



## CITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL

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**TO:** Salt Lake City Council  
Victoria Petro, Chair

**DATE:** April 2, 2024

**FROM:** Kristin Riker, Director  
Department of Public Lands (PL)

**SUBJECT:** Public Lands' Updates on Parks General Obligation (GO) and Sales Tax  
Revenue Bond Projects – Written Update #2

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### Introduction

It is the Administration's intention, upon consultation with Council staff, to provide the City Council with a regular, written update and work session briefing about the three Public Lands-related, August 2022 City-Council approved sales tax revenue bond projects; and the 19 projects funded by the November 2022 voter-approved, \$85 million general obligation (or GO) bond for parks, trails, and open spaces.

This is the Administration's second update following the first issuance of GO Bond funding (\$24,660,000), which was approved for spending on October 17, 2023, as part of Budget Amendment #2 of FY 23/24. The first update was on December 5, 2023, and the next (third) will likely be this summer following the adoption of the FY 2024/25 budget.

## **2022 Sales Tax Revenue Bond (Three Public Lands-Related Projects)**

### *Cemetery Roadways and Irrigation Improvements*

The Salt Lake City Cemetery roadways and irrigation improvements project (Council District 3) is funded by this bond (\$11.2 million), an appropriation from the state legislature (\$3 million), and a private donor (\$1 million), for a total of approximately \$15.2 million. This project's tax-exempt bond funds must be spent by November 2025. The project also includes an informal update of the Cemetery Master Plan that will be helpful for additional fundraising and/or capital campaigning.

The improvements will mean a significant revitalization of the cemetery's roadways (concrete) and irrigation systems, focused on the northeast and east areas of the cemetery. Asset condition and public comfort and perception will improve, drainage will be better managed, and more advanced and flexible irrigation systems will use less water and help maintain tree health even during extreme drought. The project has moved past 70% design and will be bid for construction starting in late summer or early fall (2024).

### *Urban Wood Reutilization Facility project*

This project was allocated \$2.1 million from this bond. The facility will reutilize tree "waste" (wood chips for parks, wood for carpentry and art, etc.) that often heads straight to the landfill. It will allow the City to reuse or sell most of that material.

The City is likely moving forward with a site on an existing City-owned property (in District 1). These *taxable* bond funds must be spent between the end of 2025 and the end of 2027.

### *Pioneer Park Phase 1*

\$10 million of the sales tax revenue bond's proceeds (taxable, not tax-exempt) and more than \$3,000,000 of park impact fees are dedicated to Phase 1 implementation of the Pioneer Park Vision Plan (District 4), focused on the northern half of the park. This phase includes a new playground, plaza, large pavilion, restroom, ranger station, "shade lawn", food truck area, mist fountain, and natural habitat area.

Currently, our staff are developing schematic design drawings. Design tasks will wrap up at the end of this year or early next, with construction beginning in July 2025 and likely wrapping up in late spring/early summer 2026.

Note that the downtown farmers market's 2024 season will not be impacted by this work.

## **2022 Parks, Trails, and Open Space GO Bond**

There are 19 parks, trails, and open space projects (so far) funded by the general obligation (GO) Bond. Additional projects will be determined by the Emerald Ribbon Action Plan and will replace the single Jordan River Corridor project (p. 8).

Funding from the first tranche of this bond has been available since early November 2023,

following FY 23/24's Budget Amendment #2 (approved on October 17, 2023). Project managers and our finance staff in Public Lands and Engineering are busy getting consultant designers, planners, and public engagement specialists under contract, and are moving toward construction on several projects, as well.

For more information, visit [www.slc.gov/parks/general-obligation-bond](http://www.slc.gov/parks/general-obligation-bond) (which will soon be to page to which the [www.SLCParksBond.com](http://www.SLCParksBond.com) URL forwards).

### Glendale Park

This project is seeking SITES Gold certification, as required by the newly adopted Sustainable Infrastructure policy (2023; see Section 56-3-6 of the City Code).

Phase 1: The ceremonial groundbreaking of the park's (District 2) first phase was held in October 2023 in anticipation of contractors beginning their work this spring (a later start date than previously anticipated due to some permitting delays, but still allowed by LWCF administrators). Phase 1 improvements include a custom all-ages playground with universal design and assistive technologies, full-court basketball, mobile food court infrastructure, and parking. This western part of the ultimate buildout of the park is expected to be open to the public in late 2024 or early 2025.

Pickleball: Design and construction for potentially up to twelve pickleball courts (in addition to a handful of tennis courts) will also commence in 2024.

Phase 2: Design for the second phase of Glendale Park will begin this summer, with construction potentially beginning in late 2025 or early 2026 and wrapping up in 2028.

Future Phases: Feasibility studies for water features are expected to begin soon, as well.

### Liberty Park's Rotary Play Park & Playground

\$2 million of GO Bond funding is for a new all-ages and abilities playground and play areas at Liberty Park's Rotary Play Park (District 5). When finished, this will be a signature space where people of all ages and abilities, especially children, can enjoy safety, comfort, and inclusion at Salt Lake City's landmark park.

In September 2023, the project team wrapped up the project's first phase of engagement. Thousands of people were engaged in this phase. This included online impressions and engagements, nearly 500 online survey responses, 80 in-person conversations at the playground this summer, 319 conversations at nine events this summer, and two very important focus groups with 35 9-13 year olds from SL Arts. A summary of results from this first phase of engagement can be found on the project webpage. Expect more community engagement and design activities in 2024.

A renowned consultant team in the field of playground and play area design is on board to deliver final construction documents for these improvements by January 2025, with construction anticipated to begin in 2025. That team includes public engagement specialists, tree care, engineering, survey, and other experts essential to this project.

### Allen Park

Allen Park's (District 7) Adaptive Reuse and Management Plan will be completed this spring or early summer (2024), following which Public Lands will present the plan to the City Council. This plan will outline the future programming and improvements for Allen Park and determine short-term, Phase 1 improvements that can be implemented with the \$4.5 million of GO Bond funding. We have heard from hundreds of community members and other interested parties about how they envision the future of Allen Park.

Upon completion of the document, an RFQ will be issued to hire a consultant to design the Phase 1 park improvements. (Some already-designed utility upgrades, funded by the GO Bond and other sources, will be constructed this year (2024) in advance of Phase 1 investments in years to come.)

### Folsom Trail

\$5 million of the GO Bond has been dedicated to landscaping, irrigation, and completion of the Folsom Trail (Districts 2 and 3).

**Landscaping:** A landscaping and irrigation design consultant will be under contract this spring. They will create construction documents for those improvements based on previous designs and the City Creek Daylighting Design Plan. Construction will likely begin in 2025.

**Trail Completion:** Discussions with adjacent property owners west of 1000 West regarding the completion of the trail have been very fruitful over the last year. We are enthusiastic about the positive direction in which these are heading and intend to engage a preliminary engineering and property survey consultant this spring to determine utility conflicts, trail alignment, property easement needs, and other outstanding tasks and requests that have emerged from stakeholder outreach in 2023.

### Fleet Block

A consolidated, comprehensive Fleet Block website (including information about the redevelopment project and last December's rezone [CAN], the approximately three-acre public open space on the southeast corner [Public Lands], the murals, overall site history, FAQs, and other information) will be published and promoted this spring. It will be the virtual space in which the City will share all information about all projects on the block, rather than having information spread across multiple sites and pages, department by department or project by project.

The new, approximately three-acre public open space (District 5) will utilize \$6 million of GO Bond funds. Connections between the public space, the 9-Line, future Green Loop improvements, and planned light rail on 400 West will be crucial. These can be found in preliminary site plans and will be further developed and refined through community input and coordination with CAN's chosen development teams and designers.

Public Lands is anticipating a joint community engagement effort with the CAN Department and their chosen development teams and designers, to begin in 2024, with Public Lands', the Mayor's Office's, and the Arts Council's parts of that larger effort focusing on identifying

public priorities for the public open space or square and the project's anticipated public artwork. These three partner groups are aiming to release an RFQ to solicit an engagement, art, and landscape design consultant team around the same time as CAN releases theirs.

### Fairmont Park

There are \$6.5 million of GO Bond funds dedicated to improvements in Fairmont Park (District 7):

- \$5 million for improvements that may include repair of, or possible new public uses for, the existing tennis courts on the corner of Sugarmont Drive and 900 East, improving facilities and services provided by the Boys & Girls Club, and enhancing public access to and within the park itself; and
- \$1.5 million for safety, security, and lighting improvements throughout the entire park.

A public input and engagement consultant will be under contract this summer. Activities with stakeholders, property owners, the community council, the community at large, and others are planned to begin shortly thereafter. This engagement will be aimed at understanding (through statistically valid surveys, events, the stakeholder outreach mentioned previously, online preference surveys, and other means) more precisely how the public wishes the City to spend these funds and accomplish these purposes.

### Steenblik Park

The first phase of community engagement for Steenblik Park aka Cat Park (District 1) is complete. About 475 people engaged in online and in-person activities, including a very successful taco truck parking lot pop-up workshop, community council presentations, summer events, and Rose Park Elementary School's parent night in 2023. The engagement report for that phase is available now on the project webpage.

An on-call design consultant is now on board to develop conceptual design alternatives based on that public engagement in 2023. Those designs will be the foundation of our summer 2024 engagement activities, ultimately resulting in a final preferred alternative that will be transformed into final construction documents.

### Cottonwood Park

Public Lands began Phase 1 of public engagement for this park (District 1) in March 2024. An online survey is live on the project webpage now! It seeks to understand current usage and the community's visions and priorities for future improvements. Our staff are also tabling at different events throughout the spring (2024) so that we can capture as many diverse and representative ideas as possible. Engagement will conclude in May or June.

We scheduled this second phase of engagement to coincide with major engagement activities that we are already doing as part of the Emerald Ribbon Action Plan. Engaging the public at the same time will help everyone understand the intimate connection between the two projects and will allow the Action Plan's design consultant to create community-informed concept designs, thereby reducing rework and improving the quality of our

investments. The community's preferred design will be the basis for the park's "reimagining", to be finalized in the form of construction documents.

### Madsen Park

Madsen Park's (District 2) community engagement and design will kick off this summer (2024). The consultant who will be assisting the City in these tasks will be under contract this spring. Many community members (either by themselves or through their community councils) have already reached out to our staff to offer their ideas for how we reimagine the park. We hope that the design of these improvements can wrap up in 2025, with construction likely to begin in 2026 or later.

### Peace Labyrinth

Like Cottonwood, the first (but not the last) phase of public engagement for this open space (District 2) kicked off in March and concludes in May or June. It was similarly coordinated with the Emerald Ribbon Action Plan's outreach because of its proximity to the Jordan River.

### Warm Springs and North Gateway Parks

The Warm Springs and North Gateway Parks (District 3) project is becoming a gold standard for engagement and relationship-building.

In 2023 and 2024, Public Lands staff and our partners have made tremendous progress in the development and nurturing of community and indigenous relationships surrounding the potential improvements to and management of these historic and sacred sites. With a community-based non-profit and an indigenous liaison as subconsultants within our design and engagement consultant team, we expect very fruitful outcomes and further relationship building in 2024 and beyond.

Since September 2023, more than 400 online surveys have been collected and dozens of people from diverse communities have been involved in on-site, in-person, deep engagement regarding these improvements. This is in addition to nearly 400 that were engaged about the project at 10 community events in 2023 alone. Focus groups for indigenous leaders and community members, as well as the Pacific Islander and Hawaiian populations, took place in December 2023 and January 2024.

### Taufer Park

A very successful first phase of public engagement for both Taufer and Richmond Parks (District 4) concluded in August 2023. Informal engagement has continued since then. Through yard signs, community council meetings, hard copy and online surveys, neighborhood canvassing, interviews at the parks, news media features, summer events, postcard mailers, a volunteer clean-up and painting event, and a "potluck dream session", the Public Lands Department engaged roughly 1,700 people by the end of last summer to help reimagine Taufer and Richmond. A report for this 2023 phase of engagement is available on the projects' webpages.

The same design, engagement, and community empowerment and history consultant team working on Warm Springs and North Gateway Parks are also working on Taufer and Richmond Parks. 2024 will be a big year for these four projects.

Lastly, KABOOM, Delta Airlines, and the Utah Jazz organization have donated funding, materials, and volunteers for a June 1, 2024, build day for Taufer Park's new playground. We are currently wrapping up playground engagement with this neighborhood (after several design sessions in March and a survey in March and April) to determine the design of the playground that will ultimately be implemented. This public-private partnership is helping to serve this community's needs in a faster and more efficient way and also means that GO Bond funds allocated to "reimagining" this park do not have to be spent on the playground equipment itself and can instead be used more effectively to reimagine the rest of the park.

#### Richmond Park

Public engagement and design for Richmond Park (District 4) has occurred and will continue to occur in conjunction with the Taufer Park project, due to their proximity to one another.

The Sema Hadithi African American Heritage and Culture Foundation is serving as a subconsultant on the design and engagement consultant team for this park. Their help will ensure that the City is able to successfully fulfill, among other critical functions, the intent of the "Reimagine Neighborhood Parks" projects in adding or improving "unique elements of surrounding neighborhoods' identities and histories [and increase] elements of placemaking based on community input and desires" (GO Bond Voter Information Pamphlet, 2022).

This project combines funding from the GO Bond ("Reimagine") and CIP FY 23/24 (partial funding for playground replacement).

#### Ida Cotten Park

Ida Cotten Park's (District 5) community engagement and design will kick off this summer (2024). The consultant assisting the City in these tasks will be under contract this spring. Many community members have already reached out to our staff to offer their ideas for how we reimagine the park. We hope that design can occur in 2024 and 2025, with construction likely in 2026 or later.

#### Jefferson Park

The Jefferson Park (District 5) project combines funding from the GO Bond, CIP FY 23/24, and asset (playground) replacement budgets. This approach will multiply the impact and quality of possible improvements and ensure that taxpayer dollars are utilized as wisely as possible.

New playground equipment is currently in storage and will be installed this summer (2024), doubling as a kick-off community event for the further reimagining of the park.

### Sunnyside Park

On March 5, 2024, the City Council approved a public benefit analysis (PBA) and voted to allow the Administration to begin the process related to a below-market land lease of 1.175 acres within Sunnyside Park (District 6) to the University of Utah. If the City and the University of Utah agree to the terms of a lease, it will provide \$4.2 million in additional, upfront capital funding to this GO Bond-funded project.

In an effort to take advantage of the public's interest in the aforementioned process earlier in 2024 and ensure compatibility with the University of Utah's proposed baseball stadium and amenities designs, Public Lands will begin public engagement on this project as soon as this spring or summer (2024).

### Donner Trail Park

The first phase of public engagement for Donner Trail Park (District 6) was completed in late 2023. More than 600 people (predominantly from the neighborhoods near the mouth of Emigration Canyon and Bonneville Golf Course) took online surveys and were engaged by the Public Lands project team at in-person events. Many more received information about the project via postcard mailers, targeted social media ads, and yard signs. The report for this phase of engagement is also available now on the project's webpage.

Public Lands is currently finalizing the contract for a consultant to develop concept design alternatives and construction documents for the GO Bond-funded improvements to this park, which will also include public art (artist finalist selection in April) and a memorial tree grove (CIP funded). Public Lands is aiming for Phase 2 of community engagement (presenting concept designs based on Phase 1 engagement results) to begin in summer 2024.

### Jordan River Corridor

As stated in the introduction of this transmittal, additional GO Bond-funded projects (beyond the 19 identified in this document) will be determined by the Emerald Ribbon Action Plan and will replace this single description of all possible "Jordan River Corridor" projects (Districts 1 and 2).

The Emerald Ribbon Action Plan (funded by CIP) will establish the collective vision for the Jordan River in Salt Lake City and a roadmap of projects that fit within the GO Bond's \$9 million for Jordan River Corridor improvements. The Action Plan will also recommend new management maintenance and operational best practices so that the City's stewardship of the river and surrounding properties and assets can be exceptional.

The Action Plan project kicked off in July 2023 and the final plan is anticipated in late 2024. The project team is nearing completion of the second phase of the project, which includes developing three concept plans for the corridor and presenting those concepts to the public. These concepts were based on first phase engagement in which over 350 people shared their current awareness, feelings, hopes, and dreams for future of the Jordan River.



Highlights include:

- 50 key stakeholders engaged through the Technical Advisory Committee and the Community Advisory Committee.
- 30 youth aged 8-12 engaged in a visioning workshop at the Northwest Community Center.
- Two public workshops that were held at Sorenson Unity Center and Mestizo Coffeehouse, where approximately 140 community members gave input.
- Over 350 participants have engaged so far in an online survey focused on gathering feedback for the concept designs. This survey remains open through April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Once the currently-open public survey for Phase 2 of the project closes, the consultant team will consolidate feedback into a final high-level vision for the entire corridor. In addition, the consultant team will provide detailed designs for up to five locations along the river corridor. Initial conversations have identified Bend in the River/Modesto Park and Cottonwood Park as high priorities for detailed designs. The final concepts will be shared back with the public for another feedback opportunity this summer (2024).

With the completion of the plan anticipated by the end of 2024, Public Lands intends to begin initial design for the highest priority projects (funded by \$9 million in GO Bond funds) in early 2025. Construction on some projects can be anticipated to begin as early as late 2025 or early 2026.

Lastly, the Backman Community Open Space near Backman Elementary (which is partially funded by the GO Bond) will begin construction this summer (2024) and is anticipated to be complete by the end of the year. This is the final phase of open space improvements related to the installation of the new Backman Bridge. This project includes better inclusion of the new Backman Bridge and realignment of the mainline of the Jordan River Parkway Trail, new soft surface trails on the west side of the river, native plantings, and the development of a currently underutilized parcel of public land into a nature playground and outdoor classroom for Backman Elementary School students and the public.

## **Conclusion**

The Public Lands Department hopes that, by sharing information like this with the City Council on a regular basis, we can be open and collaborative about project design and construction, phasing, funding, and coordination, particularly as we collaborate with other Salt Lake City projects and partners.

Our team looks forward to briefing you again soon on the progress we make over the course of the next two or three months.

We invite the public to visit [SLCParksBond.com](https://SLCParksBond.com) and [SLCPublicLands.com](https://SLCPublicLands.com) to find out more information about public input opportunities (past, present, and future) for bond and otherwise-funded projects.