



1
2
3 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
4 **COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MONDAY,**
5 **SEPTEMBER 9, 2024, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-**
6 **PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS AT THE**
7 **CWC OFFICES LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE**
8 **CITY, UTAH.**
9

- 10 **Present:** Danny Richardson, Chair
11 Linda Johnson
12 Mark Baer
13 Spencer Shaver
14 Roger Bourke
15 Amber Broadaway
16 Mike Marker
17 John Knoblock
18 Tom Diegel
19
20 **Staff:** Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
21
22 **Others:** David Sucher
23 Scott Groux
24

25 **OPENING**
26

27 **1. Chair Danny Richardson will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the**
28 **Transportation Systems Committee of the CWC Stakeholders Council.**
29

30 Chair Danny Richardson called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
31 Transportation Systems Committee Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those present.
32

33 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the August 12, 2024, Meeting.**
34

35 Chair Richardson reviewed information from the last Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.
36 He noted that there were meaningful discussions at the last meeting. For example, the Committee
37 discussed the fact that the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) has formed a Big
38 Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study Stakeholder Working Group. There was also extensive
39 discussion about a potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle and the Visitor Use Study. He reported that
40 on September 18, 2024, the CWC Youth Council Outdoor Film Festival will take place.
41

1 **MOTION:** Linda Johnson moved to APPROVE the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting
2 Minutes from August 12, 2024. Spencer Shaver seconded the motion. The motion passed with
3 the unanimous consent of the Committee.
4

5 **CHAIR UPDATES**
6

7 **1. UDOT’s Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study Stakeholder Working Group**
8 **Met on August 21, 2024.**
9

10 Chair Richardson reported that UDOT has formed the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental
11 Study Stakeholder Working Group. Amber Broadway is a member of that Working Group and
12 shared updates with the Transportation Systems Committee. Ms. Broadway noted that several
13 members of the Stakeholders Council were invited to the kickoff meeting. The U.S. Forest Service
14 also attended the meeting. Devin Weder is the Project Manager overseeing this process. At the
15 meeting, there was an opportunity for the attendees to ask questions and provide some input.
16

17 One of the takeaways from the meeting was that there are specific guardrails around what is being
18 considered through the Environmental Study. For example, looking at the mobility hub at the
19 gravel pit, which was originally intended to service Little Cottonwood Canyon. UDOT is looking
20 at what the needs would be to reimagine that so it could service the transportation needs for both
21 Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon. Additionally, there were discussions
22 about tolling. The intention is to ensure that the canyon is ready for tolling should the decision be
23 made to move forward with that approach. There were also discussions about enhancing some of
24 the bus stops. As for the resorts, the idea is to move the Solitude stop from inside Entry 1 to the
25 outside of Entry 1 on the road. At Brighton Resort, the idea is to keep the bus stop where it is but
26 enhance the access around the loop. UDOT will look at a potential bus lane or expand the third
27 lane in the upper section of the canyon. She reiterated that the study is looking at specific items.
28

29 Spencer Shaver shared additional takeaways from the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental
30 Study Stakeholder Working Group. UDOT wants to toll the canyons in the same way so there is
31 no pressure being added to one canyon. Before proceeding with any tolling in Little Cottonwood
32 Canyon, there would need to be some sort of environmental review related to tolling in Big
33 Cottonwood Canyon. It was noted that there will be a public comment period held. There is no
34 commitment to a certain level of environmental review at this time, but it is believed this will be
35 an Environmental Assessment rather than a full Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”).
36

37 John Knoblock asked when there will be a draft ready for comment and what the timeline might
38 look like. Ms. Broadway believed the plan was to have the work done this winter. By the end of
39 the spring, there will ideally be a final recommendation. There is still uncertainty about the
40 lawsuits. Her takeaway is that there might be a path forward on actionable items in Big
41 Cottonwood Canyon despite the lawsuits associated with the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon
42 EIS. Overall, the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study Stakeholder Working Group
43 meeting went well. She feels encouraged and believes there will be actionable items in the future.
44

45 Mr. Knoblock noted that even if the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS lawsuits have paused
46 spending of the \$200 million the Legislature appropriated, it might be possible to utilize some of

1 that for Big Cottonwood Canyon needs. He pointed out that the appropriation did not specify that
2 it could only be used in Little Cottonwood Canyon. Linda Johnson noted that there were
3 discussions in the past about a bus stop by the road and the construction of a building with lockers
4 for skier use. There was a great deal of resistance about that back then, but she is in favor of that
5 kind of approach. Ms. Johnson suggested thinking about a moving walkway or a path from the
6 bus stop to the main building. She clarified that this would be from the street to the resort.

7
8 Ms. Broadaway reported that the Utah Transit Authority ("UTA") has stated that the 953 Route is
9 coming back. There will be a contract service for that route. Additionally, UTA will work with
10 Solitude and Brighton again this winter to continue the momentum with employee-based
11 transportation needs. A lot more riders were moved on UTA this past winter than the prior winter
12 through surge service. She explained that there will be more of that surge service in the future.

13
14 Mr. Knoblock mentioned the mobility hub at the gravel pit. He believes there are still two more
15 years before the gravel pit operations are complete and it will likely take another two or three years
16 before anything more happens there. In the meantime, the 6200 South Park and Ride overflows
17 often. He wondered what could be done to resolve that problem while waiting on the gravel pit.
18 Ms. Broadaway noted that there is a lot of parking in the area. She is curious whether or not that
19 can be rented. She believed Mr. Weder was aware of the situation. It is worth asking UDOT if
20 some of the appropriations money can be used and accessed in the near term before some of the
21 long-term solutions are able to come to fruition. A lot of people like to use the 6200 South parking
22 lot.

23
24 Mike Marker asked if anyone monitors the use of the parking lots by the hotel at the mouth of the
25 canyon. Ms. Broadaway is unsure whether anyone is monitoring that but knows there seems to be
26 some capacity there. Mr. Marker referenced the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Investment
27 Fund ("CCTIF"). He pointed out that parking is a transportation issue and there might be money
28 available through that fund. Additional information about the CCTIF was shared. Mr. Knoblock
29 asked whether it is part of the Tourism, Recreation, Culture, and Convention ("TRCC"). Mr.
30 Marker clarified that he had not heard about TRCC being tied to CCTIF. He explained that the
31 CCTIF is focused on addressing various transportation issues in the Cottonwood Canyons.

32
33 Chair Richardson wondered whether the Working Group will meet on a monthly basis. This was
34 denied. Ms. Broadaway stated that it is possible to look out for the meeting notices. There was
35 discussion about accessing a recording of the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study
36 Stakeholder Working Group. Tom Diegel offered to send an email asking for more information.
37 It was noted that Ms. Broadaway needed to leave the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.

38 **2. Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS Lawsuit Update.**

39
40
41 Chair Richardson reported that there was a KSL article released on August 22, 2024, regarding the
42 UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. It stated that the lawsuit could delay the plan by a couple
43 of years. According to the article that was published, 13 of the 20 claims in the lawsuit affect the
44 first phase of the plan, which largely centers on enhanced bus service and tolling in the canyon.

1 Mr. Knoblock asked about a recent email exchange where an individual wanted to know whether
2 it is possible for there to be a negotiated settlement between the parties. Chair Richardson did not
3 have information about that email exchange. Mr. Knoblock reported that the email was from
4 David Sucher and there were a few participants on the thread. Mr. Diegel stated that he does not
5 know Mr. Sucher, but he may be a concerned citizen interested in an update about the lawsuits.

6
7 Mr. Diegel noted that Patrick Shea is one of the litigants associated with the lawsuits. UDOT
8 stated previously that it is not possible to move forward on the implementation of the first phases
9 unrelated to the gondola. Mr. Shea and others were working to consolidate the lawsuits so there
10 were not as many and the lawsuits would not prevent the implementation of Phase I and Phase II.
11 It was noted that Mr. Sucher was present at the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.

12
13 Mr. Shaver reported that Save Our Canyons is involved in one of the lawsuits. UDOT sets its own
14 schedule for the implementation of the different phases but has said that the lawsuits and the risks
15 to taxpayer dollars are holding up the work. Ms. Johnson pointed out that if there is not a gondola
16 included in a later phase, then what is included in Phase I and Phase II could change. In that case,
17 more people will need to be moved on the ground, so adjustments will need to be made to what
18 has been planned. That is one of the reasons it is not possible to move forward at this time. Mr.
19 Shaver reported that there are no claims in any lawsuit that prevent the implementation of Phase I
20 or Phase II. Ms. Johnson explained that UDOT cannot take the risk to move ahead.

21
22 Director of Operations, Sam Kilpack, informed those present that the CWC is not involved in any
23 of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS lawsuits. However, there are some Stakeholders
24 Council Members who are parties to the lawsuits through their various organizations.

25
26 **3. Foothills Trail System Plan.**

27
28 Chair Richardson shared information about the Salt Lake City Department of Public Lands
29 Foothills Trail System Plan. He has reached out to see if there is an opportunity for collaboration,
30 as there may be some common interests. Mr. Knoblock believes this is a separate issue and does
31 not necessarily feel the CWC should be involved in the process. He clarified that he is involved.

32
33 Mr. Diegel reported that there is a trails plan that is more relevant to the CWC study area. The
34 Recreation Systems Committee has spoken about the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan quite a bit.

35
36 **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS**
37 **DISCUSSION**

38
39 **1. The Committee will Discuss Ways to Partner with the Millcreek Canyon Committee**
40 **on Shuttle Efforts.**

41
42 **2. The Committee will Discuss Ways to Partner with the Wasatch Front Regional**
43 **Council.**

44
45 Chair Richardson reported that at the last Transportation Systems Committee Meeting, there were
46 extensive discussions about a potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle. There are some common

1 members between the Transportation Systems Committee and the Millcreek Canyon Committee.
2 It is possible to coordinate, share information, and partner with that Committee on these efforts.

3
4 Mr. Knoblock and Mr. Diegel are both on the Millcreek Canyon Committee. Mr. Knoblock
5 explained that the Millcreek Canyon Committee has been discussing a potential shuttle in
6 Millcreek Canyon for several years. Chair Richardson believes there are opportunities to share
7 information between the two Committees, especially as there are some common members. It is
8 also possible to think about ways to partner with the Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”).
9

10 **VISITOR USE STUDY**

11 12 **1. The Committee will discuss the Visitor Use Study and the Feasibility of Incorporating** 13 **Additional Data in Future Efforts.**

14
15 Chair Richardson shared information about the Visitor Use Study. He explained that there were
16 previous discussions about items missing from the Visitor Use Study due to the Utah State
17 University team following the Forest Service format. As a result of that format, there were missing
18 details specifically related to use. For example, data for backcountry skiing and summer use. It
19 appears that there has been some discussion between the Salt Lake Ranger District and the National
20 Office about potentially updating the study format. He reiterated that the study did not answer a
21 number of questions, as there was not an opportunity to have flexibility due to the required format.
22

23 Mr. Diegel explained that he has been critical of the Visitor Use Study information. He sent an
24 email to the CWC leadership expressing his concerns. If the study is being referenced in the future,
25 it is important for others to understand the limitations. In his opinion, the study is incomplete. He
26 knows that the Utah State University team has done a lot of excellent work, but the study itself is
27 something he believes is weak. Mr. Marker also had some serious problems with the Visitor Use
28 Study. He reminded those present that the Mountain Accord called for a capacity study. The
29 CWC Stakeholders Council previously launched a subcommittee for a capacity study.
30 Unfortunately, the Visitor Use Study only provides information about where people recreate. It
31 does not actually talk about the impact on the resource. He pointed out that national parks study
32 both numbers and impact. This is something that is needed in the tri-canyons as well. Something
33 he liked about the Mountain Accord process was that it recognized that all of the systems have to
34 fit together. It is not possible to make adjustments in one system without impacting the others.
35

36 Mr. Marker stressed the importance of following the Mountain Accord. He believes that
37 understanding capacity in the canyons is essential. It was noted that Utah State University did the
38 same study 10 years before and followed the same protocol. Mr. Marker compared the previous
39 report from 10 years ago with the one that was done most recently. According to the comparison,
40 the numbers in the canyons went down by 30%. During the same time, the numbers in national
41 parks like Arches and Zion increased. It does not seem possible that the numbers came down over
42 a 10-year period in the Wasatch Front. He reiterated that the Visitor Use Study does not include
43 any information about impacts on the resource. However, he looked at water quality data on the
44 Environmental Dashboard over the same 10-year period and E. coli has increased in the canyons
45 from zero to over 200 parts. Any study that looks at the health and welfare of the canyons has to
46 have visitation information as well as information about the impacts on the resource itself.

1
2 Mr. Knoblock noted that during the Mountain Accord, the intention was to have an Environmental
3 Dashboard that measured the degraded conditions. In order to improve the Environmental
4 Dashboard, he feels the degraded conditions need to be made clear. With respect to transportation,
5 one of the indicators is how many vehicles are going up the canyon. More vehicles in the canyon
6 mean more tire particles into the stream and more wear on the road. Mr. Diegel pointed out that
7 the ski resorts have been overwhelmed with the traffic. Due to the Ikon Pass, a lot of the traffic
8 has shifted to Big Cottonwood Canyon. He noted that all of the different systems are connected.
9

10 Mr. Knoblock reported that the CWC Transportation Committee is scheduled to meet tomorrow.
11 He believes members of the Transportation Systems Committee should listen in on that meeting.
12

13 Chair Richardson reported that UDOT released an information page with parking details for this
14 winter. There is information for both Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon. It
15 lists all of the resorts, parking options, and so on. He encouraged Committee Members to review
16 this and share it when applicable. The link to the website was shared in the Zoom chat box.
17

18 There were discussions about traction law enforcement. Mr. Knoblock believes this issue should
19 be a priority for the Transportation Systems Committee. It is one area where it is possible for the
20 Committee to make an impact. In the Transportation Systems Committee folder on Google Drive,
21 he created a brainstorming document related to traction law compliance. He asked Committee
22 Members to look at that document and add other ideas. Between now and the next Transportation
23 Systems Committee Meeting, it is possible to think about some additional suggestions.
24

25 Mr. Knoblock explained that on snow days, there are always a few vehicles that do not have the
26 right equipment and become stuck. This can lead to traffic issues in the canyons on busy days.
27 He has previously spoken to Mayor Jeff Silvestrini about this matter. Mr. Knoblock informed
28 those present that Mayor Silvestrini is part of WFRC and the Unified Police Department (“UPD”)
29 Board. On snow days, there are a lot of accidents in the valley and the police do not have time to
30 check for compliance. If the Transportation Systems Committee wants to see something done as
31 it relates to enforcement, then there need to be some out-of-the-box ideas and suggestions. It could
32 be as simple as improving public awareness and education or it could be more complex than that.
33

34 Mr. Knoblock pointed out that even if there was a security officer available to pull over vehicles,
35 thought would need to be given to where the vehicles would be pulled over and how those vehicles
36 would be turned around. There are a lot of factors that make this issue complicated to address.
37 That is the reason nothing has happened for all of these years. Ms. Johnson stated that in Big
38 Cottonwood Canyon, officers can be located near the left turn at the top of the parking near the
39 restrooms. If someone is pulled over, they can drive into the parking lot and turn back around.
40

41 Mr. Marker reported that the statute says traction devices are required when lights are on. The
42 lights might not be on in the morning when someone is driving up the canyon, but in the afternoon,
43 there may be snow and the traction law will be in effect. That means some of the vehicles may
44 not be in compliance. The requirement should be that traction devices must be on between certain
45 dates. Part of the solution will be education-focused, but part of the solution will need to involve
46 legislation. That being said, there needs to be enforcement to ensure that there is compliance.

1
2 Mr. Knoblock reported that he had spoken to Mike Maughan about the program previously.
3 According to him, legislation to improve traction control requirements is one of his goals. Mr.
4 Knoblock thought traction control requirements on anticipated snow days made sense. It was
5 suggested that there be a focus on incentives that could potentially change driver behavior. Ms.
6 Johnson pointed out that the Forest Service does not view all-wheel-drive vehicles the same way
7 as four-wheel-drive vehicles. In some areas of the forest, usually on the back roads, there has been
8 ticketing for those on gravel roads with all-wheel-drive vehicles, so the language used is important.
9

10 Mr. Knoblock asked what would be done to address this issue. He believes an action plan is needed
11 to ensure that progress is made. Chair Richardson asked whether the Transportation Committee
12 would be willing to discuss this matter. Ms. Kilpack explained that the agenda for that meeting
13 was already set. If the Transportation Systems Committee wants to develop a plan related to
14 traction enforcement, that can be carried out and potentially moved forward to the CWC Board.
15 Chair Richardson reported that he plans to attend the Transportation Committee Meeting. If there
16 is an opportunity to share comments, he will let Committee Members know about this discussion.
17

18 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

19 20 **1. The Committee will Discuss Items for the October 14, 2024, Meeting Agenda.**

21
22 Ms. Kilpack thanked Mr. Knoblock for creating the brainstorming document in the Transportation
23 Systems Committee folder. She noted that the Committee can continue to work on the document,
24 add suggestions, and then start to develop a potential plan. Chair Richardson believes it is
25 important to involve the Forest Service, UDOT, and the ski resorts in these discussions because
26 parking could be an incentive for traction law compliance. Ms. Johnson thought the existing
27 brainstorming document should be reviewed at the next Transportation Systems Committee
28 Meeting. It can be whittled down to a workable number and then presented to the CWC Board.
29

30 Ms. Johnson reported that WFRC has put out a map for 2034. She wants to know what having the
31 future Olympics in Salt Lake City will do to the CWC study area as far as traffic. Chair Richardson
32 noted that when it was held there in 2002, there were no events held in the canyons. Mr. Knoblock
33 stated that at that time, there were fewer people heading to the Cottonwood Canyons because
34 everyone was watching the Olympics. That shift actually benefited Cottonwood Canyon skiers.
35

36 Chair Richardson reiterated that he will be attending the Transportation Committee Meeting
37 tomorrow and will do his best to share a comment about the traction enforcement discussion. At
38 the next Transportation Systems Committee Meeting, there can be additional traction discussions.
39

40 Chair Richardson reported that Zion National Park now has an electric shuttle. There were
41 previous comments made about Zion potentially ending the shuttle service, but that is not accurate.
42 It is important to look at the shuttle examples elsewhere and learn from what has been done. Mr.
43 Knoblock reported that Carlton Christensen from UTA previously stated that UTA has looked into
44 electric buses. Based on their analysis, electric buses will not work in the canyons at this time.
45

1 There was additional discussion about potential items for the next Transportation Systems
2 Committee Meeting agenda. Chair Richardson noted that there might be some updates to share
3 from UDOT and UTA about winter transportation. Mr. Knoblock suggested that some action
4 items be determined. For example, the 6200 South Park and Ride and the possibility of using some
5 of the money from the Legislature to pay one of the adjacent businesses to use their parking lot.
6 He wondered whether someone on the Committee is willing to reach out to UDOT or UTA to
7 determine whether there is a path forward. This is also something that can be discussed at the
8 Transportation Committee Meeting. Ms. Johnson pointed out that the request might be more
9 impactful coming from the Transportation Committee than the Transportation Systems
10 Committee, as there are elected officials. Chair Richardson offered to mention it at the meeting.

11
12 Committee Members further discussed the next steps. Ms. Kilpack believes it is appropriate for
13 the Transportation Systems Committee to do some initial outreach, as that falls into the
14 Stakeholders Council role of conducting fact-finding and making recommendations to the full
15 CWC Board.

16
17 **OTHER ITEMS**

18
19 Committee Members discussed some recent road work that has taken place. Mr. Knoblock
20 explained that the work is for a 36-inch water pipe. All of that work is finished on the east side of
21 Wasatch Boulevard and the work is moving down along Fort Union Boulevard to the west.

22
23 Ms. Kilpack reported that the Environment Systems Committee is brainstorming ways to improve
24 the Environmental Dashboard and a survey was created. She encouraged Committee Members to
25 provide comments on the survey itself via email before it is distributed to others. Ms. Kilpack
26 stated that there is a Stakeholders Council/CWC Youth Council social event scheduled for
27 Wednesday. Anyone available on that afternoon is asked to participate in the event. As for the
28 CWC Youth Council Outdoor Film Festival, Committee Members are entitled to a free ticket.

29
30 The next Transportation Systems Committee Meeting falls on a holiday. Ms. Kilpack asked
31 Committee Members to discuss other potential meeting dates. It was determined that October 15,
32 2024, could be an appropriate meeting date. Chair Richardson reported that he is unavailable on
33 that date. Ms. Kilpack offered to send out a scheduling poll to Committee Members for feedback.

34
35 Chair Richardson provided time for members of the public to share comments.

36
37 *Scott Groux* explained that he chose to attend the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting as
38 an interested citizen. He has lived in Salt Lake for approximately four years and he is a renewable
39 energy developer, specifically solar and battery. Mr. Groux is an avid recreator in the Central
40 Wasatch and enjoys skiing, mountain bicycling, and running. He hopes the Committee will
41 consider discussing The Rio Grande Plan. The main focus of The Rio Grande Plan is to restore
42 rail service to the Rio Grande Depot and reconnect the community. The citizen proposal is a train
43 box for downtown Salt Lake City, which is a concrete box, dug down into the ground, that is big
44 enough to hold multiple railroad tracks. Many of these structures exist in the United States.

45

1 There are potential benefits associated with this proposal. Mr. Groux reported that a group of eight
2 local engineers put together the citizen proposal, but it has been endorsed by the Salt Lake County
3 Council. He asked the Transportation Systems Committee to look into the proposal. He offered
4 to share the link to the website with Committee Members. Mr. Groux clarified that he is not part
5 of The Rio Grande Plan group, but feels this is a worthwhile proposal that should be examined.
6

7 Ms. Johnson wondered whether there has been discussion with the WFRC about this proposal.
8 Mr. Groux clarified that he has not spoken to them and is unsure whether others have. Ms. Johnson
9 reported that WFRC has a transportation committee and a committee that meets with the Mayors.
10 WFRC should hear about The Rio Grande Plan. She is not sure it is within the purview of the
11 Transportation Systems Committee but noted that Committee Members can comment on the plan.
12 Chair Richardson felt it was important for Committee Members to be aware of the proposal.
13

14 **CLOSING**

15
16 **1. Chair Richardson will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Transportation Systems**
17 **Committee Meeting.**
18

19 **MOTION:** Linda Johnson moved to ADJOURN the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.
20 Spencer Shaver seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
21 Committee.
22

23 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee
24 Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee Meeting held on*
3 *Monday, September 9, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____