

600/700 North

Mobility, Safety, and Transit
Improvements Study



DRAFT 600/700 North Preferred Concept

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to summarize recommendations for 600/700 North corridor, and to provide some context about the process and rationale behind the recommendations. In late 2019 the Study began without any funding commitments; since then several significant funding sources have been cobbled together from various Federal, State, and local sources. The Preferred Concept presented in this document reflects a transformative vision for the corridor, and it should be emphasized that additional refinement and engineering is necessary to clearly understand how much additional funding is needed. It is also noted that implementation is expected to occur in phases, with roadway reconstruction activities preceded by spot improvements to crosswalks and bus stops.

Project Goals

The 600/700 North Corridor Stakeholder Committee established a set of 10 Corridor Goals:

- 1) Maintain and enhance the link among 600/700 North corridor neighborhoods and the rest of Salt Lake City
- 2) Link people and neighborhoods across 600/700 North
- 3) Maintain the corridor's regional connections
- 4) Calm traffic to create a safe corridor
- 5) Create a beautiful street with great places reflecting neighborhood pride
- 6) Improve access to and leverage Jordan River Parkway, Riverside Park, and the surrounding corridor parks and open space network
- 7) Support and shape corridor commercial nodes with walkable character and neighborhood-oriented services
- 8) Implement and support Salt Lake City's Frequent Transit Network and other transit connections
- 9) Improve the safety, consistency, and comfort of east-west bicycle travel in the project area.
- 10) Create a comprehensive and integrated set of solutions for the entire corridor

Working closely with the Committee, the project team developed three alternative concepts for the corridor that achieve these goals in different ways:

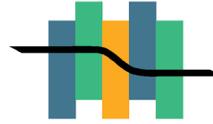
Concept 1: Baseline with Improvements - The current roadway layout with five lanes generally remains. Improvements are added for walking, biking, and transit.

Concept 2: Green Boulevard - A wide landscaped median is added to the center of the street in addition to walking, biking, and transit improvements.

Concept 3: Streetside Park - A portion of the street space is repurposed as a linear park extending from Riverside Park to provide a variety of amenities and public space.

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In addition to these core ideas, each concept included options for the Backman School/Riverside Park area and the I-15 interchange area.

The team presented these options to the public through an online story map, which included a short survey. The survey received nearly 500 responses that provided both quantitative and qualitative feedback. This feedback conveyed a series of clear – sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting – messages:

- Desire for green space and community open space as well as overall investment in the Westside neighborhoods, serving the purposes of creating a beautiful community and providing usable community space – embodying Goal 5.
- Desire for safe bike travel along the corridor, embodying Goal 9.
- Desire to slow traffic and create an overall safe environment for all street users – embodying Goal 4.
- Desire for 600/700 North to retain its function of moving people through Westside neighborhoods and to regional destinations, embodying Goal 1; and concern that one lane each way could not sufficiently move motor vehicle traffic now and in the future.
- Concern about the viability, sustainability and safety of open space and the fit of open space within the neighborhood context.

In addition, although it was less emphasized by the public, one key goal of the project from the outset is to integrate the new frequent transit network service into the corridor with high quality transit stops and waiting environment.

The team also considered the results of detailed traffic modeling on the corridor that concluded that one lane each direction from 900 West to Redwood Road can handle the existing traffic volumes as long as left and right turns lanes are provided at key intersections.

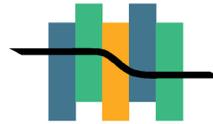
The team received guidance from the Stakeholder Committee in interpreting these results. In speaking with committee members, the team gleaned some key insights – that the area deeply desires a quality investment, though many in the community fear the change such an investment would bring. At the end of the day, many committee members expressed that a smaller, non-transformative project would not create the type of traffic calming, connections, and public spaces that they feel the corridor needs, embodied in the Corridor Goals.

Based on this feedback and these considerations, the team developed a Preferred Concept for the 600/700 North Corridor. The preferred concept is a mix of the three alternative concepts presented, taking on the strengths of each. This preferred concept combines and applies the alternatives in ways appropriate for the context of different segments of the corridor.

It may be useful to think of the overall shape of the preferred concept as an “hourglass,” with more traffic demand and corresponding traffic capacity at either end of the corridor, serving the two freeway

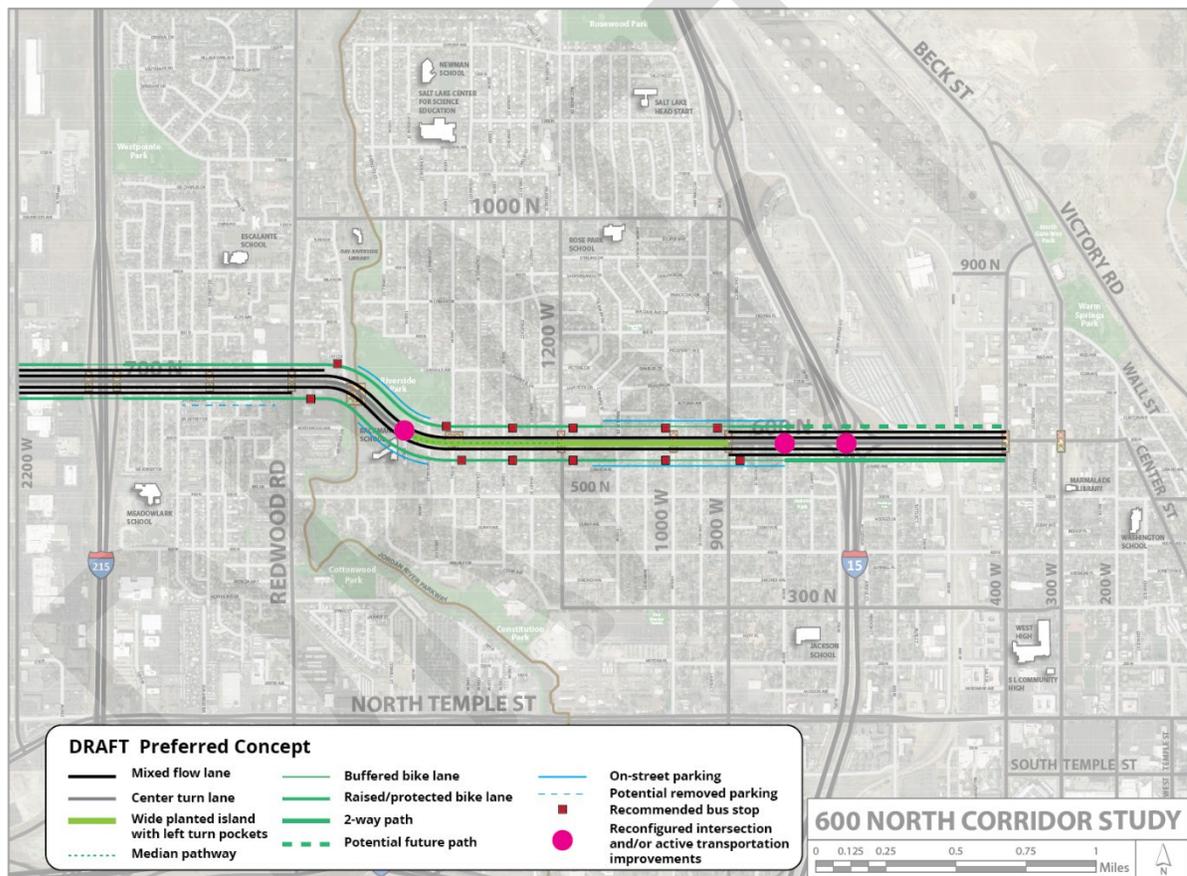
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interchanges and 900 West and Redwood Road corridors, while the neighborhood core of the corridor, between Redwood Road and 900 West, has less traffic demand and more desire for slow traffic and neighborhood activity associated with homes, Backman School, Riverside Park and Jordan River Parkway, and neighborhood commercial uses.

Correspondingly, the two ends of the corridor would retain two lanes each way, while this “neighborhood core” of the corridor would be reconfigured to one lane each way – with the space gained used to create a mutually reinforcing “ecosystem” of slower vehicle speeds, better active transportation conditions, community space, and beautification.



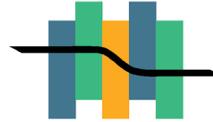
Draft Preferred Concept diagram

The diagram above shows how these pieces fit together at a high level. Here is a breakdown:

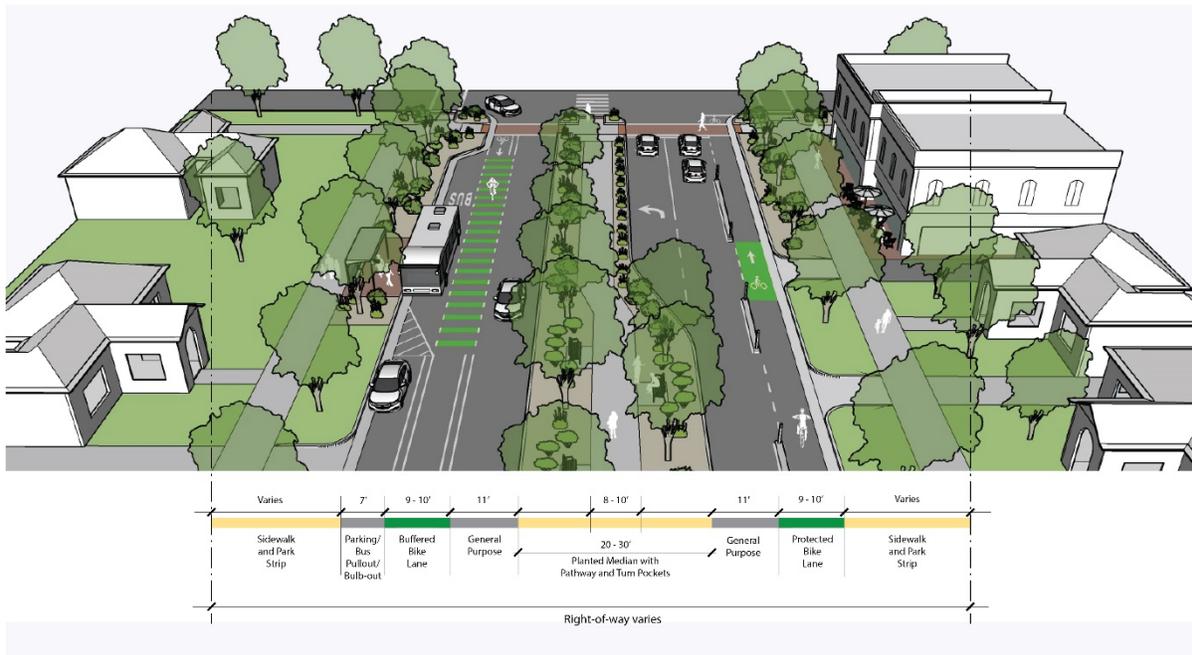
- One part of the “neighborhood core” of the corridor, from 900 West to 1500 West, is a version of Concept 2 with lanes reconfigured to one through lane each way and turn pockets at intersections. This concept has the central feature of the landscaped median proposed in Concept 2 but incorporates the usable open space popular with Concept 3’s linear park by

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including a pathway down the center of the median between two rows of trees, from 1200 West to 1500 West. This median would be a modern version of the planted medians found throughout Salt Lake's streets such as 200 West and 600 East – with more useable space and having sustainable landscaping. The segment of the median with the pathway would have marked crossings across the minor side streets in the medians.

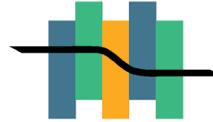


Typical cross section, 600 North from 900 West to 1500 West, showing two different approaches to bike facility. Median path would only run from 1200 West to 1500 West.

- In addition to the popularity of the median concept with the public (it received the highest rating of the three concepts), there are several practical arguments for a landscaped median configuration:
 - Having this space and pathway in the median is appropriate for the single-family residential context of the corridor, creating the community open space desired by the community, but separating it from people's front yards.
 - It is easier to plant larger trees in the median, where there would be no power lines along it, unlike along the park strip.

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- Putting the open space in the center allows the curbs to remain where they are and keeps flexibility as to just how active the median can be.
- The median's width from 1200 West to 1500 West would be about 30 feet, allowing for an 8-to-10-foot path with plenty of room on either side for buffer and trees/landscaping, as well as the ability to continue the path into the median nose alongside a narrow turn pocket. For reference, the 600 and 800 East medians are about 24 feet; the 300 South median in downtown, which has a pathway to access the median parking, is about 30 feet.
- The minor nature of the cross streets (and their narrow width on the Rose Park side) also make well-marked median crossings feasible at Oakley Street, Colorado Street, 1400 West and Catherine Street/Circle. The median would extend across the 1300 West intersection to enhance the crossing 1300 West Neighborhood Byway.
- The median is one big move that, if done well, could make a major contribution to creating a slower, human scale environment – reducing the traffic to one lane each way and adding landscaping makes a wide median a more hospitable place to be.

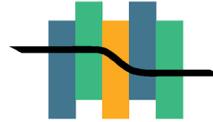


Examples of planted medians and median crossings in (clockwise from top left) Bogota, Colombia; New York City; Downtown Salt Lake City; and Oakland, California.

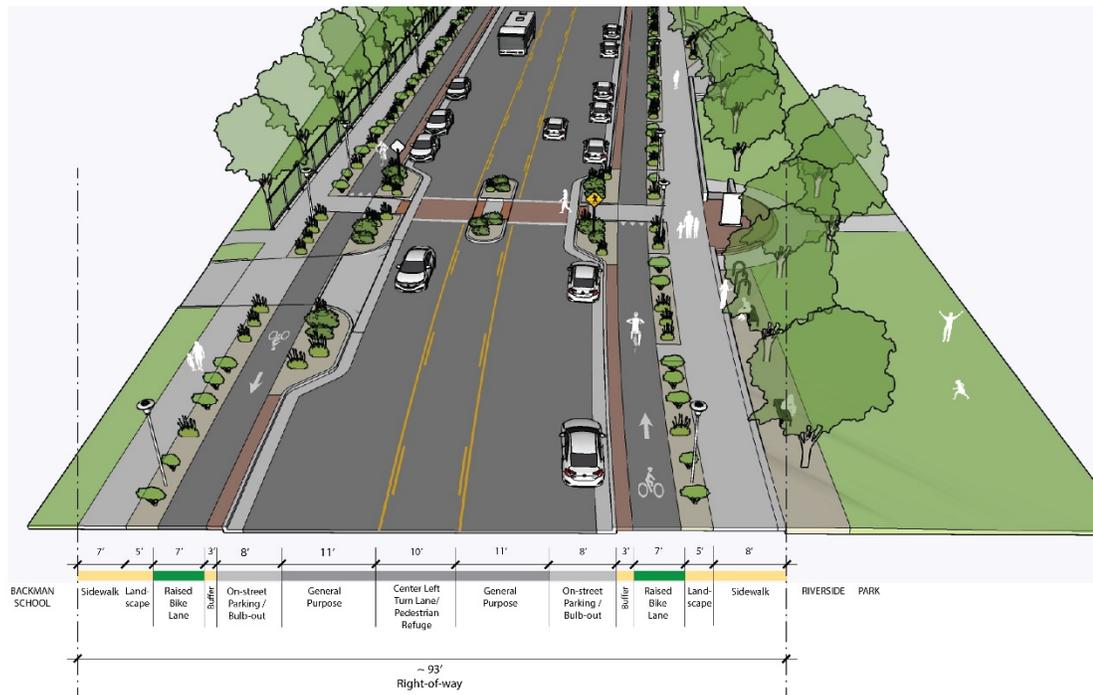
- The other part of the neighborhood core segment, alongside Backman School and Riverside Park, will be a blend of Concepts 2 and 3, with an alignment of 1500 West and the park drive to create a crossable 4-way intersection serving as a gateway to the neighborhood, transition between the two neighborhood core cross sections, and more navigable entry to the park.

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600/700 North through this segment west of 1500 West will have three lanes (short medians at pedestrian crossings), on-street parking, and raised bike lanes behind the curb alongside enhanced sidewalks, improving the safety and accessibility of this segment and its community destinations.



Typical cross section, 600/700 North at Riverside Park

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An example of a recently constructed street in Somerville, Massachusetts with a similar raised bike lane configuration as to that envisioned on 600-700 North in the Riverside Park segment.

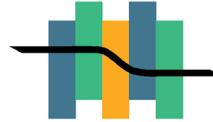
- For the corridor from 800 West to I-215, we believe we can cover over 80 percent of the east-west distance with protected bike facilities, whether through a bike lane raised on the curb (Backman School/Riverside Park segment), a pathway shared with pedestrians (between Jordan River and Redwood Road), a curb/delineator-protected lane (1200 West to 1500 West and Redwood to I-215), or in rare circumstances, a parking-protected lane (potentially some limited places between 900 West and 1200 West and between Redwood and I-215).
- The transitional segments on either end of this neighborhood core – the “wide” part of the hourglass, from 800 to 900 West and from Redwood Road to 2200 West - have more demand for traffic coming on and off the freeways to Redwood Road and 900 West and so will adopt Concept 1’s 5-lane cross section with multi-modal improvements such as a buffered bike lane, curb extension “bulb-outs,” pedestrian refuges, and streetscape.
- The viaduct/I-15 interchange segment of the corridor will adopt the Concept 2 approach, with a widened path, improved freeway ramp crossings and buffers, as well as an improved active transportation crossing at 800 West, although the Concept 3 north side path could be considered as a future phase.

We believe this corridor concept best balances and achieves the Corridor Goals established by the Stakeholder Committee and creates a transportation and public space investment worthy of the communities it will serve.

The following discusses these segments in more detail.

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900 West to 1500 West

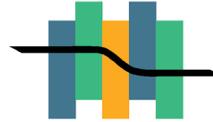
- Reconfigured lanes to one through lane each direction
- Median with turn pockets at intersections - but with center path (1200 West to 1500 West) and two rows of trees, street furniture and pedestrian scale lighting, with pedestrian refuge and crossing at path, making median occupiable/usable space.
- Where the median meets intersections, consider raising the intersection between the median segments halfway to the curb to create a calmer area to mitigate potential conflicts.
- A goal to protect the bike lane as much as feasible, and in balance with the residential driveways and on-street parking, where currently existing. This can be a block-by-block solution that can be largely protected by a vertical curb element from 1200 West to 1500 West, where no parking exists, and potentially protected for some blocks from 900 West to 1200 West, particularly at the 1100-1200 West block with civic/commercial frontage and some blocks on the south side of 600 North with side on residential and few driveways. For the remaining blocks, a buffered bike lane (on traffic side and parking side) would be employed, similar to some segments of the 300 South protected bike lane.
- Bus stops in park strips at 900 West, 1000 West, 1200 West, 1300 West and 1400 West.
- For stops slated for 1300 West and 1400 West, we propose a bike bypass – a ramp from the bike lane up to the sidewalk, which would become a short shared pathway going behind or in front of the bus passenger waiting area and back down on the far side of the stop, giving the bus a place to pull out. When there is no bus occupying the pull out, a cyclist can make the choice to keep riding through the pull out.
- Preserve parking where existing, for the most part, the exception potentially being some stretches where residences side-on to the roadway and a protected bike lane could be implemented.
- Bulb-outs into the parking lane where they exist on both 600/700 North and cross streets.
- 1300 West is a planned Neighborhood Byway – here, the median could continue across the intersection, reducing through traffic on this street and making it easier for active travelers to cross 600 North.

1500 West to Redwood Road (Backman School/Riverside Park segment)

- Reconfigure 1500 West and Riverside Park Drives to align, with plazas on all four corners and crossings of 600/700 North, creating a gateway to the neighborhoods, the park, and school.
- Center turn lane, though can consider medians at pedestrian crossings.

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- Parallel parking on both sides.
- Raised bike lanes behind parking alongside sidewalk to west side of bridge.
- Between the Jordan bridge and Redwood Road, we propose either a raised bike lane alongside the sidewalk or a shared pathway on both sides for cyclists and pedestrians to share – due to the need to protect cyclists within the limited right-of-way, and as the roadway transitions back to a 5-lane section.
- Consider new, more permeable park edge along 600/700 North, replacing chain link fence.
- Consider new system of connected drives in the park offering on-street parking spaces.

Redwood Road to I-215/2200 West

A modified version of Concept 1 with:

- 5 lanes (two lanes each way and a center turn lane)
- Curb-protected bike lanes on north side (where no parking and very few driveways); curb-protected bike lanes replacing parking on south side.
- New pedestrian crossings at Morton and Sir Anthony Drives.
- Intermittent medians breaking up the wide pavement and providing pedestrian refuges for the new crossings.
- Curb extension bulb-outs where there is a parking lane.

Viaduct/I-15 interchange

Continue working with UDOT to make modifications include:

- Widened path/sidewalk with upgraded curb ramps and crosswalk signals.
- Painted on-street bike lanes.
- Modify eastbound right turn lane to interchange with more abrupt turn angle.
- Reduce NB-to-EB curve to manage high vehicle speed.
- Consider Alternative Concept 3's north side pathway as a future phase