

Attachment 10 – City Council's Green Loop Questions and Responses from the Administration

- How much funding and from what sources has been approved to date for the Green Loop (not counting the \$3.14 million request the Council is considering in FY2025 CIP)?

Answer:

Based on the Green Loop's inclusion in the Downtown Plan and the Reimagine Nature Public Lands Plan, a multi-departmental staff team has been meeting since 2018 and seeking funding to further the project. To date, \$2,310,000 has been allocated to the Green Loop.

City Council has approved a total of 3 funding sources that directly include the Green Loop in the CIP budget book descriptions.

- FY21 CIP – Corridor Transformations Citywide – \$1.1 million total appropriation included 200 East and other corridors on the Downtown Green Loop as possible projects. No funds from this cost center were used for the Green Loop, as other corridor transformations (600 N, 300 W, 1000 W, Main St., South Temple) took precedence.
- FY22 CIP – Downtown Green Loop Implementation: Design for 200 East Linear Park - \$610,000 total appropriation for conceptual design of 200 East. This full amount will be spent on the Green Loop as described in the application.
- FY22 CIP – Urban Trails Development and Construction – \$1,045,000 total appropriation included “Design and initial quick-build implementation of portions of 200 East and/or other streets included in the Green Loop linear park recommended in the Downtown Master Plan. Quick-build designs will be linked to the project’s public engagement process and may be temporary, seasonal, or semi-permanent.” A total of approximately \$510,000 has been allocated to the Green Loop, with other funds going to pave a trail along the Jordan River to Backman Elementary, to study trails West of Redwood Road including near The Other Side Village, and toward the 400 South Viaduct Trail (construction 2025).

The FY24 Complete Streets Program (2100 South, Virginia Street, and Citywide), \$3,293,000 total, will use \$700,000 to provide the local match (20%) to a \$2.8 million federal grant to add a multi-use path and other pedestrian/ bicycle improvements to State Street. This project’s primary goal is to connect the City Center TRAX station to the Avenues and Memory Grove. A key block of State Street is on the Green Loop, such that this project is both a transit connection and a piece of the loop. Due to right of way constraints, this connection will be transportation only, without transformative greening. The federal grant applicant and awardee is UDOT; UDOT will administer the funds and construct the project as is particularly appropriate since State Street is UDOT’s.

- Why was the specific segment of the Green Loop through the Granary District prioritized for designs using the \$3.14 million proposed in FY2025 CIP? Is it correct that the \$3.14 million is only for designs and not construction?

Answer:

The Green Loop route on 500 West in the Granary represents a confluence of opportunities that make this area highly attractive for investment at the Green Loop now and in the imminent

future. The Granary is experiencing unprecedented levels of redevelopment, including by developers who will need to invest in infrastructure in the public way as part of their developments. This level of development also often requires upgrades to public utilities and are funded by the developer. The Green Loop could leverage this to reduce construction costs, but only if the developers have enough design information to build out these changes in infrastructure in ways that align with the needs of the Green Loop.

500 West especially between 600 South and 900 South is one of the sections of the Green Loop that needs reconstruction. This area of downtown has the least access to park and open space, the fewest trees, and high heat island impacts – but really what drives it to the top as a timely priority is the unique and timely opportunity to dovetail the city’s initiative with private investment and with needed street reconstruction.

- What are the options to phase the project from an optimal construction perspective vs an incremental conservative budget constraint / longer term perspective?

Answer:

The Green Loop Project includes 5.5 miles of downtown streets and is anticipated to be phased over approximately 10 years as a compromise between an optimal construction timeline and a longer-term and more budget-conservative approach.

An optimal construction timeline would fund and construct the loop as one single project with construction phasing likely over 3-5 years. This approach would serve the public’s interest in having this facility available now, would plant trees as soon as possible toward a cooler downtown even as the City experiences its hottest summers, and would provide the predictability and investment in downtown to make the Green Loop a reliable economic driver, similar to the S-Line streetcar. A rapid implementation would still likely take at least 6-7 years to complete, from design to grand opening.

The long-term timeline is what we are already on, now. This approach lacks legibility for the public as a single project and puts construction over long time periods, likely pausing between segments. The “Park Blocks” along 500 West were constructed in the early 2000’s. The Green Loop was first proposed by the Downtown Alliance in 2007. The 9-Line Trail along 900 South has recently been substantially completed, with the notable exception of street greening and trees. 900 South was studied starting in 2016 (the 9-Line Trail Extension Study), with construction just completing in 2024. These two projects, while both part of the Green Loop, lack the amplification and excitement of the Green Loop as a whole. This approach might take 30-40 years for full development.

The middle ground would identify opportunities for confluence with street reconstruction needs, public utility upgrades, state and federal grants, and private developer investment. Segments of 3-5 blocks determined primarily from the natural breaks of land use, transportation needs, and utility connections would go through successive stages of public engagement, conceptual design, full design, utility preparation, and construction. The development of each segment will take approximately 4-5 years on an accelerated timeline; however, the Green Loop program would overlap segments to accelerate the overall delivery. This segmented approach is

currently most likely. This approach is reflected in the Green Loop Update transmitted to Council in late July.

- Is the Green Loop 30% or 60% eligible for parks impact fees? The application says only 30% of the project is for green space / plazas (the other 30% is transportation and 40% is relocating existing utilities). There was a prior claim that 60% of the project is eligible for parks impact fees because the transportation elements are like a linear park.

Answer:

This project is to fund engagement/design only and thus ineligible for impact fees. Impact Fees are only eligible for projects that maintain Level of Service. Engagement and design without construction will not accomplish this. Additionally, only the portion of design that supports funded construction would be eligible.

If this were a complete design/build project, then the Parks portion would be limited to approximately 30% as indicated in the future 200 east project. See excerpt from application below:

200 EAST: The project team is currently aiming for construction of a 3-5 block segment in 2026, with an anticipated cost of \$20-\$40 million depending on length and design complexity. Approximately 30% of this cost is roadway / transportation; 30% is green space / plazas; and 40% is utility-related. As of this writing (January 2024), a pending application for \$9.8 million in state Transit Transportation Investment Fund (TTIF) funds has been ranked #1 in its funding pool; awards may be announced this spring and a three-block segment is \$7-8 million. A potential funding package to reach a \$30 million project, for example, could include \$5-8 million from this Public Lands request; \$7-8 million from TTIF toward pedestrian and bicycle facilities; approximately \$3 million from Class C or street reconstruction CIP; and additional funds TBD for \$10-12 million in utility work (\$23 million total).

The prior claim of 60% impact fee eligibility was a preliminary determination based on the CIP application description as seen below. This 60% is derived by including the majority of the cost of relocating the utilities, as this is an associated cost of building the Park.

Potential segments, obtained funding, needs for match, and likely partnerships are detailed in question 17. Ultimately, this request is seeking \$10,000,000 (see the next two sentences for a breakdown by sources) to leverage three segments for construction, comprising together 7-9 blocks with a combined project value on the order of \$50 million. Impact fees for public plazas, green space, paths, and park-like amenities: \$6,000,000. 1/4 Cent Transportation funds: \$4,000,000.

In summary, under the current Impact Fee Facilities Plan (IFFP), the portion of the Green Loop plan that is owned or operated by the City, within the City boundaries, deemed a park/open space and maintains the Level of Service as indicated in the IFFP, would be eligible for Impact Fees.

As the design of the Green Loop is still in process, final determination of impact fee eligibility will be based on the associated cost breakdown once the conceptual design for each segment is finished. For 200 East, this cost breakdown will be available late summer / early fall. For other segments, conceptual design has yet to begin. The above scenarios may inform the range of possible eligibility percentages.

- Are the utility relocations anticipated to provide any public benefits such as improved seismic safety upgrades for continuing functions after a major earthquake, expanded capacity to support greater density, and/or coordination with private utilities to accelerate upgrades while the streets are open? Sometimes it appears that the utility relocations are an avoidable cost with no benefit.

Answer:

- The design team is analyzing the right-of-way to minimize conflicts with utilities. Proposed Framework plans for the Green Loop identify location of the green space improvements to minimize utility relocation. Roadways and bike lanes are located above key utilities as much as possible to preserve access for maintenance and repair. Design and sizing of public utilities is being coordinated with the Public Utilities Department and will take into account expanded capacity and current design standards. This is particularly true in the Granary area.
 - The project is proposing to include a private utility vault as part of the project. This underground vault would improve management of private utilities and improve access for utility maintenance and repair. Consolidating private utilities into a vault has many public and private benefits, that include facilitating future roadway construction.
- How do the Green Loop preliminary designs on 200 East between 400 South and 500 South advance the concept of creating a Civic Campus by tying together Washington Square and the Library Plaza? The Council has previously discussed the Library Plaza study, 200 East Green Loop study and designs, the Washington Square Master Plan, and physical security improvements to City Hall as tying together to unify the overarching concept of a Civic Campus.

Answer:

- This block of the Green Loop on 200 East between 400 and 500 South offers a unique opportunity to connect Library Square and Washington Square with significant greening to improve the space for events and everyday use. Library Square is often desolate during summer months, tree planting is very limited on the square because it is a roof deck over parking and weight is a primary consideration of above-ground improvements. The greening provided by the Green Loop in this block will add much-needed shade for events and everyday users.
- Public Lands staff are collaborating with the Salt Lake City Library and Facilities to hire a consultant for a stakeholder visioning process to improve Library Square. Goals for the project will include improving the square and civic campus for events and improve connections between Library Square, the Green Loop and Washington Square. With the preliminary design work on the Green Loop, the design can be further informed by the

Library Square visioning process with event stakeholders to create a compelling outdoor events venue and civic campus.

- Would this segment be prioritized first for construction? If not, what other sections would the Administration recommend prioritizing?

Answer:

This section of the Green Loop is a high priority, although it may not be very first. In part, additional time is needed to fully consider this block's connection and opportunities for integration with Library and Washington Square. There is consistency with administrative staff involved in all three projects. The design team has developed a concept to understand the opportunities of the 400-500 block, in-depth stakeholder engagement is needed to refine the concept further. This section of the Green Loop could be prioritized to be aligned with improvements to Washington Square and/ or Library Square. Improvements in this section of the Green Loop is a unique opportunity to create a space that is very supportive of events and everyday activities.

- On 200 East, the three blocks just to the north (100 South to 400 South) would be recommended ahead of the Civic Block. This is for a few key reasons: a simpler design, the opportunity to dovetail with street reconstruction needs, and a chance to set the initial blocks of the Green Loop in the heart of downtown. 500 West, especially 600 South to 900 South, as discussed above, is the other segment recommended to be prioritized.
- How is leveraging grant funds and/or private financial partnerships and fundraising anticipated to factor into paying for the Green Loop?

Answer:

- Grant funds, private partnerships, philanthropic donations, and impact fees are all anticipated to be part of the funding of the Green Loop. Any large project like the Green Loop is anticipated to have segments and/or phases, and funding packages to support each stage.
- In the current funding environment, state funds for active transportation and connections to transit – such as the Green Loop's connection to the North Temple FrontRunner Station – are one of the leading potential sources of outside funds, with 30-40% local match required. Partnerships with adjacent commercial properties, institutions, and organizations are also likely to be part of the mix. Federal funds may also be available but are highly competitive; caution is also needed since federal projects come with administrative restrictions that increase overall project cost.
- A specific funding framework is still being contemplated but might include something like: 30% city (could include bonding), 30% private, 20% state, 10% federal (selected segments only), 10% county. Different phases or segments of the project are likely to have different configurations of funding.
- Is the Green Loop route expected to change, especially on the northern segment where graphics have shown different alignments along South Temple vs North Temple? For example, one

graphic shows the Green Loop going through the middle of the Sports, Entertainment, Culture, and Convention District?

Answer:

- The intersection of the Green Loop and the Sports, Entertainment, Cultural, and Convention District is an important consideration for determining the preferred routing for the northwest corner. Both projects likely have a strong interest in connecting to the North Temple / Guadalupe FrontRunner station. Perhaps the Green Loop is the preferred corridor for people walking from FrontRunner to the SECCD.
- The consultant team is looking at the remaining two legs, 500 West and North/South Temple to determine the preferred routing and alignment. For 500 West, the Green Loop will continue to build on the Park Blocks and the RDA Rio Grande District Plan, that shows significant public space on 500 West in front of the Rio Grande Building. The 500 West section was a former rail corridor, so it is very likely the center of the ROW presents the fewest utility conflicts for the development of green space. Linear transportation facilities for all ages and abilities walking and bicycling may need to be incorporated in the Park Blocks.
- How would the Green Loop improve the east-west transportation divide created by railroad tracks and Interstate 15? Sometimes the project is referred to and/or shown in maps as extending onto the Folsom Trail and 9-Line Trail west of 500 West? Would this include a section of the Green Loop going over or under the railroad tracks and under I-15 where the Folsom Trail crosses?

Answer:

Because recent discussions of the Green Loop arose from the Downtown Plan, the focus has been on green space and active transportation downtown. However, the loop does make significant improvements and connections to mend the east-west divide. It connects to the 9-Line, the Folsom Trail, and the 400 South Viaduct Trail currently in design – all of which extend westward across the divide. These trail segments interconnect to make a stronger network that becomes more valuable as both a recreation and transportation facility. The 500 West corridor, while just east of the divide, will provide north-south connectivity between the east-west trails. The challenge of the east west divide goes beyond transportation. It is also the surrounding land use – the ubiquitous pavement, many large industrial buildings, a swath of city approximately a mile wide that lacks significant greening, softening of the inhospitable industrial environment, or reprieve from the summer heat. Inserting corridors of green into this swath will provide linkages more transformative than a simple sidewalk or multi-use path.

- The detail of the Folsom Trail connection will be contemplated as the consultant team considers the technical and utility aspects of the north and west leg of the loop. Efficient and seamless connections to both the Folsom Trail and the North Temple / Guadalupe FrontRunner station are critical to that northwest corner and will be included in the final design.

- How are UTA's TRAX expansion plans being coordinated with the Green Loop since some of the TRAX expansions could require crossing (or underneath or elevated above) the Green Loop?

Answer:

- In City master plans, both projects were identified and planned as part of active transportation and transit networks in the City and are highly complementary. Alignment and station locations for TRAX are still being considered, so preliminary engineering will be part of the next phase, during which safe, compatible, and convenient access to both systems will be developed.
- The Green Loop design for 200 East crosses TRAX at 400 South at grade. The intersection of the two facilities improves connectivity for multiple modes of travel. The project will likely take a similar approach at future TRAX crossings.
- Has the Administration evaluated zoning changes to require or encourage businesses to intersect with the Green Loop in specific ways?

Answer:

We have discussed the potential for an overlay district for the Green Loop for this purpose. More study is needed.

- Where does the Green Loop fit into the City's prioritization of applications for ZAP tax funding anticipated in 2025 or 2026? Would the Administration welcome a policy discussion with the Council to inform this prioritization? Perhaps this could be folded into the existing Capital Asset Planning process?

Answer:

The Green Loop is listed as a key priority project for the city to apply for ZAP funds. This would include both the Green Loop and Library Square Vision Plan build out. Salt Lake County has solicited a list of regionally significant projects to include in their master plan, a prerequisite for ZAP eligibility.

- Would the Green Loop include public restrooms?

Answer:

Restroom facilities have not been included in the concept design for the right-of-way improvements. However, restrooms have been discussed as part of the civic campus needs for festivals.

- Some media reports claim the City would use public utilities and road reconstruction funds in addition to the \$3.14 million requested in FY2025 CIP to design and build the 500 West segment of the Green Loop. Is this correct?

Answer:

- At this time, we have no construction funding for 500 West, from any source. In considering potential funding sources, roadway reconstruction funds have come up based on the fact that the Overall Condition Index (OCI) for some blocks of 500 West is consistent with needing a reconstruction from 600 South to 900 South. This suggests that a reconstruction of 500 West in 2026 or 2027 may be appropriate. 500 West is currently being discussed as a candidate for FY26 or FY27 Complete Streets Reconstruction funding and would be provided in the list of potential streets circulated to Council with those applications.
- Public Utilities funding cannot be used for this project unless the underground utilities need reconstruction. If they do need reconstruction, then Public Utilities enterprise funds may come into play.
- If developers are required to upsize underground utilities to serve their project, they are required to bear the full cost of utility improvement costs. If subsequent developers benefit from utility upgrades there is a mechanism for them to pay their fair share and the first in line developer is reimbursed those costs. With several development projects in the Granary happening very soon, there was an interest by developers to partner on the project. They could improve and potentially relocate the utilities that benefit the Green Loop.