

September 22, 2025

To: Wasatch Front Regional Council
From: Utahns for Better Transportation
FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake
Re: Regional Transportation Plan 2023-2050 – Amendment #4

These comments are in opposition to Amendment #4 to the Wasatch Front Regional Council's 2023-2050 Regional Transportation Plan that fast tracks widening of Legacy Parkway by adding a third lane in each direction. The reason stated in this amendment is to provide additional automobile carrying capacity on Legacy Parkway during the proposed widening of I-15 from Farmington to Salt Lake City.

The genesis of the Legacy Parkway, the Legacy Bike Trail, Nature Preserve and the initiation of FrontRunner was part of a shared solution through a better balanced transportation investment portfolio. For more than 75 years we have prioritized our transportation investments to accommodate the automobile and attractive transit options and safe biking routes suffered. Fortunately, some of that has changed with active transportation investments and proposed improvements to transit networks and accompanying development.

Legacy Parkway, opened in 2008, was designated as the *Great Salt Lake Legacy Parkway Scenic Byway* by the State of Utah and was a new kind of investment for Utah. As part of the adopted Shared Solution, UDOT paid for the construction of its first shared use path, fully off road, and allocated \$20M for property acquisition so FrontRunner could be in fare operation before cutting the opening ribbon on Legacy, thus providing a first class transit option for many.

The Parkway features built into Legacy and its initial operation provided a scenic, slower speed, more relaxed drive than being on I-15 with semi-trucks and congestion. Transportation designers involved expressed their appreciation for working on a holistic transportation solution involving safe, attractive road design, a completely grade separated bike trail and initiation of FrontRunner, the backbone for transit up and down the Wasatch Front.

Our objections are two fold:

1. Adding a third lane on Legacy will turn Legacy Parkway into a 6 lane Highway with severe impacts on the surrounding area, homes, parks, schools, and nature preserve.
2. Double tracking of Front Runner is a golden opportunity to introduce a frequent, reliable transit option as a preferred alternative for travel during, and after, I-15 reconstruction.

Legacy Parkway Integrity

The heavily used Legacy Bike Trail experience for family and recreationalists would be greatly harmed by increased traffic noise and vehicle pollution. The recent introduction of semi-trucks and higher speed (55 – 65mph) on Legacy Parkway, already been a burden to residents along the Legacy Parkway corridor.

In fast-tracking an expansion of Legacy, the value of the bike/foot trail and the parks that line Legacy (Foxboro North Regional Park, Legacy Park, Mountainview Park, Birnam Woods) would be greatly diminished and usership will likely decline with increased noise, pollution and potential for higher speeds and serious accidents. With additional traffic, the air quality will be impacted, affecting children who play at two elementary schools very close to the roadway (Foxboro Elementary, Odyssey Elementary).

The wide median that incorporated a more environmentally conscious design also contains wetlands that were considered to be part of the overall protected acreage to compensate for destroyed wetlands due to roadway construction.

The proposed change to Legacy Parkway will negate the taxpayer's millions of dollars of investment into these unique Parkway design features and community assets which are currently available for all citizens to enjoy.

FrontRunner Opportunity

The freeway widening project proposed for I-15 from Farmington to Salt Lake is the perfect opportunity to promote a preferred alternative for travel during reconstruction of I-15 by taking advantage of the double tracking of FrontRunner now underway as UDOT project, FrontRunner 2X.

This project includes 11 strategic locations for double tracking, a new station in Bluffdale and 10 new trainsets with first class features. This project will allow FrontRunner to operate on a 15 minute schedule and as a backbone of a high capacity, frequent transit alternative it could be an antidote to forever adding more freeway lanes. I-15 expansion, if it goes forward, should only occur after the upgrades to FrontRunner underway to increase frequency and reliability are in operation. 15 minute service at peak travel times is key to making riding FrontRunner a preferred alternative for travel up and down the Wasatch Front for many.

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