

# We need to start today to build a regional public transportation system

*that will help maintain quality of life for us, our children and our grandchildren*



Courtesy Gordon Cardall

Commuter rail demonstration at Rio Grande Station in Salt Lake City

## Investing today saves money

A region-wide public transportation system is a key Envision Utah strategy, which as part of a package of strategies, can help preserve our quality of life and can save the region 4-1/2 billion dollars over the next 20 years, as well as reduce personal transportation costs to those using the system.

## Opportunities will be lost and expenses will go up if we fail to move forward now

With the addition of another million people by 2020, land will become more scarce and places to build new roads or rights of way for public transportation will become more expensive and difficult to find. Increasing the capacity of rail transit is more cost effective and uses less land than adding additional lanes to our roads and highways. Developing a region-wide public transportation system can help take the pressure off critical lands we may wish to preserve.

## Benefits the economy and quality of life

The benefits go beyond transportation choices. Developments for housing, shopping, work, recreation and cultural amenities can economically and aesthetically enhance key sites adjacent to public transportation routes. Communities that provide convenient and reliable public transportation exhibit a vitality that gives them a competitive edge in capturing economic development and in attracting and retaining businesses and workers.

A region-wide public transportation system also benefits non-riders by reducing the increase of congestion, time spent in traffic, and mobile emissions released, which will help keep Utah's air clean.

## More Choices for people from every walk of life

While most of us will continue to drive automobiles, the region will benefit from a more convenient and reliable public transportation system that will give us all more choices and options, more freedom and mobility, and provide more opportunities for people from every walk of life to get to and from work, shopping and recreation. A system can include commuter rail, light rail, lower cost self-powered rail, private vans and buses, and more bus routes with more frequent service. Your locally elected officials have developed a long-term region-wide plan to create a balanced public transportation system that will accommodate residents throughout the Greater Wasatch Area, but it will cost more than we currently have available.



Courtesy San Diego MTD

Commercial development integrated with rail service

Regio Sprinter demonstration of lower-cost, self-powered rail along the Wasatch Front



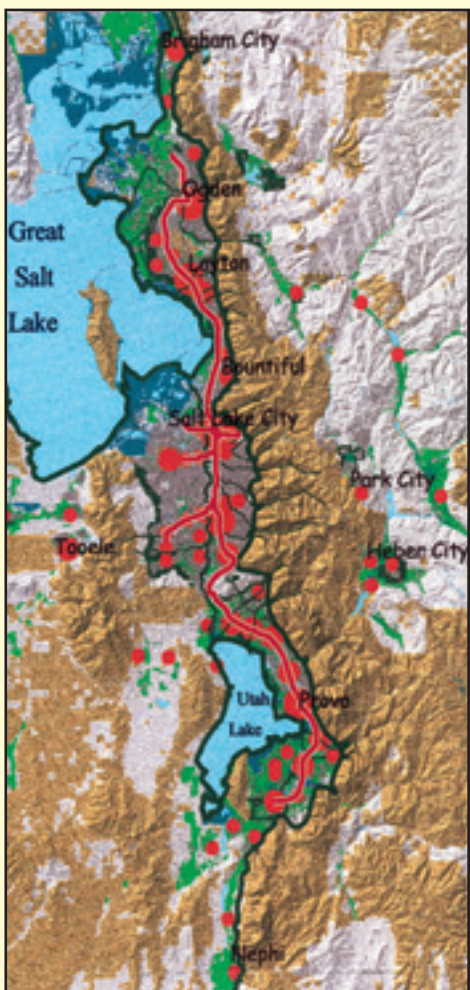
courtesy Mission Stout

Cars, buses, & rail: modes of our future transportation

**Let's make it happen!**

## Facts and information

### Envision Utah's Quality Growth Strategy through the year 2020



#### Population Centers and Critical Land

- Population Centers
- Rail Transit
- Critical Lands
- Public Land & Mountain Areas
- Farmland
- Wetlands & Floodplains
- Developed Area

• The Wasatch Front Regional Council and the Mountainland Association of Governments (your local elected officials) have in place a 20-year long-range transportation plan that includes major improvements to our region-wide public transportation system.

• The implementation of Envision Utah's Quality Growth Strategy, which includes promoting a region-wide transportation system, will reduce total infrastructure costs by \$4.5 billion dollars over the next 20 years. This translates into a \$3.5 billion savings in both regional and sub-regional roads, approximately \$0.5 billion savings in regional water, an additional investment of \$1.5 billion in public transportation projects, and \$2 billion in savings in other infrastructure costs. State of Utah's Quality Growth Efficiency Tools Committee (QGET), coordinated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

• According to a survey conducted by UTA, 28% of transit riders polled that day had no vehicle available for use. The percentage of senior riders was approximately 8%, and an additional 27% of transit riders had an income of \$20,000 or less. *Composite and Demographic Assessment of Surveyed TRAX Light Rail Users, UTA, May 9, 2000*

• Envision Utah's Quality Growth Strategy shows that through the implementation of a region-wide public transportation system, accompanied by changes in land use patterns, 171 square miles

less land will be converted to urban use over the next 20 years compared to baseline projections. This also allows for the conservation of 116 square miles of agricultural land.

• According to information gathered from the Wasatch Front Regional Council, once a facility is in place, either rail or highway, it costs approximately 20% of the initial capital costs to double the capacity of the rail transit, but costs 100% of the initial capital costs to double the capacity of the highway.

• Some \$2.4 billion worth of investment has occurred along the [Portland] MAX line since the decision to build. *At Work in the Field of Dreams, Tri-Met, Portland Oregon, September, 1998*

• "Fueled by high ridership and touted for its convenience and accessibility, MetroLink, the St. Louis region's light rail system has been lauded as a catalyst for economic development." *St. Louis' MetroLink Economic Impact, Bi-State development Agency, (undated) p.1.*

• A 1998 Texas Transportation Institute Report on congestion stated that between 1988 and 1994, the Salt Lake Area experienced the greatest growth in congestion in the country. Since 1982, congestion of Utah roads has increased by over 59%.

• QGET's transportation modeling for Envision Utah's Quality Growth Strategy resulted in a reduction in vehicle miles traveled of 2.4 million per day. At the same time, average speeds increased by 12.5%, commute times declined by 5.2%, transit trips increased by 37.5%, and total emissions were reduced by 3.5 percent, a total of 93 tons per day due to a reduction in mobile emissions of 7.3 percent. This reduction is a result of more transit trips, shorter trip times, and higher average peak speeds.



[www.EnvisionUtah.org](http://www.EnvisionUtah.org)



courtesy Mission Stout