

District Seven Community Update

February 2008

TRAFFIC SAFETY: BEING A PART OF THE SOLUTION

BY: SØREN D. SIMONSEN, COUNCIL MEMBER—DISTRICT SEVEN

It's been one year since the tragic accident that took the lives of Michelle, Ben and Anna Williams and an unborn child. Though there have been numerous traffic incidents in District Seven involving vehicles and often pedestrians, this accident had a heightened impact to many of us who have a personal acquaintance with Chris Williams' family. Each one has a similar impact on those whose lives are affected. Hindsight shows us, sadly, that most traffic accidents are preventable.

Many residents of District Seven have spoken with me, sent emails or letters indicating their concern with traffic safety. Your input and guidance is appreciated. And while there are some things the City can do to improve safety—and our personnel are diligently working on these as funding permits—I am reminded frequently by our police and traffic safety experts that we are often our own worst enemies when it comes to traffic safety.

Speeds, distractions, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and sleepiness or fatigue are the most common factors that influence safety while driving. All are factors when addressing preventable traffic accidents. Consider the following:

- * Traffic speed is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to automobile crashes. Speeding reduces a driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway, extends the necessary distance to stop a vehicle and increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a dangerous situation. Always follow the posted speed limits, use caution, and reduce speed in inclement weather.
- * Higher vehicle speeds are associated with both a greater likelihood of accident and more serious pedestrian injury. It is estimated that only 5 percent of pedestrians die when struck by a vehicle traveling at 20 miles per hour or less, compared with fatality rates of 40, 80, and nearly 100 percent associated with speeds of 30, 40, and 50 miles per hour or more respectively.
- * Distractions such as cell phones, radios and music devices, grooming, smoking, and even other passengers all contribute greatly to risks on the road. Drivers should stay focused and avoid all distractions that may take their eyes or attention away—even for just a moment. If you must make a call or do something potentially distracting while on the road, pull to a safe area where you can park and avoid distraction to yourself and risk to others.



Photograph by Buseth Photography

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SUGAR HOUSE TRANSIT CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

BY: KEVIN YOUNG, SALT LAKE CITY TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER

Salt Lake City, South Salt Lake, and Utah Transit Authority (UTA) teamed together to jointly fund a study to consider options for increased east-west transit service in the Sugar House area. The boundaries of the project area extend from the Central Pointe TRAX Station at approximately 200 West/2100 South to 1100 East and from 1700 South to 2700 South.

Prior to the commencement of the study, Salt Lake City and South Salt Lake leaders met and put together seven guiding principles for a transit solution study. These included:

- * Slow speeds
- * Frequent stops
- * Accommodates an urban linear park (trail)
- * Safe and standardized pedestrian crossings
- * Broad local support
- * Varied funding options
- * Promotes transit to transit connections

A consulting team, led by Fehr & Peers, was chosen by a selection committee to conduct the study. The consulting team was asked to do a comprehensive analysis of possible transit modes and alignments within the study area. As part of the analysis, the existing rail corridor at approximately 2300 South was to be considered as an alignment option. This rail corridor is no longer used as an active freight line and is currently owned by UTA.

From the beginning of the study, the consultant team was told that public outreach and education were to be an important part of the study. The consultant team accomplished this goal by holding open houses and conducting interviews with community leaders, business owners, and residents.

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PARLEY'S TRAIL UPDATE

BY: LYNNE OLSON, PRATT BOARD MEMBER

Planning for Parley's Trail will shift into high gear in 2008. Parley's Trail will connect the Bonneville Shoreline Trail to the Jordan River Parkway. Several sections are being designed at once, and construction of two segments will begin this year.

The new bicycle/pedestrian bridge over I-215 freeway was finished last September. Trail users will soon be able to continue their trip west on a paved trail to Tanner Park. Some planning for this section has already been done, including the identification of historic and cultural resources in Parley's Historic Nature Park. A preliminary design for the trail alignment was chosen to reduce the impact on the environment of the nature park. Salt Lake County expects this section to be under construction by the end of 2008.

Currently, there is no preferred trail alignment for connecting Tanner Park to Sugar House Park. The designers are considering several options for temporary routes, including the striping of bike lanes on 2700 South from Tanner to 1700 East Street. The consultant for this section of the trail, H.W. Lochner Inc., intends to meet with Canyon Rim, Sugar House and Millcreek Community Councils in February. They plan to gather public input about the preferred route and treatment.

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PARLEY'S TRAIL UPDATE

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Michael Baker Jr. Inc. has received Notice to Proceed on Phase Four of the trail, the 1300 East Crossing. This contract includes final design and construction documents for The Draw at Sugar House, which will connect Sugar House Park to the Sugar House Business District. Following completion of that work in late spring, the project will go out to bid for construction. Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County are negotiating with the Woodbury Corporation for the property for The Draw.

Notice to Proceed has also been given to Perkins Engineering for a study of Phase Five of the trail; a rail-with-trail development in the UTA Corridor. The study will include alternatives for crossing all of the streets and railways between 1100 East Street and the Jordan River Parkway. This section will provide access to the Sugar House Business District, South Salt Lake City Hall, and South Salt Lake's new developments at Central Pointe and Market Station.

Sufficient funding is already in place to construct the 1300 East crossing, the Sugar House Park trail section, and the Parley's to Tanner segment of Parley's Trail. Existing funding has come from a 2005 Federal Appropriation and matching funds from the Salt Lake County ZAP programs. Additional monies are coming from the Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County Open Space funds. More money will need to be raised to construct the trail between Tanner Park and 1700 East, and to build the trail from Fairmont Park to the River. To learn more about Parley's Trail, visit the website at www.parleystrail.org. Contact the PRATT Coalition to receive updates about meetings and special events.



FOOTHILL DRIVE CORRIDOR STUDY: PROGRESS UPDATE

BY: BETHANY MATSUMORI, PUBLIC INFORMATION CONTACT

Foothill Drive is a key corridor to our community; connecting people to the University of Utah, Research Park, shopping areas, and neighborhoods. A study is currently underway to identify the current and future transportation needs and alternative options to improve the corridor.

Public comment and feedback is important to the study to ensure that community views are represented and improvement decisions for Foothill Drive reflect residents' desires.

The study team began meeting with community members in July 2007 and held a public open house in November 2007. Public comments have been used to develop potential improvement options for the corridor that will be presented at a public open house in Spring 2008.

To submit your comments or for more information about the study, please contact Bethany Matsumori at 801.364.0088 ext. 109 or bethany@wfanco.com. Project information is also available at <http://www.wfrc.org/cms/foothill/>.

SUGAR HOUSE TRANSIT CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

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A steering committee consisting of representatives from Salt Lake City, South Salt Lake, UTA, UDOT, and the consultant team held many meetings where alternatives were developed and evaluated in order to determine if they met the goals and objectives of the project. Through a screening process, the alternatives were further refined and the steering committee narrowed the alternatives to a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The LPA chosen is a modern streetcar located in the rail corridor. The consultant team will now complete a draft final report. Once finalized, the consultant team will present the report to Salt Lake City and South Salt Lake for adoption.



TRAFFIC SAFETY: BEING A PART OF THE SOLUTION

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- * Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including some prescription drugs, even in small amounts can greatly impair perception and judgment. Parents should impress on their teenagers the risks of driving under the influence. Even when children don't drink they should be aware of how to intervene if they are riding with someone who might be impaired.
- * Sleepiness and fatigue can impair driving ability as much as alcohol. Avoid driving when tired. If you've been on the road for a long time, take frequent stops or have another driver relieve you.
- * Driving a private vehicle is a great freedom and privilege, but also a great responsibility. Every time we get behind the wheel, we put ourselves and others at risk. We all must be part of the solution. Slow down—Use good judgment—Yield to others. Be an example to our young people. Be a safe driver.

If you have any other thoughts or ideas about traffic safety, please feel free to call or email me. I can be reached at the City Council Office by phone at 801-535-7600, or by email at soren.simonsen@slcgov.com.

For more traffic safety information please visit the following web sites:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – www.nhtsa.gov

Utah Department of Public Safety Highway Safety – www.highwaysafety.utah.gov



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