

**TREMONTON CITY CORPORATION
TOWN HALL MEETING
JULY 14, 2025**

Members Present:

Wes Estep
Beau Lewis
Bret Rohde
Blair Westergard
Lyle Holmgren, Mayor
Bill Cobabe, City Manager
Linsey Nessen, Assistant City Manager - excused
Cynthia Nelson, City Recorder - excused

TOWN HALL MEETING

Mayor Holmgren called the July 14, 2025 Town Hall Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the City Council Meeting Room at 102 South Tremont Street, Tremonton, Utah. Those in attendance were Mayor Holmgren, Councilmembers Estep, Lewis, Rohde, and Westergard, and City Manager Cobabe. The following Department Heads were also present: Community Development Director Jeff Seedall.

1. Approval of agenda

Motion by Councilmember Estep to approve the agenda of July 14, 2025. Motion seconded by Councilmember Lewis. Vote: Councilmember Estep - yes, Councilmember Lewis - yes, Councilmember Rohde - yes, Councilmember Westergard - yes. Motion approved.

2. New Council Business:

a. Open Forum discussion on annexations

Sean Milne and John Drew from BRAG presented to the Council. Mr. Drew provided a bio on his background and experience. He said three years ago we were asked by our County CEO to chair a task force to help study the housing crisis. We have come a long way since and done a lot of revisions. This has been tweaked to be more relevant to Tremonton and Box Elder County. The housing crisis is a statewide issue. Utah's next generation will face even greater scarcity of affordable housing and more burdensome housing policies. It is critical that as we grow as a community, we consider the growth that is coming from our families. Are we going to plan for and provide for our population as it grows? Are we going to accommodate our kids? Are we going to address the housing shortage and housing prices? Our job has been to quantify the causes of the crisis, magnitude of the problem, public attitudes and impactful recommendations. We have heard many concerns, complaints and questions. Some are valid. He reviewed some of those statistics and a survey.

A woman in the crowd asked when discussing different housing, is there anywhere in the study where it talks about infrastructure being applied through the City? That will be

impacted if housing is way out on the edge. How is the City going to make sure there is infrastructure for the rural community? Is there more information on how that would be done and with what funding. Mr. Milne said the developer pays for their development and has access to impact fees. The woman said I am more interested in what the landowner does not own and bridging the gap between the development and the City. Mr. Milne said the purpose of impact fees are so local residents are not funding development. Consultants, through a study, can help the City determine the impact fee per home in that new development. The intent of State code is so local residents are not burdened with the cost of development. They further discussed impact fees within the City. Another audience member mentioned there is concern building new subdivisions but having no sidewalks for children to walk through them safely, as well as making Iowa String safer. Mayor Holmgren said those are budget issues the Council would have to discuss. There will be stretches of road we will improve as part of City projects. That is funded through the General Fund and our budget.

Michelle Martineau said my concern is with the development happening on 10th North, will there be another outlet road? There are times of the day now that I cannot get out of my house because of all the traffic. If we build hundreds of more homes up there, I do not know how people from 2300 West and to the freeway are going to be able to get all of the traffic funneled through. Lynn Martineau said a few years ago, I went to the school board and petitioned to change the bus route because there was so much traffic in front of our house. Michelle Martineau said he counted cars for an entire week to get a Monday through Friday sample that came by our house in the morning. It was in the hundreds 15 years ago. The school district then required the bus to stop in front of our house because they saw the problem was that bad 15 years ago.

The City dealt with power outages, and this is where the recording shut off. The meeting resumed on tile drain discussions. Mayor Holmgren said we do not want to sever them, we cannot because that will stop the flow. A study has been done and that information is out there. If encountered the developer has to redirect those lines so they keep flowing.

Bonnie Ellis said I live in Freeman Farms and have been to these meetings from day one. I totally have trust in a few Councilmembers, so I do not agree with the statement that you are not listening. However, I have seen a little deceit. I do not think you are getting all the information. Here are some examples. I was told Freeman Farms was totally happy with the change after the vote was made. I cannot speak for everybody in Freeman Farms, but I can speak for about seven of them and they were not happy about being annexed. They were happy that it was decided that we were not going to pay the \$17,000 impact fee because we had already been here. That turned into they were all happy. I was in the meeting last week with the Planning Commission. One of the Commission Members asked did this developer buy the land all at once? The people who knew the answer chose not to answer. I raised my hand and asked if I could answer, but I was told no. The answer is no, he did not buy it all at once. He bought one small section behind Freeman Farms. And then as time went on, he bought more. I also had a concern, and it might seem little to someone, but I am on a fixed income and built my forever home. I do not plan on moving. My address is cemented in my house in two different places. I asked

in these meetings four different times, who is going to pay for this? I was told it would be paid for by the developer. The developer said I did not agree to that. The person who told me that did not say a word. I went up to him after the meeting because I did not want to embarrass him in front of people and said, you told me three times that was going to be taken care of. All he could do was shake his head yes. I just think every member that is involved in this is not getting that information up front when they are the ones that have the information to share.

Mr. Milne said the education program will go a long way. The best thing to do is get everybody's questions answered and get as much information out. Then as a community you have to put your hands together and say let us figure out how to solve this problem. We would coordinate with the County and City to connect and have City growth that is planned. Housing is too expensive. The median listing price a year ago in Box Elder County, was \$460,000. That is not affordable. The median sale price a year ago was \$422,000. Three times your annual household income is what you can afford for a mortgage. If you made \$100,000 per household, the bank would lend you \$300,000. I did not make anywhere close to that when I was in my 20s and starting a family. Density does not equal crime. Increasing the supply will decrease the price. Most of us are probably living better than our grandparents did. We usually end up better than the generation before, but unfortunately the demographics for generation Alpha show they are expected to have a lower quality of life than most of us today. Part of that is because we sold them a bill of goods. We told them if they go to school, get good grades and go to a university, they will get a good paying job. They will have access to the American dream of home ownership. People move here because it is awesome here and they wanted a piece of what you have built. Thankfully they paid impact fees. You should diversify your economy with different size lots. Tonight's entire presentation will be posted to Tremonton's website for further review.

Jamie Crowther said this is great information, is it worth putting together a task force of different representation of groups to help make these decisions? I like that idea of public education and there is still a lot of education that needs to happen. I wonder if a task force with experts in different areas and these data experts would be beneficial in making future decisions. Councilmember Lewis said we are working on creating videos that will bring that awareness. We want to get information out and be as transparent as possible.

A man in the audience said I do not necessarily buy that the majority of our growth is from our children when birth rates are dropping. What I have seen over the last 10 years, in our neighborhood, an influx from out of state people buying homes. I am curious, do you have those numbers? Mr. Drew said in Cache County, 85% of the growth is organic growth—it is families having kids, while 15% is from elsewhere. The man asked if they have numbers on those moving in from out of state? This sounds like a possible ploy that it is for our children, and it is getting twisted. I want the whole truth. Is it 100% correct what you are saying that the growth is from children wanting to buy a house? I have a problem not having all the numbers. Mr. Milne said in five to 10 years, it is expected that Box Elder County will see a net migration from both. Box Elder County is still expected to have more internal growth from offspring. He then explained some of the details from

the slideshow. He added, businesses do not invest in shrinking markets. They invest in growing ones.

Chris Danvers said when I was young, I knew I was not going to be able to buy a home right off the bat. Renting is a viable option for our children. It may not be the best thing we hoped for, but eventually they are going to get to a place where they can buy. The Council can make it easier with cheap rentals. This Council has passed regulations making it harder to rent out a room without having a separate driveway for tenants. You could incentivize people to have cheap rooms to rent in town and make it easier for others to have someplace affordable to live. It does not have to be a new home. When things start hitting people's pocketbooks, people turn out. This is a huge meeting and there have been a lot of huge meetings lately. People are taking notice. It is okay to say no.

Laura Calder said I sit on a board to help protect property rights and we serve on a lot of water boards in the County. The Department of Labor produced stats for Box Elder County last fall, saying that about 70% of our children is what they are tracking as move ins. Our kids are moving here. Box Elder County is one of the higher areas where our kids are our growth. They also discussed median income, what jobs are offered in Tremonton and what are solutions to solve some of these issues with affordability. The County provided those stats for review to see the housing crisis because it is a problem.

Marie Lund said who is it that we are creating affordable housing for, and will they put money from their paycheck back into our community? Some of these southern cities have awesome amenities that we have not seen here, but we also do not have the population. Those buying the homes will pay taxes, but they may not be invested here. Will they be part of our community, or will their community be where they work? Are they just looking to live somewhere cheap.

Jonathan Butler said I have been to the last few meetings. It takes everybody to get more active. I appreciate the Council. I was told that with what has been approved, we will be going from 70% single-family dwelling and 30% multi-family dwelling to a 60% single-family dwelling to 40% multi-family dwelling status in Tremonton. 40% is a large number for multi-family dwellings. We are not going to get away from growth and I understand Tremonton is targeting businesses to allow for better paying jobs. Back in 2021, 628 residences were approved in the River's Edge development, but the water we had at the time was only sufficient for another 1,500 homes. That was before all of this other development and before we start targeting businesses. We talk about people spending money here in town, but people still commute to other places. We are pushing in more homes, but where can we spend our money? Why are we not bringing other stores in? We cannot only be targeting residences because you cannot rely on houses to be your income for your town. You have to have businesses and places for people to spend their money. Councilmember Lewis said I had a meeting with a business who wants 75,000 square feet, but they also need good employees. There are a lot of facets to this. Mr. Butler said some businesses have been turned down and so they build somewhere else.

The Council spent time discussing affordable housing and the area median income in Box Elder County. Due to another power outage. The recording stopped and then picked up here. We are growing together. As we guide through this, we are talking about economics, growth and all these different things. Please do not forget the children and providing them with sidewalks throughout the City. That includes curbs, gutter, lights and all those things that come into play. We need to be strategically going after a plan. The group spent time discussing the importance of connectivity throughout these neighborhoods. Councilmember Rohde said this continued input from citizens is important, please continue to talk to the Council and voice concerns.

Michael Allen said we would like to discuss the Freeman Farms subdivision and the zoning that would determine how many houses are going to be put in that area. A vote will be made by the Council tomorrow so we would like to address that. The majority of the people in that area do not want multi-family housing south of the freeway. The closest zone is R1-10. Councilmember Rohde said so are you happy with quarter acre lots? What do you want out there? Mr. Allen said minimum quarter acre. We do not want eight families on an acre.

A woman in the audience said careful, considerate zoning ensures compatibility of adjacent land uses and apply appropriate buffers. This also talks about having access to roads and highways, and that quality of life. Zoning needs to be appropriate and where the infrastructure can support it. Multi-family housing should remain close to the urban core, so they have access to trails and roads. Is getting the infrastructure out there going to add more tax burden to the citizens? Children walking down Iowa Street as it is now, is going to be worse than 1000 North. I think we should have all different kinds of housing in different areas. I am not against that, but I want to make sure our kids are taken care of. I do not want them moving out there not being able to walk to Maverik because the city did not produce sidewalks. I want people to move in, but I want them to move to a safe place. We need to listen to our police officer. He made some very valid points about crime and density, but I know it can happen anywhere.

A man said the Integrated Land Use Plan says this area would have industrial in 20 to 50 years, but if you put houses on today, you are never going to make it industrial. If you want the industrial as part of your plan, you have to keep it available for that now.

Kelly Wood said I am trying to salvage some of the feelings tonight, because I do not want our City to be so divided. I want to be more united and feel like we can communicate. I know you guys are probably offended by the reaction, but I think that was created by a situation you did not realize coming in. We were expecting to talk about this annexation and zoning situation. I spent hours today making notes. We made plans, and were all nervous, and then it was not what we expected. Of course, people are going to feel frustrated. Also, I feel like we are talking about a specific situation being voted on tomorrow that you guys are not familiar with. You do not know what we are talking about or how many units it is. You think we are against all outsiders. Several things were said that were not said by anyone here, but I feel like you came in with a chip on your shoulder about us. Most of us are good people and welcoming neighbors, but our balance

is getting a little out of hand. For those of us who have seen Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs develop, that is frightening. We have seen roads like Iowa String, now surrounded by four-story apartments on every side. There has to be a balance. We are not saying no growth, but we need to be smart about it. That is all people are asking. They just want to slow down and be wise and make our community something we are excited about in 20 years. It is going to ebb and flow, but if you do not control that, we see what happens to those communities and they are unrecognizable in two or three years. It is townhomes for miles, and it changes your community. We love what we have here, and I think it can grow, but we need to be careful. We should have a voice in how that grows. You said multi-family housing does not affect crime, but statistically that is not true. It does not mean there is not a lot of great families in multi-family housing, but statistically, you have to be very careful with the balance in your community. We need to be wise. We need to be careful and that is what the Land Use Plan says. If that survey he did is statistically relevant with 103 responses, then the survey on the Tremonton website with 1,300 responses should be relevant. Manager Cobabe said that was not relevant and not a good representation. Well, if that was statistically relevant at 103, then all the responses on that survey on the Tremonton website that say our number one priority is keeping it rural, protecting a small-town feel, growing while we are protecting open space and being careful what our growth is, should matter.

The developer Brody Calder for this area said we have come to the City to get infrastructure. We are not even pitching multi-family housing right now. We are pitching R1-8, which is 8,000 square foot single-family lots. If we want to get bonus density, we can throw in some things, but it has to be approved by the Council. We have discussed doing single-family housing that are smaller lots so people can afford them. We need to create affordability.

A woman said we were told at the planning meeting that you want to put high-density apartments by the cement factory because you would not be able to sell homes there. There are five homes on the side of it now, and they have no problems. Mr. Calder said apartments are not in our plan. We started at RM-8 and after receiving input we went to R1-8, which reduces the density. We are paying for all the infrastructure, so it has to be feasible. We were planning on townhome in front of the cement plant. Then we would do a park and have single family. The woman said I think we are not trying to be unreasonable we just want to protect our area—the people, farms, tractors and animals. This sets a precedent for what goes in that whole area. That is a big deal and there is already a lot of multi-family happening in Tremonton. We are high on multi-family housing. I feel these outer areas is where we should keep more open space. That is what the Land Use Plan says. Mrs. Wood said lift stations are a huge expense later on to the city. The developer puts the costs up front, but they get that back in impact fees. The City will have to maintain it. They discussed the good and bad of those systems, along with more details on drainage. A gentleman said it just seems like less dense housing would have less problems when it comes to groundwater. Like has been said, just keeping that same rural, country feel. I do not know if townhomes fit in that area.

Mr. Calder said this will happen over several years in phases. If no one develops the property, the amenities do not get put in. We are paying for that and would allow the City to have that regional lift station so they can have control over all future development there. This is not just for these homes it opens up the whole area. By bringing it into the City we can control how it looks and feels. We would like to have a nice community with a park and trails, and other amenities to bring in businesses. We have dropped hundreds of units because of what we heard.

The Council thanked those who participated in the discussion.

3. Adjournment

Motion by Councilmember Lewis to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Councilmember Westergard. Vote: Councilmember Estep - yes, Councilmember Lewis - yes, Councilmember Rohde - yes, Councilmember Vance - yes, Councilmember Westergard - yes. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

The undersigned duly acting and appointed Recorder for Tremonton City Corporation hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes for the City Council Meeting held on the above referenced date. Minutes were prepared by Jessica Tanner.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Cynthia Nelson, City Recorder