

Thank you for inviting me to be here today and giving me the opportunity to update you on the status of the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision (ROD).

The ROD outlines a three phase approach. Phase 1 includes increased bus service, tolling, a mobility hub at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon, and improved resort bus stops. Wasatch Boulevard improvements, constructing snow sheds, and trailhead improvements are in Phase 2, and implementing gondola service is in Phase 3.

The phasing plan is in response to the request of thousands of public comments received during the final two comment periods of the EIS.

As you are likely aware, three legal challenges to the ROD were filed in December of 2023. All lawsuits challenge the basic assumptions of the ROD and ask the court to revoke the Final EIS and ROD that UDOT issued. Two of the three suits request a stop to any further actions that implement or authorize any component of the project.

After reviewing each legal challenge, we are pausing work with significant costs to reduce risk to taxpayer funds until the litigation is resolved. Our initial plan was to begin procuring buses and constructing the mobility hub this year, with the bus service operational by the Winter of 2025. This timeline is now delayed and we don't have a new operational date at this time.

I'm disappointed we can't start addressing today's problems with the \$150 million that the Legislature allocated to Phase 1 in 2023.

As we work through the litigation process, we will continue to coordinate with our agency and local government partners and look for opportunities to implement low risk activities. Some of the activities we are working on include preliminary designs, purchasing ROW, and installing additional signage for communication with canyon travelers. We are also working on the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study, which will allow for the implementation of increased bus service and tolling in Big Cottonwood Canyon.

I think it's important to note that each phase of the ROD has actions that are intended to increase the overall efficiency of the system for travelers, each phase and the associated improvement builds upon the previous phase to create a holistic transportation system that functions safely and reliably.

Due to the litigation we can't build the infrastructure to support running additional buses. The increased bus service needs the mobility hub and improved resort bus stops to function efficiently as we are already at capacity with the current parking lots and resort stops.

We will not move forward with travel demand management tools such as tolling without first providing an improved transit system to avoid impacts to lower-income populations.

Thank you again for allowing me the time to speak with you today.