

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) HYBRID STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING, HELD MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES, LOCATED AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

**Present:**  Will McCarvill, Co-Chair

 Barbara Cameron, Co-Chair

 Sarah Bennett

 Maura Hahnenberger

 Danny Richardson

 Troy Morgan

 Jennifer Eden

 Joanna Wheelton

 Mike Marker

 Del Draper

 Ed Marshall

 Dennis Goreham

 Jan Striefel

 Kelly Boardman

 Mike Doyle

 Kurt Hegmann

 Kirk Nichols

 John Knoblock

 Carl Fisher

 Hilary Lambert

 Patrick Shea

 Tom Diegel

 Angie Bauer-Fellows

 Loretta Markham

**Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director of Policy

 Blake Perez, Executive Director of Administration

**Opening**

1. **William McCarvill will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders Council.**

Chair William McCarvill called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. He reported that this was a hybrid meeting.

1. **The Stakeholders Council will Consider Approving the Stakeholders Council DRAFT Minutes from Wednesday, November 16, 2022.**

**MOTION:** William McCarvill moved to APPROVE the November 16, 2022 Stakeholders Council Meeting Minutes. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

1. **Announcements:**
* **Short-Term Project Announcement.**

Executive Director of Policy, Lindsey Nielsen shared information related to short-term projects. She reported that the CWC is entering the fourth cycle of short-term project grant funding. The call for proposals will open on March 6, 2023, and close on April 3, 2023. In the budget, $50,000 is allocated for short-term projects. The Short-Term Projects Committee includes Mayor Nann Worel from Park City, Mayor Michael Weichers from Cottonwood Heights, and Mayor Roger Bourke from Alta. After April 3, 2023, CWC Staff and resource managers will review the initial group of project proposals. The Short-Term Projects Committee will then review the proposals during a meeting on April 14, 2023. The CWC Board would review and formally approve the recommended projects during the May 1, 2023, CWC Board Meeting. Successful short-term projects will ultimately be funded between May and June 2023.

* **Briefing on SHC Membership and Timeline.**

Chair McCarvill noted that there were several Stakeholders Council Members with terms ending in June 2023. Co-Chair Barbara Cameron reported that 14 Stakeholders Council terms will expire on June 30, 2023. Each of the members will be contacted by Stakeholders Council leadership in March to determine if there was a desire to extend the term for an additional four years. In April, CWC Staff would assist Stakeholders Council leadership and release a call for applications. The application deadline would end on May 1, 2023. After that, CWC Staff, Stakeholders Council leadership, and a CWC Board Member will review the Stakeholders Council applications and present recommendations to the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee at the May 15, 2023 meeting. The Executive/Budget/Audit Committee will then recommend new members to the CWC Board. Those would be considered at the June 5, 2023, CWC Board Meeting.

* **Call for Additional Announcements from SHC Members.**

Chair McCarvill reported that the Legislature approved a $150 million appropriation for Cottonwood Canyons transportation improvements. He did not have additional details but there was an assumption that it might be for buses and bus stops. As soon as there is more information, he will share it with the Stakeholders Council Members. He did not believe $150 million was enough to build a gondola, so it was clear that something else was in the works. John Knoblock wondered if that had been approved. Chair McCarvill believed it had. Carl Fisher clarified that it had not passed, but it was introduced in concept. Kurt Hegmann noted that it had come out of Executive Appropriations Committee. It was then written into Senate Bill (“S.B.”) 0002. Since it came out of that Committee, the bill was set up to pass. It would take action to remove it, which was unlikely.

Patrick Shea wondered if the language was part of the Legislative history or the appropriations bill. This made a difference in terms of the legal use. Mr. Hegeman was not certain but referenced lines 4017 in SB-0002. It specifically mentioned Cottonwood Canyon transportation.

**STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL COMMITTEE UPDATE**

1. **Trails Committee.**

Mr. Knoblock shared information about the Trails Committee. The U.S. Forest Service along with Salt Lake County and a Consultant hired by Salt Lake County had been working on the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan. A series of public engagement sessions had taken place recently. Online, there was a website with an interactive map where comments and suggestions could be submitted. The intention was to receive broad input. Concurrently, Dr. Jordan Smith from Utah State University was working on the Visitor Use Study commissioned by the CWC. The Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan and the Visitor Use Study were part of the original Mountain Accord goals. It was exciting to see those actions start to move forward. Dr. Smith had been working closely with Chelsea Phillippe and Zinnia Wilson at the Forest Service to ensure that all of the work was in alignment.

According to Dr. Smith, some trails were highly used. This included Cecret Lake, Lake Blanche, and Donut Falls. On the other hand, some trails do not receive much use at all. For instance, wilderness trails or trails that are further than two miles from a trailhead. There were many places where it was possible to achieve a sense of peace and solitude. On the highly used trails, the expectations were calibrated to the use expectations. He explained that people visiting Donut Falls expect to see a lot of people in that area. Based on the information shared by Dr. Smith, it was best to focus use in those high-use areas. Dispersing use would not be ideal because there would be a greater environmental footprint. The highly used trails should be hardened to prevent any further degradation of the trail surface and environment. It was recommended the use be focused on recreation nodes, such as the ski areas, where there was already parking, water, food, and emergency medical services. The natural environment had already been impacted in those areas.

Dr. Smith stated that a lot of high-use areas are around the high alpine lakes. It was important not to disrupt the riparian zones or cause lakeside erosion there. Something worth considering was putting loop trails around the lakes where the loop trails are far enough away to minimize impacts to the lake and the riparian zones. This would allow visitors to be near the lakes but would keep the riparian area safe. Chair McCarvill thanked Mr. Knoblock for sharing updates. Dennis Goreham made a correction to the summary document that was shared. During the Trails Committee Meeting, Dr. Smith stated that if mass transit provided access to the mid-canyon trails, this might bring more visitors there than desired. The correction was noted.

Mr. Fisher noted that he left a comment in the Zoom chat box earlier. There had been a lot of concern related to House Bill (“H.B.”) 527 from Representative Keven Stratton. It related to the expansion of mining operations and did not allow cities and counties to regulate that use. However, the bill did not make it out and was unlikely to move forward during the current session.

Mr. Fisher asked if Dr. Smith had reviewed the one-page summary document. He wanted to know if he felt it encapsulated the report. Co-Chair Cameron did not believe it had been submitted to Dr. Smith for review. That could be done if desired by the Stakeholders Council. It was determined that the summary would be forwarded for review to ensure that the document captured the key findings and data. Executive Director of Administration, Blake Perez clarified that there was an Executive Summary of the report that Dr. Smith shared. It was available on the website. The document that was shared by Mr. Knoblock was a summary of the Trails Committee Meeting.

1. **Millcreek Canyon Committee.**

Tom Diegel shared information about the Millcreek Canyon Committee. He reported that the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) Grant Project in Millcreek was moving forward. It was projected to improve the road in the upper canyon. The last review was the 30% design, which was presented in May 2022. There was an Open House and public comment period at that time. Since then, consultants continued to work on the design. The next checkpoint would be in the middle of April 2023. The Millcreek Canyon Committee looked forward to seeing the 50% design.

Mr. Diegel was curious about the public comments from the 30% design. Through a Government Records and Management Act (“GRAMA”) request, he was able to obtain the comments. There were approximately 350 comments in total. The Committee Members reviewed and itemized the comments. Based on the feedback, the public was not thrilled about lane widening. Generally, the public comments indicated that there was a desire to see minimal changes occur in the canyon. Some updates were needed but members of the public did not want to see the overall character of the canyon change.

The Wasatch Backcountry Alliance placed trail counters at popular wintertime trailheads. The trail counters were then used by the Forest Service in the summer. Mr. Diegel shared a graph and explained that both Porter Fork and Millcreek Roads were shown. The use on Porter Fork Road had increased by approximately 30% since 2018. That area was gaining in popularity. A lot of people were deterred by the traffic in Big Cottonwood Canyon, so a lot of backcountry skiers were now visiting Millcreek Canyon instead. As a result, parking was becoming an issue on the weekends. The FLAP grant indicated that parking and access to the canyon were becoming limited. It was important that any changes made account for a possible shuttle. He noted that Millcreek Road had been relatively stagnant in terms of use. Both winter and summer use of a shuttle bus system would be beneficial. He reminded the Stakeholders Council that the Millcreek Canyon Committee was originally called the Millcreek Shuttle Committee. After speaking to the Forest Service at that time, it became clear that a shuttle was not viable. Some progress had been made since then thanks to the FLAP grant and an improved relationship with the Forest Service.

The Millcreek Canyon Committee experienced some challenges communicating with the County about the FLAP grant. Mr. Diegel explained that the Committee spoke to Catherine Kanter during the November 2022 meeting and she was willing to listen. Since then, between the holidays and the general session, she had not been present. However, Ms. Kanter would participate at the next Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, which was scheduled before the next round of design for the FLAP grant was released. He looked forward to hearing more from her at that time. At the next Stakeholders Council Meeting, he would share any additional updates. There would be a public comment period for the 50% FLAP grant design. It would be worthwhile for Stakeholders Council Members to reach out to their constituents about the FLAP grant and consider sharing comments.

Ed Marshall pointed out that there was no consensus on the Millcreek Canyon Committee about how to handle some of the competing goals. For example, maintaining the character of the upper canyon by not widening the road. That was one goal, but improving pedestrian and bicycle safety was another. Different approaches were suggested to accommodate both goals. Mr. Diegel reported that bicycle safety was a common concern in a lot of the public comments. That being said, there were a lot of different opinions about how bicycle safety and pedestrian safety should be approached. Mr. Knoblock reviewed some of the options that had been discussed, which included a bicycle advisory lane. It would be interesting to see what was recommended in the next round of design.

Mr. Diegel shared information related to Cardiff. He reminded Stakeholders Council Members that a resolution had been written in the fall to encourage all entities to reach an agreement about the expired Special Use Permit that the Cardiff Canyon Owners Association had. There had been concerns about conflicts in the winter. Some of those fears were founded because there had been physical confrontations. People carrying guns had told visitors that all of Cardiff was closed, which was not true. There is plenty of public land in Cardiff as well as some private land. The landowners in Cardiff recently placed fencing across Cardiff Road. However, that was placed on public land rather than private. That was illegal and they had been told to remove the fencing. Mr. Diegel explained that Cardiff Canyon is not closed. There is some private land but also public land as well as legal access. The Forest Service was working to address the issues.

**BIG COTTONWOOD CANYON MOBILITY ACTION PLAN**

1. **Stakeholders Council Members will Receive a Briefing on Work Done to Date, Key Themes from Public Survey, and Key Next Steps.**

Angie Bauer-Fellows from AECOM shared information related to the Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (“BCC MAP”). The public survey period for the BCC MAP recently concluded. The information would be shared about the results as well as the BCC MAP in general. She explained that there was also a desire to hear feedback from Stakeholders Council Members. There were two points in the meeting where the presentation would be paused so small group discussions could take place. The breakout sessions would be conducted virtually. Someone would be in each of the breakout rooms to document the discussion and key takeaways. After everyone returns to the Stakeholders Council Meeting, one person from each group would share highlights.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that mobility hub options have been the main focus recently. She explained that the mobility hub components are currently preliminary and conceptual. Moving forward, the options that make the most sense would be further refined and converged with the rest of the recommendations. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that the BCC MAP will not provide a single preferred recommendation. There would be a menu of options that could move the needle in the right direction and improve mobility. There would likely not be one option selected but instead, there would be a mixture of options selected. For instance, mobility hubs at certain locations as well as more frequent transit service. If decision-makers wanted to move forward with a specific recommendation, the implementation component of the BCC MAP would outline the next steps. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that the implementation component will include information such as cost estimates, possible funding sources, associated agencies, and what would need to occur beforehand.

The BCC MAP public survey was live on the CWC website for approximately one month. It closed on February 10, 2023. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that a full report on the survey responses would be ready ahead of the March 2023 CWC Board Meeting. Approximately 960 survey responses were received. The survey focused on key topic areas including winter bus service, year-round bus service, mobility hubs, bicycling, funding, parking, tolling, fees, and fares. She acknowledged that the survey does not cover all potential options or recommendations. However, it would be possible for others to be added. Anything not referenced in the public survey would be acknowledged in the final BCC MAP.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that the survey results would be included in the Outreach Summary Report. That would be shared with the CWC Board at the next CWC Board Meeting. The other piece that would be incorporated into that report was feedback from the Stakeholders Council. It was important to capture both public survey results as well as input from Council Members. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that this would be captured in a public engagement chapter of the BCC MAP.

The survey questions and results were reviewed. Some questions focused specifically on the winter bus service. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted there was a lot of support for a seasonal express bus in the winter. That being said, there was some nuance there. While the majority of respondents were supportive of the idea, the open-ended responses showed the nuance behind why there was or was no support for winter seasonal express bus service. That level of detail was not captured in the summary shared with the Stakeholders Council but those responses would be captured in the comprehensive summary. There was a lot of detailed information that would be available for review.

There was a similar question posed for non-winter or year-round service. Almost all respondents were not willing to wait more than 30 minutes for a bus and 15 minutes was the longest they felt was appropriate to wait. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that there had been a ranked question related to seasonal winter express bus concerns. The highest-ranked concerns were limited service areas and waiting for a bus before and after skiing. Frequent, reliable, and comfortable transit service was supported based on the responses gathered. When asked what would encourage someone to utilize the service, the main responses were consistent and frequent headways, a clear schedule, enough seating capacity, and the implementation of tolling. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that approximately 50% of respondents were in support of year-round service and the rest landed in the maybe or other categories.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there was support for free or low fares for transportation. A lot of respondents were also interested in an option for a monthly or annual pass. In general, it seemed that $5 was the price that most respondents were willing to pay for round-trip bus service. Most were not willing to pay more than $10 for that service. Another question was posed about whether the fares should differ for the winter express service versus the year-round option. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that there had been a variety of responses there. Some felt it made sense for the winter service to cost more but others believed it should be free or low-fare year-round.

One of the notable takeaways from the open-ended responses was that there was a lot of interest in a shuttle service, especially for non-winter use. However, there were still questions about the frequency of service, convenience, and capacity. For respondents to use bus service year-round, there needs to be an obvious and consistent schedule. There was also a lot of interest in on-demand stops at trailheads. Ms. Bauer-Fellows shared some of the parking questions that were posed. The intention was to find out what respondents would do if on-street parking was removed. If a frequent and comfortable transit service was provided, a fair number of respondents would use that.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there were a few questions related to mobility hubs in the survey. She noted that a lot of the questions pertained to physical amenities that could be included at the different mobility hubs. One theme from the open-ended responses was an acknowledgment that mobility hubs went hand in hand with whatever transit service was implemented. One portion of the survey focused on a more robust mobility hub such as one at the Gravel Pit. The priorities there were parking and restrooms. As for potential hubs that could be up the canyon, the responses were across the board. There was a lot of support for trail maps and robust transit service. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that one of the questions was:

* Where would you like to see additional mobility hubs in the canyon?

The responses focused on resorts, major trailheads, and the mouth of the canyon. That being said, a lot of respondents did not want to see mobility hubs in the canyon. Those respondents felt that the focus should be on the mouth of the canyon, the valley, and potential resorts.

A mobility hub could mean a lot of different things. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that the term “mobility hub” was being used in this context to refer to a location that connected transit with other modes. In the BCC MAP, a mobility hub may refer to a more robust transit center or a substantial bus stop. The amenities and size would likely vary depending on the location and what was being served. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that the BCC MAP work started with the language and assumptions that were laid out in the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) First/Last Mile Strategies Study from 2015. She shared a graph with those present. From left to right, there were the simplest types of mobility hubs to the more substantial types. She noted that Types 1, 2, 3, and 4 were listed. This went from minimal investment, minimal infrastructure, and minimal amenities to higher investment and higher connectivity. Several options had been looked at conceptually. This ranged from trailhead options in Type 1 and 2 range to resort options in the Type 3 range and mobility hub options at the mouth of the canyon as a Type 4 option.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reviewed the amenities that could be incorporated into the different types of mobility hubs. She clarified that not every mobility hub will include everything listed, but it acted as a starting point for recommendations. Most of the areas being explored were Type 2 and beyond when it came to the different components that could be considered. Ms. Bauer-Fellows shared some possible options and rough ideas with the Stakeholders Council. She explained that these options would start at the mouth of the canyon. The first mobility hub discussed was the Gravel Pit. Ms. Bauer-Fellows acknowledged that the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) recommended a mobility hub there. Potential concerns and challenges were highlighted for each of the options shown.

Beyond the Gravel Pit, there are a few different possibilities. For instance, the existing Park and Ride lot. AECOM had brainstormed some rough ideas. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that for the Park and Ride lot area specifically, there were some straightforward options, such as restriping the existing lot. Changing the angle of the parking stalls to 90 degrees could increase the number of parking spots from 86 to 150. Something more substantial was the construction of a parking deck. The option to add a parking deck would be a much higher investment, but it would result in approximately 400 parking spots. She noted that there were certain considerations for that location. For instance, traffic and access in and out of the site. There are existing challenges and it was important to consider whether a more robust mobility hub would exacerbate the issues and how to address that. Additionally, what happened at the Gravel Pit would impact what made sense in that location.

There were a few different trailhead options. Three examples included the Reynolds Flat, Spruces, and Silver Fork alternatives. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there were several options, which included restriping parking and constructing platforms. She clarified that any recommendations in those locations would require collaboration with the Forest Service, UTA, and UDOT. She shared information about the Reynold Flat alternative. The most robust option would be the Type 2 category, where there would be platforms and accessibility considerations. The Spruces and Silver Fork alternatives were similar in terms of what would work.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows shared recommendations for the Solitude resort area. There were several options, such as using a bypass road that was currently unused and replacing the stop at the second entrance. Other options included a parking deck. Based on the feedback from Solitude and jurisdictional partners, certain options were more palatable. However, there were additional considerations to work through. For instance, a pedestrian crossing and a pedestrian bridge. Ms. Bauer-Fellows shared recommendations related to the Brighton area. Existing stops could be upgraded. There was also an option related to a bus bypass shared transit lane around the loop.

1. **The Stakeholders Council will Provide Feedback on Several Key BCC MAP Topics.**

Ms. Bauer-Fellows asked that during the breakout session, Stakeholders Council Members focus on the potential mobility hub concepts. She hoped to hear the pros and cons of the potential locations, the scale of the facilities, and any other considerations. Mr. Perez shared a link in the Zoom chat box. From there, Council Members would be broken into different breakout groups. It was noted that there would be four breakout rooms in total. One room would be run by Ms. Bauer-Fellows, one by Loretta Markham, one by Mr. Perez, and one by Ms. Nielsen. The Council went into the breakout session.

Following the breakout session, each room shared a brief overview of what was discussed. Ms. Bauer-Fellows had been in room one and she asked Chair McCarvill to share the key takeaways. Chair McCarvill noted that there had been a discussion about removing vehicles from the canyon rather than providing parking areas. Co-Chair Cameron shared key takeaways from the room two discussion. Some thought the Gravel Pit would be a good place for a mobility hub, but there were concerns about the term mobility hub. She noted that a robust transit system was needed and that the transit system should be operational year-round and seven days a week.

Mr. Knoblock shared updates related to the room three discussion. There was support for summer transit but until the Forest Service agreed to that, it was difficult to work out the details. Additionally, there were discussions about capacity. If transit could not move people up the canyon, it did not make sense to have a lot of different amenities at the mobility hubs. Mr. Perez shared information about the room four discussion. The main comments had to do with the importance of the Gravel Pit. It could improve transit and provide parking. There was also a comment that a platform at the mouth of the canyon would increase congestion, so it was especially important to focus on the Gravel Pit. The restriping at the mouth of the canyon made sense. There was also support for mobility hubs at Brighton and Solitude but it was necessary to consider turn lanes. It was also suggested that the BCC MAP consider what progress should look like in 5, 10, 15, and 20 years. There would need to be a phased approach for Big Cottonwood Canyon.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that there was additional information to share before another breakout session was held. There were several survey questions related to tolling, fares, and fees. Generally, there was support for transit, carpooling, tolls, and user fees, depending on the circumstances. She noted that the public generally supported the idea of transit, with a focus on buses. There was a broad question included in the survey related to the different options that had been identified and shared in previous studies. Survey respondents were asked to rank those. Seasonal winter service was highly ranked as was the year-round transit service. Dynamic tolling and a mobility hub at the Gravel Pit were also highly ranked. Those were in line with the comments shared from the first Stakeholders Council breakout session. She asked that Council Members spend a few minutes discussing the previously identified options and identify anything that might be missing from that list. The Stakeholders Council went into a second breakout session and broke into four separate rooms.

Following the breakout session, highlights were shared from each room. Kirk Nichols explained that room one realized that all of the options could be outgrown. For instance, parking areas could be outgrown over time. Additionally, it was noted that tolls that kept visitors out of the canyon due to the high costs were not accessible. There needed to be equal access. One long-term solution that had been discussed was capacity. For example, establishing a certain capacity, which would likely be based on transit and a reservation system. Co-Chair Cameron shared takeaways from the room two discussion. There was support for a reservation system. There was discussion regarding tolling and implementing discounts for residents, employees, service trucks, and food trucks.

Mr. Diegel shared information about the room three discussion. Doing some environmental monitoring, particularly with the water source, would be a way to monitor the impacts over time. There were also discussions about the concept of dynamic tolling. The main focus needed to be on reducing the number of vehicles in the canyon, which could be done through dynamic tolling. That kind of tolling had the potential to adjust the habits of visitors. Mr. Perez shared information about the room four discussions. There had been questions raised about capacity constraints from a fire, emergency services, resort, and watershed perspective. In addition, there had been comments about dispersed parking and bus routes that started at various key locations.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows thanked the Stakeholders Council for their feedback. She felt that the breakout sessions had been beneficial. The feedback would be further considered and shared in the draft BCC MAP. There would be an additional update at the March 6, 2023, CWC Board Meeting. She noted that there was also a scheduled presentation to the Transportation Committee on March 22, 2023. BCC MAP information would be shared ahead of the actual draft BCC MAP document.

**OPEN COMMENTS**

There were no additional comments.

**ADJOURN MEETING**

1. **William McCarvill will Adjourn the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders Council.**

**MOTION:** William McCarvill moved to ADJOURN the Stakeholders Council Meeting. Del Draper seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Hybrid Stakeholders Council Meeting held Monday, February 27, 2023.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

T Forbes Group

Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_