

1 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
2 **MEETING HELD MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020 AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS**
3 **CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT A PHYSICAL LOCATION, AS**
4 **AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER DATED MARCH 18, 2020.**
5

6 **Present:** Chair Chris Robinson, Mayor Mike Peterson, Mayor Jeff Silvestrini, Laura
7 Briefer (representing Mayor Mendenhall), Mayor Harris Sondak, Vincent Izzo,
8 Mike Reberg (representing Mayor Wilson, Josh Van Jura, Brianna Binnebose,
9 Jared Stewart, Jocelyn Romero

10
11 **Staff:** Executive Director Ralph Becker, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen,
12 Office Administrator Kaye Mickelson
13

14 **Excused:** Mayor Jenny Wilson, Mayor Erin Mendenhall

15
16 **1. OPENING**

17
18 **a. The Meeting will be Called to Order by Chair Chris Robinson.**
19

20 Chair Chris Robinson called the meeting to order via Zoom at approximately 3:30 p.m.
21

22 **2. RECEIVE: Presentation by UDOT: Reference EIS Note: (a) Due to the change of the**
23 **July CWC Board of Commissioners from July 6, to July 13, 2020; (b) Previous**
24 **scheduling of UDOT/EIS Presentation to 7/13/2020; (c) UDOT presentation will occur**
25 **at this Executive Committee Meeting.**
26

27 UDOT Project Manager, Josh Van Jura, described the purpose of the project and stated that the goal
28 of the Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) is to substantially improve safety, reliability, and
29 mobility from Fort Union Boulevard to the Town of Alta. He commented that SR-210 on busy ski
30 days can be problematic while Wasatch Boulevard is an issue year-round. Reliability primarily
31 pertains to avalanche risk.
32

33 Mr. Van Jura reported that when they began the EIS process in 2018, they looked at the myriad
34 planning studies conducted in an effort to reach potential solutions and identify problems. He noted
35 that there will be a public input period. They began with 105 potential solutions and weighed them
36 against the project purpose to see if it met their intent. In the end, they came up with the following
37 three alternatives:
38

- 39 1. The Enhanced Bus Option.
- 40 2. The Enhanced Bus Option plus peak hour shoulders; and
- 41 3. A Gondola.
42

43 Mr. Van Jura reported that there will be two mobility hubs at the Gravel Pit and the existing UTA
44 Park and Ride at 9400 South and Highland Drive. A mobility hub was described as a well-engineered
45 parking structure that allows buses and people to come and go in an efficient manner. He stated that
46 all three transit alternatives include a mobility hub. There will also be bus priority and widening on
47 Wasatch Boulevard. It was noted that the bus service in the canyon under the enhanced bus and
48 enhanced bus service plus widening alternatives will have 24 buses per hour during peak times. This

1 equates to one bus every five minutes leaving from each mobility hub. It will be direct to service
2 with no other stops.

3
4 Mr. Van Jura reported that the enhanced bus service option with widening will include an 11-foot
5 shoulder that will allow buses to have their own private lane during peak periods and avoid mixing
6 with general-purpose traffic.

7
8 The gondola option was next addressed. Mr. Van Jura explained that the gondola base station is in
9 the existing park and ride. Parking will be provided at the mobility hub with a bus to the base of the
10 gondola.

11
12 Travel times were reflected based on the time spent in a transit seat. With the first option, the in-seat
13 time would be 54 minutes. With the enhanced bus service with peak period shoulder, the travel time
14 would be 36 minutes. Traveling in a private vehicle would take 38 minutes. The travel time in the
15 gondola would be 63 minutes due to mode switches. Costs were determined to be \$283 million for
16 the enhanced bus alternative with \$9 million in Operations and Maintenance (“O&M”). The enhanced
17 bus service with peak period shoulder lanes will cost \$470 million with \$6.2 in O&M. The cost of
18 the gondola is \$393 million with the lowest O&M. Mr. Van Jura reported that currently the O&M is
19 only estimated during the period that buses run. They did not analyze summer service for the gondola
20 since there is no need for it. There may, however, be a desire to run the gondola in the summer
21 months for recreation and tourism purposes.

22
23 Mr. Van Jura reported that they are in the middle of a 35-day comment period that runs through
24 July 10. A draft EIS was to be distributed next spring with a 45-day comment period. The final EIS
25 was expected to be completed by the end of the year. Public comment periods will take place on
26 June 8 and July 10 in addition to two virtual public meetings scheduled for the following week. A by
27 reservation public meeting was also scheduled for those with little or no internet access.

28
29 Chair Robinson opened the meeting to public comment.

30
31 Chair Robinson commented on the differences between capital and operating costs and travel times.
32 He liked the gondola option but questioned the lengthy travel time. Mr. Van Jura stated that travel
33 times are one of their main objectives as part of the mobility goal. If they do nothing, they are
34 estimating a travel time of 80 to 85 minutes by the year 2050. While the current estimate of 63
35 minutes is longer than the 36 minutes it takes to drive in a private vehicle, there are several issues to
36 balance such as water quality, visual impacts, etc. The goal was to find the best option. Mr. Van Jura
37 recognized the importance of travel times but stated that even the slowest travel time of 63 minutes
38 is a 25% increase over the no-build option.

39
40 Mayor Peterson commented on the first option consisting of lane widening on Wasatch Boulevard
41 and the mobility hub at the Gravel Pit and asked if it has changed from the earlier plans that are in
42 concert with the Wasatch Boulevard Master Plan. Mr. Van Jura confirmed that that was the case and
43 clarified that the snow sheds will be in place for two of the three alternatives but not the gondola. He
44 noted that snow sheds cost \$25,000 per linear foot.

45
46 Mayor Sondak was confused as to why the O&M would be lower for the dedicated bus lane than for
47 enhanced bus service. Mr. Van Jura stated that because the travel times are lower, the round-trip
48 times are reduced, which results in fewer buses to perform the same service. He explained that the

1 additional shoulder would be available for cyclists, hikers, and runners during the summer months,
2 which is a benefit of that alternative.

3
4 Mayor Sondak expressed concern with egress during an emergency. The combination of large
5 numbers of people in the canyon with no way to get out was of concern. He stressed the importance
6 of the road being functional. He asked if UDOT had been in contact with Chris McCandless
7 concerning his development near LaCaille. Mr. Van Jura stated that Mr. McCandless has forwarded
8 information to them and they were reviewing.

9
10 Laura Briefer asked about capacity and how the alternatives will manage large numbers of people.
11 She was concerned about creating more demand in the canyon without solving the actual congestion
12 issues. Mr. Van Jura stated that every alternative is based on the projected demand in 2050. They
13 are only providing direct to service and as a result, the U.S. Forest Service does not believe that a
14 capacity analysis is needed.

15
16 Mayor Sondak did not think it was realistic to think that everyone who uses transit is a customer of
17 the Snowbird and Alta ski areas. He pointed out that the alignment will make a significant difference
18 in terms of how the Town of Alta responds.

19
20 Debra Case commented that if the gondola is promoted as an eco-friendly alternative, people will be
21 more likely to use it. Also, advertising impact/tourism dollars are promoting eco-friendly aspects of
22 the Cottonwood Canyons and the gondola will enhance the area.

23
24 There were no further comments.

25
26 **3. BRIGHTON: Update and Status**

27
28 CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker stated that all of the steps for Brighton to officially become
29 a member of the Central Wasatch Commission have been completed. They can begin to participate
30 as a member at the next meeting scheduled for July 13. It was noted that Mayor Knopp has been
31 participating but not as a voting member.

32
33 **4. EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: Discuss UTA and Other Potential Ex Officio Members.**

34
35 Mr. Becker reported that UTA expressed an interest in becoming an ex officio member of the CWC.
36 Staff was scheduled to meet with the UTA Board soon. He pointed out that the amended ILA
37 Agreement provides for up to four ex officio members.

38
39 Mr. Becker had also been in contact with the Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake City and Sandy
40 City and there was interest there.

41
42 There had been discussions with Mayor Troy Walker from Draper as well. Under the present
43 circumstances, if Draper City were to join, it should perhaps be as an ex officio member.

44
45 Mayor Peterson thought it was critical, particularly with UTA, to move forward as quickly as possible.
46

1 **5. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: CWC Process for Submitting Responses to**
2 **UDOT.**

3
4 Mayor Peterson reported that the Transportation Committee plans to respond to the EIS alternative
5 analysis and over the next 10 days they will prepare a draft response document by soliciting feedback
6 from the various jurisdictions and their stakeholders. At the June 30 Transportation Committee
7 Meeting they will make recommendations and provide further vetting. By July 6 it will be sent out
8 to the full CWC Board for final approval and submitted to UDOT by the July 10 deadline.
9

10 **6. REVIEW AND DISCUSS: DRAFT July 13, 2020, Board Agenda. The Executive**
11 **Committee will Review the First Draft Agenda and Make Edits, Comments, Add or**
12 **Delete Information (attached).**

13
14 The Board Meeting agenda was reviewed and discussed. Concerning the Visitor Management
15 Committee Prospectus discussion, Mr. Becker stated that there have been discussions about carrying
16 capacity as part of the Commission's interests. When the Stakeholders Council was formed, there
17 was tremendous interest. Since then they have been working on Carrying Capacity/Visitor
18 Management. The Town of Alta passed a resolution regarding the need for that kind of information.
19 The Stakeholders Council Visitor Management Committee has been developing what a Visitor
20 Management Study could look like. The two phases were described and have an estimated cost of
21 \$235,000. It was reported that the Stakeholders Council has advanced the matter to the Board for
22 consideration.
23

24 Mayor Jeff Silvestrini reported on behalf of the Budget/Finance Committee and stated that they
25 adopted the budget.
26

27 Chair Robinson questioned whether reserves should be used to fund additional special projects, which
28 seemed to have been successful and well-received.
29

30 Mike Reberg reported that a presentation will be made to the County Council on one of the projects
31 Desolation Trail Design Projects that was not funded. They will be seeking County support.
32

33 **7. ADJOURNMENT.**

34
35 **MOTION:** Mayor Peterson moved to adjourn. Chair Robinson seconded the motion. The motion
36 passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
37

38 The Central Wasatch Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Executive Committee Meeting held Monday, June 15, 2020.*

3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____