

Mountain Accord Transportation Corridor Purposes and Alternatives

This document summarizes the purposes (intended outcomes) for proposed transit improvements in three key transportation corridors. It also lists the alternatives being considered, and identifies those alternatives that are proposed to be advanced for further consideration. Further, this document also identifies the alternatives proposed to be dropped from further consideration and explains why. We are seeking public input on the purposes and the alternatives.

Little Cottonwood Canyon/Park City Area Corridor

The following table lists the purposes of a proposed transit action in the Little Cottonwood Canyon/Park City Area Corridor. They were derived from the [Visions and Goals](#) developed by the system groups. These purposes outline the outcomes a transit action would need to produce/achieve in order to be considered as a reasonable transit alternative.

Corridor Purposes
1. Protect watershed health, water supply, and water quality.
2. Provide competitive transit service in the corridor.
3. Reduce avalanche-related risks and delay in Little Cottonwood Canyon.
4. Provide new evacuation options from both Cottonwood Canyons.
5. Reduce auto use and congestion in Little Cottonwood Canyon.
6. Reduce vehicle emissions in the Cottonwood Canyons to improve air quality.
7. Reduce parking impacts on environment, safety, and economy.
8. Support land use goals for reduced sprawl and concentrated development.
9. Create unique, attractive “traveler experience” to increase tourist and resident visitation.
10. Improve access and connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.
11. Improve travel reliability in inclement weather.
12. Provide competitive transit service to a range of recreation destinations and economic nodes.
13. Protect or enhance the natural and scenic resources of the Cottonwood Canyons.
14. Protect and enhance community character.

Mountain Accord is considering a range of alternatives to achieve these purposes. The first list below outlines the alternatives that are proposed to advance for additional consideration. Alternatives in the second group are proposed to be dropped from further consideration because they fail to meet most of the corridor’s purposes.

Alternatives Proposed to Advance for Further Consideration

- A. **Light rail transit** (LRT) in exclusive guideway up Little Cottonwood Canyon to the Park City area, including tunnel connections between Alta, Big Cottonwood Canyon and Park City.
- B. **Bus rapid transit** (BRT) in exclusive guideway up Little Cottonwood Canyon to the Park City area including tunnel connections between Alta, Big Cottonwood Canyon and Park City.
- C. Same as above but with **aerial transportation** (such as a gondola or tram) in the segment between Big Cottonwood Canyon and Park City.
- D. **Transportation system management alternatives**, which are combinations of incentives for transit use and disincentives to auto use, without adding new transit guideways or expanding roadways.

Alternatives c and d need further refinement and analysis to determine if they can adequately meet the corridor purposes.

Alternatives Proposed to Drop from Further Consideration

The following alternatives fail to meet most of the purposes for this corridor and are therefore proposed to be dropped from further consideration:

- E. **Improve Guardsman Road** for year round auto use between Park City and Big Cottonwood Canyon.
 - This alternative would partially meet the purpose of providing a new evacuation option (it would provide an evacuation option from Big Cottonwood Canyon but not from Little Cottonwood Canyon); it would fail to meet the other 13 purposes.
- F. **Increase bus service** in mixed traffic up Little Cottonwood Canyon.
 - This alternative would meet the purpose of reducing avalanche-related risk and delay (assuming that it would include construction of avalanche sheds in Little Cottonwood Canyon) but would fail to meet the other 13 purposes.
- G. Add **new roadway capacity** for automobiles in the Cottonwood Canyons.
 - This alternative would meet the purpose of reducing avalanche-related risk and delay (assuming that it would include construction of avalanche sheds) but would fail to meet the other 13 purposes.
- H. Add **aerial transportation** (gondola or tram) from Sandy to the Park City area via Little or Big Cottonwood Canyons.
 - This alternative would meet purposes 3, 4, 9 and 11 by: allowing gondola/tram riders to travel above avalanche paths; providing a new evacuation option from both canyons; providing a unique traveler experience; and providing more travel reliability in inclement weather. However, it would fail to meet the other 10 purposes largely because the travel speed would be slow and it would not provide a competitive alternative to automobile travel over such long distances. It

would also require mode transfers which would further increase travel time and discourage ridership.

- I. Add **light rail transit** (LRT) or **bus rapid transit** (BRT) up Big Cottonwood Canyon
 - o These two alternatives would provide meaningful benefit in Big Cottonwood Canyon, but the greater needs are in Little Cottonwood Canyon. Little Cottonwood has higher congestion, higher travel demand, greater parking impacts and higher avalanche-related reliability and safety problems. LRT or BRT up Big Cottonwood Canyon would fail to adequately meet 8 of the 14 purposes largely because it wouldn't do enough to meet the purposes for Little Cottonwood Canyon. The trip up Big Cottonwood and then via tunnel to Little Cottonwood would have substantial out of direction travel, longer travel times and would require a transfer for riders destined to Little Cottonwood Canyon. It would also fail to address the avalanche safety and reliability issues in Little Cottonwood Canyon.
 - o These alternatives would meet purposes 4, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 14 by providing a new evacuation option from both canyons, supporting land use goals, providing a unique traveler experience, providing access and safety improvements for bicyclists (assuming construction of a parallel bike path), protecting the scenic and natural resources, and protecting and enhancing community character, although it would only partially meet some of the purposes for Little Cottonwood.

Salt Lake City Airport to Park City via I-80 Corridor

The following table lists the purposes of a proposed transit action in this corridor. They were derived from the [Visions and Goals](#) developed by the System Groups. These purposes outline the outcomes a transit action would need to produce/achieve in order to be considered as a reasonable transit alternative.

Corridor Purposes
1. Provide competitive transit service between the airport and Park City area.
2. Reduce future congestion impacts and delay around Kimball Junction.
3. Provide competitive non-SOV (single occupancy vehicle) options on congested corridors.
4. Reduce adverse impacts of parking in Park City.
5. Support land use goals for reduced sprawl and concentrated development.
6. Provide competitive transit service to a range of recreation destinations and economic nodes.
7. Protect community character.
8. Reduce vehicle emissions to improve air quality.
9. Protect natural and scenic resources of Parleys Canyon.

Alternatives being considered for this corridor include the following:

- A. **Express bus in mixed traffic** from the Salt Lake City airport to Park City via I-80 with new transit priority access at key interchanges.
- B. **Express bus with HOV** (high occupancy vehicles only) lane on I-80 (convert existing lane) with new transit priority access at key interchanges.
- C. **Rail** from the University TRAX line to Park City via I-80.

The first two alternatives could meet all of the purposes. The last alternative would meet most of the purposes but would have substantially slower travel times from the airport and downtown to the Park City area. Based on analysis to date, the first alternative is proposed for further feasibility and potential design analysis in 2015, which would include analysis of potential transit access improvements at key interchanges (Kimball Junction and other locations on I-80).

Compared to the express bus in mixed traffic alternative, the HOV lane alternative would have little added benefit and higher costs as well as impacts on I-80 freight and other traffic. The rail alternative would have slower travel times (because it would run in street and have many stops between the airport and the University) and considerably higher costs and impacts.

Over the longer term (a 25-year planning horizon or later), growth in traffic and congestion on I-80 could slow the travel time and reliability for all vehicles on I-80, including the express bus alternative. Under these conditions, the HOV and rail alternatives would be more promising and are therefore recommended to be considered in future phases of analysis and implementation.

Summit County Connectors (SR 224 from Park City to Kimball and SR 248 from Park City to US 40)

The following table lists the purposes of proposed transit actions on SR-224 and SR-248. They were derived from the [Visions and Goals](#) developed by Mountain Accord system groups. These purposes outline the outcomes a transit action would need to produce/achieve in order to be considered as a reasonable transit alternative.

Corridor Purposes
1. Provide competitive alternative to autos in Park City area.
2. Support diversified economic development.
3. Protect community character of Park City.
4. Reduce adverse impacts of parking in Park City area.
5. Support land use goals for reduced sprawl and concentrated development.
6. Connect economic nodes with fast, reliable, and competitive transit service.

Mountain Accord is considering a range of alternatives to achieve these purposes. The first list below outlines the alternatives that are proposed to advance for additional consideration. Alternatives in the second group are proposed to be dropped from further consideration because they fail to meet most of the corridor's purposes.

Alternatives Proposed to Advance for Further Consideration

- A. **Light rail transit** (LRT) in new exclusive guideway on SR-224 from Park City to Kimball Junction (I-80) and on SR-248 from Park City to Quinn's Junction (US 40).
- B. **Bus rapid transit** (BRT) in new exclusive guideway on both routes.

Alternatives Proposed to Drop from Further Consideration

- A. **Bus in Mixed Traffic** on SR-224 from Park City to Kimball Junction (I-80) and on SR-248 from Park City to Quinn's Junction (US 40).
 - Because buses would be caught in the same congestion as automobiles, this alternative would fail to meet all of the purposes for these routes.
- B. **Bus in Managed Lane** on both routes.
 - Large segments in both routes have just one traffic lane in each direction. This alternative would fail to meet most of the purposes for this corridor.