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## **IX. CONTINUED PLANNING AND UPDATE**

Regional transportation planning, to be effective, must be a continuing process. Changing development patterns resulting from the continued growth in the region, fluctuating economic conditions, and shifting environmental concerns all impact the need for transportation in the Wasatch Front Urban Area and the types of improvements required to meet those needs.

The Wasatch Front Regional Council has established a process to update and maintain the long range transportation plan. The WFRC will continuously monitor the development taking place and the progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2030 LRP Update. The WFRC also works with other agencies to address congestion, pavement preservation, and bridge replacement and rehabilitation needs through the management systems and to conduct corridor and environmental studies for major highway and transit projects studies and local master plan updates to help refine the recommendations of the 2030 LRP Update.

Local cities and counties of the Wasatch Front, UDOT, and UTA are responsible for the implementation of the 2030 LRP Update. The WFRC works with these agencies to encourage them to pursue the facilities recommended in the 2030 LRP Update and incorporates these projects in a five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Appendix J contains a summary of the 2004-2008 TIP. The WFRC continues to update its planning capabilities through improvements to the region's travel models. Finally, the Wasatch Front Regional Council continues to update the process used to develop the long range transportation plan and is planning to address new issues in future updates. Each of the components of this continuous process is discussed in more detail below.

### **SYSTEM MONITORING**

The WFRC annually publishes a Surveillance of Land Use and Socioeconomic Characteristics report which contains current population and employment data for the region. The development and adoption of the Wasatch Front Urban Area's TIP each year allows the WFRC to monitor the implementation of recommended 2030 LRP Update projects and to reevaluate the needs of the Wasatch Front Urban Area. The Utah Department of Transportation's highway traffic surveillance data, published every two years, along with periodic Utah Transit Authority ridership updates, will contribute information needed to update the 2030 LRP. Also, as part of the continuing planning process, the WFRC and the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Area Transportation Advisory Committees will continue to identify and respond to issues which impact the Wasatch Front Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan Update: 2004-2030.

### **MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The Wasatch Front Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan Update: 2004-2030 addresses the need to provide increased capacity to meet the growing travel demand in the region. Because of financial and other constraints, the recommendations of the 2030 LRP Update will not meet all of the demand in the year 2030. Travel demand management and transportation system management strategies will be needed to mitigate some of the continuing traffic congestion anticipated in the

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future. In addition to meeting the growing travel needs, the transportation system needs to be maintained and preserved and to provide for safe and secure travel. The WFRC addresses these congestion, preservation, and safety needs through several management systems developed in cooperation with, UDOT, UTA, and others. Funding to pay for the recommendations of the management systems is included in the Financial Plan for the 2030 LRP Update.

Beginning with ISTEA, federal legislation has required a Congestion Management System (CMS) in all Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Since October 1997 the Regional Council has had fully operational CMSs for the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Areas. The purpose of a CMS is to recommend actions to maximize the efficiency of the existing and future transportation system. Congestion Management Subcommittees of the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Area Technical Advisory Committees work with WFRC staff to refine and implement the CMSs. The subcommittees monitor and provide input to implementation of congestion mitigation strategies on both a regional and a site-specific basis.

For all projects in the five-year TIP that increase single occupant vehicle (SOV) capacity, the WFRC and the CMS subcommittees develop site-specific system management and demand management strategies that should be incorporated into each project. For all widening and new construction projects, the CMS also demonstrates that system management and demand management strategies by themselves will not meet the travel demand on a particular facility, or in other words, that additional SOV capacity is needed.

UDOT uses a Pavement Management System and a Bridge Management System to develop its recommendations for pavement and bridge projects to include in the TIP. These systems identify the necessary maintenance and preservation projects to maintain the existing system. WFRC has worked with UDOT to develop a pavement management system for the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Areas that recommends cost-effective and timely treatments. These recommendations have begun to be considered in the development of the TIP.

Safety and security are of increasing importance. UDOT also has established procedures for identifying high hazard locations and selecting cost-effective projects for the use of federal safety funds. UTA and UDOT are working with other state and federal agencies to address security needs.

## **PLAN REFINEMENT STUDIES**

In addition to preparing the long range transportation plan, the WFRC works with UDOT, UTA, and local communities on alternatives analyses, environmental studies, corridor studies, and master plan updates to help refine the recommendations of the long range transportation plan as well as to assist in implementation of the plan's recommendations themselves.

ISTEA and TEA-21 require that where major highway and transit improvements are planned, an Alternatives Analysis (AA - previously referred to as a Major Investment Study - MIS) be conducted as part of the planning process. The purpose of the analysis/study is to provide input when refining the long range transportation plan and allow for decisions to be made on the scope of the improvement(s) during the planning process, which is prior to project development and engineering. Several major investment studies and/or alternatives analysis have been completed or are currently

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underway in the Wasatch Front Urban Area, for both highway and transit corridors. Each of the corridors for which an alternatives analysis is needed or underway, or for which a MIS is completed is discussed below:

**Mountain View Corridor from I-80 to the Salt Lake/Utah County Line-** The 2030 LRP Update recommends the Mountain View Corridor (formerly the Western Transportation Corridor) include a six-lane freeway, which would include grade separations (interchanges) at major cross streets, From SR-201 to 13400 South, a six-lane arterial or expressway south of 13400 South to the Utah County line, and a BRT line from I-80 to the south end of Salt Lake County. The WFRC, UDOT, and local communities in the corridor conducted a planning study evaluating alternative alignments and recommended a preferred corridor alignment. Much of the corridor has been, or is actively being, preserved, through efforts by local communities, UDOT, and WFRC. UDOT in cooperation with the local communities, UTA, and the WFRC is currently preparing an EIS for the corridor that is looking at both highway and transit alternatives.

**2000 East from I-215 to I-15** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends this road be a four to six-lane principal arterial street with at-grade intersections and limited access. The WFRC has completed a MIS/DEIS for this corridor. A final environmental document will need to be prepared and approved.

**I-15 from 600 North (Salt Lake City) to 200 North (Kaysville)** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends an additional general purpose and/or HOV lane in each direction be added to I-15 from 600 North (Salt Lake City) to US-89 (Farmington). UDOT has prepared an MIS/DEIS for this project. UDOT is working to prepare the final environmental documents for this project.

**Legacy Parkway from I-215 in Salt Lake County to US-89 in Davis County** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends a four-lane freeway be constructed from I-215 to US-89. The WFRC has completed a MIS for the entire Legacy Parkway corridor from I-80 in Salt Lake County to 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Weber County. UDOT prepared a FEIS for the section from I-215 (North Salt Lake) to US-89 (Farmington) and is now working with the FHWA and the Army Corps of Engineers to prepare a Supplemental EIS to address additional issues. Construction of the Burke Lane Interchange upgrade at I-15 and US-89 that will be the north end of this project is underway.

**Legacy Parkway from US-89 in Davis County to 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Weber County** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends that a four-lane principal arterial street be built from US-89 to 5500 South in Weber County. For the portion of this corridor from 5500 South to 12<sup>th</sup> Street, the 2030 LRP Update recommends that a right-of-way be preserved for a future facility. The WFRC has completed a MIS for the entire corridor from I-80 in Salt Lake County to 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Weber County. In addition, the WFRC, UDOT, and local communities completed a corridor study to identify and evaluate alternative alignments for this facility between US-89 and 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Weber County. A preferred corridor alignment was recommended. Efforts to preserve the corridor are being made by the local communities, UDOT, and WFRC. Final environmental documents will need to be prepared and approved for this section of the Legacy Parkway.

**Regional Corridor from Payson to Brigham City** - The WFRC, in cooperation with Mountainland Association of Governments, UDOT, UTA, and local communities, completed an alternatives analysis which identifies options for future highway and transit improvements for this inter-regional corridor, Payson to Brigham City. This analysis examined a wide variety of alternatives and recommended highway widening improvements and new roadways, HOV lanes, commuter rail, and

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BRT service. The Utah Transit Authority is preparing the necessary environmental studies to implement commuter rail service between Ogden and Salt Lake City.

**Light Rail Transit Extensions** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends the expansion of Salt Lake County's light rail transit system. The five additional corridors recommended are in various stages of development.

**Downtown Salt Lake City to the University of Utah Medical Center** -- The WFRC completed the MIS/DEIS/FEIS for a light rail transit line from the Salt Lake International Airport to the University of Utah. The Final Design for the University of Utah to Salt Lake Central Business District section was approved and construction has been completed and the entire segment is open for operations.

**Downtown Salt Lake City to the Salt Lake City International Airport** -- The WFRC completed the MIS/DEIS/FEIS for a light rail transit line from the Salt Lake International Airport to the University of Utah. These studies will need to be reviewed before final design and construction can begin.

**West Valley City Corridor** -West Valley City completed a MIS for a corridor extending from UTA's existing north-south TRAX line to the Valley Fair Mall/City Hall area. This MIS designated a light rail transit alignment as the Locally Preferred Alternative. This same study included an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the West Valley City Intermodal Center. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the EA was issued for the Intermodal Center. The WFRC and UTA are currently preparing a draft EIS for the light rail transit project in this corridor.

**Mid-Jordan Corridor** --The WFRC completed a feasibility study for potential light rail transit corridors in the south part of Salt Lake County. The study found that light rail transit is feasible in a corridor extending from UTA's existing north-south TRAX line through Midvale and West Jordan to South Jordan. The WFRC and UTA are currently preparing a draft EIS for this corridor.

**Draper Extension** -- The WFRC completed a feasibility study for potential light rail transit corridors in the south part of Salt Lake County. The study found that light rail transit is feasible in a corridor extending from the existing terminus of UTA's north-south TRAX line in Sandy along the UTA-owned rail corridor to Draper. UTA and the WFRC in cooperation with Sandy and Draper will conduct an alternatives analysis for this corridor during 2004.

**US-89 from I-15 to Harrison Boulevard** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends US-89 be upgraded to an expressway with interchanges. The recommendations are that a general-purpose lane be added in each direction to this section of US-89 and that interchanges are constructed at major cross streets. The recommendations were developed through a corridor study and an EIS. These studies fulfill the MIS and environmental requirements for this project.

**I-15 from SR-232 (Layton) to 2700 North (Pleasant View)** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends additional lanes be added in each direction, to this section of I-15. A DEIS is underway for the section from 31<sup>st</sup> Street in Ogden to 2700 North. Studies for the section from SR-232 to 31<sup>st</sup> Street will need to be pursued.

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Other special planning studies are currently underway, or will shortly begin, that will help refine the recommendations of the 2030 LRP Update. These studies include:

**Riverton Area Transportation Study** – Riverton in cooperation with UDOT and UTA is studying the needs along the Bangerter Highway from 12600 South to 13400 South near the new Intel campus to identify highway and transit improvements to serve the area.. The recommendations of this study will be considered as the 2030 LRP Update is revised in the future.

**South Davis County Transit Needs Analysis** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends a BRT facility to connect downtown Salt Lake City to the south Davis county communities. The six cities in south Davis County (North Salt Lake, Woods Cross, Bountiful, West Bountiful, Centerville, and Farmington) along with Davis County, Salt Lake City, UTA, and the WFRC are beginning a study to identify the need for transit improvements in the corridor. The study will also determine the feasibility of various alternatives, including BRT and light rail transit.

**Downtown Ogden to Weber State University Transit Needs Analysis** - The 2030 LRP Update recommends a BRT facility to connect the downtown Ogden Intermodal Facility to Weber State University. Ogden City, along with UTA and the WFRC, will begin a study to identify the need for transit improvements in the corridor in 2004. The study will also determine the feasibility of various alternatives, including BRT and light rail transit.

**Transit Development Program** - The Utah Transit Authority and the WFRC prepare on a regular basis a five year, short range plan for service, operation costs, and capital facilities improvements to the 2030 LRP Update.

## **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The 2030 LRP Update recommended highway and transit projects are implemented through the programming of federal and other highway and transit funds in the TIP. The WFRC, as the Urbanized Area's MPO, has the responsibility of preparing and approving a TIP for the Wasatch Front Region. The TIP is a requirement of both the FHWA and the FTA. Both agencies require that federally funded transportation projects in a Metropolitan Area be included in an MPO approved TIP.

The WFRC's TIP is a five-year program of highway, and transit projects for the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Urbanized Areas. It is a compilation of projects from the various federal, state, and local funding programs for all the cities and counties in the Region, as well as for UDOT and UTA.

Projects included in the program will implement the long range highway and transit plans for the Region, meet the short range needs of the area, and provide for the maintenance of the existing transportation system. The Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Urbanized Areas includes all of Salt Lake and Davis Counties and the western urbanized portion of Weber County.

The federal-aid projects in the TIP are divided into four categories — Urban Area Surface Transportation Program projects, Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality projects, other Federal-Aid highway projects, and Federal-Aid transit projects. The WFRC is responsible for developing in cooperation with UDOT and UTA these federal highway and transit programs and including them in the TIP.

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During the TIP development process, projects from the 2030 LRP Update are evaluated, along with projects from the management systems. During this process, the State Air Quality Implementation Plan is reviewed for recommended Traffic Control Measures, which need to be implemented. These measures are given priority in selecting projects for the TIP. Eligible projects are identified for each of the highway and transit funding categories. Projects are evaluated and priorities set within each funding source. The recommended projects receiving the highest priority are included in each program. These separate programs are then combined to form the TIP. The WFRC, in consultation with UDOT and UTA, is responsible for developing the Salt Lake and Ogden/Layton Area TIP.

Once the TIP is compiled, the WFRC conducts an analysis to determine if the TIP conforms with the state air quality plans. This conformity analysis is made available to the State Division of Air Quality and the public for review and comment. The FHWA and FTA must concur in this finding.

A TIP, containing the recommended programs along with the conformity determination is submitted to Trans Com annually for their review. The Councils of Governments also have an opportunity to review and comment on the TIP. Appropriate adjustments are made and a final TIP is developed. The final conforming TIP is then recommended to the WFRC for its approval. Following Wasatch Front Regional Council's approval, the Executive Director of UDOT (as the Governor's designee) must review and approve the TIP and the Utah State Transportation Commission must include the TIP without modification in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

## **MODELING CAPABILITIES**

The WFRC uses travel forecasting models to project future traffic and transit ridership based on forecasted land use characteristics. These travel forecasts are used to identify the needed highway and transit improvements to the transportation system. The WFRC will continue to upgrade its traffic modeling capabilities over the next three years to be able to better represent freight (truck) traffic in the travel demand modeling process and to allow for more comprehensive freight planning. The WFRC is somewhat limited in its ability to model freight (truck) traffic, but will soon be able to model the kinds of scenarios like the moving of Union Pacific Railroad's intermodal freight center to Salt Lake City's west side, as well as test the effect that different public policies may have on freight. Other planned improvements to the travel demand models include incorporating market segmentation into trip distribution and further enhancements in the traffic assignment process. In addition, a home interview survey is anticipated in the fall of 2004 to provide data with which models can be recalibrated.

## **FUTURE PLAN UPDATES**

Future revisions to the 2030 LRP Update will place greater emphasis on considering the relationship between the transportation system and land use and in incorporating NEPA principles with the planning process. The WFRC reorganized its Regional Growth Committee (RGC) in September 2003 to serve as a counterpart to Trans Com in the planning process. The RGC will be responsible for overseeing future long range transportation plan updates, while Trans Com will continue to be responsible for short range planning, including the preparation of the TIP.

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Future long range transportation plans will continue to be based on land use included in approved local master plans. However, the WFRC will make a significant effort to consider the impacts on future development patterns of major transportation improvements. Also, the WFRC will work with the state and all local jurisdictions to identify alternative development scenarios and evaluate how they would change the future travel demand in the region.

By addressing NEPA issues in the planning process, the WFRC hopes to streamline the project development process for project sponsors. To address these issues, the WFRC will make a greater effort to identify and evaluate multi-model alternatives in major transportation corridors, increase the public involvement opportunities regarding these major corridors, address environmental factors in the evaluation process, and prepare a draft purpose and need statement that could be used as a basis for the preparation of the necessary environmental studies.

The WFRC reviews the recommendation of the long range transportation plan at least every three years and updates it as necessary. The next revision to the 2030 LRP Update will occur by December 2006.

