



WASATCH BOULEVARD

Master Plan



July 2019

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

The Wasatch Boulevard Master Plan is a project led by the City of Cottonwood Heights that will guide the future evolution of Wasatch Boulevard and the communities it serves. The Plan focuses on the corridor between Interstate 215 and the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon and addresses transportation, land use, and other aspects of the corridor. The project is a partnership with Wasatch Front Regional Council in collaboration with the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and ongoing partnership between the City and UDOT is critical to achieving the vision set forth in this plan.

This planning effort seeks to develop an understanding of the values and priorities along the Wasatch Boulevard corridor; to paint a comprehensive picture of the current conditions and future trends on the corridor; to brainstorm, develop, and test ideas for improving the corridor; and to develop a long-range vision for the corridor and strategies to achieve the vision.

To achieve these objectives, the Plan is comprised of four main sections. These are:

- **Plan Foundations** sets out the goals and performance measures that communicate the priorities and values for the corridor. This section also recounts the project background and summarizes the project process.
- **Corridor Study** provides an in-depth analysis of how well the corridor is performing according to the corridor goals.
- **Concepts & Scenarios** presents a series of alternative concepts and scenarios of how the corridor could achieve the goals.
- **Recommendations** presents the Plan’s recommended course of action for the vision and strategies that will best achieve the corridor goals in a comprehensive and balanced way.

In the following summary, the Recommendations are presented first, followed by a summary of the project process, which includes the Plan Foundations, Corridor Study, and Concepts and Scenarios.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Wasatch Boulevard Master Plan focus on a set of Planning Objectives, each containing specific strategies. These objectives point to a Preferred Scenario for Wasatch Boulevard that balances the achievement of the seven Corridor Goals.

Planning objectives

The focus of this Preferred Scenario is a series of three planning objectives that respond to both the team evaluation and public feedback. We believe these objectives are the best and most balanced way for this plan to balance among the different priorities for the corridor.

Objective 1: Shape a canyon-oriented, Walkable Urban Place at the Gravel Pit.

Strategies:

- Envision development in a walkable, connected layout that incorporates many of the following concepts:
 - ◇ High-density / high-intensity uses;
 - ◇ Market-supported mix of uses;
 - ◇ Walkable streets;
 - ◇ Highly connected internal street networks;
 - ◇ Recreational amenities (e.g. trails, gathering areas, activity areas, etc.);
 - ◇ Pedestrian access across Wasatch Boulevard to the Old Mill area, where feasible;
 - ◇ Connection to and supportive access onto a future Bonneville Shoreline Trail east of the development;
- In line with regional needs and priorities, encourage the creation of a major transit center near the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon serving as the terminus of a major bus route, both to the north (1-215/Wasatch Boulevard, Foothill Drive, Downtown Salt Lake City, airport, etc.) and as a hub for canyon transit service with major park-and-ride resources;
 - ◇ A transit center should be complementary to the overall development on the site, should involve local and regional partners (especially the Utah Transit Authority), and should be accompanied by supportive land uses such as retail and food/beverage opportunities.

- Support increased capacity on 6200 South/Wasatch Boulevard in a creative way that also supports walkability, transit opportunities at the Gravel Pit, and active transportation along the corridor.
- Continue to develop a strong working partnership with UTA to achieve the transit changes envisioned along the corridor.

Objective 2: Create a connected network of pathways and trails for transportation and recreation, along the entire corridor.

Strategies:

- Build connected shared use pathways on Wasatch Boulevard
- Improve Wasatch Boulevard crossings by improving existing crossings and adding new ones.
- Leverage existing trails and paths into a larger network.
- Develop trail corridors running through the neighborhoods.
- Create trail and pathway connections to Gravel Pit development.
- In the long-term, create of a string of parks on the network.

Objective 3: Balance livability, roadway capacity, and sustainable canyon access south of Big Cottonwood Canyon.

Strategies:

- Add roadway capacity sensitively as needed.
- Strongly consider using flex shoulders, with future consideration of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).
- Slow Wasatch Boulevard.
- Improve neighborhood access.
- Consider roundabouts and other traffic calming measures.
- Make local street connectivity improvements.
- Preserve and enhance the on-street bike facility.
- Use native landscaping.
- Employ medians where feasible.
- Limit additional canyons parking.
- Preserve and enhance key views.

Preferred Scenario

The three planning objectives suggest a Preferred Scenario that looks like the one pictured to the right, in Figure 0.3. Objective 1 shapes a walkable, urban, recreation- and canyon-oriented Gravel Pit development. Objective 3 shapes the segment of the corridor south of Big Cottonwood Canyon with a balance among the needs of the local neighborhoods, regional traffic, and canyon travelers. Objective 2 shapes a pathway network that ties the corridor, its communities, activity centers, and open spaces together.

WASATCH BLVD. CORRIDOR GOALS

- **Goal 1:** Preserve and enhance the character and livability of existing residential neighborhoods.
- **Goal 2:** Move people through the corridor reliably and safely.
- **Goal 3:** Increase travel choices along the Wasatch corridor.
- **Goal 4:** Enhance opportunities for recreation along the corridor.
- **Goal 5:** Preserve and enhance the scenic and natural qualities along the corridor.
- **Goal 6:** Promote and prioritize sustainable solutions to Wasatch Canyon access at a local and regional scale.
- **Goal 7:** Identify potential land uses and locations for new development or redevelopment along the corridor.

Preferred scenario performance

Like the Alternative Long Range Scenarios, the Preferred Scenario was evaluated against the Wasatch Boulevard Corridor Goals and performance measures. The evaluation process yields a score for the scenario for each goal, and an overall score.

As Figure 0.1 demonstrates, the Preferred Scenario balances achievement of the seven goals. The scenario does contribute more for some goals (moving people and new development) than others (preserving and enhancing neighborhoods, improving canyon access). This is in part because of the differences in opportunities of this plan for affecting each of the goals. For some goals - specifically the neighborhood and canyon access goals - this plan has less ability to provide improvement; all of the scenarios show a limited amount of contribution compared to the moving people and development goal.

However, the contribution of the scenario to each goal is significant, and as Figure 0.2 demonstrates, compares well with the highest scoring scenario for each.

	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6	GOAL 7	OVER-ALL
Preferred Scenario	0.47	1.17	0.60	0.78	0.49	0.42	1.23	0.73

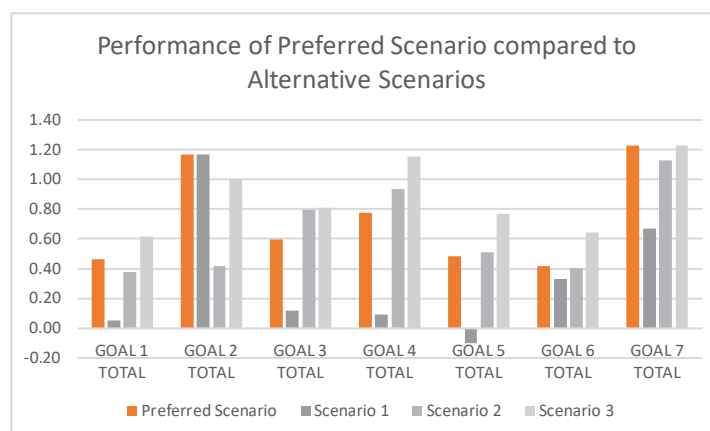


Figure 0.1 Summary of evaluation of Preferred Scenario (top) and Figure 0.2 Performance of Preferred Scenario compared to Alternative Scenarios (bottom).

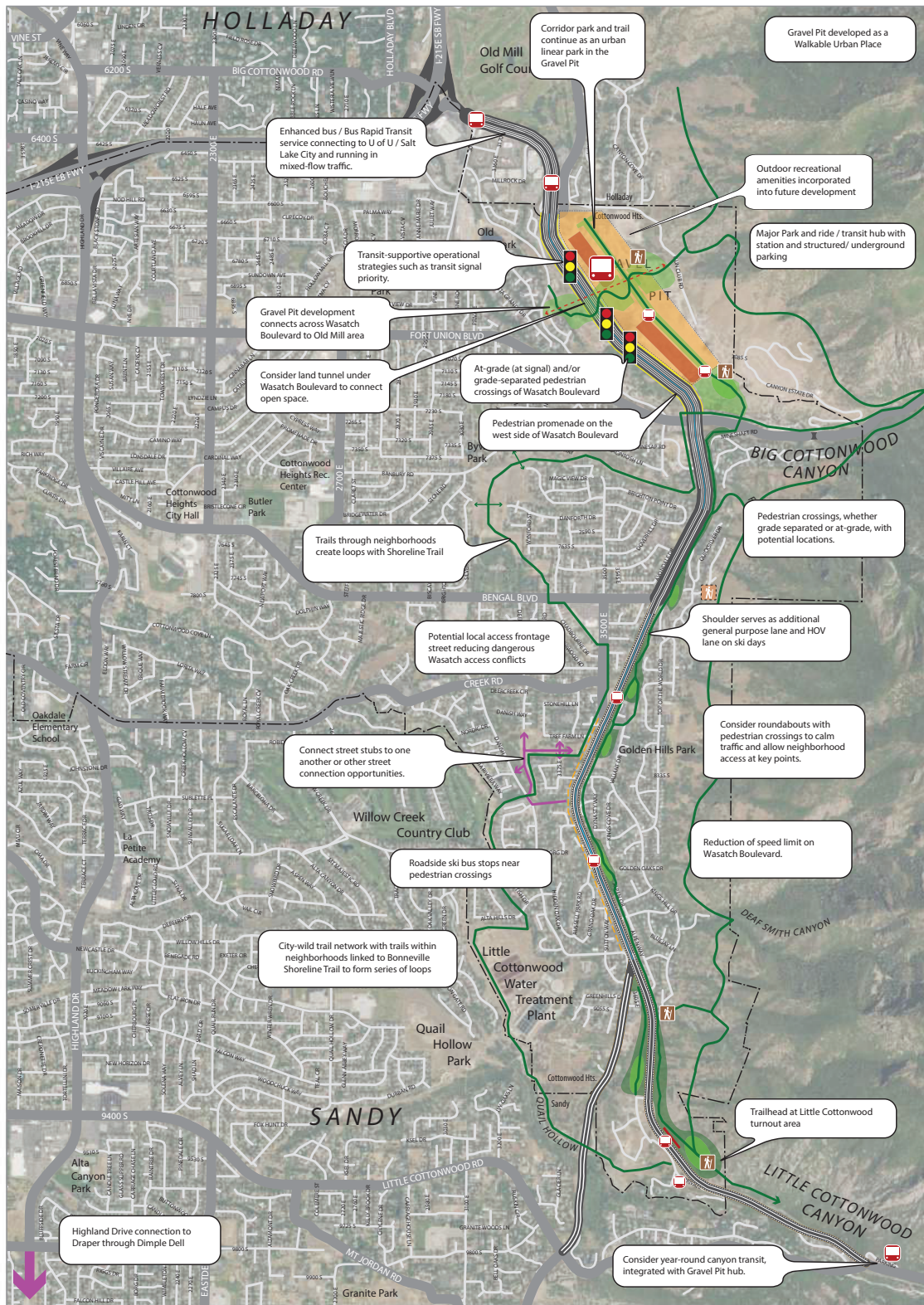
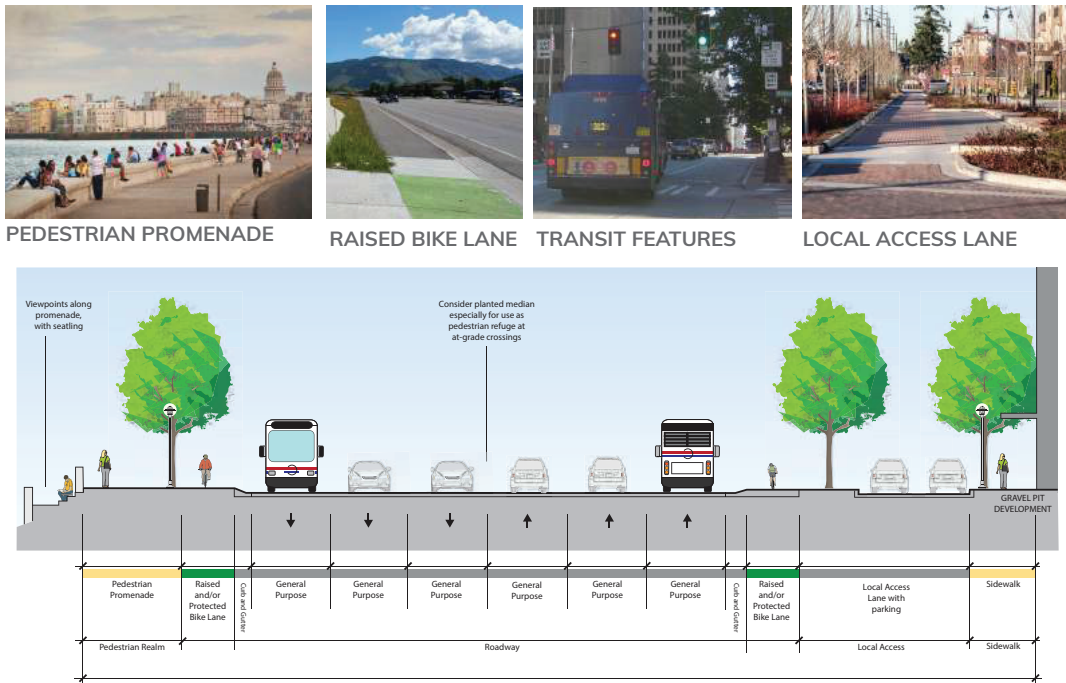


Figure 0.3: Preferred Long Range Scenario.

Recommended Wasatch Boulevard cross section concepts

In line with the three planning objectives and the Preferred Scenario, the project team recommends the following street cross section concepts for key segments of Wasatch Boulevard:

At future Gravel Pit development



South of Bengal Boulevard

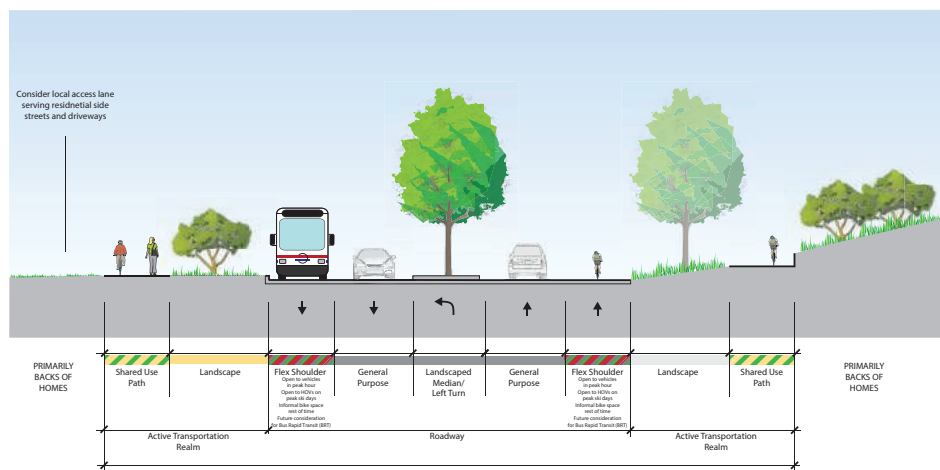


Figure 0.4 Cross section concept for Wasatch Boulevard at the Gravel Pit development (top) and Figure 0.5 Cross section concept for Wasatch Boulevard south of Bengal Boulevard (bottom).

The Preferred Scenario **preserves and enhances the character and livability of existing residential neighborhoods** by:



Focusing new development focused on Gravel Pit area, preserving character of existing corridor neighborhoods.



Linking neighborhoods together through shared use pathways and trails along Wasatch Boulevard.



Reducing the barrier of Wasatch Boulevard with improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings.



Minimizing the pavement width of Wasatch Boulevard roadway as much as possible, despite the additional lane capacity.



Improving resident access onto Wasatch Boulevard through a slower street, features such as roundabouts, and warnings for canyon traffic not to block the intersections.



Creating a proactive, assertive development review process that will provide residents with a chance to shape the development of key parcels within neighborhoods.



Lowering the speed of Wasatch Boulevard through a new design and a lower posted speed.

The Preferred Scenario **moves people through the corridor reliably and safely** by:



Adding a transit-prioritized lane in each direction on Wasatch Boulevard in Segment 1, increasing the corridor's capacity to move people more reliably.



Adding a lane or shoulder for peak traffic use in each direction on Wasatch Boulevard in Segment 3, increasing the corridor's capacity to move people more reliably.



Initiating an enhanced bus or bus rapid transit line north along the Valley's east side and terminating at or near the Gravel Pit, providing a high-capacity transit possibility to carry people from the Gravel Pit to major activity centers, reflecting a strong travel market. Cottonwood Heights will work closely with UTA to achieve this increased service and infrastructure.



Improving and emphasizing transit access along the corridor through road design and function (e.g. flex lanes, transit preemption, BRT, etc.).



Slowing the speed of Wasatch Boulevard south of Big Cottonwood Canyon.



Implementing traffic calming features such as medians and roundabouts.



Enhancing visibility of pedestrians and cyclists at crosswalks at major intersections.

The Preferred Scenario **increases travel choices along the corridor** by:



Continuing to develop a close relationship with UTA to provide higher levels of service and infrastructure along the corridor and to give consideration to emergent transportation trends.



Initiating an enhanced bus or bus rapid transit line north along the Valley's east side and terminating at or near the Gravel Pit, providing a robust transit alternative to carry people from the Gravel Pit to major activity centers.



Implementing transit-supportive roadway and operational features between Gravel Pit and I-215 can improve transit travel times between Gravel Pit hub and I-215.



Shaping the Gravel Pit as a walkable urban place that provides a unique walking and riding lifestyle choice for people living in this new place.



Creating a network of paths and crossings along the corridor will make short trips easier to take on foot and bike and improve transit access.

The Preferred Scenario **enhances opportunities for recreation along the corridor** by:



Creating a network of paths that is a venue for recreation for all types of interests and abilities – paved and dirt trails, routes to parks and loops.



Connecting the corridor's activity centers and communities to the Cottonwood canyons.



Encouraging the creation of a major recreational amenity and/or mountain recreation park in the Gravel Pit development creates a recreational focus and hub.



Completing the Bonneville Shoreline Trail and associated new access points, tying Cottonwood Heights into a regional recreation network.



Implementing the city's Bicycle and Trails Master Plan by enhancing the on-street bike lane and lowering of vehicle speeds to improve conditions for road cyclists.

The Preferred Scenario preserves and enhances the scenic and natural qualities along the corridor by:



Concentrating new development in the Gravel Pit.



Emphasizing the natural Wasatch foothill landscape, reinforcing scenic aspects of the corridor important to people.



Preserving key views along the corridor.



Lending a more human scale to the corridor through a pathway system, traffic calming, slower vehicle speeds, and roadway design (landscaped medians, parkstrips, etc.).



Creating walkable frontage and streetscape in the Gravel Pit development, including along Wasatch Boulevard, will create a more attractive character on the northern segment of the corridor.



Building a pedestrian promenade on the west side of Wasatch across from the Gravel Pit, creating a scenic resource.

The Preferred Scenario promotes and prioritizes sustainable solutions to Wasatch Canyon access at a local and regional scale by:



In partnership with UTA, shaping a vibrant canyons hub, with a wealth of park-and-ride spaces, high-quality transit center, frequent transit service to the key canyons destinations, and complementary land uses such as retail and restaurants, hotel rooms, and on-site recreation.



Implementing flex shoulders on Wasatch Boulevard south of Bengal Boulevard that are open to transit and HOVs only on peak ski days, providing a way to incent trip reduction in the canyons and emphasizing more efficient means of transportation year round.



Improving communication about canyon and parking conditions.



Implementing resident access improvements.

The Preferred Scenario identifies potential land uses and locations for new development or redevelopment along the corridor by:



Focusing development in the Gravel Pit, which balances neighborhood preservation, moving people, transportation choices, recreation, scenery, and canyon access.



Acknowledging the potential for a high amount of development in a way that balances the corridor goals.



Identifying a process for development along the corridor south of Big Cottonwood that allows the City to be proactive in working with public to define development that meets corridor goals and goals of other City policy.