



COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

TO: City Council Members
FROM: Ben Luedtke, Budget & Policy Analyst
DATE: February 7, 2023

Project Timeline:

1st Briefing: February 7, 2023
2nd Briefing: TBD (if needed)
Public Hearing: February 21, 2023
Potential Final Vote: March 7, 2023

RE: Update to 2013 Sugar House Circulation Plan; Administration's title: Local Link Circulation Study

ISSUE AT-A-GLANCE

The update to the 2013 Sugar House Circulation Plan, referred to by the Administration as the “Local Link study” has two major parts: recommended projects, programs, and policies to address transportation gaps and barriers, and a proposed locally preferred alternative extension of the S-Line streetcar. The Planning Commission issued a positive recommendation for the Council to adopt the plan. The Council would need to hold a public hearing and adopt an ordinance to make the Local Link study an official City plan, and how to handle parts of the plan that are outside City jurisdictional boundaries and/or operational purview (such as transit).

The study area includes neighborhoods experiencing significant development and increasing density from South Salt Lake’s emerging downtown, the Sugar House Business District, Brickyard and Millcreek’s City Center, and Holladay Village. Representatives from the cities of South Salt Lake, Millcreek and Holladay participated in the study. Salt Lake County, Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC), the Utah Department of Transportation and the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) were also consulted as part of this study. Public engagement was collected from 2020 to 2022. Over 2,000 people provided feedback.

Two Routes for S-Line Streetcar Extensions: One South and Another North

See [Attachment 1](#) for a map of the southern S-Line extension with 10 potential station locations (note: many are outside City jurisdictional boundaries)

See [Attachment 2](#) for a map of the northern S-Line extension from Sugarmont Drive and Highland Drive, north on 1100 East to 400 South and 900 East shown as the blue line

The study recommends implementing enhanced bus services on Highland Drive from 2100 South to Murray Holladay Road as an interim step towards long-term southern extension of the S-Line streetcar. Improvements along the route for enhanced bus services could facilitate transition to a streetcar such as transit signal priority systems, bus stops where larger streetcar stations would go, and increasing ridership on the frequent transit route. Placing the S-Line on Highland Drive means the streetcar would share the road with traffic. Eventually the streetcar could extend beyond Holladay to Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons in the south and downtown Salt Lake City in the north.

The northern streetcar extension was officially adopted by the Council in 2013 and is included in WFRC’s 2019-2050 Regional Transportation Plan. The project is currently unfunded and there is continued community opposition from stakeholders along 1100 East. See the Additional Info section below for more about the

northern route. *Governance/Role note: the Council’s role in streetcars and transit is to approve “locally preferred routes.” The Utah Transit Authority (UTA) is responsible for the cost and maintenance of operating the overall transit system, although the City has occasionally added funds to address specific system gaps when the Council has identified it as a priority.*

The staff report is structured first with a table listing project recommendations and associated notes and policy questions, then a second table listing program and policy recommendations, this is followed by general policy questions and finally a short Additional Info section at the end.

Goal of the briefing: Present the plan to the Council and get feedback, including whether the Council would like to officially adopt this plan.

Project Recommendations

The table below lists in the left column six project recommendations from the draft plan. The right column has potential policy questions and notes the Council may wish to consider.

Recommendation	Notes and Policy Questions
<p>Parley’s Trail alignment through the Sugar House Business District should provide riders an enjoyable and intuitive experience. Parley’s Trail alignment through South Salt Lake Downtown can create a more direct and intuitive connection to Central Pointe TRAX station.</p>	<p>Note the Council approved a \$950,000 State grant in Budget Amendment #3 for a high-quality two-way bike lane on the west side of Highland Drive. This will be added to the upcoming street reconstruction. The also approved over \$1 million for urban trails in FY2022 CIP which could be used.</p> <p>When the project is completed the one remaining Parley’s Trail gap would be located from State Street to 300 West in South Salt Lake.</p>
<p>2700 South complete street improvements will fill a gap along a major east-west active transportation corridor.</p>	<p>This area scored low in need for traffic calming relative to other Livable Streets traffic calming program zones in the City.</p>
<p>Complete street improvements between Sugar House Business District and Millcreek City Center for seamless active transportation connection between the two.</p>	<p>According to Engineering’s 2022 Six Year Pavement Plan there are two upcoming major street reconstructions that could advance this recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1100 East / Highland Drive from Ramona Ave to Warnock Ave in 2023 - 1300 East from 2100 South to city limits in 2024 <p>The Council approved \$500,000 in FY2022 CIP for complete street improvements to these projects. The Council may wish to discuss how to coordinate funding for improvements within City boundaries with Millcreek City, who would be responsible to fund improvements in their city boundaries.</p>
<p>Improved active transportation along 3300 South can address a gap in infrastructure and improve safety in a dangerous environment.</p>	<p>Although it is outside City boundaries, missing sidewalks near 400 East and the S-Line Streetcar were identified as a pain point creating difficulty accessing the transit service. Note that many of the improvements recommended along 3300 South would also be in other jurisdictions.</p>

Recommendation	Notes and Policy Questions
<p>2100 South complete street improvements may be considered to add additional connectivity along a major Sugar House corridor.</p>	<p>Note the Council approved \$8 million using bond funds in Budget Amendment #4 to reconstruct 2100 South from 700 East to 1300 East.</p>
<p>Two-way bike lanes around Sugar House Park would allow easier navigation to and around the Business District across the Park.</p>	<p>The Council may wish to ask to what extent would the Sugar House Park Authority lead out on this project including funding, design, and public engagement?</p>

Program & Policy Recommendations

The table below lists in the left column seven program and policy recommendations from the draft plan. The right column has potential policy questions the Council may wish to consider.

Recommendation	Policy Questions
<p>Creative placemaking in Sugar House Business District especially along Highland Drive will improve walkability and vibrancy.</p> <p>Examples: encourage people to spend time outside with public art installations, street amenities, activities, and events</p>	<p>Would the City's role be to lead on implementing this recommendation? The Council funded a study to create a Sugar House Special Assessment Area or SAA for economic promotion activities (like the existing downtown SAA) which could take on some of these activities.</p>
<p>Green conflict markings on regionally significant bikeways can help highlight conflict zones and raise awareness of people on bicycles.</p> <p>Corridor locations: Highland Drive, Parley's Trail, 900 East, 2700 South</p>	<p>Would this recommendation significantly increase maintenance costs? In recent years, the Council has funded specialized maintenance of multi-modal infrastructure such as the downtown green bike lanes because the City lacks the necessary equipment.</p>
<p>Comprehensive wayfinding and signage eases navigation, enriches our experience, enhances branding, and reinforces key destinations.</p>	<p>Would the wayfinding and signage system create designs and styles specific to Sugar House or be similar to existing sign systems seen elsewhere in the City?</p>
<p>Additional bike parking throughout the study area will make it more accessible and inviting to cyclists.</p>	<p>What is the adoption process to add the Association of Bicycle and Pedestrian Professional's Bicycle Parking Guidelines into the City's development codes?</p>
<p>Trail oriented development guidelines that detail ways trails can activate and enrich urban environments.</p>	<p>Does the City already have guidelines for existing City trails (McClelland, 9 Line, etc.)? Could those be applied as a starting point to this area?</p>
<p>Traffic calming policies can reintroduce City measures to help encourage slower speeds on roadways.</p>	<p>The Sugar House Business District from 2100 South to Interstate 80 and 900 East to 1300 East was ranked the second highest zone needing traffic calming in the Livable Streets program. Funding could come from the \$2 million one-time program funding in the last annual budget. The Council may wish to ask the status of implementing traffic calming in the Business District.</p>

Recommendation	Policy Questions
Develop mobility hubs at key locations where frequent transit network (bus service at least every 15 minutes) interfaces with major destinations or where routes intersect.	What should the mobility hub roles be for the City, the Utah Transit Authority (UTA), transportation companies (e.g., on-demand rides, scooter rentals), and private property owners, particularly as it relates to funding and operating responsibility?

GENERAL POLICY QUESTIONS

1. Implementation of Recommendations/Transit Service Outside City Boundaries – Some of the recommendations in this plan involve improvements in other jurisdictions (Millcreek, South Salt Lake, Holladay), or involve operating expenses that would typically fall to other entities, such as UTA. The Council may wish to discuss with the Administration next steps to bring these partners along and gauge their support for funding these recommendations within their respective budgets, so the City doesn’t accidentally create the expectation that the City will fill potential future funding needs.
2. Missing Priorities or Tools – Are there any community priorities, projects or programs that are not in the plan which should be? For example, should completion of the McClelland Trail be identified as a priority project in the plan? See Additional Info section below for more on the trail.
3. Next Steps for Sugarmont Plaza – The Council may wish to ask what the next steps for this triangular block are which is identified as the new eastern end of the S-Line and potential mobility hub. The block is located between Highland Drive and 1100 East, and Sugarmont Drive and Simpson Ave. In 2012 the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) acquired the former Deseret Industries building and parking lot. In 2021 the RDA consolidated ownership of the block which total 1.61 acres. The block is zoned Sugar House Business District 1.
4. Funding to Double Track Sugar House Streetcar – The Council may wish to ask the Administration what are the funding options for double tracking from 500 East to 700 East, and how much is the estimated cost? \$12 million was appropriated by the State Legislature to extend the streetcar from McClelland Street to Highland Drive. Additional funding would be needed for double tracking to allow the streetcars to run more frequently.
5. Prioritizing Streetcar and TRAX Extensions – The Council may wish to discuss with the Administration how UTA’s plans prioritize the various streetcar extensions, and how the City can work with UTA to align those priorities with City goals. Examples include:
 - a. The S-Line streetcar extension north to connect with the 400 South 900 East TRAX line (including engagement with community members who previously opposed this extension),
 - b. S-Line streetcar extension south to Highland Drive and Murray Holladay Road,
 - c. Completing the downtown TRAX loop from the intermodal hub at 600 West and 400 South to the existing TRAX lines at 400 South and Main Street,
 - d. Reactivating the 400 West to Ballpark rail spur and existing TRAX station at 1300 South, and
 - e. An extension of the Red Line TRAX into Research Park among other potential routes.

ADDITIONAL & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Northern Streetcar Extension

See Attachment 2 for a map showing the route as a blue line

After many hours of public comment on the issue and some very vocal local stakeholder opposition, on May 7, 2013, the Council voted 4-3 to adopt Resolution 19 of 2013 identifying the Sugar House Streetcar Phase 2 locally preferred alternative as continuing “along the Sugarmont corridor, then through Simpson Avenue to Highland Drive and turn north along Highland Drive, turning into 1100 East, until 1700 South, within the City owned right of way.” The Local Link Study identifies another locally preferred alternative route to the south. It states that the 2013 “locally preferred alternative [connecting with the 400 South TRAX line] is still valid, except where it conflicts with this one, in which case this most recent plan takes precedence.”

The route shown as the blue line in Attachment 2 goes further north than the Council adopted locally preferred alternative. The streetcar would turn north from Sugarmont Drive onto Highland Drive, continuing north onto 1100 East, turn west on 1700 South, then turn north on 900 East to reach the 400 South TRAX Red Line. This would create a public transit loop making travel easier. The plan estimates the extension would cost \$389,546,000. The cost is likely more now than when the estimate was made in 2019. For comparison, the Local Link study estimates the cost as \$225 million to \$331 million for the southern route along Highland Drive to Murray Holladay Road.

McClelland Trail

The 2013 McClelland Trail implementation plan evaluated the entire length of the trail from 800 South to 3300 South. Transportation is working on Phase 2 to extend the trail from Fairmont Park to 3300 South. Phase 1 built the trail from 800 South to 2100 South. Note it's also called the Jordan and Salt Lake City Canal Trail. The southern end of the trail is planned to be at 3300 South and Brickyard.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Local Link Study Map with S-Line Extension along Highland Drive to Murray Holladay Road
2. Wasatch Front Regional Council's 2019-2050 Regional Transportation Plan Map showing S-Line Extension from Sugarmont Drive and Highland Drive to 400 South and 900 East shown as the blue line

ACRONYMS

CIP – Capital Improvement Program

FY – Fiscal Year

RDA – Redevelopment Agency

SAA – Special Assessment Area

TBD – To Be Determined

UTA – Utah Transit Authority

WFRC – Wasatch Front Regional Council