High Speed Process, Slow Speed Rail:
The Case of Successful Partnerships for a Livable Sugar House

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October 20, 2010
Livability?
The Project

- **2 miles** long, connection between TRAX Light Rail and Sugar House Business District and neighborhood

- Capital cost of **$55 M**, located in an existing right-of-way

- **3,000** daily riders in 2012 (1500 new to system) and all with **direct connection to over 130 miles** of existing and planned rail transit
The 33/33/33 Partnership
• Each City and UTA have been responsible for 1/3 of the financial resources for all work that has been completed to date

• Salt Lake City and South Salt Lake City have passed resolutions to each fund $2.5 million of the Sugar House Streetcar

• Each City and UTA have devoted staff resources who have worked collaboratively throughout the life of the project
“In the larger context of a regional plan, smaller, valuable projects can be overshadowed unless there is a strong local voice to promote them”

“I think the partnerships on the Sugarhouse Streetcar project are unique because of the diversity of the players involved, which include, the largest City in the State, a very small City, a regional transit organization, residents, and businesses. Some of our goals are different, some are the same, and it is amazing to me that we have been able to develop a project that seems to meet the goals and aspirations of everyone involved.”
The developer partnerships (and an economic engine)
Salt Lake Councilmember Soren Simonsen builds agreement with South Salt Lake and cities agree to study transit. Market Station is proposed, envisioning the Streetcar as a central focus.

Doug White, a local property owner, begins Sugar House Trolley Association, studying streetcars in Sugar House.

UTA, SLC and SSL each give 1/3 of the budget required to do an Alternatives Analysis for transit to Sugar House, and participating fully in the study.

The AA involved stakeholders and the public in numerous meetings; developers on the corridor begin working through entitlement processes.

Both Cities adopt resolutions for Streetcar as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

The Cities and UTA come together again to fund a financial feasibility study and an Environmental Assessment.

Cities approve local funding for the project, TIGER Grant application submitted.
Livability
“In our surface transportation programs, it implies a commitment to the principles that some refer to as livability; that is, investing in a way that recognizes the unique character of each community. The era of one-size-fits-all transportation projects must give way to one where preserving and enhancing unique community characteristics, be they rural or urban, is a primary mission of our work rather than an afterthought.”
Local residents want a streetcar system in Sugar House

By Tanna Berensen

To create a new mode of public transportation, sometimes old ideas are resurrected. This was the case at a Utah Transit Authority open house on July 12 when three alternatives for the Sugar House Transit Corridor, from 2250 South at the 2100 South TRAX station running east to 1100 East were presented. The study area extends from the north/south TRAX line east to 1300 East, and from 1700 South to Interstate 80.

"Out of the three proposals, which were Bus Rapid Transit, light rail, which is similar to TRAX, and an old fashioned streetcar, the streetcar was the locally preferred alternative," said Chad Saley, UTA public relations specialist.

Through a system of comment cards or placing stickers on a specific display board, Sugar House residents, as well as local business owners were able to give their vehicle preference, look at pros and cons to each alternative, and give what stop options they would like.

"The public opinion is a factor, but the steering committee as well as the stakeholders committee will make the final decision about which alternative will be used," said Dennis Pay, South Salt Lake City public works director and steering committee member. The study is being conducted by UTA, Salt Lake City and South Salt Lake.

The projected average daily ridership of the streetcar is estimated by UTA at being close to 2,300 passengers.

Although alternatives for the transit corridor were presented, a more in-depth analysis will be conducted by Fehr and Peers, consultants hired by UTA, before any construction is considered by the steering committee.

"At this point the cost is very tentative. If we were to build now, the streetcar would run close to $36.7 million," said Saley.

There is no funding now to actually build the new transit system, but one of the goals of the study is to identify funding sources.

"Keeping a broad base of support from the community is essential to identify creative funding solutions if needed," said Pay.

Fehr and Peers will be looking at issues such as noise, vibration, access to the right of way and property acquisition, as well as six key criteria set forth by the steering committee to follow during the more in-depth analysis.

"Besides funding solutions, Fehr and Peers will now analyze the need for frequent stops, low speeds, pedestrian-friendly crossings, continue to promote community support, and incorporate an urban linear park corridor into the design of the transit corridor," said Pay.

The park corridor would add a trail and green space such as grass and trees alongside the tracks of the transit corridor.

Fehr and Peers has put together a

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• Imminent Transit-Oriented Development creates good ridership and enhances the “trip not taken”
• Over 10,000 vehicle miles/day avoided
• Over 450 gallons/day gasoline saved
• Over 800 tons of GHG avoided annually
• Agency and City partnerships
• Shared funding responsibility
• Developer and merchant support
• Public/private partnerships
• Public support
• Transit support for a better community with transportation choice

The Wasatch Front Regional Council moved this project from Phase 3 to Phase 1 of the Fiscally Constrained Long Range Plan
Question and Answer with:

- Mayor Wood, South Salt Lake City
- Dennis Pay, South Salt Lake City
- DJ Baxter, Salt Lake City
- Kerry Doane, UTA