

### COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

**TO:** City Council Members

FROM: Russell Weeks

**Public Policy Analyst** 

**DATE:** July 23, 2015 at 1:47 PM

**RE:** UPDATE: TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

Council Sponsor: Lisa Adams

View the Administration's proposal

Item Schedule:

Briefing: Written-Only -

July 28, 2015

Set Date: Not Applicable Public Hearing: Not

Applicable

Potential Action: Not

Applicable.

#### **ISSUE AT-A-GLANCE**

Goal of the briefing: To keep City Council Members informed of the progress of work on the Transit Master Plan. This report, the Administration transmittal, and attachments are intended as a <u>written-only</u> briefing.

Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates Inc. is in the third of six steps that will result in a draft transit master plan in December. This report is largely about the second step.

The second step involved identifying gaps in current transit service and key transportation corridors.<sup>1</sup> The third step involves developing a framework for evaluating transit corridors in Salt Lake City.

As indicated in the Administration's transmittal, research in the second step identified several key findings and themes, including:

- A need to improve service for Salt Lake City residents because they use transit for more than commuting.
- o A need to reach neighborhoods where potential riders live.
- A need to improve transit frequency and facilities for riders.



#### **POLICY QUESTIONS**

- Based on the research, are there any preliminary recommendations of what Salt Lake City can do to improve transit service for residents and workers in addition to working with the Utah Transit Authority?
- 2. As more people move into apartment buildings in Sugar House will the number of rider boardings increase, or will apartment dwellers stay within the Sugar House Central Business District?
- 3. Would advertising the Free Fare Zone more increase ridership there beyond the two percent of total Salt Lake City trips noted as an existing condition?
- 4. The master plan consultants will be in Salt Lake City on September 22. Would the City Council be interested in having them discuss their progress during the Council work session on September 22?

#### ADDITIONAL & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As indicated in the transmittal, the Nelson Nygaard and the Transportation Division have published a *State of the System Fact Book* in June 2015. Council staff has summarized Chapter 5 titled Rider Demographics later in this report.

The full Fact Book is available electronically at <a href="http://slcrides.org">http://slcrides.org</a>. A summary published and available on the same website is attached to this report.

According to the *Fact Book*, summary, and transmittal:

- o Four out of five transit trips in Salt Lake City are non-commuter trips.<sup>2</sup>
- o Some high density areas in Salt Lake City do not show high transit rider boardings. The areas include the east downtown, parts of the Liberty Wells neighborhood, Sugar House, and neighborhoods west of Interstate 15.3
- One of the major service gaps is between the Downtown's primary transit transfer points and the densest areas of the City in eastern downtown.<sup>4</sup> It might be noted that most primary transit transfer point points are along the I-15, Main Street, and State Street corridors.
- People who: are older, or may have disabilities, or may have lower incomes, or have no access to an automobile are more likely to use transit if it is available. However, some neighborhoods where those people live have lower transit boardings. Areas identified with a transit share lower than the citywide average are the Capitol Hill/Avenues neighborhoods, Sugar House/East Bench neighborhoods, Rose Park, and Glendale.<sup>5</sup>
- Frequent service is limited outside of weekday workday commute times, particularly on weekends.<sup>6</sup>
- UTA's program of changing bus routes during the year "undermines the City's ability to organize growth around transit."
- Although bus stop amenities are better in Salt Lake City than in the rest of UTA's service area,
   83 percent of bus stops in the City do not have a bench or a shelter.
- University of Utah students make up a significant 25 percent portion of transit passengers in Salt Lake City.<sup>9</sup>

#### Who Rides Transit in Salt Lake City?10

- Fifty-eight percent of transit riders are male. Sixty-two percent of riders are age 34 or younger.
   Fifty-two percent of riders are "transit dependent" meaning they have no access to a vehicle, may not have a driver's license, may be unable to afford another kind of transportation, may be disabled, or may be elderly.
- The ethnicity of transit riders closely matches the Salt Lake City population as a whole. Seventynine percent identify themselves as Caucasian, thirteen percent identify themselves as Hispanic followed by Asian, African American, and Native Americans.
- Sixty-one percent of UTA passengers in Salt Lake City have a household income of less than \$50,000 – due in part to the number of University of Utah students who ride transit. Forty-eight percent of passengers have full-time jobs. Fifteen percent are employed part-time.
- Sixty-six percent of Salt Lake City passengers use UTA five or more days per week. Another 21
  percent use transit three to four days per week.

**Cc:** Cindy Gust-Jenson, David Everitt, Margaret Plane, Jennifer Bruno, Nichol Bourdeaux, Jill Love, Mary De La Mare-Schaefer, Robin Hutcheson, Cris Jones, Julianne Sabula

File Location: Transportation, Bus Service, Light Rail

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, June 2015, Page 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Pages 9 and 12.

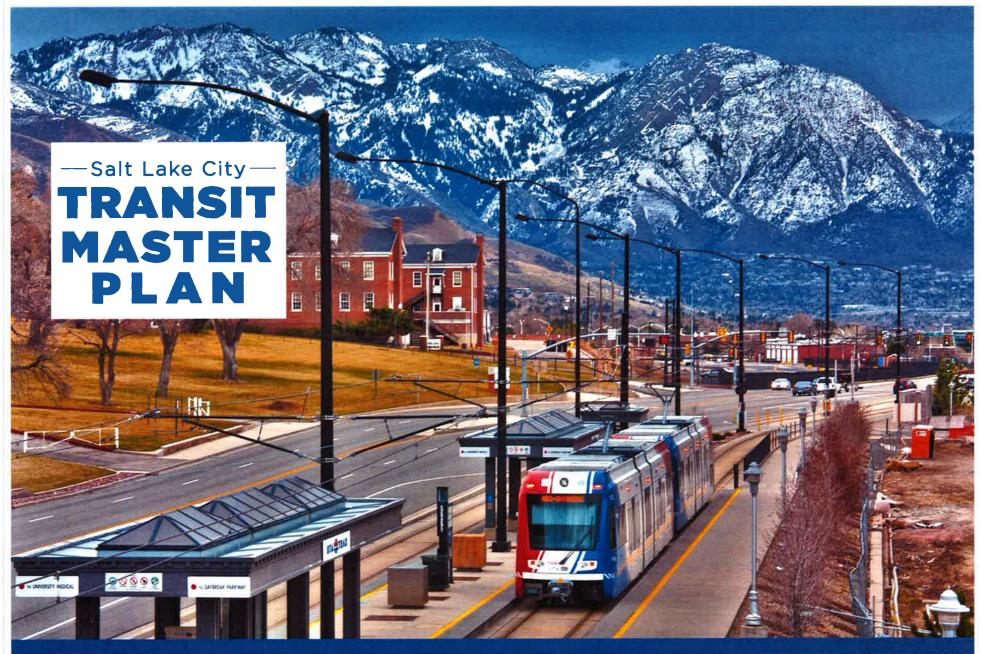
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan summary, Page 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> State of the System Fact Book, Nelson/Nygaard, June 2015, Page 5-4.

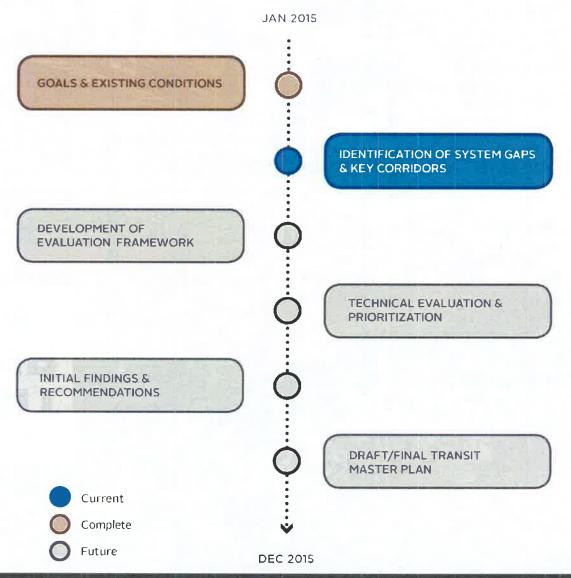
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Information in this section is from the *State of the System Fact Book*, by Nelson/Nygaard, published in June 2015.



June 2015

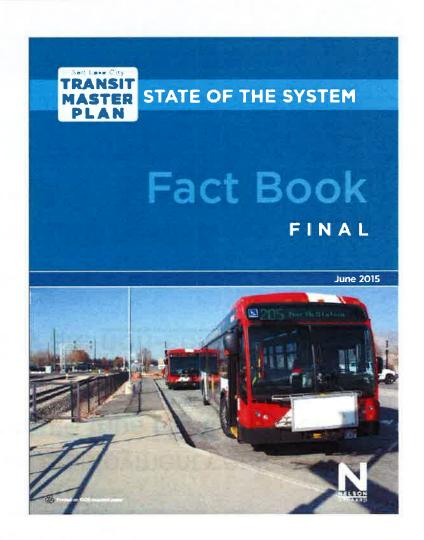
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# KEY MILESTONES 2015



### Phase I Work Completed

- State of the System Factbook
  - Existing Plans, Policies, & Goals
  - Travel Demand & Market Analysis
  - Existing/Planned Transit Service
  - Transit Rider Demographics
  - Amenities, Fares, & Access
- Gaps Analysis
- Council interviews
- Stakeholder interviews and initial public outreach
- Input received to date has yielded largely consistent themes, most of which are supported by the data



### What types of trips are we planning for?

- Salt Lake City is a major regional employment center, and the system serves regional commute trips relatively well
   However...
- 4 out of 5 of trips in Salt Lake City are <u>non-commute</u> trips

#### **Key questions for Transit Master Plan:**

- Does UTA service meet all types of trip needs?
- Are there markets we are missing?



### Trip Types and Transit Mode Share

■ 6% of <u>commute</u> trips overall are made by transit (highest for those who work in Salt Lake City)

Home Location	Work Location	Transit Mode Share
Salt Lake City Resident	Salt Lake City	6%
	Outside Salt Lake City	4%
Non-Salt Lake City Resident	Salt Lake City	6.5%
	Outside Salt Lake City	1%-3%*

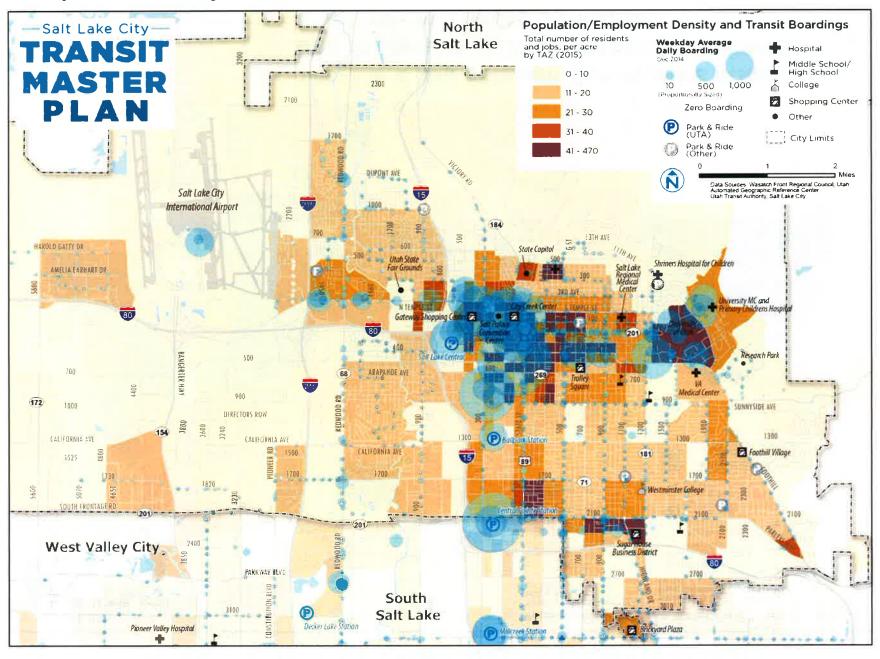
■ 2% of <u>all</u> trips in Salt Lake City are made by transit, indicating that these trips are harder to make on transit

\*Depending on the county of origin.

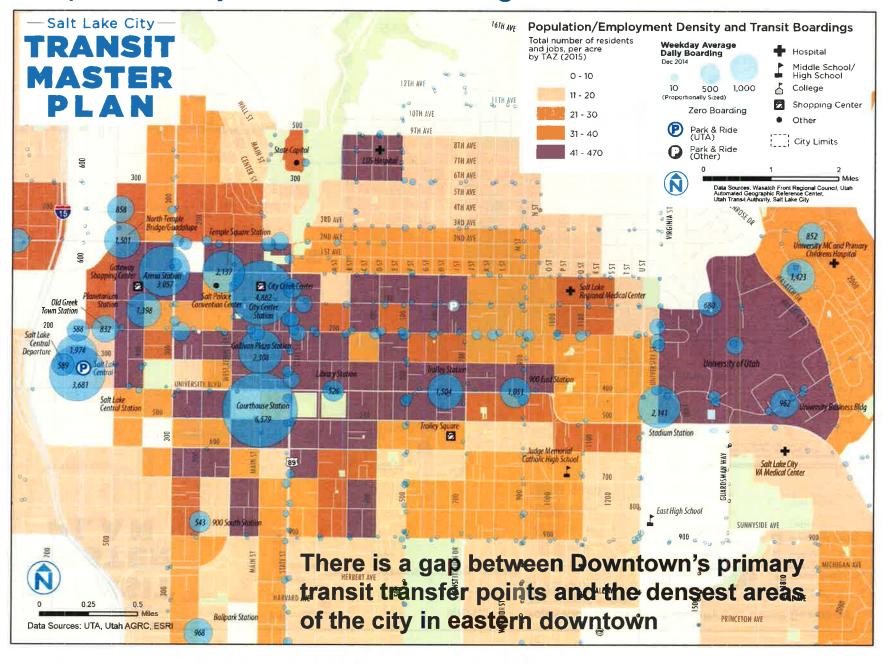
#### Gaps Analysis: Where service may not meet demand

- Higher density areas tend to have higher use of transit, however some high density areas in Salt Lake do not show high transit boardings, such as eastern downtown, portions of Liberty Wells, Sugar House, and neighborhoods west of I-15
- In particular, there is a gap between Downtown's primary transit transfer points and the densest areas of the city in eastern downtown
- This first/last mile barrier is exacerbated by the large block size in Salt Lake City

#### Gaps: Density and Transit Boardings



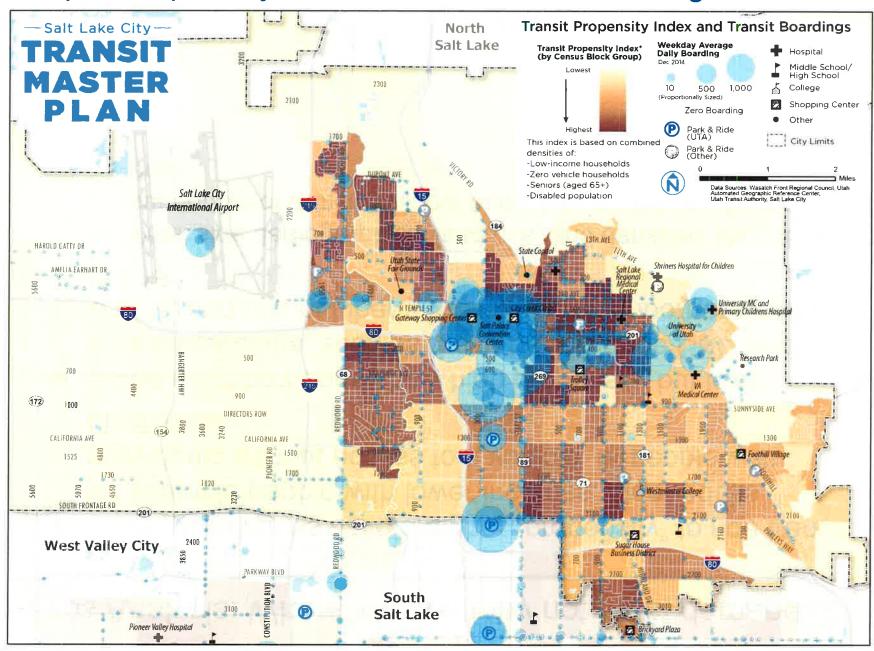
#### Gaps: Density & Transit Boardings - DOWNTOWN



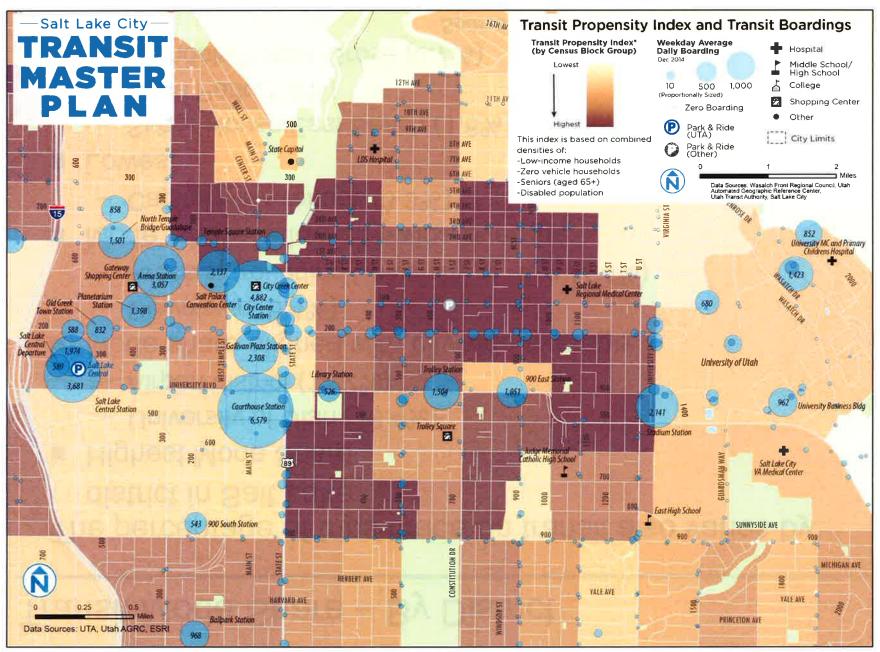
#### Gaps Analysis: Where service may not meet demand

- Some populations have a higher "propensity" to ride transit, for example people with lower incomes, older adults, individuals without access to a vehicle, or people with disabilities.
- Some neighborhoods show high propensity but lower transit boardings, such as those between the CBD and the U of U, portions of Liberty Wells, and neighborhoods west of I-15.
  - West side demographics, land use, and densities should be supportive of transit use, but show less transit use than other areas.

### Gaps: Propensity to Ride Transit and Boardings



#### Gaps: Propensity to Ride Transit + Boardings (DOWNTOWN)



### Transit Mode Share – By District

The percentage of trips made on transit also varies by district in Salt Lake:

- Highest Mode Share
  - University of Utah (18.4%)
  - Airport district (13.2%)
- Mode share aligned with citywide average
  - Downtown (6.4%)
  - Areas surrounding University of Utah (7.4%)
- Mode share below city-wide average
  - Capitol Hill/Avenues (3.3%)
- Lowest
  - Sugar House/East Bench (1.6%)
  - Rose Park (1.6%)
  - Glendale/Poplar Grove (0.7%)

Source: 2012 Utah Household Travel Survey

### **Transit Boarding Trends 2011-2014**

- Transit boardings in SLC have increased since 2011, but at slower rate than the system as a whole and than service hours.
  - Exception: Bus ridership has decreased 3%

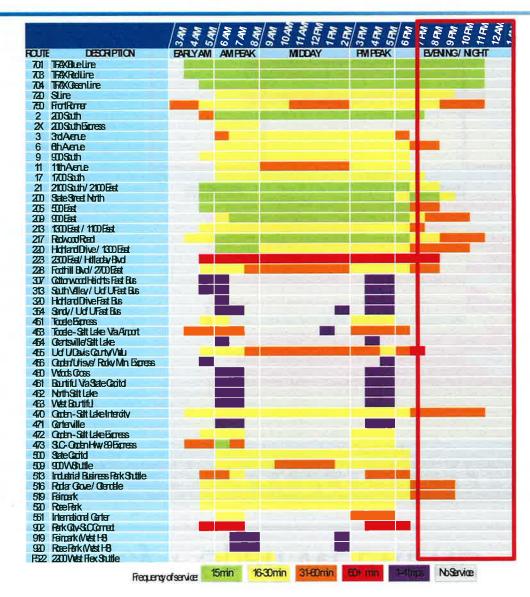
Transit Boardings Change (2011-2014)		
SLC Bus	- 3%	
TRAX	30%	
TRAX (SLC only)	19%	
FrontRunner	176%	
FrontRunner (SLC only)	77%	
Total Boardings	28%	
Total SLC Boardings	13%	

Notes: (1) Bus boardings include UTA bus routes that enter Salt Lake City limits. (2) TRAX and FrontRunner boardings that occur within Salt Lake City limits. [3] Revenue hours for TRAX, FrontRunner, and S-Line include the entire systems, since all lines serve Salt Lake City. 4) There is no comparable historic data available for the S-Line which was not open in 2011.

### Gaps Analysis: Where service may not meet demand

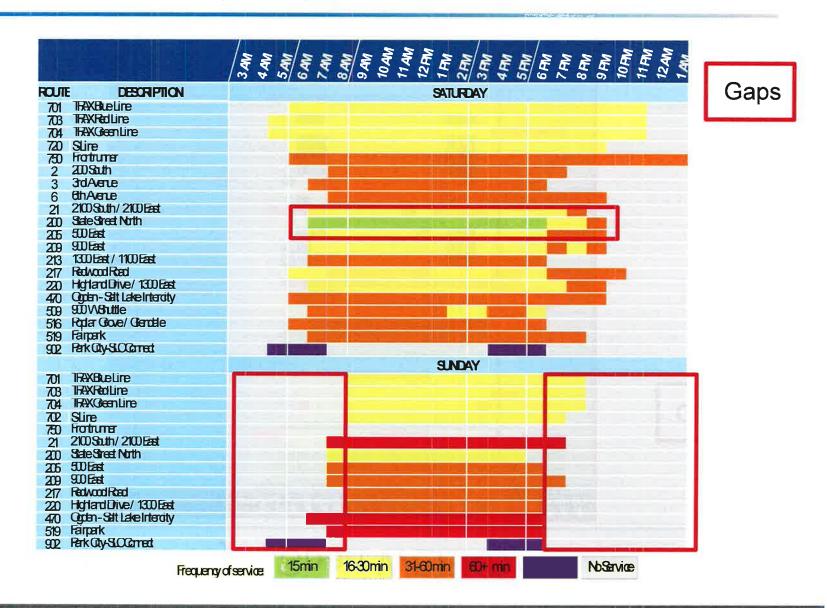
- Frequent service is very limited outside of standard commute times, such as midday, evenings and weekends.
  - ≤15 minute service is considered the minimum that allows people to use transit without consulting a schedule
  - Of Salt Lake City's 44 bus routes, only 6 routes operate service that is available every 15 minutes or less
  - Service is particularly limited on weekends: 16 of the 44 bus routes operate on Saturdays and 9 operate on Sundays
    - Most weekend services operate no more frequently than every 30 min. on Saturdays and every 60 min. on Sundays
- This presents challenges for visitors, service sector workers, and those who want a "transit lifestyle."

### Service Frequency + Span WEEKDAY



Gaps

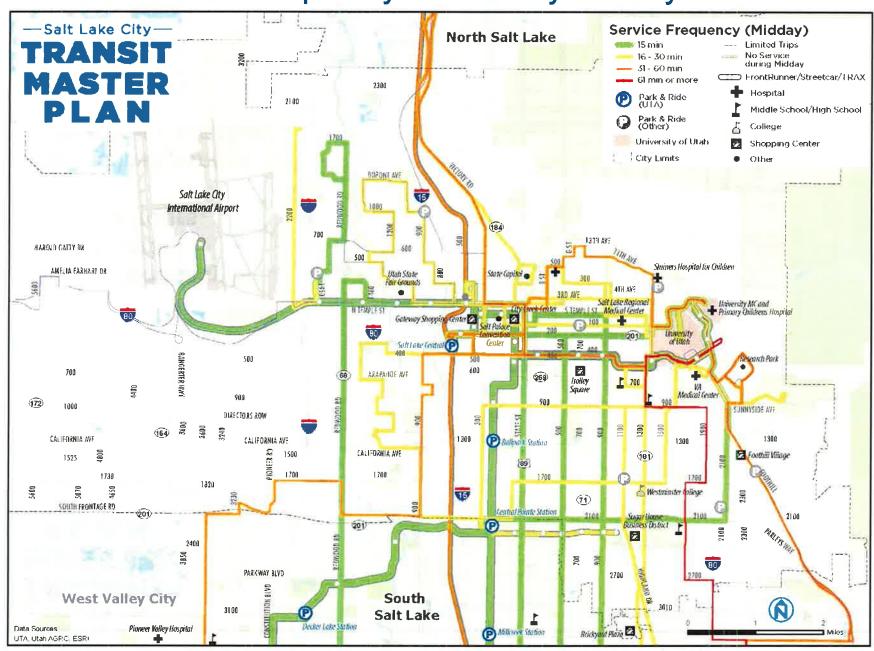
### Service Frequency + Span WEEKEND



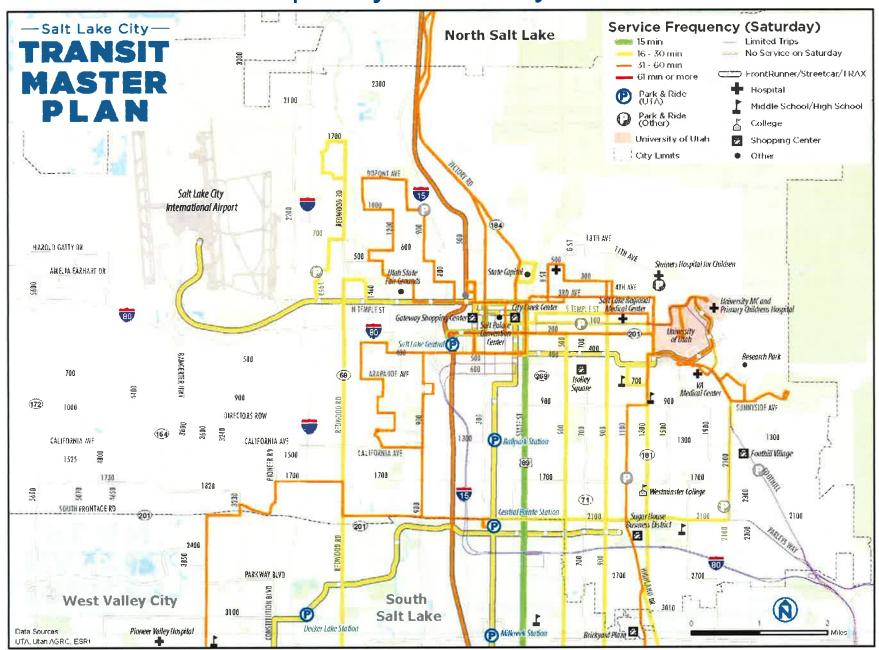
#### Transit service frequency – Weekday AM Peak



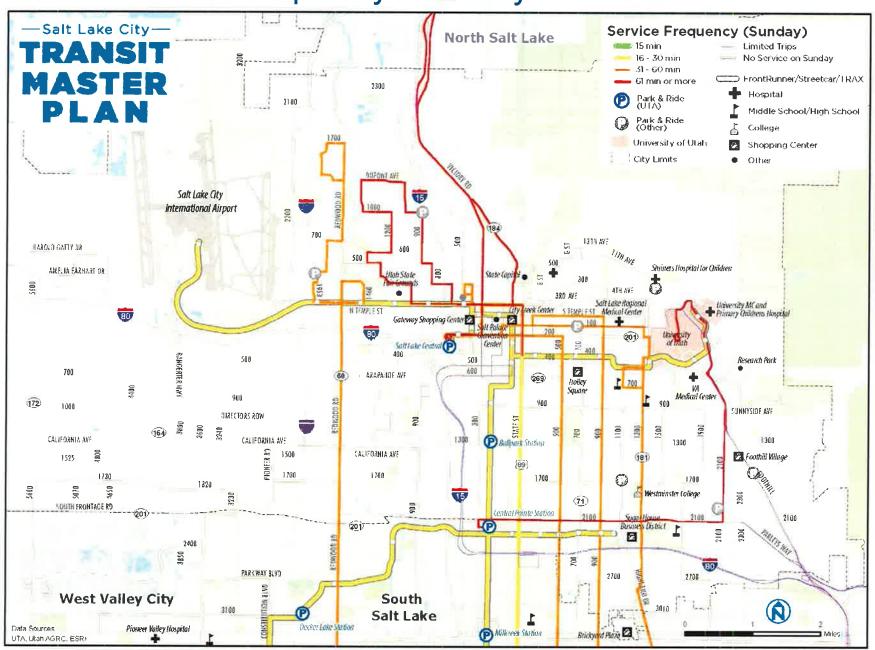
### Transit service frequency— Weekday Midday



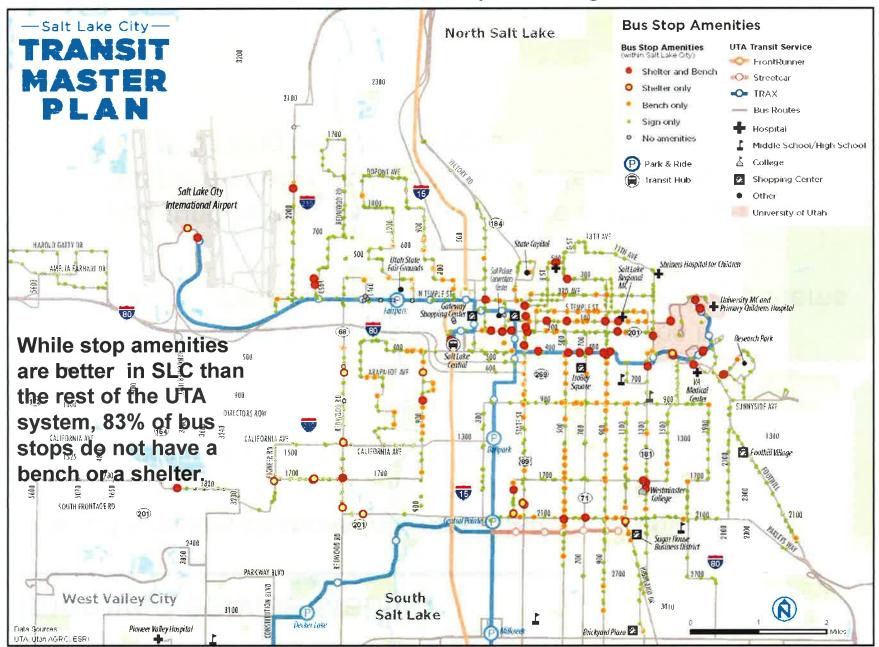
#### Transit service frequency—Saturday



#### Transit service frequency—Sunday



#### There are limited amenities for passengers at bus stops



### Improved service stability

- UTA makes changes to their system three times per year, which creates uncertainty about system stability and undermines the City's ability to organize growth around transit
- UTA has made some major structural changes in their service in the last 10 years that changed boarding patterns
- Opportunities may exist to build more stable, long-term ridership and encourage transit-oriented development through limiting service changes

### Transit Affordability is a concern for many

- Affordability make transit more affordable, esp. for:
  - Large families and youth
  - Transit dependent populations
  - Especially west side
- Ideas:
  - Low-income transit pass
  - Family pass
  - Discounts for major trip patterns, e.g. University-Downtown



### Access to transit stops and stations is critical

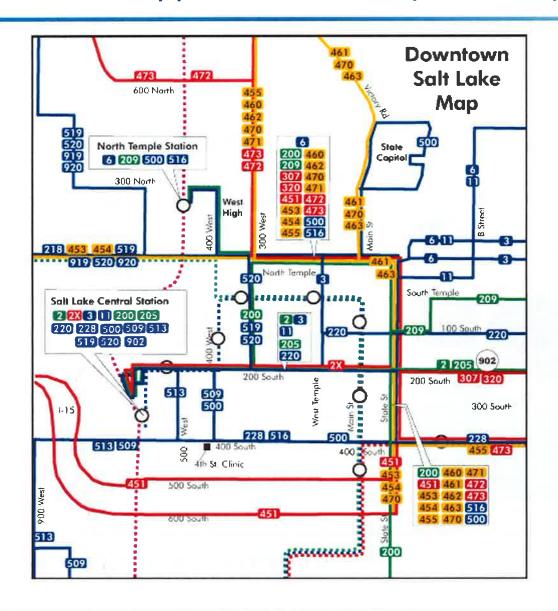
- Accessing transit can be challenging based on wide streets and large blocks.
- Solutions may include:
  - Mid-block connections as development occurs
  - Improving multimodal connectivity through programs like GreenBike
  - Improving pedestrian environment

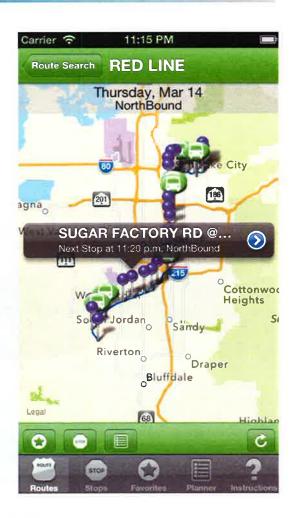


#### **City Block Size Comparison**



#### There are opportunities to improve maps/information





#### **UTA Facilities Needs**

- UTA has needs for new facilities to support additional service:
  - Additional bus layover space in Salt Lake City at University of Utah and Downtown
  - No additional trains can move through the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> South and Main Street



### Summary of State of System

- Key travel demand corridors:
  - Downtown East Downtown Avenues to surrounding University
  - East-west across I-15
  - Sugarhouse
  - Capitol Hill Downtown

- neighborhoods
- Circulation within Downtown
- Intra-neighborhood trips
- Redwood Road
- Highest density areas are east of downtown transfer points
- Some areas with high propensity to use transit aren't wellserved by existing transit system
- Transit use lower for non-commute trips (the majority)
- Transit use lower in some neighborhoods
- Transit boardings increased less in Salt Lake than in system as a whole over past 4 years

### Summary of Key Transit Service Needs/Gaps

- Increased frequency and span of service (support "transit lifestyle")
- Support existing/future growth; desire to be regional destination for culture/commerce (e.g. midday and evening trips)
- Better neighborhood and non-commute oriented services (connections to and between neighborhood nodes)
- Improved reliability and speed; more competitive with auto (consider ease and low cost of driving and parking in SLC)
- Improve stability of service
- Safer, higher quality bus stops with more amenities
- Better, safer access to stops
- More affordable service
- Better maps and information
- Build a "transit culture" (e.g. education/promotion to build ridership)

### Thank You!



# For more information visit: www.slcrides.org

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Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan

# 5 WHO RIDES TRANSIT IN SALT LAKE CITY?

This chapter analyzes the demographic data received in the 2014 UTA On-Board Survey for passengers who ride fixed route transit. For the purpose of this study, only respondents whose trips began or ended within Salt Lake City limits are analyzed. Of the 13,282 responses to the UTA survey, 8,491 respondents (64%) meet this criterion. The other 4,791 responses are not included in this analysis.

#### Gender and Age

Transit riders in Salt Lake City are slightly more male than female at 58% to 42% respectively. Riders are also more likely to be young, due in part to the large population of students at the University of Utah: 62% of riders are 34 years of age or younger and nearly one third are 18 to 24 years old (31%). When compared to demographics of the Salt Lake City population as a whole, the percent of people ages 18 to 34 is higher for UTA passengers than it is in the city as a whole (31% compared to 14%).

■UTA Passengers □Salt Lake City 35% 31% 29% 30% 25% 23% 20% 20% 14% 4% 15% 11%11% 10%10% 10% 5% 5% 1% 0% Under 18 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75 or older

Figure 5-1 Age of Transit Riders

Source: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey; 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan

#### **Income and Employment**

The majority (61%) of UTA passengers in Salt Lake City have a household income of less than \$50,000 (Figure 5-5). This is due in part to the population of University of Utah students who rely on transit in Salt Lake City (students account for 25% of the transit passengers in the City). Only 48% of passengers are employed full-time (Figure 5-6). When compared to the income of Salt Lake City residents as a whole, UTA riders are lower income with 17% of UTA passengers earning \$10,000 or less versus 10% of Salt Lake City residents.

■UTA Passengers □ Salt Lake City 30% 25%<sup>25%</sup> 25% 19%18% 20% 18% 17% 16% 14% 15% 11%11% 1 1% 0% 10% 5% 5% 2% 0% \$100,000-\$200,000 \$10,000-\$25,000-\$50,000-\$75,000-Under \$49,999 \$74,999 \$99,999 \$199,999 \$10,000 \$24,999

Figure 5-4 Household Income

Source: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey; 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

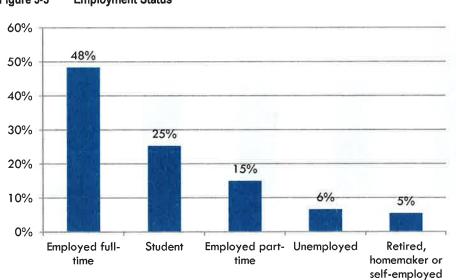


Figure 5-5 Employment Status

Source: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey

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#### **Ridership Frequency and Fares**

Most Salt Lake City passengers (66%) use UTA five or more days per week (Figure 5-7). Eleven percent ride two or fewer days per week. The UPass is the most common method of payment for Salt Lake City transit trips (used by 35% of passengers), followed by cash, tickets and transfers (23%)<sup>1</sup>, FAREPAY (22%), and passes (20%)<sup>2</sup> (Figure 5-8). Trips within the Fare Free Zone account for 2% of Salt Lake City trips.

70% 66% 60% 50% 40% 30% 21% 20% 11% 10% 1% 0% First time riding 2 or fewer days per 3-4 days per week 5 or more days per

week

week

Figure 5-6 Trip Frequency

Source: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey

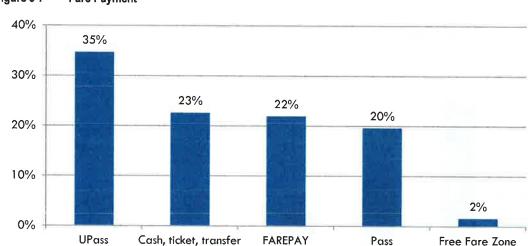


Figure 5-7 Fare Payment

Source: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Includes cash, tokens, one-way tickets, round-trip tickets, paper bus transfers and reduced fare products.

 $<sup>^{2}</sup>$  Includes day/group passes, Medicaid punch cards and paper monthly passes.

Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan

#### **Race and Ethnicity**

Racially, Salt Lake City transit passengers are largely white. Approximately 79% classify themselves as white or Caucasian, followed by Asian (6%), African American/Black (3%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (2%). Ethnically, the majority of respondents indicated they are not Hispanic or Latino (of any race). Only 13% indicated they were Hispanic (Figure 5-3). The racial and ethnic makeup of UTA passengers in Salt Lake City closely matches the Salt Lake City population as a whole. These passengers are less likely to be Hispanic and slightly more likely to be white/Caucasian.

■UTA passengers □ Salt Lake City 90% 79%76% 80% 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 21% 15% 20% 13% 9% 6% 4% 10% 3% 3% 2% 1% 0% White/ Other Asian African American Hispanic (of Indian/ Alaska Caucasian American/ any race) Black Native

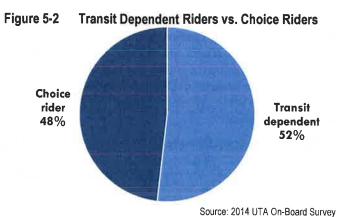
Figure 5-3 Race and Ethnicity (UTA Passengers vs. Salt Lake City Residents)

Sources: 2014 UTA On-Board Survey; 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan

#### **Transit Dependency**

For a variety of reasons, a portion of the population is dependent on the transit system to meet their transportation needs. These include having a disability, not having access to a private vehicle, insufficient income to pay for other modes, or not having a driver's license. According to the survey responses, more than half of UTA transit passengers in Salt Lake City (52%) are transit dependent (Figure 5-2). This means that



without adequate transit service, these individuals would not be able to meet their daily needs. The remaining forty-eight (48%) of passengers are "choice riders" which means they have the ability to travel using a mode other than transit.

A transit dependency map is provided in Chapter 3.

Salt Lake City Transit Master Plan

#### **Hive Pass Survey Results**

In 2013, Salt Lake City, in partnership with UTA, launched a one-year pilot project that allowed people living in Salt Lake City to purchase an unlimited annual transit pass for \$360 – called the Hive Pass. A total of 3,200 passes were sold during the pilot project; 233 Hive Pass users participated in an online survey following the pilot. Key findings from the survey include:

- Among those who had ridden transit before, there was a significant increase in the frequency of transit use.
- Seventy percent of Hive Pass holders use transit three times a week or more.
- More than 90% of Hive Pass users are satisfied with their Hive Pass.
- The majority of Hive purchasers live between State Street (west) and the University of Utah (east) and North Temple (north) and 400 South (south).
- Hive Pass users primarily used the bus (51%) followed by the TRAX (38%), FrontRunner (9%), and Streetcar (2%).
- Fifty one percent (51%) of Hive Pass purchases previously paid cash fares; 17% used Farepay cards; 23% purchased monthly passes, and 9% were new riders.

Source: Salt Lake City Hive Pass Pilot Program Evaluation (2014)