

1 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”)**
2 **TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020**
3 **AT 2:00 P.M. IN THE SALT LAKE CITY COUNTY BUILDING, CANNON ROOM**
4 **LOCATED AT 451 SOUTH STATE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**
5

6 **Present:** Committee Members:
7

8 Chair Mike Peterson, Mayor of Cottonwood Heights City
9 Mayor Andy Beerman, Co-Chair Park City
10 Mayor Dan Knopp, Town of Brighton
11 Chris Robinson, Central Wasatch Commission Chair
12

13 Others:
14

15 Dave Fields, Snowbird
16 Mike Reburg, Salt Lake County
17 Carlton Christensen, Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”)
18 Kyle Maynard, Friends of Alta
19 Grant Farnsworth, Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”)
20 Caroline Rodriguez
21 Tod Young, [REDACTED]
22 Kim Mayhew, Solitude Mountain Resort
23 Lori Fowlke, [REDACTED]
24 Nathan Raffarty, Ski Utah
25 Chris Adams, Wasatch Backcountry Alliance
26 Randy Doyle, Brighton Ski Resort
27 Mike Maughan, Alta Ski Area
28 Greg Summerhays, South Valley Chamber of Commerce and Stakeholders
29 Council Chair
30 Ashley Burn, [REDACTED]
31 Caroline Morgan, Summit County
32 Carl Fisher, Save Our Canyons
33 Ned Hacker, Wasatch Front Regional Council
34

35 CWC Staff:
36

37 Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director
38 Blake Perez, CWC Deputy Director
39

40 **1. OPENING**
41

42 **a. The Meeting will be Called to Order by Transportation Committee Chair,**
43 **Mayor Mike Peterson**
44

45 Chair Peterson called the newly created Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee
46 Meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

1
2 **2. INTRODUCTIONS**
3

4 Those present introduced themselves.
5

6 **3. PURPOSE**
7

8 **a. Chris Robinson, Chair of the Central Wasatch Commission, will Inform the**
9 **Committee of the Purpose of Why the Committee was Created and the Work**
10 **Done to Date.**
11

12 Chair Peterson reported that Mountain Accord set a precedent for the Central Wasatch
13 Commission and refers to transportation, which is also an important part of the proposed federal
14 legislation. For the past 12 to 18 months, the CWC set transportation as a very high priority. The
15 intent of the Transportation Committee was to inform their partners and discuss the development
16 of a framework for a mountain transportation system development process.
17

18 CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker observed that many of those present were involved in
19 Mountain Accord, which served as the foundation for the CWC. Within Mountain Accord there
20 were two primary thrusts. One was to pursue federal legislation to encourage additional
21 congressional action pertaining to the protection of the land in the Central Wasatch. It also looked
22 to land exchanges and realigning public and private ownership for more sensible and beneficial
23 outcomes for public and private parties. Mr. Becker was the first CWC staff member after being
24 hired in June 2018. Over the following 18 months, the congressional legislation was the primary
25 focus of the Central Wasatch Commission. The second focus was to address and find solutions to
26 the transportation issues in the Central Wasatch Mountains.
27

28 Mr. Becker reported that a CWC Retreat was held in November 2019 where the CWC made the
29 decision to refocus its attention on transportation issues. The intent was to complement UDOT's
30 work on the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"). Since
31 November, CWC Chair Chris Robinson, Mr. Becker, Mr. Perez, and others addressed the new
32 focus. It has refined the effort, which has been well received and supported. This year's mission
33 is to find solutions and pursue implementation to address the transportation issues that exist in the
34 Central Wasatch Mountains. This year, the intent was to bring the parties together along with the
35 best information staff has developed in an effort to arrive at a consensus about what mountain
36 transportation should be.
37

38 Mr. Robinson commented that putting the federal legislation on hold was not intended to be
39 construed as an abandonment. It was believed that in order to resolve the challenges that exist, a
40 symbiosis between transportation and conservation efforts is needed. More progress needed to be
41 made on the mountain transportation system before moving forward with federal protections.
42 Mr. Robinson commented that the intent was not to upend, contradict, or interfere with the Little
43 Cottonwood Canyon EIS. He explained that UDOT is on course to issue a record of decision by
44 2021. It was considered beneficial for the CWC and the Transportation Committee to brainstorm
45 a system for the entire Central Wasatch. Mr. Robinson explained that public comment will be
46 received through March 1 on the characteristics and traits of a mountain transportation system.

1
2 Chair Peterson reported that the comments received will be used to shape the concepts of the
3 system.

4
5 Carlton Christensen asked how the information will be integrated into the process. He asked about
6 next steps in the event there is a conflict. Mr. Becker explained that as part of the EIS, UDOT has
7 taken a series of steps including tolling, parking, aerial systems, bus systems, and drainage
8 systems. They have prepared a draft of an aerial system and they plan to issue drafts of the other
9 reports in the spring. UDOT also offered to provide additional assistance.

10
11 Chris Adams commented that traffic seems to be getting worse and they need to think about the
12 situation in the short, medium, and long term. He pointed out that some solutions will not be
13 implemented for 10 or more years. He suggested that immediate steps be taken to address traffic
14 concerns. Chair Peterson agreed and stated that the CWC has addressed short-term strategies
15 including increasing bus service up the canyons.

16
17 Mr. Becker stated that the focus is through 2050. At the Retreat, there were three areas of focus.
18 The first was the formation of the Transportation Committee. The second addressed legislature
19 and land tenure issues and the third consisted of short-term projects. A group was established to
20 look at short-term projects that can be done immediately and what the CWC can do to support that
21 effort. Possible solutions included bus service improvements for this year, State legislation, and a
22 State appropriation. Various short-term transit-focused issues were also being considered.

23
24 Mr. Becker reported that the previous day, the Short-Term Projects Committee recommended
25 recreational and environmental improvement projects that can be completed this year. The
26 categories included transportation, environment, recreation, and economy. A list of projects will
27 be fleshed out. If the Transportation Committee comes up with a short-term priority, they will
28 share it with the Short-Term Projects Committee.

29
30 Chair Peterson stated that the objective of the Transportation Committee is to provide feedback on
31 a draft scoping document. It will focus primarily on the long-term, however, it will be necessary
32 to have a short-term component as well. Mayor Beerman expressed an interest in the scoping.

33
34 Chair Peterson explained that in Cottonwood Heights they are dealing with issues on Wasatch
35 Boulevard with regard to how to address situations involving motorists traveling from I-215 and
36 Wasatch Boulevard who are unable to get through. As a result, they cut through neighborhoods,
37 which prevents residents from getting out. They discussed signage, traffic control, legislation,
38 escorts for buses, etc.

39 40 **4. OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

41 42 **a. Chair Mike Peterson will Lead a Discussion on the Current Scoping** 43 **Document.**

44
45 Chair Peterson clarified that the focus of the Transportation Committee is to pick up where
46 Mountain Accord left off and add to what is being provided by the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS.

1
2 The scope of the committee was described as follows:
3

4 ‘The group is intended to connect residents and visitors to mountain
5 destinations, connect communities of people to jobs by way of efficient,
6 sustainable transit choices. Solutions will manage the impacts of a rapidly
7 growing population in ways that will reduce reliance on automobiles and
8 decrease impacts on the environment. To impose a transit network would not
9 only provide a more sustainable way to travel, it would also provide a powerful
10 tool to shape growth, reduce sprawl, promote transit-oriented development,
11 support economic growth, quality of life, and environmental protection.’
12

13 Chair Peterson reported that Mountain Accord looks at high capacity transit in Little Cottonwood
14 Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and the Park City corridor. It also addresses transit incentives
15 and disincentives including parking, pricing strategies, improved year-round local bus service to
16 Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons, fast transit service from the airport to Park City, improved
17 transit services on US 40 and I-80 between Quinn’s Junction and Kimball Junction, improved
18 transit connections to Summit County, high-capacity transit connections to the eastern Salt Lake
19 Valley via Wasatch Boulevard, and access improvements for cyclists and pedestrians. Chair
20 Peterson explained that the scope is very general so they should look at specifics going forward.
21

22 **5. PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

23 **a. Blake Perez will Lead a Discussion on the Process and Timeline.**

24
25
26 CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez addressed the process and timeline. He hoped the group would
27 work in the spirit of coordinating with a consensus moving forward. He reported that currently,
28 they are in a public comment period on the scope and project deliverables that will close March 1.
29 Staff will then review the comments and make edits and present the comments at the March 9
30 CWC Board Meeting for formal approval. Over the next three or four months, they will explore
31 mode alternatives and management options. They will obtain information from UDOT on various
32 modes and engage with various vendors with respect to how it will look and where it will go. At
33 that point, there will be discussion about a transportation panel with experts involving a Q&A with
34 the public to kick off the public comment period on the modes. The modes will be weighed out
35 against the criteria being established for the system.
36

37 Mr. Perez reported that an open house will be held mid-summer. There will be a proposal
38 development refinement between July and September as well. A Transportation Summit was
39 scheduled for later in the fall where they will decide on a locally preferred alternative. If they
40 come out of the summit with a good proposal, there would be an additional 30-day comment
41 period. By the end of the year, the CWC should approve and recommend a proposal to move
42 forward with the federal designation.
43

1 **6. TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT**

2
3 a. **Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director, will Lead a Discussion on the**
4 **Tentatively Planned Transportation Summit During Fall 2020**
5

6 Mr. Becker reported that there are short-term issues that will hopefully help reduce traffic
7 congestion. Many present had been involved in infrastructure projects with many long-term
8 projects expected to be 10 years out or longer. If there is a consensus around an approach for a
9 mountain transportation system from the CWC, it will likely be the catalyst for others to act. Key
10 individuals involved were identified. Mr. Becker explained that the hope was that if they reach a
11 consensus that the long-term implementation will be a collaborative effort.
12

13 Mr. Becker stated that many involved in the upcoming summit were involved with Mountain
14 Accord. He commented that they ultimately achieved a consensus by having four different
15 working groups addressing four major themes. Each came up with its own proposal. They then
16 looked at common denominators and differences and brought them forward in a day-long session
17 in an effort to identify a single proposal. Something similar was anticipated as they arrive at a
18 plan. They will look at different modes and alternatives as well as the various impacts and the
19 advantages/disadvantages of each as they reach an agreement on the best approach for a mountain
20 transportation system.
21

22 The Transportation Summit was expected to take place on a Friday/Saturday the end of September
23 or early October.
24

25 Chair Peterson commented that key stakeholders and partners have been invited who have
26 expressed a willingness to participate. They had the same kind of diversity with Mountain Accord.
27

28 Mr. Robinson stressed the importance of looking at mode alternatives and management and
29 weighing them against the scope. The metrics of a good system are what they are seeking public
30 input on.
31

32 **7. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**
33

34 Chair Peterson reiterated that transportation was identified as a critical concern. The
35 Transportation Committee was formed to create something of value with interim short-term goals
36 and objectives including trails and the environmental dashboard. Various committees were formed
37 to move the work forward.
38

39 Mr. Robinson reported that there are three CWC Board Members assigned to each of the three
40 committees. He serves as a floating member of each.
41

42 A question was raised about how to manage short and long-term solutions. Mr. Robinson stressed
43 that the Transportation Committee should focus solely on transportation issues. The Short-Term
44 Projects Committee will have broader purview but not as keen an interest in transportation.
45

1 Mayor Beerman commented that similar conversations have been ongoing for a long time. He
2 hoped the committee can help regain momentum. For example, the group can look at bus
3 schedules on a more technical level and provide solutions for moving those forward, building
4 political will, and financial means.

5
6 Mr. Becker reported that there has been a working group involving UTA, the CWC, ski area
7 general managers, UTA staff, and others who have been focused on immediate work that can be
8 done. The group continues to meet and work toward immediate action that can be taken. With
9 regard to bus service improvements, many supported that idea and came forward with funding to
10 move projects forward very quickly. Mr. Becker explained that they will continue to work on
11 short-term solutions.

12
13 Carl Fisher had fundamental questions. He recognized that there is a transportation problem in the
14 canyons and asked fundamentally who they are serving with the Mountain Transportation Plan.
15 He questioned whether they were inducing or managing visitation. He also asked if the concept
16 of capacity is something that the committee is willing to address and if those involved are
17 financially invested in an outcome. Chair Peterson explained that Mountain Accord defers to each
18 of the questions raised and they remain at the forefront.

19
20 In response to a question posed, Chair Peterson stated that the first step is to meet with all of the
21 stakeholders. Resources will be introduced. A broad breadth of feedback is needed on what is
22 proposed to determine whether they can reach a consensus.

23
24 Mayor Knopp stressed the need to address both short and long-term goals. It was confirmed that
25 the Transportation Committee will meet monthly. He questioned whether they could wait one year
26 for short-term projects. He suggested they substantially tighten up that timeline and encourage
27 various cities to contribute. The first step should be to increase bus service and get cars off the
28 road. Buses were thought to be the best way to accomplish that in the short-term. Dave Fields
29 commented that two other groups are focusing on that. Mr. Robinson stated that the purview of
30 the Short-Term Committee could be curtailed to exclude transportation issues.

31
32 Chair Peterson suggested they get an update from UTA on ongoing efforts. Mr. Becker
33 commented that there are at least two groups focused on short-term transportation solutions. A
34 working group began meeting last year and have come up with numerous ideas. They were able
35 to get one of them accomplished this year. Additional ideas would be forthcoming. Many were
36 involved and spent numerous hours evaluating various alternatives. It was suggested that perhaps
37 it would be appropriate to have them report to this group. Ways to involve both groups were
38 discussed. It was suggested that the Transportation Committee receive feedback on short-term or
39 interim measures with respect to transportation as part of the Transportation Committee agenda
40 going forward.

41
42 Mr. Robinson stated that in addition to some funding, UTA and UDOT have offered to lend their
43 expertise as well as staff and others with regard to transportation and transit issues. There are
44 vendors who can also provide ideas without jeopardizing future participation in the bidding
45 process. He suggested they organize around the resources that are already in place. The primary
46 challenge will be to reach a consensus.

1
2 Mr. Becker reported that staff discussed with CWC’s legal counsel at length ways to hold meetings
3 while remaining in compliance with the Open and Public Meetings Act. He explained that the
4 official members of the Transportation Committee are CWC Board Members. In the event that
5 they get more than a quorum of the full board at a meeting, it is being noticed as both a
6 Transportation Committee Meeting of the CWC and the CWC as a whole who will be the formal
7 voting members.
8

9 Mayor Beerman commented on parameters and referred to the scope of Mountain Accord. He
10 wanted to make sure the group was comfortable. A decision needed to be made about whether the
11 group is seasonal or year-round. Another question pertained to visitors versus residents. The
12 assumption was that it would focus on both. The question of who is served remained unresolved.
13 Mayor Beerman assumed that because of growth they will be dealing with residents and visitors.
14 The outstanding question dealt with whether to set thresholds. They should assume there will be
15 growth but determine at what pace they can realistically accommodate that growth. Threshold
16 issues were discussed. Chair Peterson reported that the Stakeholders Council is addressing
17 capacity and may be a resource.
18

19 Mike Maughan raised the question of who has jurisdiction over capacity. Mayor Knopp pointed
20 out that the one entity that is not represented is the U.S. Forest Service who has very definite
21 opinions. It was suggested that they be encouraged to have a representative present.
22

23 Mayor Beerman stated that it has always been paramount that they protect the quality of the
24 experience and the environment in the canyons. Any recommendation should be made through
25 the filter of whether it will harm the natural environment.
26

27 Mr. Robinson suggested that when looking at modes of transportation they consider capacity, cost,
28 and other metrics and determine which provides the most capacity. He believed that the dynamic
29 tension that may exist involves the fact that those that brought the capacity are eager to have more
30 and those who were worried about too much are eager to have less.
31

32 Kim Mayhew stated that this year the Unified Police Department (“UPD”)has taken it upon itself
33 to protect the health and safety of visitors and chose to close the canyon. She pointed out that
34 capacity involves being responsible and understanding that circumstances will guide decisions
35 regarding capacity. Possible metering of transportation modes was discussed.
36

37 Mr. Becker commented that visitor management can be evaluated as they look at each mode and
38 how it will work as part of a Mountain Transportation System. They can look specifically at how
39 many people it delivers as well as the impacts relative to each mode. Mr. Robinson explained that
40 capacity is a function of mode. They will not be able to resolve inflation or capacity until they
41 better understand the modes.
42

43 Mr. Becker suggested that the Committee determine what they want to achieve in the mountains.
44 Ms. Mayhew remarked that when they have single-occupancy vehicles traveling up and down the
45 canyons on snowy days, the mode and conditions change the overall experience. Education should
46 be provided regarding how to best get up and down the canyon.

1
2 Chair Peterson stated that all of the public comments received will be summarized and presented
3 at the March 9, meeting. They will then begin meeting with experts.
4

5 Mr. Fisher asked if they can be successful without the involvement of the Governor and the
6 Legislature. Mr. Becker stated that CWC staff have met with both and representatives have been
7 assigned on their behalf.
8

9 **8. ADJOURNMENT**

10
11 **MOTION:** Mayor Beerman moved to adjourn. The motion passed with the unanimous consent
12 of the Committee Members.
13

14 The Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately
15 3:34 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting held Tuesday, February 25, 2020.*

3

4 *Teri Forbes*

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____