

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held August 11, 2005

Councilman Michael Jensen called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. at the Wasatch Front Regional Council offices located at 295 North Jimmy Doolittle Road, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Attendance

Michael Jensen	Councilman, Salt Lake County
Carlton Christensen	Councilman, Salt Lake City
Byron Anderson	Mayor, Grantsville City
Joe Johnson	Mayor, Bountiful City
Darrell Smith	Mayor, Draper
Roger Burnett	Mayor, Roy City
Tom Dolan	Mayor, Sandy City
Fred Panucci	Mayor, Syracuse City
Bryan Holladay	Mayor, West Jordan City
Dennis Nordfelt	Mayor, West Valley City
Jerry Larrabee	Mayor, Woods Cross City
Jim Horrocks	Utah Air Quality Board
Terry Diehl	Utah Transit Authority Board of Trustees
Steve Randall	Utah Transit Authority Board of Trustees
Ken Warnick	Utah Transportation Commission
Jan Wells	Utah Transportation Commission
Wilf Sommerkorn	Davis County
Aaron Larsen	Riverdale City
John Hiskey	Sandy City
Shane Greenwood	South Jordan City
Donald Adams	Taylorsville City
Mark Christensen	Washington Terrace City
Brook Merrell	University of Utah
Steve Call	Federal Highway Administration
Jill Stark	Federal Highway Administration
Bret Anderson	Utah Department of Transportation
Ahmad Jaber	Utah Department of Transportation
Dave Nazare	Utah Department of Transportation
John Thomas	Utah Department of Transportation
Heather Barnum	Utah Transit Authority
Mick Crandall	Utah Transit Authority
Chuck Chappell	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Doug Hattery	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Jory Johner	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Sam Klemm	Wasatch Front Regional Council
George Ramjoue	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Paula Lee Roberts	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Ben Wuthrich	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Renae Bodily	Wasatch Front Regional Council

Minutes

ACTION: Commissioner Jan Wells moved that the minutes of the May 12, 2005, Trans Com meeting be approved as written. Terry Diehl seconded the motion, and the voting was unanimous.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no comments.

Certification of the Transportation Planning Process

a. Report on federal certification review of the transportation planning process

Steve Call, Utah Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), said the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) required that every three years the FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a review of the transportation planning process in the Wasatch Front Region and certify that the process meets federal requirements. On June 15-16, 2005, FHWA and FTA met with the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC), Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and Utah Transit Authority (UTA) staff members and other interested persons to conduct this certification review. Mr. Call said every federal rule regarding transportation planning was covered during that two-day period. He highlighted the fact that the Wasatch Front Regional Council is on the cutting edge and leads the nation in certain areas.

Mr. Call said that in the certification review there are four possible outcomes: an MPO can be fully certified, conditionally certified (based on correcting a few items), partially certified, or de-certified. Mr. Call said that during the review, there were a few recommendations made to WFRC to improve processes; however, there were no corrective actions. WFRC will be fully certified when the final report comes out.

Mr. Call said the final report will be approximately 30 pages. He distributed a brief one page review entitled: *Commendations/Recommendations for the Salt Lake City-Ogden/Layton Planning Area Certification* (see attachment #1). Doug Hattery, WFRC, highlighted recommendation #1 which stated "In order to strengthen its standing as the forum for transportation decision making for the metropolitan planning area, we recommend that the MPO consider adding, as voting members of its Policy Body, representatives of UDOT and UTA."

In response to a question from Mayor Panucci, Mr. Hattery said that when the Regional Council was formed in 1969, there was no requirement for it to be a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Back then, the mayors got together to talk about common local problems, which may or may not have included transportation problems. WFRC didn't take the responsibility for transportation planning until 1973 when it became an MPO. In the past, Council members discussed whether to include UDOT and UTA representatives as official members, but decided to

keep the membership as it was with local elected officials. When the final certification report is made available, this topic will once again be presented to the Council to discuss. Mr. Call emphasized that this recommendation is not meant to say that UDOT or UTA have been absent from the planning process. He said they have been heavily involved. FHWA and FTA feel that making them official members will encourage even more cooperative planning.

Mayor Johnson asked for a clarification on recommendation #10 which stated "*We recommend that consideration of transportation decisions be given not only to Native American populations currently residing in the region, but to populations that have historical ties to the region.*" Mayor Johnson wanted to know what types of populations they were referring to who had historical ties to the region. Mr. Hattery explained that FTA had asked that Native American tribes be contacted during recent environmental studies for light rail transit extensions. Mr. Hattery said that the groups were asked to provide information on any potential site where their ancestors might have lived. He indicated that the WFRC now has a list of contact persons and will be able to provide them an opportunity to participate in the overall planning process.

Mr. Hattery said that when the final report is received, Trans Com will formally review the recommendations and pass their comments onto the Council.

Mr. Call concluded by saying that David Gibbs, the current Utah FHWA division administrator, has taken a position in Florida. Walter (Butch) Waidelich will be the new division administrator. He is coming from New Hampshire.

b. ACTION on self-certification of the transportation planning process

Mr. Hattery reported that every year when Trans Com reviews and recommends the approval of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the Regional Council, they also need to certify that the transportation planning process meets all federal planning requirements. He said the WFRC and UDOT staffs have worked together to evaluate how well the federal requirements are being met. Based on this effort, a resolution (which was included in member's packets) has been prepared certifying the planning process for the region. If approved by Trans Com and the Regional Council, the resolution will be signed by John Njord as Executive Director of UDOT and by Mayor Dennis Nordfelt as Chairman of WFRC.

Mr. Hattery said that one thing the FHWA and FTA requested WFRC to do was to update an agreement to coordinate air quality planning with the Division of Air Quality (which was signed in 1978). An updated agreement is currently being worked on and should be approved in a few months.

ACTION: Mayor Roger Burnett moved that Trans Com recommend that the Regional Council approve the draft Resolution of the Urban Transportation Planning Process Certification, 2005. The motion was seconded by Mayor Jerry Larrabee and passed unanimously.

Transportation Improvement Program

a. ACTION on requests to amend the 2004-2008 TIP

Ben Wuthrich said the WFRC has received three requests to amend the 2004-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- (1) The first request came from UDOT for an additional \$520,000 of Bridge Off System funds for a bridge project located at 700 South and the Jordan River in Salt Lake City. This request for additional funds is due to the inclusion of rip rap protection, increased granular backfill borrow, archaeological monitoring, higher material costs, and project contingency.
- (2) The second request also came from UDOT for a new Transportation Enhancement project at the interchange of I-215 and Redwood Road in Taylorsville. This request came as a result of Taylorsville wanting to move the project from the draft TIP to the existing TIP, thereby allowing it to be completed in conjunction with the completion of their Redwood Road Beautification project.
- (3) The third request came from Riverdale City and Washington Terrace City for an additional \$905,492 in Ogden/Layton Urban Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for their project on 300 West from Riverdale Road to 4400 South. This request came as a result of the updated construction costs, overall project cost increases, and project contingency.

Mr. Wuthrich said these three project requests will not affect any other projects on the TIP. The proposed TIP amendment does not need to be reviewed for conformity and consistency with the State Implementation Program, because the amended projects are already included in the TIP or are exempt from air quality conformity requirements. The amendment was made available for public review and comment by UDOT and WFRC from July 5 through August 10, 2005. No comments were received.

ACTION: Mayor Tom Dolan moved that Trans Com recommend that the Regional Council approve the amendment to the 2004-2008 TIP. The motion was seconded by Mayor Jerry Larrabee and passed unanimously.

b. APPROVAL of 2006-2010 TIP

Mr. Wuthrich said the WFRC is responsible for developing a TIP annually. He said the TIP is a five-year program of highway and transit projects funded by federal, state, and local revenues. The WFRC staff works with UDOT, UTA, and the cities and counties in the region to compile the list of proposed projects for inclusion in the TIP. Federal regulations require that: (1) the TIP be approved by local elected officials serving on the Regional Council; (2) the public be given an opportunity to review and comment on the TIP; (3) the TIP be financially constrained; and (4) the TIP be found to conform with state air quality plans. All of these requirements were met.

The public comment period extended from July 5 to August 10, 2005. During the public comment period, four public meetings were held, in conjunction with the Wasatch Choices 2040 Open Houses – at the Sandy City Hall, the Ogden Eccles Conference Center, the Columbus Senior Community Center in South Salt Lake, and the Farmington City Community Center. Mr.

Wuthrich said that the WFRC staff did receive one comment through a letter from the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Mr. Wuthrich distributed copies of the Sierra Club's letter (see attachment #2). He said the Sierra Club's comments do not raise any serious objections to the 2006-2010 TIP and the corresponding conformity analysis. Mr. Wuthrich highlighted the following points in the Sierra Club's letter:

1. The Sierra Club applauded the clarity and conciseness of the TIP and Conformity Analysis. They were happy to see more emphasis on reconstruction and maintenance in the plan, specific reconstruction for pedestrians, bicyclists, etc. as well as for cars, electrification at truck stops, inclusion of money for pavement inventories, and the provision of auto and pedestrian access to some of the rail stations.

Mr. Wuthrich said the WFRC appreciated the Sierra Club's comments and support.

2. The Sierra Club had some concerns regarding the TIP and Conformity Analysis. They believed that transportation planning needs to take into consideration the changes affecting transportation modes occurring at this time including: the high price of gasoline, TOD housing, the growing population of senior citizens preferring to use arterials, air pollution, and anticipated growth in vehicle miles traveled.

Mr. Wuthrich said as the WFRC prepares to update the RTP and the next TIP, the Sierra Club's concerns will be considered as travel models are updated and work with Wasatch 2040 Choices continues. WFRC recognized that air pollution has not gone away, but progress is being made and staff is confident that they can comply with federal requirements.

3. The Sierra Club had the following specific concerns: besides STP funds being used for reconstruction as opposed to new capacity, the Sierra Club believes that the flexible STP funds should be used for transit and other modal projects as intended by Congress, continued use of the 1993 Household Interview Survey (mode of availability and price of gas has changed since 1993), continuing use of national default vehicle mix, assumption that more single occupant vehicle (SOV) capacity is needed because travel demand management (TDM) is not sufficient, and the level of transit fares is an important aspect of getting people to use transit.

Mr. Wuthrich said WFRC always considers transit projects for STP and CMAQ funding when evaluating projects for the TIP. WFRC has programmed STP funds for transit in the past (i.e., the purchase of light rail vehicles, light rail vehicle renovation, and reconstruction of the TRAX bridge over State Street). Historically we've programmed 40-50% or more of the CMAQ funds for transit and transit related projects because of the effectiveness of these projects. Mr. Wuthrich said other identified concerns deal with our travel model and conformity analysis. WFRC is already taking action to address these concerns now and in the immediate future as WFRC continues to improve the overall planning process.

ACTION: Councilman Carlton Christensen moved that Trans Com recommend that the Regional Council approve the 2006-2010 Transportation Improvement Program and its conformity finding. The motion was seconded by Mayor Fred Panucci and passed unanimously.

Report on UDOT's project selection process

Ahmad Jaber, Director of UDOT Program Development, distributed a handout and referred members to a proposed rule for **Prioritization of New Transportation Capacity Projects** which was included in members packets.

Mr. Jaber said during the 2005 General Session, the Utah State Legislature passed Senate Bill 25, which among other things, requires the State Transportation Commission, in consultation with UDOT and the MPOs in the state, to issue rules that establish a prioritization process for new transportation projects that meet UDOT's strategic goals. He said UDOT has had several meetings with the Utah Association of Counties, the Utah League of Cities and Towns, and the four MPOs in the state.

Mr. Jaber distributed a handout which illustrated how projects programmed for the first ten years of the Long Range Plan had been ranked and prioritized using transportation efficiency factors which include congestion, truck traffic, the functional class of the highway (interstate or arterial), growth, and safety. (Copies of this handout may be obtained by contacting the WFRC office - 363-4250.)

Mr. Jaber explained that UDOT recommends, given the nature of the proposed ranking process, that the projects be divided into three tiers. The Commission would then be able to recommend projects for funding from the top tier based on the rankings and other factors. Also included on the project list were new projects planned for the next ten years. UDOT is still trying to decide how to prioritize these projects (such as Legacy Parkway, Mountain View Corridor, east/west connections in Northern Utah County, etc.) since there are no transportation efficiency factors to be measured on projects that haven't been built.

Mr. Hattery said a reason for this prioritization process is that there are more projects programmed for the next ten years than there is funding for. Commissioner Warnick said that if more funds became available, the Commission would most likely consider proceeding forward with tier one projects. Commissioner Wells added that there are some subjective measures that the Commission will need to consider in addition to the objective measures discussed by Mr. Jaber when the Commission makes their recommendations.

Mr. Jaber said now that UDOT's project selection process has been presented to the Commission and the public, it will now proceed to the Legislative Task Force for their comments. Mr. Jaber invited anyone with specific project prioritization questions to contact him.

Mr. Jaber then briefly went over the draft rules for the prioritization of major new capacity projects. (A copy was included in member's packets.) He highlighted the rule which states "*Major New Capacity Project*" means a transportation project that costs more than \$5 million and accomplishes any of the following: (1) adds new roads and interchanges; (2) adds new lanes; or (3) modifies existing interchanges for capacity or economic development purposes. He said projects less than \$5 million do not have to go through this process.

Mr. Jaber discussed other draft rules including authority and purpose, application of strategic initiatives to projects, prioritization of major new capacity projects list, commission and legislative discretion, need for local government participation for interchanges, and public hearings.

Mr. Jaber said that Grant Shultz, a professor from Brigham Young University, has been working with UDOT for the past six months on how to include economic impact factors in the project selection process. Mr. Jaber said it has been a struggle deciding how to use economic impact factors since economics means different things to different people. The Commission decided to give UDOT a recommendation not to consider economics in the first step of the project selection process.

In response to a question from Councilman Jensen, Commissioner Warnick said there will be some objectivity when using economics as a prioritization factor. This could involve a number of things including fairness issues, political issues, partnering issues, as well as the differences between rural and urban areas. Commissioner Wells added that there is not a hard fast number that can apply in all situations.

Mayor Panucci asked if a major construction project is planned for the future, such as a stadium being built, would that impact the planning process? Mr. Chappell responded that, in addition to the factors that Mr. Jaber had already discussed, other factors could be environmental and socio-economic impact.

Mr. Chappell continued to say that many factors need to be considered while developing the prioritization process. He highlighted the point that there is more traffic data in urban areas; however, transportation models may offer more accurate data for future growth in both rural and urban areas. He also reemphasized the state law which states that UDOT and the Commission need to consult with the MPOs and local governments while setting this process.

Commissioner Wells agreed that the Commission would welcome local officials being involved in this process. She pointed out that this process is in place of a CHF 2 process, where the Legislature would approve a list of projects for funding as they did with the first CHF program. She said a lot will depend on how the Legislature reacts to the proposed rule and how often they use their discretion to make changes.

Mr. Jaber highlighted the part of the rule that would require local sponsors of new interchanges on existing roads that would be built for economic development purposes to contribute at least 50% of the cost. Mr. Hattery added that local sponsors could also mean the developers or whoever would benefit from the interchange. In response to a question from Councilman Christensen, Commissioner Wells said the Commission has considered a lot of different options that could be acceptable as part of that 50%. She said the Commission would be open to anything the communities want to put on the table. It was mentioned that Sandy and Layton are examples of municipalities that have contributed to their interchanges.

Mayor Panucci asked what happens to smaller communities who don't have the resources to come up with the 50%. Commissioner Wells responded that interchange projects on the plan to address capacity and congestion needs will be funded 100% by UDOT. It is only projects for economic development that local sponsors will need to pay 50%. She added that this is a directive from the Legislature, not the Commission.

Mr. Chappell said when the Council previously presented a recommendation to the Transportation Planning Task Force for additional transportation funds, one of the options was for a local option tax increase, either a gas tax or a sales tax, where the funds could stay within the local community or

county and could be matched with UDOT's funds. He said the legislature was not receptive to the option.

Mr. Hattery noted that the Legislature has created a Transportation Investment Fund in the place of the CHF program. This priority setting process is to be used to select projects to receive this funding.

Report on UDOT's Managed Lanes Study

John Thomas, project manager of UDOT's managed lanes study, distributed copies of the recently completely *UDOT's Managed Lanes – Executive Summary* (copies were also included in member's packets). Mr. Thomas said the purpose of doing a managed lane study was to look at, in a statewide comprehensive fashion, what opportunities there are for managed lanes. He said everyone knows money is short, and UDOT wanted to consider alternate ways to improve existing corridors.

Mr. Thomas said UDOT defines four types of managed lanes: High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes (for people who are in a single occupant vehicle and are willing to pay a toll to drive in a HOV lane), toll roads, and reversible lanes. UDOT analyzed the 6,000 mile state highway system and determined which corridors might possibly use the four types of managed lanes. Transportation models, economics, and a variety of different factors were used to see what kind of value might be derived from implementing managed lanes.

Mr. Thomas briefly discussed 14 corridors that the study determined could use managed lane techniques. He mentioned that the current I-15 HOV lane will be expanded from 600 North in Salt Lake City to University Parkway in Provo. UDOT is currently working to determine if it is feasible to turn that HOV lane into a HOT lane. In response to a question from Mayor Dolan, Mr. Thomas said currently there is no technology to determine if there is one or more persons in a car. That would be left up to compliance and enforcement.

Mr. Thomas also mentioned the EIS for the Mountain View Corridor (MVC) is considering an option of making it a toll road. Mayor Nordfelt commented that the possibility of making the MVC a toll road seems like an unfair burden for the citizens on the west side of the valley. Mr. Thomas responded by saying that the equity issue is important. Mayor Nordfelt asked if it is possible to put a toll on other existing corridors to perhaps equalize that burden. Mr. Hattery responded that toll roads can only be added to new lanes, not existing lanes. The only exception is that HOT lanes may be added to existing HOV lanes. Mr. Thomas emphasized that the expectation for generating revenue from toll roads will be kept at a very low level.

Councilman Jensen asked why more reversible lanes weren't found favorable in the study, especially on east-west lanes throughout the valley. Mr. Thomas responded that based on data after numerous traffic counts, there was not strong enough numbers to support that. Mr. Jaber also mentioned that one challenge with reversible lanes is there are restrictions on left hand turns.

Rail-Volution Conference in Salt Lake City on September 8 to 10, 2005

Heather Barnum, from UTA, distributed Rail-Volution 2005 registration information to all in attendance. (Copies were also included in member's packets.) She said UTA is one of the sponsors of an international planning conference to be held at the Grand American Hotel in Salt Lake City on September 8-10. The focus of the conference will be on building livable communities around transit. There will be a wide range of presenters from all over the country, as well as some international locations. The workshops will be led by transportation professionals, elected officials, urban planners, developers, advocacy experts, financiers, citizen groups, architects, and others. Discussions will provide fresh ideas about what is being done in other parts of the country. Ms. Barnum said this is a great opportunity for us and encouraged everyone to attend this national conference.

New Transportation Authorization Bill (SAFETEA-LU)

Councilman Jensen commented that yesterday President Bush had signed a new transportation bill and asked Chuck Chappell to comment on it. Mr. Chappell said the new authorization bill, called the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU), increases highway funding by 30%, transit funding by 80%, and planning funds by 25% over the next five years.

Mr. Chappell said high-priority project earmarks, including several for Utah, are almost 9% of the total \$284 billion authorization bill. Mr. Chappell said that staff will work with the individual cities that received earmarked funding so that projects can be scheduled over the next five years. Mr. Hattery added that staff will prepare an amended TIP to include some of the earmarked projects and present it at Trans Com's October 13th meeting.

Mr. Chappell continued to say that SAFETEA-LU includes a separate safety fund, which was previously included under the Surface Transportation Program. He said the new bill also streamlines the planning process by requiring the plan and conformity be updated every four years, instead of every three years as in the past. Mr. Chappell said he expects fact sheets regarding SAFETEA-LU to come out in the near future detailing more information.

Transit Phasing and Funding

Mr. Chappell said in a historic joint resolution signed on October 26, 2004, MAG and WFRC supported the "shared solution" of highways, transit, and non-motorized systems and supported diversifying the funding sources for each. With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, the formula transit funds will increase over the past and increases in discretionary capital funds are anticipated. Consequently, Mr. Chappell said the Council has some decisions to make before the next regional transportation plan and before the 2006 legislative session.

Mr. Chappell said it is critical that the Council take the lead again in recommending and supporting an increase in transit funds to implement the transit systems that all the communities want. He emphasized the first step would be to cooperate with UTA on a Dan Jones poll to see if citizens would support a tax increase for transit. He also said the Council needs to decide the priority of the following

five transit projects competing for the extra funding: Commuter Rail south and TRAX extensions in Salt Lake County, Draper, Mid-Jordan, West Valley City.

Councilman Jensen asked for comments. Mayor Nordfelt agreed that a poll is needed because we need to know if a property tax increase would be supported before moving forward.

ACTION: Mayor Dennis Nordfelt moved that Trans Com recommend to the Regional Council that the WFRC participate with UTA to do a Dan Jones public opinion survey to determine if the public would approve a property tax increase for transit funding. Also, if the Budget Committee decides the cost of conducting the poll is too high, the matter will come back to Trans Com for further review. The motion was seconded by Mayor Bryan Holladay and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: October 13, 2005

Commendations/Recommendations for the Salt Lake City/Ogden Planning Area Certification

1. UDOT and WFRC are to be commended for their collaborative approach to the development of unified State and MPO 2030 Transportation Plans, which go beyond state-of-the-practice in the application of visioning, scenario planning, and linking planning with NEPA.
 2. We commend WFRC on their efforts to address and encourage them to continue to address future congestion and non-recurring congestion in their CMS and encourage them to continue to provide substantive documentation.
 3. We commend WFRC for their public involvement activities in the region and in their ability to coordinate and incorporate the public involvement conducted by other agencies. We recommend that they continue their efforts to further enhance the WFRC web page, making it more user friendly and providing access to more planning products. We also encourage all agencies in the region to provide links to each other's web pages and to work collaboratively to provide consistent messages and to ensure that the input of the public is requested in the most efficient manner.
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1. In order to strengthen its standing as the forum for transportation decision making for the metropolitan planning area, we recommend that the MPO consider adding, as voting members of its Policy Body, representatives of the Utah Department of Transportation and the Utah Transit Authority.
 2. WFRC should submit an updated and complete copy of the MPA boundary map to be sent to FTA and FHWA (no corrective action or recommendation).
 3. WFRC should submit an updated copy of the air quality agreement be sent to FTA and FHWA, once it is signed by both parties (no corrective action or recommendation).
 4. We recommend that a study be undertaken that identifies the surface transportation security vulnerabilities for the region and proposes needed actions to address prevention, protection, redundancy, and recovery countermeasures.
 5. We recommend that safety conscious planning activities for the region be coordinated between agencies and centralized within the MPO in order that deficiencies are more strategically addressed.
 6. We recommend that "system management and operations" be included as an emphasis area in the State and MPO Transportation Plan.
 7. We recommend that the MPO give priority to the identification of freight deficiencies in the region and the prioritization of needed improvements to address freight access and mobility needs in the region.
 8. We recommend that UDOT and WFRC collaborate on a level commensurate with their Transportation Plan effort in the development of the TIP/STIP to ensure that these documents are unified. We suggest that consideration be given to incorporating the TIPS by reference into the STIP. We encourage UDOT, UTA and the MPOs to continue their efforts to cooperatively develop comprehensive procedures for amending and modifying the STIP and TIP to ensure the timely maintenance of these documents. We encourage WFRC to strive to improve the user friendliness of their annual listing of projects where funds have been obligated the previous year, in order to provide a clearer accounting of the project sponsors' stewardship to the public.
 9. We recommend that UDOT and WFRC work with FTA to develop appropriate DBE goals for the region.
 10. We recommend that consideration of transportation decisions be given not only to Native American populations currently residing in the region, but to populations that have historical ties to the region.
 11. We recommend that the Utah Department of Air Quality (UDAQ) and WFRC give priority to finalizing the consultation SIP including the interagency consultation procedure and that WFRC continue to strive for the early involvement of USEPA, FTA and FHWA in the interagency consultation process.

TO: Ben Wuthrich
Wasatch Front Regional Council
295 North Jimmy Doolittle Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84116
bwuthrich@wfr.org

FROM: Nina Dougherty, Transportation and Air Quality Coordinator, Utah Chapter of Sierra Club
638 Sixth Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT 84103
(801) 322-4610, ninadou@earthlink.net

RE: Draft 2006-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Comments for Utah Chapter of Sierra Club

The following comments submitted on behalf of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club are mostly general rather than detailed and comprehensive.

We applaud the clarity and conciseness of the TIP and Conformity Analysis as well as the openness of important policy, planning and regulatory information provided in the documents. Some of the aspects of the plan that we were happy to see are:

1. More emphasis on reconstruction and maintenance in the plan in general and the allocation of some STP funds for reconstruction. Fixing what we have and currently use is certainly important. The type of reconstruction being described appears to be for pedestrians, bicyclists and other multi-modal users as well as for cars.
2. The study and, presumably, implementation of BRT for 3500 South and South Davis County. We hope that the implementation of BRT in those areas can proceed in a very timely fashion.
3. Electrification at a truck stop is a good beginning to reduce emissions from idling trucks.
4. The inclusion of money for pavement inventories.
5. Provision of auto and pedestrian access to some of the rail stations.

Some specific concerns regarding the TIP and Conformity Analysis are listed at the end. A major concern, however, is that we believe transportation planning, including TIPs and Long Range Plans, need to take into consideration the changes affecting transportation modes that are occurring in this transition time:

1. The high price of gasoline is apparently not just a blip to wait out. Continuing high prices could affect use of SOV or transit and how far one lives from work. Future plans should analyze how much impact this cost has had and may have in the future on mode desire.
2. TOD housing is now and will increasingly become available (such as along 4th South). It appears to be desirable to certain segments of the population.
3. Senior citizens who still drive prefer to use arterials as opposed to multi-lane freeways requiring quick reflexes. Our population of senior citizens is growing.
4. Air pollution has not gone away. We had many days of bad ozone levels this summer. Utah seeks attainment redesignation for PM10 but is aware that PM2.5 levels are not good even at the current national standards. EPA staff and their air quality committee recommend tighter PM2.5 standards.
5. Although Tier 2 and reduced sulfur in gasoline standards will reduce pollution from each vehicle, it is anticipated that the growth in VMT will continue to rise faster than our high population growth. The Tier 2 benefits will likely cross paths with the VMT growth in the future. We need to implement facilities now that will prevent such loss of benefit.

Some specific concerns:

1. The WFRRC policy on allocation of STP funds has at least dedicated some for reconstruction as opposed to new capacity. However, we believe that the flexible STP funds should also be used for transit and other modal projects, as intended by Congress.
2. Continuing use of 1993 Household Interview Survey. Mode availability and price of gas have changed since 1993.
3. Continuing use of national default vehicle mix. Has our mix been shown to be the same as the national mix of cars, SUVs and other large vehicles?
4. Assumption that more SOV capacity is needed because TDM is not sufficient. This should be re-analyzed given the high price of gas.
4. The level of transit fares is an important aspect of getting people to use transit. It shouldn't just be assumed that the current mode of increasing fares should or will continue.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on these important transportation planning documents.