dog-friendly, and accommodates skis and snowshoes

RESERVE YOUR **FREE** RIDE!

Email umsparkcity@gmail.com the information in this exact form:

- Subject line: T2T Winter
- Name
- Phone number
- Requested date
- Departure time
- Number of riders
- Equipment type (skis, bikes, etc.)

If you pack it in, please pack it out.

This **FREE** service will be capped when capacity is met. Unscheduled or 'walk-up' riders will be accepted based on availability.

DEPARTURE
Arrive at pick-up location
5-10 minutes prior to
departure.

RETURN
If you need a return trip,
please organize with your
shuttle driver at departure.

OTHER CITIES WITH SHUTTLES TO TRAILS:

Park City, UT (left)
Aspen, CO (right)
Sedona, AZ (below)

Operated by cooperative agreements, allow bikes and pets (with stipulations), access USFS trailheads



One proposal, many improvements



Built upon exist planning efforts to fulfill a demonstrated demand that would:

- Improve canyon **accessibility** for all users, **year-round**
- **Decrease reliance** on private or single-occupancy vehicles
- Reduce **environmental impacts** from vehicles
- Make parking areas **safer and less congested**