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PUBLIC
COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT OVERVIEW

The 2023-2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Public Involvement Process is outlined in [Chapter 2 of the RTP document](#). This appendix contains (1) a link to all of the public comments received throughout the creation of the RTP, (2) a list of resource agencies that were contacted for input on the RTP, and (3) supplemental information. All public outreach efforts were based on the Wasatch Front Regional Council's (WFRC) [Public Participation Plan](#) which can be accessed via WFRC's [Public Involvement website](#), which also includes the [ADA Effective Communication Policy](#), [Limited English Proficiency Plan](#), and [Title VI information](#). WFRC engaged in a proactive public involvement program and outreach effort which included:

- Meetings and Open Houses,
- Fairs and Conference Booths,
- Small Area Meetings and Presentations,
- News Media and Publications,
- Social Media Outlets,
- Website Updates, and
- WFRC Newsletters.

All public comments, along with the WFRC's responses, can be accessed in the [Public Comment Log](#).

WFRC solicited public comment from various groups including freight hauling organizations, advocates for people with limited incomes, minority organizations, senior citizens groups, community councils, county councils and commissions, city councils, local councils of governments, various government agencies, planning partners, stakeholder groups, resource and natural resource agencies, environmental groups, people/persons with disabilities, chambers of commerce, state legislators, the Utah Congressional Delegation, and the general public over six specific outreach efforts which are outlined in the [Public Comment Log](#):

1. Scenario Development: Fall 2020 - Fall 2021
2. Draft Preferred Scenario: Fall 2021 - Winter 2022
3. Needs Based Phasing: Spring 2022
4. Fiscally Constrained Based Phasing: Summer 2022
5. Workshops Outreach: Fall 2022
6. Draft RTP Public Comment Period: Winter 2023

Resource Agency Outreach

Resource agencies were also invited to participate in the RTP development. Representatives from the following agencies participated in the January 2022 resource agency stakeholder meeting:

- US Bureau of Land Management
- US Bureau of Reclamation
- Jordan School District

- Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
- Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy
- Murray School District
- Utah Office of Energy Development
- Roy Water Conservancy District
- Salt Lake School District
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Forest Service
- US Geological Survey
- Utah Department of Environmental Quality
- Utah Department of Health
- Utah Division of Emergency Management
- Utah Division of Air Quality
- Utah Geological Survey
- Utah Geospatial Resource Center
- Utah Public Lands Policy Coordination Office
- Utah State Parks and Recreation
- Weber Basin Conservancy District

Feedback from these resource agencies can be found in the Public Comment Log.

Electronic Communication

All documents, tables, graphs, figures, maps, timetables, and schedules that are part of the 2023-2050 RTP were made available on the [WFRC website](#) throughout the process. Interested parties were invited to visit the website and review and comment on the documentation. Many emails and comments received on the interactive maps were received, reviewed, and responded to throughout the 2023-2050 RTP process. In addition, emails were sent to thousands of people soliciting public review and comment.

Media Relations

Efforts to include the local news media in development and progress of the 2023-2050 RTP resulted in a number of articles about WFRC. WFRC members were quoted in news articles during the 2023-2050 RTP process.

Utah Department of Transportation Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement

WFRC appreciates receiving comments during the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) public comment period during the winter of 2023 related to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) S.R. 210 Project (also called the Little Cottonwood Canyon (LCC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) project). Comments related to the UDOT LCC EIS were received via email, a comment form, an interactive map, a public meeting, and handwritten letters. Over 1,500 comments were received by WFRC. These comments have been read and summarized below, as well as shared with the UDOT LCC EIS team.

Of the comments received relating to LCC, major themes revolved around environmental impacts, transportation, and funding. These major themes, along with many other topics have been addressed in [UDOT's LCC EIS Chapter 32, Response to Comments](#). As the LCC EIS has completed a more in-depth and detailed analysis of the transportation elements in Little Cottonwood Canyon than the analysis during the RTP process, you will also find a wider array of answers to the questions and comments in the resources provided in the LCC EIS [homepage](#) and [FAQ page](#).

WFRC prepared a [FAQ sheet](#) that provides information on the relationship between the RTP and the LCC EIS. In summary, it explains that WFRC, as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), is required to include in the RTP all regionally significant transportation elements currently identified in an EIS or other NEPA environmental process. The MPO is then responsible for verifying that the RTP – with the EIS elements included – satisfies regional air quality conformity and fiscal constraint requirements. This is done pursuant to federal regulations, legal guidance, and decades of consistent practice.

The draft 2023-2050 RTP shows all components and phases from UDOT's Final EIS for LCC. These were allocated to the fiscally constrained RTP phases as follows::

- Phase 1 (2023-2032): enhanced bus service, tolling/congestion-based pricing, roadway improvements, and a mobility hub (Phase 1 was funded with \$150M from the state during the 2023 legislative session)
- Phase 2 (2033-2042): avalanche snow sheds and trailhead improvements
- Phase 3 (2043-2050): gondola and base station parking

The phased implementation timeline identified in the RTP is for planning purposes only as the EIS did not identify a timeline for constructing the components listed in phases 2 and 3.

The RTP does not approve or provide funding for a gondola in LCC, nor does it allocate future funds for the project. It simply reflects the EIS at this point in time. If the EIS for LCC changes or if the record of decision selects a different implementation approach, the RTP will also be changed through an amendment process.

Major public comment period themes and references to detailed EIS responses:

Environmental Impacts - Majority of comments included elements of the following:

- Impacts to the watershed (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.12 of Response to Comments*)
- Impacts to the viewshed (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.17 of Response to Comments*)
- Impacts to wildlife habitat (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.13 of Response to Comments*)
- The Canyon is at its carrying capacity (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.20 of Response to Comments*)
- Impacts to climbing and recreation experiences (See *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.4 of Response to Comments*)

Transportation - Majority of comments included elements of the following:

- The proposed solutions will not solve the traffic problems, people will continue to drive their vehicles up the Canyon (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.2.4 and Section 32.7 of Response to Comments*)
- The transportation solution should include Big Cottonwood Canyon (see *UDOT LCC EIS Sections 32.1.1 - 32.1.5 of Response to Comments*)
- Utilize electric busses and increase frequency of bus service (see *UDOT LCC EIS Sections 32.10 and 32.2.2 of Response to Comments*)

- Traffic flow through the surrounding cities to the new parking garage will be the same and cause more issues for the neighborhoods (see *UDOT LCC EIS Sections 32.2.6 and 32.4 of Response to Comments*)
- The gondola will take too long to load and traverse the Canyon - and only provides access to two points in the Canyon (see *UDOT LCC EIS Sections 32.1.1 - 32.1.5 and 32.2.6 of the Response to Comments*)

Funding - Majority of comments included elements of the following:

- Cost burden shouldn't fall on the taxpayer when it only services two private businesses (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.2.7 of Response to Comments*)
- The congestion is only on a handful of days on an average year, thus not justifying the investment (see *UDOT LCC EIS Sections 32.1.1 - 32.1.5 of Response to Comments*)
- There are more important challenges to spend taxpayer money along the Wasatch Front and throughout the State (see *UDOT LCC EIS Section 32.1.2 and Section 32.2.7 of Response to Comments*)

Conclusion

The 2023-2050 RTP is available online and paper copies can be made available by visiting the WFRC office. Below is a summary of the number of comments received and reviewed by the WFRC:

- » Scenario Development Comments (2020): 268 comments
- » Draft Preferred Scenario Comments (2021-2022): 696 comments
- » Needs Based Phasing Comments (2022): 294 comments
- » Fiscally Constrained Based Phasing Comments (2022): 222 comments
- » Workshops Outreach Comments (2022): 356 comments
- » Draft RTP Public Comment Period (2023): 1,642 comments