



# City Council Staff Communications Report

**Subject:** Emerging Disruptor Task Force: Future Transportation Study  
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**Department:** Transportation Planning  
**Date:** November 16, 2023  
**Type of Item:** Work Session

## Summary

This work session will provide the Council with an update on the Emerging Disruptors Task Force and Study, and request feedback and input on potential next steps. Park City’s Transportation Team and Brent Crowther (Project Manager, Kimley-Horn) will facilitate a policy discussion.

In May 2023, Mayor Worel convened a Stakeholder Committee to assess and screen transformative transportation solutions. No project or concept was off-limits due to scope, cost, or previous analysis. This report contains background information, recommendations, and direction for future evaluation. A final report incorporating the Council’s input is expected by the end of the year.

## Background

In 2021, Park City was awarded an \$80,000 grant from the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), alongside a \$50,000 local match, to study emerging technologies and disruptive ideas. At the [March 31, 2022, Council meeting](#), an initial “[disruptive ideas list](#)” was presented in response to growing community calls for innovation in our transportation systems and infrastructure. The City Council received an [update](#) from the Stakeholders during its September Retreat.

The Stakeholders include:

- Casey Christ, PC Resident
- Josh Finken, PC Resident
- Christine Hesse, PC Resident
- Herve Lavenant, PC Resident
- Tarra McDonald, PC Mountain
- Caroline Rodriguez, High Valley Transit
- Victoria Schlaepfer, Deer Valley
- Henry Sigg, Planning Commission
- Peter Tomai, PC Resident
- Steven Yevoli, PC Resident

## Analysis

The Stakeholders ranked and selected eight topics from a [list of seventeen](#) to hold individual workshops. The proposed next steps are considerations for the Council to reflect on and provide feedback.

**Recommended Continuation**

<b><u>Priority Transportation Topics</u></b>	
SLC International Airport Connections	Begin discussions with relevant stakeholders and identify a regional champion for transit service and funding
Aerial Gondolas	Evaluate alignments between nodes that have a competitive advantage over existing travel corridors
Underground Transportation Tunneling	The Boring Company (TBC) or other provider conducts feasibility analysis with a social equity parameter
<b><u>Coordination with Regional Partners</u></b>	
Dedicated Bus/HOV Lanes	Explore opportunities to repurpose travel lanes to transit-only lanes/shoulders
Reversible Arterial Flex Lanes	Pursue coordination with UDOT on gateway corridors
Passenger Rail	Support coordinated efforts to advance regional rail considerations
<b><u>Lower Transportation Priority</u></b>	
Vehicle-Free/Restricted Zones	Support mechanisms to improve the pedestrian environment of Main Street
One-Way Loop Concept	Consider pilot in winter temporary operations, but do not support year-round implementation

The Stakeholder Committee endorsed some topics that ultimately fell short of meeting the criteria set by the group. These are summarized below.

<b><u>Topics Not Selected for Workshops</u></b>	
<u>Topic</u>	<u>Decision Factors</u>
Local and Regional Transit Enhancements	Noted the City should support regional transit partners where applicable, but this did not meet considerations of the Committee
Intelligent Transportation Systems	Noted the City should advance where applicable and support UDOT and other partners but this did not meet considerations of the Committee
Land Use Policy	Recommended working with Planning to advance transportation goals in land use policies and regulation
Active Parking Management	Noted the City should advance current parking policy but it did not meet considerations of the Committee
Congestion Pricing and Tolling	The City should work with UDOT to explore options but noted concerns about equity
Mobility on Demand	Did not meet the considerations of the Committee

Smart Corridors and Connected Vehicles	Technology advancements are continuous but rely on UDOT research and fell beyond the time horizon of the Committee’s focus
E-Bike and EV Public Charging	Did not meet the considerations of the Committee
Curbside Management	Did not meet the considerations of the Committee

For each workshop, the content included a brief background, national subject experts, and real-world examples of major infrastructure improvements from other cities and towns. Comprehensive notes of each workshop are found in **Exhibit A** and **Exhibit B**.

**Stakeholder Committee Recommendations**

The following are meeting summaries and recommendations:

**1. Dedicated Bus/HOV Lanes – July 20, 2023**

Stakeholders focused on introducing new transit-only or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes in Park City and extending the [SR-224 bus rapid transit](#) (BRT) dedicated bus lanes to the Old Town Transit Center. The Stakeholders recommend that day visitors and commuters be diverted to conveniently located capture and intercept lots near freeway exits, and the BRT should have convenient access points for local residents.

**Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:**

- The Stakeholders recommend advancing transit-only lanes if feasible without significant right-of-way expansion. Some Stakeholders felt that reversible flex lanes provide the most practical opportunity for near-term transit-only lanes. The Stakeholders seek more information on the time savings that transit-only lanes would provide, given several pinch-points at key intersections.
- The Stakeholders only support transit-only lanes if accomplished within existing travel lanes and shoulders.

**2. One-Way Loop Concept – July 27, 2023**

The Stakeholders discussed a major one-way concept, or a counter-clockwise traffic pattern, that would convert Kearns Boulevard, SR-224, and Bonanza Drive into a large one-way traffic loop. This concept could improve traffic flows on Park City’s primary corridors and most congested intersections, and potentially provide transit-only lanes. It would also drastically change local travel patterns, and impact local residents and businesses.

**Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:**

- While the Stakeholders recognized the peak traffic benefits, they did not believe it would be compelling enough to warrant year-round implementation.
- Some Stakeholders supported a two-week pilot program. However, given the amount of infrastructure adjustments, education, and coordination, most did not

support a pilot program.

### **3. Aerial Gondolas – August 21, 2023**

The Stakeholders reviewed background information on [previous studies](#) regarding a gondola transportation system and routing options. The Committee reviewed gondola systems in other cities, including Telluride, CO, and Portland, OR. In other locations, each end of the gondola system was activated with a desirable and mixed-use development.

#### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders recommend exploring potential gondola alignments that connect major nodes and are more competitive than automobile travel times. Exploring routes outside of existing transportation corridors could also minimize impacts on existing structures, including homes, and be more efficient.
- The Stakeholders recommend exploring funding gondolas through public-private partnerships.
- Some Stakeholders were concerned that direct access could be an economic disadvantage to other areas of town, and future consideration must integrate gondolas within a larger transit network and with multiple access points.

### **4. Passenger Rail – August 30, 2023**

The Stakeholders considered the potential impacts and feasibility of bringing rail to Park City, including different systems such as light rail, street cars, elevated rail, and commuter (heavy) rail. The Stakeholders emphasized a need for a transportation network beyond cars, including rail, but had concerns about price, ROW impacts, community compatibility, and seamless connections.

#### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders felt Park City should not be the leader in bringing passenger rail to the Wasatch Back but should support regional efforts. The Stakeholders recommend advancing conversations with regional partners to bring regional rail to the perimeter of Park City to integrate with Park City's transit network.
- The Stakeholders do not support a Park City internal-only rail system.

### **5. Salt Lake City International Airport Connections – September 6, 2023**

The Stakeholders explored several models to connect Park City to the Salt Lake City International Airport (SLC Airport). Due to ongoing regional transit coordination between High Valley Transit (HVT) and UTA, general-purpose transit connections between Salt Lake County and Park City were not discussed in this workshop. Instead, Stakeholders explored how systems in Colorado ski towns, including the [Landline and United Airlines](#) partnership and the [Epic Mountain Express](#), might work in Park City.

#### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders recommend advancing a high-capacity shuttle from the SLC Airport to Park City by engaging with stakeholders and identifying partnerships.
- The Stakeholders believe this is a feasible and potentially low-cost investment that would benefit multiple stakeholders, including locals, visitors, airlines, and hotels.
- The Stakeholders noted that providing safe and secure capture lots with overnight parking and transit access will also be key to making shuttles attractive to Park City residents.

## **6. Reversible Arterial Flex Lanes – September 12, 2023**

The Stakeholders discussed reversible flex lanes on Park City’s corridors to help improve traffic flows in and out of town. Reversible lanes create more efficient traffic patterns by increasing capacity in one direction while reducing it in the other, depending on travel patterns. For example, these lanes might increase capacity into town during morning peak hours and out of town during the evenings.

### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders recommend advancing flex lanes in Park City if it includes transit improvements.
- The Stakeholders recommend traffic modeling to determine if reversible lanes reduce travel times and congestion on different road segments, including Bonanza Drive, SR-248, and SR-224 (Deer Valley Drive).

## **7. Vehicle-Free/Restricted Zones – September 18, 2023**

The Stakeholders assessed vehicle-free streets in Park City. Unlike the other workshops, the Stakeholders recognized that this topic focused less on improving travel conditions and more on placemaking, pedestrian safety, and boosting economic opportunity. Examples of other vehicle-restricted streets were evaluated, including 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Boise, ID, and the Charlottesville Mall in Virginia.

### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders recommend advancing pedestrian prioritization concepts on Main Street, coupled with improved transportation options to Main Street, replacing on-street parking with more parking in secondary locations, and considerable community and business district engagement.
- The Stakeholders recommend considering additional pedestrian priority zones throughout town, including near the ski resorts and in the Bonanza Park area.
- The Stakeholders recommend vehicle restrictions to include a safety and circulation plan that accommodates those with mobility disabilities, emergency vehicles, and deliveries.

## **8. Underground Transportation Tunneling – October 3, 2023**

The Stakeholders heard a presentation by The Boring Company (TBC), known for their work on the [Vegas Loop](#). The concept requires deep boring to create underground

tunnels with a 12-foot radius. In Las Vegas, TBC operates an underground network of electric vehicles with stations at destinations near the Vegas Convention Center. The privately operated tunnel only allows their vehicles access, thereby bypassing the traffic above ground and providing direct access to their destination.

#### Stakeholder Committee Recommendation:

- The Stakeholders recommend advancing conversations with TBC, or other providers, to conduct a feasibility study regarding tunnels in mountain terrain with a mining history. Ideally, TBC or another provider would fund the study.
- Advancing tunnel concepts should include the ability to move significant users during peak seasons and special events. Other uses could be explored during off-peak times.
- The Stakeholders recommend further exploration of funding strategies and noted that TBC is not the only company constructing similar tunnels.

#### **Conclusion**

The Stakeholders recommended advancing several ideas that have the potential to reduce traffic congestion and support a more sustainable transportation future for Park City. Transportation Planning seeks further feedback from the City Council on the Emerging Disruptors process prior to the final report, which is expected by the end of the year.

#### **Exhibits**

- A - Workshop Summaries
- B - Workshop Discussion Notes