



Comments to UDOT's Little Cottonwood Canyon (LCC) Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS)

**Mayor Jenny Wilson
Councilmember Jim Bradley**

August 2021

Background

Mayor Wilson and Councilmember Bradley represent SLCo on the Central Wasatch Commission

- They have spent two+ years studying and analyzing this complex matter

UDOT has narrowed options to two preferred alternatives

- Enhanced Bus/Shoulder Lane Alternative
- Gondola originating from a station near La Caille at the base of LCC

Context



EIS Purpose and Need
Mobility, Reliability, Safety

Recommendation

Of the two alternatives: **Prefer the Enhanced Bus/Shoulder Lane Alternative**, but with a phased implementation approach that entails a delay of the road construction while other initial techniques are implemented that support the reduction of cars in LCC but are less costly and environmentally harmful

Phased Approach Investments/Techniques

2-3 Year Phased Approach

Opportunity to invest in less costly and less permanent transportation management solutions while assessing impacts

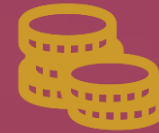


Construction of mobility hubs

Gravel Pit & 9400 S/Highland Drive



Investment in the enhanced bus system



Travel Demand Management

(TDM) strategies such as tolling and carpooling



Technology

e.g., “real time” information to assist in travel mode selections

Benefits of Enhanced Bus/Shoulder Lane Alternative



Faster!

By as much as 19-23 minutes



Less visually impactful

*Avoids 21 Gondola towers
Some the size of a high-rise hotel, with
potential flashing lights*



Lower upfront costs

(~\$82M) with flexibility to adjust operating costs



More convenient: requires a single transfer v multiple transfers

Will serve to better incent transit



Buses entail less permanent infrastructure

*With ability to “pivot”
based on changing
circumstances (e.g.,
climate change) system
can evolve*

Benefits of Enhanced Bus/Shoulder Lane Alternative, cont.



**“Better Buses” – Smaller, Frequent (5 mins),
Comfortable, Wi-Fi, etc.**
Not your “grandfather’s bus”



**More utilitarian: Benefits people other than
skiers to two resorts**
Cyclists, pedestrians, and potential for dispersed recreation
Possibility of “micro mobility hubs”

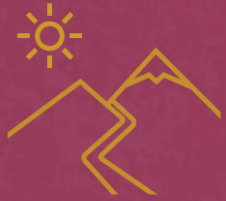


**Avoids high-capacity system pitfalls that
could lead to overuse/overloading of LCC**
Less impactful to fragile ecosystem & visitor experience
quality



**Fewer threats to historic and recreational
resources**

Additional Considerations



Environmental

*Air Quality/Watershed
Impacts*



Reliability

*Mechanical Complexity
Benefits of “Simpler” System*

Impact to Local Community



- *Significant traffic continues on Wasatch Blvd/S.R. 210*
- *Commercialization of residential area*
- *“Voice” of local residents*



Existing Road and Buses to Remain Part of Gondola System

Gondola: additive transportation corridor/doesn't eliminate travel on existing road

Federal Legislation

Ultimate transportation system should be coupled with the passage of federal legislation (the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act) given the important tenets of the Mountain Accord agreement

Summary

Enhanced Bus/Shoulder Lane Alternative

- *What do our residents – including non-skiers and residents from all areas of the valley – get for this enormous public investment?*
- *More “practical” approach*
- *Meets “stable flow of traffic” goal while providing benefits other than resort destination*
- *Avoids pitfalls such as risk of canyon overuse and impairment of majestic vistas*

Phased Approach with initial investment in buses, hubs and TDM strategies

- *Will allow time to measure effectiveness*

Let’s commit to non-permanent tools in our toolbox first, before taking a step that could negatively and irreversibly affect this priceless natural resource.