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**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023 AT 1:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM.  THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED AT GATEWAY AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

**Present:**  Mayor Dan Knopp, Chair

Mayor Mike Weichers, Co-Chair

Carlton Christensen

**Staff:** Blake Perez, Executive Director of Administration

Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director of Policy

Ella Warnick, Community Engagement Intern

**Others:** Angie Bauer-Fellows

Barbara Cameron

Carl Fisher

Patrick Shea

Tom Ward

Ralph Becker

Amber Broadaway

Grant Farnsworth

**OPEN TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. **Chair Dan Knopp will Call the Meeting to Order and Welcome Those Present.**

Chair Dan Knopp called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

1. **Committee will Approve Minutes from the February 16, 2023 Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Weichers moved to APPROVE the Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2023. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

**BCC MAP REVIEW**

1. **The Transportation Committee will Receive a Briefing on the Draft Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (“BCC MAP”) and Next Steps.**

Angie Bauer-Fellows from AECOM was present to share information related to the Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (“BCC MAP”). Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that a general project update would be shared during the Transportation Committee Meeting. There would also be a preview of the recommendations included in the Draft BCC MAP document. That document would be released on March 27, 2023. In addition, she would review the timeline and next steps before the final document was released at the end of April 2023.

At this point in the process, the Draft BCC MAP document had been compiled. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reiterated that the Draft BCC MAP will be released on March 27, 2023. It will be made available on the CWC website and public comments will be accepted until April 17, 2023. Comments could be submitted via email or on the comment form found directly on the website. Over the next several weeks, there would be coordination with CWC partners and jurisdictional agencies to further refine the content and address any outstanding questions. At the same time, public comments would be received and documentation of those comments would be incorporated into the Final BCC MAP document. The final version of the document would be ready at the end of April. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there would be a presentation for the Transportation Committee on April 25, 2023, and a presentation for the full CWC Board on May 1, 2023.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reviewed the issues that the BCC MAP addressed. There was a heavy focus on the seasonal peak period mobility issues in Big Cottonwood Canyon. There had also been some consideration of year-round mobility needs. Generally speaking, the BCC MAP focused on shifting vehicle trips to transit and reducing single-occupancy vehicles over time. The study was primarily constrained to the Big Cottonwood Canyon corridor and the immediate mouth of the canyon. However, some considerations extended beyond that area, especially in terms of regional transit, and that was recognized within the document as well.

Contributing issues to the broader mobility problem statement were listed. There was a lack of convenient, frequent, and reliable transit service connecting to Big Cottonwood Canyon and serving Big Cottonwood Canyon. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that there was more of a spotlight on that recently with the reduction of service on Route 72. Even when that route was functioning at full capacity, the buses were full and still not meeting the needs. In addition, there was a lack of bus service throughout the year. Peak period traffic congestion also impacted the frequency and reliability. There were notable challenges related to parking as well. She reported that there is limited parking at the base of the canyon and there were not a lot of convenient locations to park elsewhere in the valley to connect to transit. Ms. Bauer-Fellows informed those present that safety was another component that factored into the BCC MAP work.

The Draft BCC MAP would include a range of options. Those options could be implemented independently or in various combinations, depending on funding, priorities, and the complexity of next steps. Ms. Bauer-Fellows clarified that there was not a single solution suggested to be implemented at a single time. The Draft BCC MAP laid out an iterative process, where some simpler options could be implemented short-term, and some more complex options could be implemented over time. The full list of recommendations, detailed descriptions, and information about implementation and next steps would be provided in the report.

The recommendations were organized into six different categories: transit service, travel demand management, parking management, mobility hubs and bus stops, roadway improvements, and administrative or policy changes. Recommendations from the different categories would likely be implemented together as it made sense to do so. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that near-term options were either immediate or could be implemented within the next two years. Mid-term options had a two-to-10-year timeframe whereas long-term options had a longer timeframe than that. Even for the mid-term to long-term options, there were next steps that could be started.

The transit service recommendations were reviewed. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that the first was referenced in the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) Five-Year Service Plan. It was an option that would return service levels to what was in place before the recent winter season when the routes were cut back due to operator shortages. The option was not a long-term solution, but an immediate next step that needed to occur. The second option was a supplementary shuttle service, which could be on top of the underlying UTA services. The assumption was that it would serve valley locations directly to ski resorts. She explained that this shuttle could be run by a third party or UTA could hold the contract with another entity and provide the supplementary service.

Another option was the seasonal enhanced or express bus that directly services the ski resorts. Five-minute frequency was ideal, even though there were challenges to consider. For instance, the number of buses, operators, and traffic congestion. The next steps for that option included money from the last Legislative Session that enhanced buses in the Cottonwood Canyons. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that the next steps listed would require further coordination with UTA to confirm travel times, operator details, bus stop locations, and so on. There was some additional analysis needed and some details needed to be finalized, assuming that UTA would provide the service.

Another item that would be complementary to enhanced bus service was an exclusive transit lane. The BCC MAP assumed an exclusive lane between Solitude and the Brighton loop. There were various options, but there would need to be some coordination to determine right-of-way and logistics. She pointed out that year-round bus service was also listed. The recommendations focused on winter recommendations but the Draft BCC MAP recognized that there were year-round needs as well. There would potentially need to be different frequencies or stops over the year. Those details would need to be further refined and clarified moving forward.

Additional items were shared. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that they related to improvements to the existing transit service in the valley and the need for new routes/frequency. Two specific examples were listed. She noted that both were included in the Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”) Draft Regional Transportation Plan (“RTP”) that was currently underway. Both were listed as later phases in the Draft RTP. The recommendation in the Draft BCC MAP was to prioritize the Cottonwood to Midvale route. Currently, Route 72 has a 30-to-60-minute frequency and the recommendation was to build a 15-minute high-frequency route along a similar corridor. In addition, for the 6200 South Core route, it asked that the 15-minute service option be prioritized.

Recommendations related to mobility hubs and bus stops were reviewed. Ms. Bauer-Fellows clarified that the mobility hubs and stop improvements were intended to complement the proposed transit service. Implementation will coincide, as reasonable, with the service proposed. The Park and Ride location was referenced under the mobility hub category. There was an immediate option identified to accommodate more parking in the near term. Restriping the parking in the lot at a different angle could allow up to 150 vehicles. It currently has approximately 80 parking stalls. She noted that some of the assumptions for the park and ride location depended on the timing of the Gravel Pit mobility hub. That was mentioned in the draft.

A mobility hub was referenced for both Brighton and Solitude. What those look like and the exact locations still needed to be confirmed in some capacity. Both were key components of the enhanced bus option. It was noted that the Brighton resort mobility hub was more substantial and would likely include a structure to house restrooms and lockers and had a covered shelter area for people to wait. Additionally, it could accommodate two-to-three buses or shuttles. It would be more substantial than a basic bus stop but not substantial enough to have a café inside or additional parking. Brighton was identified as a key location because the Brighton Lakes and the corresponding trail had high use during non-winter seasons. There was an opportunity for a functional mobility hub that could provide for visitors year-round. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there would be a few different recommendations for Solitude. The context of Solitude was slightly different and some of the challenges were how to move the bus out of the parking lot and how to improve operations. Options would be further vetted and then presented.

As for the Gravel Pit, there was nothing recommended that was different from the assumptions made in the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). Trailhead bus stops were referenced in the Draft BCC MAP as well. Those were more likely to factor into the year-round service than the recommended seasonal express bus. The locations and amenities still needed to be confirmed, but in general, the assumption was that there would be fairly basic bus stops with shelters and trail maps. Further coordination would be needed with both the U.S. Forest Service and UDOT.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that an option was identified for regional transit connection centers. She explained that intention was to identify some additional locations in the valley that connected to high-frequency transit service. The regional transit connection centers might be park and rides or they might be a more substantial transit center. The idea was to prioritize a few key locations that would correspond with the existing or proposed transit routes and services.

Roadway improvements were discussed. It was clarified that the BCC MAP did not focus on roadway reconfiguration, but instead examined options from a multi-modal perspective. That being said, UDOT had identified some preliminary concepts in the Big Cottonwood Canyon Corridor Study over the last year or two. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that the Draft BCC MAP prioritized some of the roadway configuration options that UDOT had laid out conceptually. One was the Fort Union Dual Left-Turn Lane option, which would add a second left-turn lane from Wasatch accessing the canyon and extend the queue length. In addition, there was an option for a Fort Union Merge Lane, which would extend the merge lane from the intersection up the canyon approximately one-half mile. That would provide more length to connect to general traffic.

Those options were included in the Draft BCC MAP so buses could move through more frequently and congestion would be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Both options could be progressed as standalone projects or they could move forward collectively. There would need to be some level of environmental analysis. With UDOT as the lead agency, the options leaned more toward the near-term than the mid-term to long-term as far as the environmental analysis. Beyond those, the Draft BCC MAP did not list other specific roadway improvements. However, with the recommendation for the exclusive bus lane, there would need to be some reconfiguration of the Guardsman intersection. That intersection already had some challenges in terms of the turning radius and safety. The assumption was that there would be additional refinements made there.

As far as additional options, the Draft BCC MAP referenced dynamic tolling or congestion-based tolling. The assumption was that there would be some similarities between Big and Little Cottonwood Canyon to ensure consistency. If tolling were to move forward for Big Cottonwood Canyon, there would likely need to be some additional environmental analysis. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that the tolling would be specific to winter and would primarily be focused around those peak period timeframes. There were some challenges to consider in terms of equity. That was something that would need to be discussed with the fare structure. She noted that dynamic tolling was closely tied to the need for adequate transit service. As far as timing, the need for appropriate transit service should coincide with the option for tolling. Assuming there was additional transit service, there could be considerations about the fare structure and pass options. Nothing had been confirmed, but the options were referenced in the Draft BCC MAP.

The parking management recommendations were reviewed as well as recommendations for the administrative or policy changes category. For parking management, the intention was not to create additional parking within the canyon. There would be ongoing considerations for reservation systems. Ms. Bauer-Fellows noted that there could be reservation options at the resorts but also trailheads in the future. The latter would likely be a mid-term to long-term option. In addition, the Draft BCC MAP would provide a recommendation for reducing or eliminating roadside parking in key locations during the winter peak period timeframe. Any changes to parking would require further coordination and next steps with the Forest Service.

Another item listed was a new canyon-specific transit agency. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that the Draft BCC MAP wanted to capture the idea that long term, there could be an opportunity to create a new agency focused specifically on the canyons and the Central Wasatch. That agency could function in coordination with UTA or provide supplementary service. She clarified that the details were not formally defined but there was an opportunity to look into that possibility.

Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that the Draft BCC MAP would include examples of options that could progress together in the near term, mid-term, and long term. She reiterated that the Draft BCC MAP would be available to review on March 27, 2023. As noted earlier, public comments would be accepted on the Draft BCC MAP. Those would be reviewed and taken into consideration as the document was finalized. The public comments would be included as an appendix for future reference. There would be further discussions about the Draft BCC MAP as well as future refinement based on the input received. The final document would be presented to the Transportation Committee on April 25, 2023, and at the CWC Board on May 1, 2023.

Carlton Christensen noted that there were a lot of references to UTA in the presentation. He wondered how much conversation there had been with UTA because there were a lot of items that were not included in the mid-range plan. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there had been coordination with UTA. For a few of the recommendations, the next steps included an additional discussion with UTA so those items could be formalized. Some of the recommendations had not been formalized with UTA yet. Mr. Christensen asked that it be made clear what was and was not currently planned to keep expectations measured. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that the intention was to be clear. There could be a further acknowledgment of that in the BCC MAP.

Carl Fisher left a comment in the Zoom chat box. He wondered whether the appropriations would complement the process. Ms. Bauer-Fellows felt encouraged by the appropriations. It presented opportunities to progress the transportation conversation. Executive Director of Administration, Blake Perez agreed and read a question from Patrick Shea. He wondered which of the six categories was unique to Big Cottonwood Canyon. Ms. Bauer-Fellows believed the administrative or policy changes category was unique. That category had to do with higher-level perspectives. The rest of the categories were standard for any canyon-related recommendations.

Ralph Becker asked if there would be costs included in the BCC MAP. Ms. Bauer-Fellows confirmed this. The Draft BCC MAP would include high-level cost estimates for the improvements. Some would be specific to construction and implementation whereas some would be specific to ongoing operations and maintenance costs. Tom Ward wanted to know if peak demand management priority for transit had been considered. He explained that this was a hybrid of what was being done in Little Cottonwood Canyon, where the Sandy City Police Department allowed the buses to move through the canyon first. It was important to incentivize transit. Ms. Bauer-Fellows stated that those kinds of solutions were referenced, but not prioritized.

Mayor Mike Weichers wanted additional clarity about the mobility hubs. For instance, why the mobility hub at Brighton would have more options than the one at Solitude. It might make sense to do something similar in both locations. Ms. Bauer-Fellows explained that it had to do with the location of the hub in comparison to the resort itself. Part of the discussion had been whether independent amenities were needed within the mobility hub if the drop-off was close to the resort. Amber Broadaway added that one of the challenges at Solitude was that moving buses out of the parking lot would require Forest Service, Public Utilities, and UDOT coordination. The stream setbacks were also a challenge in that location. As a result, there were more considerations there.

Ms. Broadaway appreciated the work done by AECOM. However, she expressed concerns about the comments shared by Mr. Christensen. According to him, the Draft BCC MAP was not in sync with the UTA mid-range plans. Since many of the recommendations in the Draft BCC MAP related to bus enhancements, she had some reservations. Mayor Knopp explained that the work needed to start somewhere. The intent of the BCC MAP was to start moving things forward.

Mr. Shea wondered if AECOM had checked with local law enforcement about the enforceability of bus lanes. He anticipated that personal vehicles would be in the bus lane and it would become the responsibility of law enforcement to address that burden. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that those discussions had not taken place yet. The Draft BCC MAP was a high-level plan. The exclusive bus lanes would pose challenges from a few perspectives as far as enforceability and design. The associated challenges would be referenced within the BCC MAP.

Mr. Shea noted that many of the recommendations in the Draft BCC MAP were not convergent with the UTA plans. If the $150 million was not to be used for purchasing new buses, he wondered what it would be used for. Mr. Perez clarified that the $50 million of the $150 million appropriation would go towards buses, tolling, a mobility hub, and bus stops at the ski resorts. He believed $100 million would be put into the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Investment Fund. The money was for both Cottonwood Canyons. Mr. Shea asked who would purchase the buses with the money. Mr. Christensen clarified that it would be a UDOT decision. There may be some collaboration with UTA but that decision was not for UTA to make. UDOT would decide how to move forward with the use of the money because the money was not appropriated to UTA.

Mayor Knopp further discussed bus lanes and enforcement. He explained that the solution could be as simple as traffic cameras. There could be a substantial fine for vehicles that illegally utilized the bus lane. With the technology that currently existed, there did not need to be law enforcement officers there in person. Mr. Shea wondered who would receive the revenue from the fines. Mayor Knopp believed the fines would be received by whoever administered the transit hubs. He reported that the parking ticket revenue currently went to the Town of Brighton. Illegal parking had decreased drastically since the parking ticket fines increased. Mayor Knopp clarified that the intention was not to generate money but to use fines to effectively change behavior.

Mr. Shea wondered if the $100 million for the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Investment Fund would be spent in Fiscal Year 2023 or if it would be in a reserve fund. Mr. Perez reported that it would be in a reserve fund that generated revenue annually. Further discussions were had about the funds. Mr. Perez reiterated that $50 million would go toward buses, tolling, mobility hubs, and bus stops. That money would be utilized as soon as possible. The remaining $100 million would be added to the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Investment Fund. He did not know what the plans were for the money that would be added to the fund.

Mayor Weichers referenced the concerns expressed by Ms. Broadaway. He thought she brought up a good point, but in his mind, the BCC MAP was a roadmap. He hoped that UTA, UDOT, and others would make a notable effort to enhance bus service in the canyons. Even if that was not on the mid-range plan currently, it was something that could be there in the future. Mayor Knopp agreed. The BCC MAP was a way to move things forward and actually start the process. Some items could be done quickly, but other items would take longer to implement.

Barbara Cameron wondered if the Forest Service had approved bus stops at trailheads, such as Mill B, Cardiff, Spruces, Brighton, and Solitude. She wanted to know about the right-of-way considerations there. Additionally, she was confused about the role that WFRC played and asked if the WFRC would work with UDOT and UTA to find a way to support buses. Ms. Bauer-Fellows reported that there had been ongoing conversations with the Forest Service. There was no formal approval for bus stops at those locations. This was the first step where various options would be considered. She explained that there were some additional requirements and challenges.

Mr. Christensen reported that UTA is constantly working with transportation partners. Any new ideas would go through the regional transportation process. As for local bus service, there was a process every two years where the Five-Year Service Plan was discussed. The Five-Year Service Plan had recently been adopted, but it would be reviewed again in a couple of years. Mr. Christensen explained that UTA was currently working on a long-range plan. It mostly impacted local service as the regional core route was done through a regional planning process. He informed those present that there were still constraints due to labor issues, but he hoped that would change in the future. Ms. Cameron expressed her appreciation for the work done by Mr. Christensen. She also thanked Mayor Knopp for his dedication to Big Cottonwood Canyon and the BCC MAP.

Mr. Perez reminded those present that the Draft BCC MAP would be available to review on the CWC website on March 27, 2023. The public comment period would open at that time. The Transportation Committee would reconvene at the end of April to review the BCC MAP.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no further comments.

**ADJOURN TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

1. **Following a Motion and Affirmative Vote, Chair Knopp will Close the Meeting.**

The Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting held Wednesday, March 22, 2023.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

T Forbes Group

Minutes Secretary

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