



MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2026, AT 1:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS AT THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Present: Gay Lynn Bennion, Chair
Mayor Scotty John
Commissioner Bill Ciraco
Caroline Rodriquez, Ex-Officio
Jack Stauss, Special Advisor
Amber Broadaway, Special Advisor
Mark Baer, Stakeholders Council
Jim McGauley, Public

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
Will McKay, Communications Director

OPENING

1. Chair Gay Lynn Bennion will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Transportation Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Chair Gay Lynn Bennion called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Transportation Committee Meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the June 10, 2026, Meeting.

There was not a quorum present at the beginning of the Transportation Committee Meeting. Once there was a quorum present, the Committee voted on the Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2026.

MOTION: Scotty John moved to APPROVE the Minutes from the June 10, 2026, Meeting. Bill Ciraco seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

BUSING AND CAPACITY DISCUSSION

1. The Committee will Discuss the Ability of the Busing Transit Mode to Achieve the Goals Set Forth in the LCC EIS.

Chair Bennion introduced Jim McGauley, a resident of Cottonwood Heights who she has been in contact with for the last five years. He lives on Wasatch Boulevard and has looked into some of the issues in that area. Mr. McGauley has also looked into bottlenecks and potential bus concerns.

Mr. McGauley explained that he has seen the traffic issues on Wasatch Boulevard firsthand. When it comes to transportation, there are two elements that need to be taken into account: how long it takes to move a large mass of people and how long it takes to move an individual person. He asked the Transportation Committee to consider the proposed Little Cottonwood Canyon gondola and Big Cottonwood Canyon bus hub. In the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) literature, it states that anyone who drives into the gondola garage will be on the gondola in 12 minutes. However, when considered further, that number does not make a lot of sense. One of the problems with the 12-minute statement is that there is not an analysis shown in any of the literature to prove that 12 minutes is realistic. The UDOT solution to the canyon traffic is to establish a single park and ride structure that is described as centralized, convenient, and reliable.

One of the previous UDOT documents stated that the traffic on Wasatch Boulevard is 18,000 people in two hours, which is not accurate. Mr. McGauley started to look further into the numbers and found that this was actually the average number of vehicles throughout the day and throughout the year. He highlighted certain numbers, including 5,000, which is the capacity of the gondola garage. 1,000 is the number of people who can move out of the garage in one hour, which is what he calls the bottleneck number. The proposed bus hub can hold 1,750 vehicles, which means approximately 3,600 people. The bottleneck number there is 600. He explained that each of these proposals has a bottleneck that needs to be taken into consideration. There are certain implications to these conditions. At some point, it is important to talk about appropriate solutions.

Mr. McGauley explained that with the gondola proposal, it would take five hours to evacuate a full garage. He reviewed some calculations for the bus hub. The maximum number of people is 3,600. If the buses are five minutes apart, then there could be 12 buses per hour. If there are 50 people per bus, then there could only be 600 people moved per hour. He shared example scenarios to highlight the potential difficulties. Mr. McGauley discussed queuing and potential wait times.

It was noted that the gondola is portrayed as being an enjoyable ride up the canyon. Mr. McGauley pointed out that the Snowbird tram takes seven minutes each way whereas the proposed ride to Alta would be 40 minutes. That might not be the most comfortable experience for canyon visitors. Both the gondola garage and bus hub will be located near the mouth of the canyons. Once someone reaches that point, a decision will either be made to stay in line and drive or head to either the gondola garage or bus hub. If there are queuing issues at the garage or bus hub, then visitors will be less likely to leave their personal vehicles. Chair Bennion thanked Mr. McGauley for sharing his thoughts on the UDOT proposal and asked Committee Members to provide comments.

1 Mayor Scotty John asked if Mr. McGauley believes the bus hub at the mouth of Big Cottonwood
2 Canyon would be the best solution. Mr. McGauley stated that the numbers speak for themselves.
3 Based on the numbers, what is proposed will likely create some difficult situations. Committee
4 Members reviewed a chart that was distributed ahead of the Transportation Committee Meeting.
5 Mr. McGauley explained that if buses are five minutes apart and there are 12 buses per hour, then
6 there are 600 people who can be moved per hour. If there are 3,600 people, then it will take six
7 hours to move all of those people. If the buses are 15 minutes apart, there are only four buses an
8 hour, which will move 200 people. In order to move 3,600 people, it would take 18 hours.

9
10 Commissioner Bill Ciraco thought the information shared by Mr. McGauley was correct and
11 factual but pointed out that it is static. He does not see an analysis that considers behavioral
12 changes. He noted that there are paid parking and parking reservation systems at many of the
13 resorts, which did not exist previously. There have been behavioral changes seen over the years,
14 but he does not see any of that included in the analysis. He asked Mr. McGauley for feedback on
15 how behaviors might change with the implementation of these transportation efforts. Mr.
16 McGauley clarified that he does not have expertise beyond what has been presented. The
17 information that was sent out to the Transportation Committee indicates that there could be long
18 lines if the gondola and bus hub move forward as described. He shared comments about shelters.

19
20 Mr. McGauley explained that the numbers can be ignored or can be the basis of additional
21 evaluation. Commissioner Ciraco asked if he had had the opportunity to ride the Mountain Village
22 Gondola in Telluride or the BreckConnect Gondola in Breckenridge. Mr. McGauley had not taken
23 the BreckConnect Gondola. Commissioner Ciraco reported that the BreckConnect Gondola is
24 approximately one mile from the base of the mountain. There was a large parking capture built
25 with both surface and structured parking. It seems the parking there is managed fairly well. He
26 believed there are ways to address many of the concerns that have been raised about queuing. It
27 is important to look at all of the different options to determine what will work best in this area.

28
29 Chair Bennion asked what would happen if UDOT had additional buses available first thing in the
30 morning. Mr. McGauley explained that he looked at the numbers that were included in the UDOT
31 literature. It is projected that the maximum number of buses in 2050 will be 30. He is not stating
32 that there is no way to solve the transportation problems, but that what has been presented will
33 present some challenges. Special Advisor, Amber Broadway, asked if this data analysis has been
34 shared with a member of the UDOT team. Chair Bennion reported that she will meet with UDOT
35 next week and offered to share this information with them. Special Advisor, Jack Stauss, thanked
36 Mr. McGauley for the presentation. Based on more recent conversations with UDOT, there is a
37 plan to have some direct buses to the ski areas. He is not sure if that changes the calculations.

38
39 Chair Bennion reported that some of the engineering students at the University of Utah worked on
40 a project that looks at ways to improve Little Cottonwood Canyon traffic in the winter. There was
41 a smart transportation system explored that would let people know what the queues looked like.
42 This would allow visitors to make informed decisions about how to access the area.

43
44 Ex-Officio Member, Caroline Rodriguez, thanked Mr. McGauley for providing this analysis with
45 the Transportation Committee. However, she wants to be careful about comments that certain data
46 was not incorporated, because this process was federally mandated and the analysis was conducted

1 under strict guidelines. She wants to make sure there is an acknowledgement of the process. Mr.
2 McGauley shared additional comments about the UDOT data that was included in the documents
3 and reiterated the importance of considering how people will interact with the transportation.

4
5 Mr. Stauss asked if another mobility hub that served Little Cottonwood Canyon more directly
6 would alleviate some of the issues that were outlined during the presentation. Mr. McGauley
7 stated that there is a solution to almost every problem. He believes there is a solution to the issues
8 that have been outlined. His analysis is intended to be a starting point for additional discussion.
9 Chair Bennion thanked Mr. McGauley for sharing his analysis with the Transportation Committee.

10 11 **STAKEHOLDERS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

12 13 **1. The Committee will Invite the Co-Chairs of the CWC Stakeholders Council** 14 **Transportation System Committee to Present Transportation and Transit Topics to** 15 **Commissioners.**

16
17 Chair Bennion reported that the next item on the Transportation Committee Meeting agenda
18 involves the CWC Stakeholders Council Transportation System Committee. She stressed the
19 importance of connecting with the Transportation System Committee to learn what the
20 subcommittee has been working on lately. Chair of the Transportation System Committee, Mark
21 Baer, introduced himself to the Transportation Committee. He encouraged Committee Members
22 to ensure that transportation alternatives are effectuated in real time. Mr. Baer pointed out that the
23 analysis shared earlier in the meeting is static and assumes that everyone arrives and leaves at the
24 same time. He noted that people will modify their behaviors based on the existing conditions.

25
26 Mr. Baer stressed the importance of incentives. One incentive that makes sense is to have toll
27 booths at Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon, as that will encourage visitors
28 to use buses more often. He noted that real time information will also modify visitor behaviors.
29 Committee Members shared comments about the proposed toll booths in the Cottonwood Canyons.

30
31 Mr. Baer reported that when UDOT presented information to the Stakeholders Council about the
32 intermodal hub, there were questions about coffee shops and retail stores. The UDOT
33 representative stated that special permission is needed. People will migrate to the nearby
34 development if there are no shops inside the hub, so it would make sense to offer those amenities.
35 Chair Bennion reported that it was added in legislation this year that UDOT can have those uses.
36 Mayor John stressed the importance of moving something forward, because the status quo has not
37 worked. It is necessary to take action. He offered to speak to UDOT about the concerns expressed.

38 39 **OTHER ITEMS**

40
41 Chair Bennion reported that there is a desire to have someone from the County attend a meeting
42 to discuss the potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle, but there has been difficulty adding that to the
43 calendar. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that Catherine Kanter will not be
44 available during the scheduled meeting in August. She is waiting to hear if another member of
45 staff will be able to attend, as there is a desire to continue discussions about a Millcreek Canyon

1 shuttle and address the remaining County concerns. She asked if there were other items Committee
2 Members would like to add to the agenda for the Transportation Committee Meeting in August.

3
4 Mayor John would like to focus on moving transportation efforts forward, but he is not certain
5 what the Transportation Committee should do. Last month, he met with Representative John
6 Arthur, who is working to address the ongoing operations and maintenance needs for the buses.

7
8 Mr. Baer asked what the Transportation System Committee can do to assist the Transportation
9 Committee in the most effective manner. Mayor John asked if there is consensus at the
10 subcommittee level. Mr. Baer is confident that the Transportation System Committee could come
11 close to a consensus, but he acknowledged that reaching full consensus is unlikely when it comes
12 to transportation issues. However, there seems to be a lot support for the intermodal hub.

13
14 Mayor John suggested that Andrew Gruber from the Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”)
15 attend a future Transportation Committee Meeting. Some of the issues mentioned earlier in the
16 meeting could be alleviated if canyon visitors take buses that do not start at the mobility hub. It
17 would be interesting to learn what their plan is and better understand how to work together. Mr.
18 Stauss noted that a Transportation Committee goal could be to focus on regional connectivity.

19
20 Mayor John wondered what needs to be done ahead of the Olympic Games in 2034. He asked if
21 it would be possible to use that event as momentum to make connectivity improvements between
22 the Wasatch Back and Wasatch Front. Commissioner Ciraco reported that High Valley Transit
23 has a significant project in the SR-224 corridor from Kimball Junction to Old Town. Part of the
24 push to move that forward has been the Olympic Games. There is a desire to improve the
25 movement of visitors. Park City has been working on the other entry corridor that comes in from
26 the east on SR-248. There have also been ideas about the park and road location at Richardson
27 Flat. Commissioner Circo noted that a well-supported plan from a municipality or transit agency
28 will likely catch the attention of those at the State level. He stated that local support is key.

29
30 Ex-Officio Rodriguez is not certain that the Olympic Games will motivate certain transportation
31 improvements, as there are no events planned to take place in the Cottonwood Canyons. As a
32 transit agency, there has been conflicting information received about what the Olympics means for
33 High Valley Transit. Part of the reason the previously mentioned project was successfully funded
34 is because it will be beneficial during the Olympic Games but is also helpful outside of that. The
35 best strategy that she has found to move items forward is to support the transit agency that is
36 leading the charge. She stressed the importance of supporting Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”)
37 when it comes to improvements and then communicating how those improvements are beneficial.

38
39 Mayor John suggested that the next meeting agenda include an item about communication and
40 outreach. It is important that there be clarity and consistency with all of the talking points. Chair
41 Bennion suggested that the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act
42 (“CWNCRA”) be added to the next Transportation Committee Meeting agenda as well, as it was
43 determined that this is one of the main goals of the CWC. The Transportation Committee can
44 discuss efforts that can be made to support the CWNCRA and start to move that goal forward.

1 **CLOSING**

2
3 1. **Chair Bennion will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Transportation Committee**
4 **Meeting.**

5
6 **MOTION:** Scotty John moved to ADJOURN the Transportation Committee Meeting. Bill Ciraco
7 seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

8
9 The Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the*
2 *Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting held Wednesday, July 8,*
3 *2026.*

4
5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary

9
10 Minutes Approved: _____