

1 Department of Transportation (“UDOT”), the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”), Bike Utah. and
2 Salt Lake County.

3
4 Mr. McMurtry read the Vision statement as follows: “Working together to create a connected
5 active transportation system for all ages and abilities.” He explained that the individual goals
6 include prioritizing safe routes, creating a connected backbone network, collaborating with the
7 public, and access to key destinations. These goals guided the work performed for the study.
8 Mr. McMurtry pointed out that Cottonwood Heights has more existing active transportation
9 facilities than any of the other participating cities, and is starting from a place of strength. He
10 presented a graphic illustrating the existing facilities and trails in all of the participating cities.

11
12 He reported that they looked at several other factors, including bicycle fatalities and Strava data
13 in developing the plan. They found that there was a lot of heavy use on Cottonwood Canyon
14 Trail, general biking across Wasatch, and use of the Jordan River Parkway trail. They conducted
15 a bike tour early on to look at some of the facilities and different design types and the tour
16 allowed them to experience what cyclists do, which in turn helped them with the planning
17 process. Mr. McMurtry presented the infrastructure included in the ATP, which included bike
18 lanes and neighborhood byways, protected bike lanes, and shared-use paths.

19
20 On March 9, 2020, they hosted a Brainstorm Workshop where participants from the various
21 communities marked up maps that resulted in a new consolidated map, which he presented to the
22 Commission. They also invited the public to attend the Brainstorming Workshop and
23 emphasized that they considered everyone’s input. They had over 650 people participate in the
24 exercise. Their efforts continued remotely after the pandemic struck, which included Zoom
25 meetings and interacting via the websites. He reported that they received over 5,000 public visits
26 to the website and over 900 responses to their surveys. The public came up with over 550 new
27 ideas that were drawn on the maps during these meetings. In sum, Mr. McMurtry felt that even
28 with the pandemic, they received good participation from the public.

29
30 Mr. McMurtry reported that some of the input was specifically from Cottonwood Heights
31 residents regarding the anticipated use of walk/bike facilities, if available, and 46% of residents
32 responded that they would walk daily, while 38% said they would walk weekly. These numbers
33 were higher than in other cities. He outlined the recommended projects and noted that they
34 recommended 240 projects across all of the participating cities. A major theme for all cities was
35 connectivity, and he identified the recommended backbone projects, which are those of the
36 highest priority. He commented that several of the most difficult backbone projects were carried
37 forward into some level of design, and highlighted Project No. 7 along Fort Union Boulevard in
38 Cottonwood Heights. Mr. McMurtry commented that the recommended project list was still in
39 draft form and they continue to make changes. Their goal is to have the Planning Commission
40 issue a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the plan.

41
42 Mr. McMurtry presented a design concept prepared by their engineers and designers for a section
43 of Fort Union Boulevard. This particular design presents an option of how they could fit curb
44 separated bike lanes through a section of Fort Union Boulevard. The specific section depicted is
45 in the area in front of Ross and stressed that this design is conceptual and intended to help the
46 City vision these improvements going forward. He explained that this concept would effectively

1 remove the bikes from the travel lanes. A small park strip was included in some locations, and
2 they contemplated a curb barrier along the south side of Fort Union Boulevard.

3
4 Their most controversial recommended project was located at 3900 South, in an area that cuts
5 through the heart of Millcreek City towards Taylorsville. He added that based on this design
6 concept, they have already asked the Wasatch Front Regional Council to help obtain funding for
7 a design. He commented that the Wasatch Front Regional Council has encouraged cities to
8 undertake these projects. It was confirmed that there are plenty of funding opportunities to assist
9 with the projects. Mr. McMurtry added that the State issued a one-time \$35 million allocation
10 specifically for active transportation projects. In addition, UDOT has looked at establishing an
11 active TIF fund that would be a regular, revolving fund available on an annual basis.

12
13 A question was raised as to whether this recommended project dovetails with the Fort Union
14 Master Plan. Mr. Hulka answered in the affirmative and added that they view this recommended
15 ATP project as taking the Fort Union Master Plan a step further toward their vision for the area.
16 If adopted, they would have input on when the development would occur. It was confirmed that
17 Fort Union was one of the backbone projects, along with 2700 East, Highland Drive, and
18 Wasatch Boulevard and will be integrated with the updates to the Open Space Master Plan.

19
20 There was discussion regarding ensuring that the plans do not conflict, especially with some of
21 the alternative proposals for the Little Cottonwood Trail. Mr. McMurtry added that the Little
22 Cottonwood Canyon EIS identified both bike lanes and a trail on the east side, which was
23 integrated into the ATP.

24
25 Commissioner Mills referenced the impact of incentives to use alternative transportation and
26 asked if there were any incentives proposed for safe lanes. Mr. McMurtry noted that the survey
27 questions were focused more on community interest in having certain facilities, although they
28 have seen throughout the Wasatch Front that the use of trails has exceeded their expectations.
29 He also referenced a study of Trax Stations where they found that in 2020, 850,000 pedestrians
30 moved in and around the Trax stop at 3300 South. Mr. McMurtry directed the Commission to
31 the part of the ATP that included data on pedestrian use of signalized intersections. He added
32 that some areas and schools have attempted to incentivize people to walk to school. He
33 referenced cash payments to students in the Jordan School District who gave up their parking
34 passes.

35
36 A question was raised as to whether the various speeds encountered on bike trails were
37 accounted for in the Plan and if they evaluated the availability of land they could use to create a
38 trail. Mr. McMurtry stated that multi-speeds on trails and bike lanes have become a bigger issue,
39 especially with the allowance of scooters. They would recommend widening the trail somewhat
40 to address those issues. He added that this was the primary issue on Wasatch Boulevard, which
41 is why the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS specifically designated some trails for higher speeds,
42 while also providing more trails for children and families. He commented that this plan exists
43 along Wasatch Boulevard into Millcreek and beyond. It was noted by a Commissioner that
44 cyclists of any speed should not use the Jordan River Parkway because it is a mess, although it is
45 a very good place to run. Trying to create a shared trail would not be desirable in this location.

1 It was noted by Mr. McMurtry that cycle-trek mixed with a sidewalk or a bike lane next to a
2 sidewalk is becoming a more popular design concept. He referenced a trail designed by Salt
3 Lake City along 300 West with a 16-foot dedication that would hold a six-foot-wide sidewalk
4 and 10-foot wide trail, with a three-inch riser between the two.

5
6 It was noted by Commissioner Ebbeler that in Washington D.C., they created dedicated, coned-
7 off bike lanes on both sides of K Street. A comment was made that a similar design was
8 implemented at Sugar House on Highland Drive. Commissioner Ebbeler noted that there are
9 several places in Cottonwood Heights where such separation would be needed and noted that in
10 areas where a cyclist can build up steam going downhill, two options could include having extra
11 space on the shoulder or making it a dedicated lane. It was agreed by Mr. McMurtry that
12 downhill grades are of concern and difficult to design but emphasized the importance of getting
13 it designed now even if it would not be built for some time. He stressed that Cottonwood
14 Heights is in a good place in terms of the recommended projects. As they get closer to design,
15 they can get into the specifics that will fill the City's needs.

16
17 In response to an inquiry regarding the concept for Fort Union, Mr. McMurtry stated that they
18 looked at dedicated six-foot bike lanes along Fort Union Boulevard and where they can they will
19 install park strip separators on both sides. All of this would be separated from the sidewalks as
20 well. A comment was made that an example of this design could be found in two mixed-used
21 townhome projects currently under construction. These projects required a dedicated path. An
22 asphalt portion was constructed for cyclists and a wide sidewalk was constructed for pedestrians,
23 which resulted in two distinct paths.

24
25 Mr. Hulka stated that as part of the new Credit Union building, the Commission was aware of
26 this ATP project as they were going through that review, which is why as part of ATP's
27 approval, they required the developer to build wider sidewalks. It was noted that they did not
28 require extra space for the bike lane because they knew that this design concept would utilize the
29 existing shoulder area for a future project that would connect with Midvale. It was noted that the
30 concept design used the existing shoulders along Fort Union Boulevard. Mr. McMurtry
31 referenced page 31 of the report and stated that they prepared two maps illustrating the level of
32 traffic stress to measure how much traffic stress a cyclist would encounter on a given facility.
33 The high-stress facilities are the ones where they recommend a level of separation between bikes
34 and vehicles.

35
36 Commissioner Mills commented that people are used to seeing bikes along Wasatch Boulevard
37 in the Cottonwood Canyons but from 3000 East to 2300 East on Fort Union Boulevard there is a
38 four-inch shoulder in the westbound direction. He stated that this is likely the worst section for
39 bicyclists in the entire City. He opined that it would not make sense to spend a lot of money on
40 cyclists in the area coming out of Little Cottonwood Canyon. He stressed that cyclists traveling
41 along westbound Fort Union Boulevard from 3000 East to 2000 East are risking their lives.
42 Mr. McMurtry echoed these comments and noted that he often sees cyclists riding in the gutter
43 due to a lack of a shoulder.

1 Mr. McMurtry confirmed that they used the most recent data available to prepare the traffic
2 studies included in the report. They tried to utilize 2020 data when available and noted that
3 traffic stress was calculated using the 2019 traffic counts, which is the latest available.

4
5 A Commission Member commented that it would be worth spending the money to connect bike
6 lanes along Fort Union Boulevard from Midvale to Wasatch Boulevard for anyone in those
7 communities who wanted to bike commute or use it for errands.

8
9 Chair Coutts wondered about the intent of the ATP for reasons other than connectivity for active
10 transportation. Mr. McMurtry responded that their intent, which is shared by Wasatch Front
11 Regional Council, was to prepare a unified plan that each city could adopt. He reported that
12 Midvale City has already adopted the ATP.

13
14 Mr. McMurtry explained that if the ATP were adopted, the municipalities could seek funding for
15 the various projects. Wasatch Front Regional Council has grants and other funding, while
16 UDOT continues to put more money into active transportation. He added that UDOT's new
17 active Transportation Investment Fund ("TIF") funding and the one-time \$35 million funds
18 required a 20% match and an adopted plan. He commented that UDOT provided \$9 million to
19 South Salt Lake City to build the last piece of Parley's Trail to connect it to the Jordan River
20 Trail.

21
22 Commissioner Bevan recommended that they consider putting something in place since it is a
23 prerequisite to obtaining funding. He stressed that plans are fluid but they must have a plan in
24 place. Mr. McMurtry offered to provide the Commission with the raw design files so that they
25 could be edited at a later date. He could also provide edits at the Commission's request before
26 requesting adoption by the City Council. He added that the Wasatch Front Regional Council
27 funded nearly the entire study through a TLC grant. Cottonwood Heights contributed \$5,000 to
28 the funding along with each of the other participating cities.

29
30 Commissioner Mills stated that the Creek Road portion would be a good option for cyclists
31 between Sandy City and Cottonwood Heights, as would Highland Drive. Otherwise, cyclists
32 prefer to stay on Wasatch Boulevard as long as possible. Having more east/west routes would be
33 preferable.

34
35 Mr. Hulka stated that the approach would be to make sure that the Cottonwood Heights' portion
36 of the plan complies with all of the City's Master Plans, including the pending Open Space
37 Master Plan, and then bring that back to a Business Meeting for public hearing and
38 recommendation. It was agreed that this was a good use of time and support was expressed for
39 folding all of the plans together. Mr. McMurtry offered to come back before the Commission to
40 answer any questions. It was suggested that Mr. McMurtry be present for the public hearing.

41 42 **1.1 Cottonwood Heights General Plan Update.**

43
44 Community and Economic Development Director, Michael Johnson highlighted the General
45 Plan project website and reported that over the summer they performed the background analysis
46 and consolidated old Master Plans. They also retained sub-consultants to work on various

1 elements of the Master Plan. Township & Range was working on the Transportation element,
2 GSBS Architects was working on Housing and Economic Development, and Landmark
3 Development was working on Land Use and Open Space elements.
4

5 Mr. Johnson added that they have evaluated the preliminary goals for the General Plan as
6 recommended by the Steering Committee. They are now ready to present the goals to the public
7 for feedback before bringing a draft Master Plan before the Commission. He stressed that public
8 feedback on the goals is important because it will serve as the basis for everything else moving
9 forward. Mr. Johnson noted that the goals are provided on the website. He stated that staff has
10 set aside time for public office hours to allow the public to reach out and discuss the proposed
11 goals and the importance of the General Plan so that when they present the draft Master Plan
12 document, the public will better understand its purposes and elements.
13

14 Mr. Johnson added that the results of the surveys completed to date were published on the
15 website. He suggested that the Commission encourage neighborhood groups, Homeowners'
16 Associations, or school organizations to visit the website. Moving forward there will be more
17 opportunities for public input. Commissioner Mills suggested that signs be placed to announce
18 the process and encourage residents to get involved. It was recommended that QR Codes be
19 included on signs around the City. It was agreed that it would be better to have more opportunity
20 for public input than less. Mr. Johnson confirmed that public input is the current priority.
21

22 Commissioner Ebbeler asked about ex parte communications. It was determined unacceptable to
23 encourage residents to speak to the Commissioners individually and should not sway any
24 decision on a recommendation. Mr. Johnson opined that promoting the website in an unbiased
25 fashion would be proper.
26

27 Chair Coutts added that there should be no issue sharing with the public that there is a General
28 Plan process underway and noted that any efforts to influence could be easily deflected by the
29 Commissioners. She added that the majority of time spent during the last Steering Committee
30 meeting focused on how they could engage more with the public. She commented that the
31 survey is robust and allows the public to zoom into maps and include their comments. She
32 affirmed that it should be appropriate for the Commissioners to take the survey as citizens of
33 Cottonwood Heights.
34

35 Mr. Johnson added that any efforts by citizens to influence Commissioners should be brought to
36 the attention of staff. He reiterated that they are trying to get the word out by any means possible
37 and referenced the use of Next Door as opposed to Twitter. In response to an inquiry regarding
38 the meetings on the YouTube channel, they would look into how many people watch after the
39 meeting is concluded. Mr. Johnson added that Zoom meetings are recorded and available to the
40 public and they reached out to the school district as well.
41

42 The comment was made that from a process standpoint, the Little Cottonwood Canyon process
43 resulted in a fairly high level of engagement in terms of volume, and demonstrated a level of
44 unification over time. Commissioner Bevan was impressed by how the opinions of the residents
45 coalesced as the process evolved. He hoped that the residents would help positively shape the
46 Master Plan.
47

1 Mr. Johnson stated that they would like to educate the residents on why a Master Plan is
2 important and why they should care about what is included in the Plan. He explained that the
3 process will carry over into 2022 after the upcoming election cycle and while this is technically
4 an update to the Master Plan, it is quite comprehensive.

5
6 Commissioner Bevan was enthusiastic about this process and commented that the original
7 Master Plan did not include much public input. It was put into place because it was required as
8 part of the City's incorporation. He stressed that just because something is included in the
9 Master Plan does not mean that it is the only way to do things.

10
11 In response to an inquiry regarding the general thoughts from the Steering Committee, Chair
12 Coutts noted that there was robust discussion regarding the EIS process with Little Cottonwood
13 Canyon and Wasatch Boulevard. She stated that a significant part of the discussions involved
14 people getting around in Cottonwood Heights. Chair Coutts was impressed by the volume of
15 information and the group of sub-consultants involved. She viewed this effort as much more
16 mature than the original Master Plan and hoped that the output would reflect that.

17
18 Commissioner Ebbeler asked if technology infrastructure was part of the Steering Committee
19 discussions. Mr. Johnson stated that from an Economic Development standpoint, they were
20 looking at these issues. He reported that they received a COVID-19-related grant to conduct a
21 more in-depth economic study of the City and how it was impacted by the pandemic. The entire
22 way the economy functions has shifted and that analysis will be included in the Economic
23 Development portion of the Master Plan. Mr. Johnson explained that they included generalized
24 goals that are Citywide in scope and that incorporate multiple elements within each goal. There
25 will be separate Plan elements, but they will be interwoven, making it a more realistic Plan.

26
27 Commissioner Chappell added that as a result of the original Master Plan, the structure of City
28 ordinances varied. She felt that the structure of the updated Master Plan would help make things
29 clearer and more streamlined. Code issues would likely be clearer to those appearing before the
30 Planning Commission, as well as clearer for the Commission. She added that the structure of the
31 update feels much better than what is currently in place.

32 33 **1.2 Cottonwood Heights Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan.**

34
35 Mr. Johnson recalled that the Commission, along with the Parks, Trails, and Open Space
36 Committee, made a positive recommendation on the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan
37 several months ago. It was presented to the City Council and a public hearing was held the
38 previous month. He reported that one part of the Plan received a significant amount of public
39 input and concern so they prepared a proposed amendment as directed by the Council. He
40 explained that the scope of the Plan was to provide a long-range broad vision to help future City
41 leaders make recommendations as it pertains to budget decisions, City policies, new City codes
42 and ordinances, and development requirements as they relate to parks, trails, and open space. He
43 stressed that the Plan was not a construction plan but includes recommendations in the maps
44 included within the Plan.

1 Mr. Johnson reported that at the request of the Council, they added an acknowledgment of
2 private property rights, which states that the City respects private property rights and the Plan
3 does not give the City authority to make improvements that would impact private property rights.
4 The amendment also specifies that the Plan does not give the City eminent domain authority to
5 make any of the improvements outlined in the Plan and the City has no eminent domain authority
6 when it comes to parks, trails, and open space. He stated that this was not recommended as an
7 implementation strategy; rather, any future improvement envisioned in the Plan that affects
8 private property would either be required during substantial redevelopment or through real estate
9 negotiations with willing landowners. The Council also requested references to nationally
10 recognized park standards, which would help justify recommendations for more park space or
11 trails consistent with those benchmark standards.

12
13 Mr. Johnson addressed the Future Trails Chapter, as it was the part of the Plan that received the
14 most public interest. The purpose of the chapter was to envision interconnected active
15 transportation and recreational trail network that connects neighborhoods to City and regional
16 parks to other cities. He added that they envisioned a trail network through the City that could
17 be used by casual recreationists as well as a legitimate means of transportation. They also hope
18 to provide access to public lands for City residents and visitors without interfering with the
19 quality of life of nearby residents.

20
21 Mr. Johnson reported that the Little Cottonwood Trail caused a lot of concern from
22 neighborhoods along that trail alignment. The Council was also very concerned about the
23 original alignment. He noted that the original intent of the Little Cottonwood Trail was
24 envisioned as a long-range trail improvement where, over a long period of time, land would be
25 set aside as areas aged up and were redeveloped. Most of the trail alignment crossed private
26 properties, which was the reason it was included as a long-range vision. Mr. Johnson
27 commented that there was concern and confusion over this vision, as many believed it was a trail
28 development plan. The Council communicated that staff needs to provide an alternate solution
29 to that particular future trail.

30
31 Mr. Johnson presented the alternative and explained that it would still involve a trail envisioned
32 in the area of the Little Cottonwood Creek; however, they moved it off the waterway alignment
33 and instead proposed that it be located along public rights-of-way. It remains a long-range
34 project but by locating it in public rights-of-way as an urban trail system, they felt it would create
35 much less conflict and concern over private property rights and privacy. This change also allows
36 them to achieve their goals of an interconnected trail network. He stressed that this is not a
37 design document at this point. Issues regarding accommodating active transportation with
38 recreational uses would be addressed at the design stage. He added that the alternative trail plan
39 is now in the draft Plan that is published online.

40
41 Mr. Johnson provided examples of urban trails and stressed that they are only visual examples of
42 different trail types and what they could look like. He referenced public concern about increased
43 crime with urban trails. He presented the Big Cottonwood Trail that runs near some residential
44 properties in the City and noted how the different configurations achieved the same desired
45 result.

1 Commissioner Mills reported that he lives across the street from the Big Cottonwood Trail and
2 the residents love it. He added that there has been an increase in traffic on the trail but not a
3 dramatic increase in crime. He defended the direction taken by staff and felt that many do not
4 realize how a similar trail would be a blessing to their neighborhood. Mr. Johnson stated that
5 most of the concerns regarding an urban trail came from residents along Siesta Drive and noted
6 that they could make the trail more contextual with the character of the neighborhood. He
7 emphasized that this would be an important connection because Crestwood Park provides a
8 potential connection to Parkridge.

9
10 What they have proposed was not drastically more intense than the sidewalks currently along
11 Siesta Drive. He referenced some of the other visual examples of urban trails. In response to an
12 inquiry from Commissioner Bevan regarding the example at 9400 South in Sandy, Mr. Johnson
13 believed that it includes a bike lane but there were comments that it is rarely used. Mr. Johnson
14 explained that the requested changes would still achieve the goals of the Trails element of the
15 Plan. He emphasized that the Plan does not authorize construction and the elements would go
16 through future planning and design processes, including public input.

17
18 Mr. Johnson stated that the Commission would not be required to take action on this amended
19 Plan as the Council has full authority to require these modifications. The Commission could
20 elect to take public comments again; however, at this point, the City Council is the public
21 hearing body and comments can be submitted to the Council before they make their decision.
22 He suggested that re-opening public comment at this time would be unnecessary as there is still
23 an avenue for the public to provide their input to the deciding body. He further explained that
24 they would present the plan to the Open Space Committee in two weeks after which it would go
25 back to the City Council in early to mid-November for direction. It was confirmed that only the
26 new alternative would be included in the Plan to be presented to the Council.

27
28 Chair Coutts echoed the comments of Commissioner Mills that the concerns were shortsighted
29 but understood the sensitivities involved. She appreciated the time spent to find an alternative
30 that embraced the spirit of following Little Cottonwood Creek. She asked why the path through
31 Crestwood Park would have been eliminated. Mr. Johnson explained that it presented similar
32 concerns regarding the use of private properties. The revised plan envisions an enhanced urban
33 trail element along Siesta Drive, which would also connect directly into Crestwood Park.

34
35 Commissioner Ebbeler stated that he lived near one of the largest trail systems in the D.C. Metro
36 area and the economic development driver on the reconnection of that trail as part of a mixed-use
37 project was significant. Crime concerns never came to fruition and the trail became more
38 activated and was a significant amenity that increased the value of the adjacent homes.

39
40 Commissioner Bevan asked about alternatives on Forest Creek Lane or South Parkridge. He
41 noted that a trail on Parkridge could connect with Bengal Boulevard. He suggested there could
42 be options either off Curtis Drive or Parkridge Circle that would avoid the HOA. Commissioner
43 Mills felt that this could present some challenges.

44
45 Commissioner Allen suggested that staff look into options from the east of Crestwood Park. He
46 viewed Crestwood Park as an island in terms of access. Commissioner Allen felt there was a

1 fundamental shift in the essence of the Plan to go from a long-term route along the creek to a
2 route along a public right-of-way. He noted that the best sections of the Big Cottonwood Trail
3 are the sections next to the creek. The worst part of the trail is along the public right-of-way. He
4 expressed that this fundamental shift was unfortunate but acknowledged that it is the decision of
5 the City Council. It was noted that it would be important to explore locations along Big
6 Cottonwood Creek and connecting at the top by Wasatch Boulevard to show that their intention
7 as a City would be to have that connection while being sensitive to private property rights. It was
8 generally felt that a trail along the creek would be much more desirable. Mr. Johnson agreed to
9 report the Commission's feedback back to the Council.

10 11 **1.3 Additional Discussion Items.**

12
13 Mr. Johnson reminded the Commission that their next meeting is scheduled to take place in two
14 weeks and will be a hybrid meeting.

15 16 **2.0 Adjournment.**

17
18 *Commissioner Bevan moved to adjourn. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion. The*
19 *motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Commission.*

20
21 The Work Meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the*
2 *Cottonwood Heights City Planning Commission Meeting held Wednesday, October 6, 2021.*
3
4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary
9

10 Minutes Approved: _____