

# SURVIVING ROAD & UTILITIES CONSTRUCTION

A Planning & Resource  
Guide for Salt Lake City  
Businesses



MARCH

2021

## LETTER FROM THE MAYOR & SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL

### DEAR SALT LAKE CITY BUSINESS OWNER:

Salt Lake City is growing, and public utility and road improvement projects are critical to meet the demand from new residential and commercial development. The city's goal is to not only use local taxpayer dollars, but state, county and federal grants to build safer, more accessible, and more welcoming streets that accommodate all ages and abilities.

These transformative projects will allow for future growth and changes in transportation while focusing on moving people – not just cars. With input from the community at every stage, city projects are designed to not only solve transportation problems, but also beautify the communities they serve, promote public health, and create a more sustainable environment.

We know that road and utility construction projects will temporarily impact area businesses and that the final improvements will benefit all aspects of the community for decades to come. We also know that we can work together to reduce the impacts of construction on area businesses by engaging you early in the project lifecycle, providing you with the right information, and coordinating together with the project team. While the inconveniences and impacts of construction are unavoidable, our goal is to help you plan ahead to reduce the impact on your business and your customers.

This *Surviving Road and Utilities Construction Planning and Resource Guide* was created to provide you with additional ideas and information to assist you before, during, and after construction begins. For projects in areas with many impacted businesses, the city will designate a project liaison to coordinate with you throughout construction. The liaison will keep you informed about the project and work with you to minimize impacts to your business and customers.

Check out the rest of this guide for more information on the engagement process.

On behalf of my office and the City Council, thank you for the contributions you make to the vibrancy of our city. We look forward to continued partnership with you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Erin Mendenhall".

**Mayor Erin Mendenhall & Salt Lake City Council Members:**

James Rogers–District 1, Andrew Johnston–District 2,  
Chris Wharton–District 3, Ana Valdemoros–District 4,  
Darin Mano–District 5, Dan Dugan, District 6, Amy Fowler– District 7





[illegible]





*Road construction projects often include upgrading or replacing curb and gutter, which reduces ponding and improves storm water runoff for neighboring properties.*





## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

### WORKING TOGETHER

**At Salt Lake City, we believe that communities work best when residents, businesses, and institutions are engaged and working together.**

We value diverse perspectives and encourage community members to be informed and involved in shaping how decisions are made.

This guide helps explain how public street and utility projects move from planning to completion, how construction activities often impact businesses, and how you can get involved and plan ahead to reduce the impacts of those activities on your business. Each section provides information about a different aspect of the project lifecycle, what you can expect, how we can help you, and offers ideas to help reduce impacts to your business. Understanding where the project is in this cycle and how your input can influence the process will help you make the best decisions for your business whether you have already participated in a phase of a project affecting you, or are learning about a project for the first time.



### PROJECTS MOVE THROUGH A DELIVERY PROCESS

The process begins when we prioritize areas of need as part of our planning process. Funding is then allocated and projects move to environmental clearance, concept development and design. The process of prioritization to selecting a designer can take anywhere from 1-5 years.

During the design phase, business owners are contacted and invited to participate in meetings to share their ideas. This is the most important time for you to be involved and when your comments have the most impact on the project design. The design phase is also the time to work with your neighborhood association or council representatives and local chamber(s) of

commerce to make connections and stay informed. Once the design is finalized, the project features and planned improvements are set.

Participating in the design phase gives you a voice and your input helps us to determine project improvements.

Once public input is incorporated into the project design, the project is advertised to the contracting community. Once a contractor is hired, we'll share the schedule, project phasing, and anticipated impacts via a combination of workshops, fliers, email newsletters, and more. Public feedback is accepted at any time throughout a project, however once a project reaches construction changes or additions are unlikely.

Often, construction of city projects is phased to complete utility relocation and upgrades to clear the way for roadway construction. This means your business could be impacted over more than one construction season. The city phases projects this way to help reduce costs and impacts to traffic as well as provide a higher quality end product.



**PRIORITIZATION**



**FUNDING**



**CONCEPTUAL  
DEVELOPMENT**



**DESIGN**



**CONSTRUCTION**



**PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT**



**PUBLIC  
INFORMATION**



## WHAT TO EXPECT - IMPACTS FROM CONSTRUCTION

### CONSTRUCTION IS NECESSARY


**Construction is necessary to maintain or enhance existing city infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, utilities, signals and more.**

Projects also create opportunities to improve travel safety for everyone by adding, replacing or upgrading sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and even new features like bike lanes. Park strips, trees, lighting and landscaping can also be added to support our goals and beautify our city.

Depending on the size of the project, construction can last anywhere from a few months to a year or more. However, once finished, roads will likely be construction-free for years, if not decades. Your business will benefit directly from the improvements as travel to your location is safer, more comfortable, and accessible for your customers. If your business is located in or near a road construction area, you will be impacted by construction and may also experience financial impacts during the project. While this is not an all-inclusive list, these are the most common impacts from construction. Knowing what to expect can help you plan ahead to reduce those impacts wherever you can to mitigate how the inconveniences of construction affect you, your business and your customers.

#### WORK AT OR NEAR YOUR PROPERTY

- Noise, dust, and vibration will be daily occurrences when work is at or near you.
- Construction activities occur linearly, meaning one activity may pass by your location at a time. They also occur concurrently with multiple active work zones at the same time. This means your location could be impacted multiple times throughout the project.
- Crews only work inside the city's property or easements except when they connect the new infrastructure to your property. This is called a "tie-in" and the project team will coordinate with you before crews come onto your property to perform this work.



*Safety is important to Salt Lake City. Reconstructing streets gives the city an opportunity to add new sidewalks to areas that don't currently have them, which improves safety for pedestrians and those using mobility devices.*

## WHAT TO EXPECT - IMPACTS FROM CONSTRUCTION *(continued)*

### TRAVEL IMPACTS

- Travel lanes, shoulders, side streets and intersections may close during construction and paving operations. These temporary closures are required to provide safe work and travel conditions for everyone.
- During these instances detour routes will be necessary and appropriate access and signage will be provided to maintain customer access.

### UTILITY SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS

- Intermittent utility service interruptions may happen if sewer, water, gas, power, internet, or phone services are being upgraded or replaced. These are critical services and crews will limit service interruptions to minimize impacts as much as possible.
- Utility service interruptions may happen if unidentified or misidentified underground utilities are damaged by equipment.

### UNFORESEEN ISSUES

- Heavy rainfall or other extreme weather events may cause delays.
- Schedules can change for several reasons including weather, equipment, material, or scarcity of resources.

**UNFORESEEN ISSUES  
CAN HAPPEN AND  
WE WILL WORK WITH  
YOU TO MITIGATE THE  
INCONVENIENCE AS  
MUCH AS POSSIBLE**

## THE CITY ASKS OUR CONTRACTORS TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING GOALS:

- Always maintain a way for customers to get to businesses.
- Keep one lane of travel in each direction open the majority of the time.
- Communicate additional closures to businesses and the public ahead of time.
- Maintain at least one business access at all times.
- Provide business access with signage to guide traffic when possible.
- Restore landscape elements damaged by the project.
- Minimize work around major holidays as much as possible.
- Provide advance notice of lane closures, night work, and access impacts.
- Construction workers should not park on your property without your permission.
- If assigned, a project liaison will work closely with you on issues.




## FROM ROADS TO PUBLIC UTILITIES

### YOUR BUSINESS MAY BE IMPACTED

**Before or during road projects, your business may also be impacted by utility work.**

Salt Lake City's Department of Public Utilities is responsible for building and maintaining water, sewer, and storm drain utilities. Other utilities like power, gas, and communications lines (like phone and internet) are owned by other parties. Salt Lake City and project teams coordinate closely to ensure that utility work can be phased to happen before road work, or that the two projects can occur simultaneously. This is handled on a project-by-project basis because each project impacts utilities differently.

The impacts from utility work are similar to those listed previously. However, there are some differences and knowing what to expect from utility work will help you prepare for the impacts and help your staff and customers navigate the work at your location.



*Utility work is often done during major roadway reconstruction to improve those services while the road is already torn up. Here, Public Utility crews reconstruct a storm drain line along 1300 East.*

During water line maintenance or replacement you can expect temporary water service interruptions. You will be notified up to 48 hours in advance of planned service interruptions. Occasionally, emergency service interruptions happen and the project team will notify you as quickly as possible.

When a new water line is installed, it will undergo bacteria, pressure, and other testing for upwards of a week to ensure health, safety and water quality standards are met. During testing it may

look as if no progress is being made because crews are not actively working on the site. As soon as testing concludes, crews will connect your business to the new line and finish construction.

Not all water service interruptions are for new line installation. Sometimes the water service is interrupted so that other adjacent utilities can be looped around water lines, or vice versa.

## FROM ROADS TO PUBLIC UTILITIES *(continued)*

During sewer line work you may be asked to temporarily stop using your water and sewer systems to allow crews to perform their work. When crews drain these lines you may notice an odor for a short period of time.

Storm drain work, like road construction, may impact accesses to your business, create noise, dust, and vibration, and require detouring travelers.

No matter the type of utility work being performed, you can expect to have utilities restored by the end of the day. We will also restore disturbed landscaping to its condition prior to construction.

Crews working on public utilities build reliability and redundancy into the utility system to ensure that utilities at your business function the way they should. If you have questions about utility work call 801-483-6900 or visit [www.slc.gov/utilities](http://www.slc.gov/utilities).

If one of your other utility services appears to have been interrupted, please contact the project liaison to help expedite service restoration.

You may notice that your water is cloudy, white or even rusty looking. This is normal when a service is stopped and then reinstated and will resolve quickly.

To flush the line:

- Remove all aerators, screens, and filters from your faucets.
- Check to see if you have a water softener; if you do, be sure to bypass it prior to flushing.
- Locate your water heater and close the inlet valve if possible.
- Then run the cold water until the water returns to normal.

*Crews prepare to install a sewer line. Underground utility upgrades are done in partnership with Salt Lake City Public Utilities and other city departments as well as other entities.*





## CONSTRUCTION & IMPROVEMENTS WILL IMPACT YOU, YOUR BUSINESS AND CUSTOMERS

The overall project schedule and anticipated impacts should be shared with you at least two weeks before construction begins, with more specific details provided regularly. Once you've received this information, you can further prepare and help your employees and customers cope with construction.

*The following tips and ideas have been shared with the city from past projects and can help minimize surprise and frustration for your customers before construction begins.*

*Sidewalk closures are common during reconstruction. If the sidewalk on one side of the street is closed, the other side will be open with detour signage. There will always be pedestrian access through construction.*

**Start by including a note about the project and start date on your website, social media pages, and in any newsletter or business communication you have with customers**

- Include messages that emphasize:
  - There will always be a way to get to your business
  - Customers can sign up for the project newsletter to receive timely information and to help them understand the best way to reach you
- If you don't collect contact information already, now is a good time to start so you can help keep clients/customers informed.
- Support your customers' buying habits by sending regular emails with route information and promotions.

### **WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES ON A PLAN TO MAINTAIN REGULAR OPERATIONS**

- Talk to your employees about ways to stay prosperous during construction and allow them to share any concerns they have.
- Create or strengthen your marketing plan so it is in place before construction begins.
- Make sure your employees are signed up for project updates and that they know available routes to get to work during construction.
- Ensure your employees have a plan to communicate any messages that might come from the construction team outside of project updates.

## PLANNING IS KEY - BE PREPARED AND STAY RESILIENT *(continued)*

### CONNECT WITH A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

- Join your local chamber(s) of commerce and make use of their resources, including marketing support.
- Connect with neighboring businesses, community and neighborhood associations to share your business information and promotions with the surrounding community. See our reference list on page 14.

### ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED

- Work with city staff in the pre-bid stage to request that contracts include business friendly requirements such as:
  - cleaning up the project site and suspending construction activities during critical business days
  - ensuring accesses to business is available at all times
  - putting up “all businesses are open” signage
  - requesting meetings with the project team and contractor to stay in the loop on the project schedule and share concerns

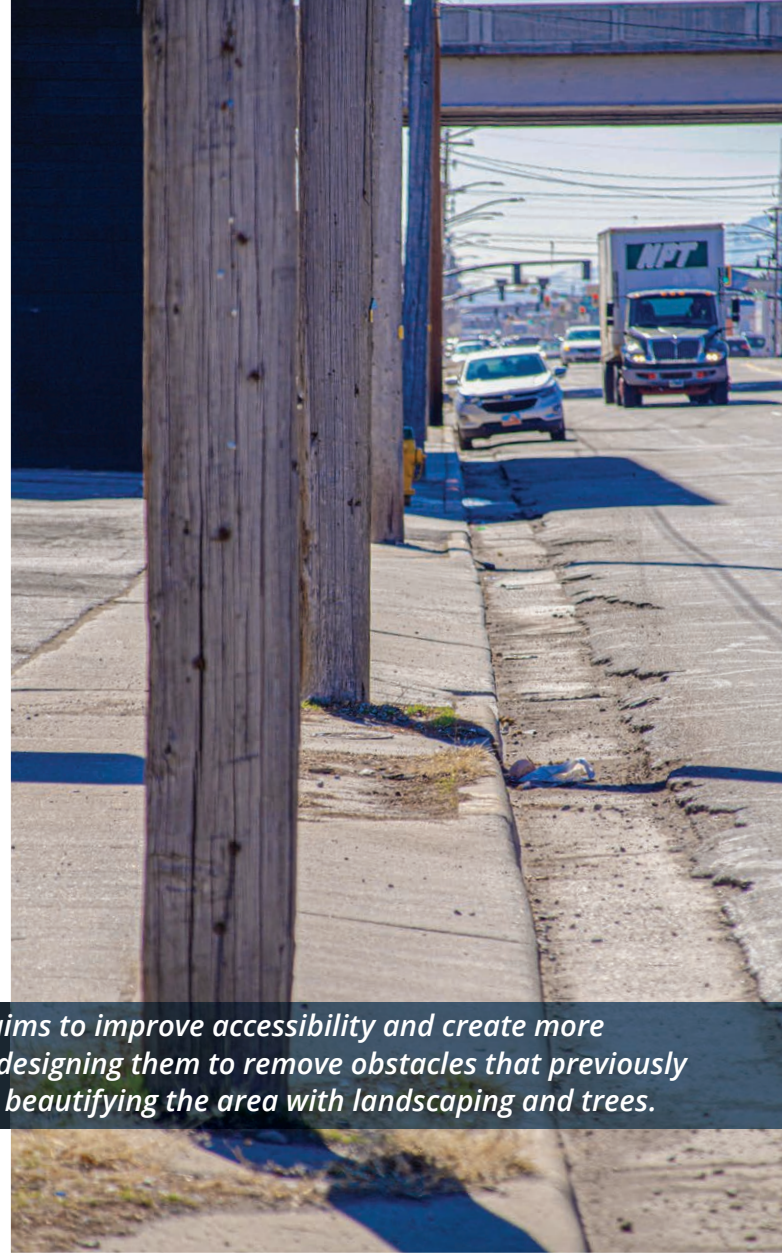
### THINK THROUGH YOUR OPERATIONS

- Talk to your lender about the upcoming project and whether existing debt can be restructured or if lines of credit might be needed prior to construction and in light of potentially diminished revenue.
- Secure a line of credit while your sales are good so it is in place in an emergency.
- Consider your staffing needs. A decrease in customers may happen during construction. Keeping an open position vacant, job sharing, and reducing hours are all strategies to keep your staff lean if there is a loss of revenue.
- Reducing inventory is another strategy to respond to slower times during construction.
- Consider adding more money for cleaning in your budgets during heavy construction to keep your business as dust-free as possible. Crews work to keep dust down, but it is a reality during construction.
- Don't relocate because of construction. A new location may still be impacted by future construction. Once road construction is finished in your area it will be many years, if not decades, before it is necessary again.

*For any kind of crisis, have a*  
**STRONG BUSINESS PLAN**  
*in place.*

*The stronger the plan,*  
**THE BETTER OFF**  
*your business will be.*

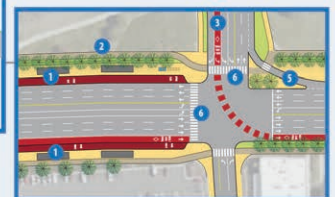
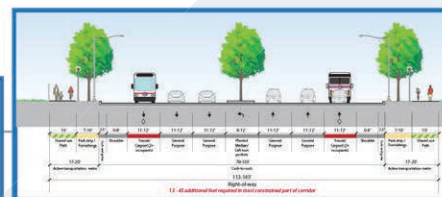
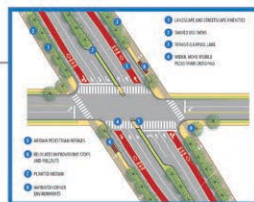
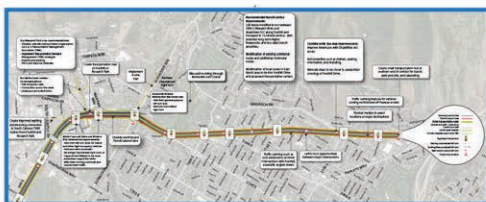




*Road reconstruction aims to improve accessibility and create more welcoming streets by designing them to remove obstacles that previously obstructed travel and beautifying the area with landscaping and trees.*

Salt Lake City uses its **Master Plans, studies,** and other **guiding design documents** to develop and prioritize roadway design and improvements.

To learn more visit  
<https://www.slc.gov/transportation/plans-studies/>



### ONCE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

**Once construction begins, work will occur in front of your business multiple times and for varying periods of time depending on the activities taking place.**

For instance, underground excavation and utility upgrades may take longer, while asphalt paving is usually a very short operation. Often, utility relocation and upgrade work occurs before roadway construction. This means your business could be impacted over more than one construction season. Construction is phased to finish as quickly as possible. The convenience of a shorter project is usually offset by more frequent or intense impacts.

Impacts like dust, noise and vibration are inevitable during construction. Others, such as traffic delays and blocked travel routes and accesses, often arise. The following ideas can help you cope if/when they happen.

*The most important thing  
you can do is*  
**MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION**  
*with the project team.*  
*The sooner we know about your needs  
the better we can*  
**ACCOMMODATE YOU.**

#### **MAINTAIN OPEN COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROJECT TEAM**

- The project liaison's job is to help you during construction. Call them if you have a question, concern or issue.
- Report problems as they happen and whenever they happen. Don't wait for a situation to get worse before alerting the team.
- If damage occurs to your property from the project, contact the project liaison right away. Do not repair it on your own.
- Keep this project guide handy for questions. You can find it online at <https://www.slc.gov/ed/businessresources>
- Save the project hotline number in your phone, ask your store managers to do the same, and make it visible for your staff.
- Talk to the project liaison if you are planning property improvements during construction such as landscaping, parking lot maintenance, etc., to coordinate and avoid delays, extra work or future damage to your new improvements.
- Talk to the project team in advance if you are planning any special events at your location.
- Be sure to read all correspondence about the project.





## KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS COMING BACK

- We will put up signs to direct traffic. Take a look at these signs and make sure they make sense to you and your customers. If not, let the project liaison know what your concerns are.
- Remain positive when talking about construction to your customers. Having a negative attitude can make customers less likely to return.
- Keep a script with information next to the phone that explains the best way to get to your business if customers call.
- Put this information on your website and social media feeds. The project liaison can often provide route maps for you to use.
- Look at options like signs or flags on your property to increase business visibility.
- Consider offering discounts and promotions during the most difficult construction periods as additional incentives for customers.
- If you have alternate entrances, consider adding extra signage to help customers reach you more easily.
- Extend or shift business hours so you're open after construction wraps up for the day.
- Consider using a delivery service to get your products to customers.
- If your location has minimal onsite parking, consider asking employees to carpool or park on side streets to free up spaces for customers.

## KEEP YOUR SUPPLIERS INFORMED

- Talk to your suppliers, delivery drivers, maintenance and landscape providers in advance so they are aware the project is coming.
- Ask them to sign up for project updates to get the most recent information about project schedule, impacts, and available routes.
- Coordinate with the project liaison if your deliveries are impacted by construction.

## BE CREATIVE AND FLEXIBLE TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

- If you've been considering a remodel or repairs to your business, make the construction work for you by performing this work during a slower time.
- Consider pooling advertising resources or joining marketing campaigns with surrounding businesses in the construction zone.
- Use creative promotions and do something above and beyond what you might normally do to attract new customers.
- Consider offering customers a promotional item or discount if they post photos on their social media pages of them in your business with a note about construction not keeping them away.



*A reconstructed roadway with the first "lift" or layer of new asphalt is shown. Asphalt paving is a significant milestone and signals the end of major road construction.*

## ADVICE FROM CONTRACTORS

*Try to keep the big picture in mind. Like remodeling your home, construction is*  
**MESSY AND INCONVENIENT.** *In the end, you'll have a* **BRAND NEW ROAD.**



## WHAT CONTRACTORS THINK YOU SHOULD KNOW

In addition to sharing advice from business owners who have been resilient through construction, we asked construction contractors about what they think you should know.

- **Construction phasing may not seem logical** to you, but there is a method to the madness. Check in with the project liaison to understand the order of work and associated impacts so you have a full picture of what is planned in your area.
- **We want to help reduce impacts where we can**, but contract documents guide the work. Sometimes we can easily address your concerns, other times we may need to work together to brainstorm solutions.
- **Often there are crews from more than one construction company on a project.** While our team wants to help you and reduce impacts, talking to the workers may not resolve an issue or get the information to the right person. It might seem counterintuitive to call the project liaison when there are workers right outside your door, but the liaison is the best person to help resolve issues quickly and at the lowest level possible.
- **Direct questions** about schedule, timing and phasing to the project liaison, website or email updates.
- **Construction is messy.** The city will monitor the contractor to make sure they keep it cleaned up.





## TIME TO CELEBRATE - POST CONSTRUCTION

### CELEBRATE WITH EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS

**As construction ends, take the opportunity to celebrate with your employees and customers. The new road will be more convenient, accessible, and welcoming.**

- Work with your neighborhood association or council, and project team on a ribbon cutting ceremony or other project-completion event.
- Post a message on your website, social media pages, and in emails to customers announcing the end of construction and the benefits of the project.
- Consider an end of construction sale or promotion to bring back customers and/or thank customers for hanging in there.
- If needed, partner with other businesses to take turns at sharing driveways or parking stalls.
- Support other businesses in areas with road construction. Share your experience and advice with them.



*Crews finish work on a new layer of asphalt. Depending on the depth of reconstruction, most projects will receive two to three layers of new asphalt.*

## RESOURCES FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

### DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Salt Lake City's Department of Economic Development is the best place to learn about resources available to support your business before, during, and after construction.**

We know that construction can be challenging, but that the improvements will benefit your business by improving customer access, increasing customer visits, and improving your property value. Our team of experts can connect you with available loan programs offered by the city and other organizations.

Our number one tip for businesses about to be impacted by construction is to contact the Suazo Business Center, the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) and the Women's Business Center of Utah. These organizations offer free consulting to help you with your business and marketing plans.

**Other available resources include:**

<b>Pacific Islander Business Alliance</b>	<a href="https://pik2ar.org/piba/">https://pik2ar.org/piba/</a>
<b>Salt Lake Chamber</b>	<a href="https://slchamber.com/">https://slchamber.com/</a>
<b>Small Business Development Corporation - Utah</b>	<a href="https://utahsbdc.org/">https://utahsbdc.org/</a>
<b>Suazo Business Center</b>	<a href="https://suazocenter.org/">https://suazocenter.org/</a>
<b>Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce Greater Salt Lake</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/TCCGSL/">https://www.facebook.com/TCCGSL/</a>
<b>Utah Asia Chamber of Commerce</b>	<a href="http://www.utahasiancc.org/">http://www.utahasiancc.org/</a>
<b>Utah Black Chamber</b>	<a href="https://utahblackchamber.com/">https://utahblackchamber.com/</a>
<b>Utah Gay &amp; Lesbian Chamber</b>	<a href="https://www.utahlgbtqchamber.org/">https://www.utahlgbtqchamber.org/</a>
<b>Utah Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/utahhcc/">https://www.facebook.com/utahhcc/</a>
<b>Women's Business Center</b>	<a href="https://wbcutah.org/">https://wbcutah.org/</a>





## QUESTIONS

Questions for Salt Lake City's Civic Engagement, Economic Development, Engineering, and Public Utilities teams can be directed to the contacts below.

### **SALT LAKE CITY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

CivicEngagementTeam@slcgov.com  
www.slc.gov/civic-engagement

### **SALT LAKE CITY ENGINEERING**

801-535-7961  
engineeringinfo@slcgov.com  
www.slc.gov/engineering  
@SLCMoves

### **SALT LAKE CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

801-535-7200  
ed@slcgov.com  
www.slc.gov/ed  
@SLCEconDev

### **SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC UTILITIES**

801-483-6900  
www.slc.gov/utilities  
@SLCPu

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

Salt Lake City wishes to thank the local business and construction contracting community that provided advice and recommendations. Additional acknowledgment and gratitude are offered to the cities of Madison, Wisconsin, Fort Collins, Colorado, and the Minnesota and Utah Departments of Transportation for their development of similar resource guides, which were used as references.

