



# Memorandum

To: Mayor Erin Mendenhall

From: Jon Larsen, Transportation Division Director

CC: Marcia White, Jennifer McGrath

Date: May 7, 2020

Re: Foothill Drive Next Steps

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This memorandum provides a summary of next steps for Foothill Drive. This is a follow-up to our earlier conversations, including with Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) leadership, about community concerns and next steps related to the Foothill Corridor and the 2017 Implementation Strategy. I have included background and an explanation on the decision to eliminate consideration for additional lanes on Foothill from the long range plans, as well as ideas for a series of incremental enhancements.

There is no question that the Foothill Drive Corridor needs thoughtful attention to resolve the safety, multi-modal traffic, and access concerns of residents and businesses. Those issues will only increase as our population rapidly grows.

Among the guiding principles we have kept top of mind in working to reimagine the Foothill Corridor are the goals in the bullet list below, which are from the 2017 Implementation Strategy. The Implementation Strategy grew out years of dialogue and lays the foundation for a series of incremental steps that will improve Foothill, from Mario Capecchi Drive at the University of Utah to the Parleys freeway interchange.

- Preserving and enhancing the communities along the corridor.
- Enhancing safety for all who use the corridor.
- Enabling and encouraging all modes of transportation, including cycling, walking, carpooling and public transit.
- Moving more people through the corridor more efficiently and easily.
- Creating an ongoing collaborative process for stakeholders to address future challenges.



The Implementation Strategy identified a Preferred Scenario, which had wide support from the community and included four community council leaders on the steering committee. Various agencies participated as well, including Salt Lake County, UDOT, University of Utah, Utah Transit Authority (UTA), and the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC). This scenario identified an additional travel lane in each direction south of the 2300 East intersection. The result would be three travel lanes each direction for the length of the corridor, with the outside lane being dedicated to buses and high-occupancy vehicles. A multi-use path and landscaping was included in the preferred scenario as well.

Recently, UDOT and the City looked at the technical feasibility of implementing the Preferred Scenario on Foothill, and found that it would be highly impactful to adjacent numerous properties along the corridor. In light of this new information, and based on direction from you and UDOT leadership, we will no longer pursue the full Preferred Scenario or any alternative on Foothill Drive that involves additional vehicular travel lanes.

The focus in the coming years will shift to planning, design, and community engagement on numerous opportunities for incremental design changes and improvements along Foothill which we believe are aligned with community goals. City Transportation staff has synthesized those into recommendations that will be discussed with our community partners, UDOT, and the UTA. Those include:

- A mobility hub in Research Park at the University of Utah.
- A trail and tunnel system at Red Butte Creek crossing.
- Pedestrian friendly improvements at the 2300 East intersection and other locations, including adding additional crosswalks.
- Reconfiguration of travel lanes, including the addition of designated carpool/transit lanes.
- Increased frequency and extended hours of UTA bus service, with enhanced bus stops and potential operational improvements at intersections.
- Elimination of 'free right' turns at some intersections.

In addition, UDOT has several projects either under way or planned for 2020, including repaving sections of Foothill on both the north and south ends. UDOT's plans also include adding a variable messaging sign and a signal upgrade at 1700 South.

Salt Lake City is working closely with UDOT to ensure that Foothill neighborhoods are aware of these projects before they start and that the project goals are shared, so the neighborhoods know what to expect.

ERIN MENDENHALL  
*Mayor*



**DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY  
and NEIGHBORHOODS**

Marcia L. White  
Director

We know that Foothill has been an ongoing challenge for the community with numerous discussions and plans, and few tangible results. We would ask for everyone to stay engaged in the conversation as we shift the focus toward implementable projects. Tackling the challenges of Salt Lake City's future growth will require continued collaboration. It is our hope that we can address the issues together and reduce any negative impacts on our community.

**Attachments:**

Foothill Drive Improvement Projects Map

# Foothill Drive\* Improvement Projects

April 2020

