

**Conserve Southwest Utah's Issues with the Traffic Modeling for the Northern Corridor
As Discussed with Myron Lee of the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization
June 25, 2018**

Attendance:

DMPO: Myron Lee
CSU: Susan Crook, Sandy Johnson, Tom Butine
CBD: Ryan Beam

Issues:

1. Congestion and "Elasticity"

We think you agreed to look into the degree of anticipated local congestion compared to other cities. We think St George is used to having very little traffic congestion and that expectations of increases in congestion as the metropolitan area grows may not be realistic. Cities with far more congestion than we have locally in St George continue to thrive economically even as traffic and congestion increases. (I have lived in the middle of such a metro area.) We think you also agreed to tune the model of various degrees of "traffic elasticity": travel avoidance or modification as congestion increases. We'll be interested to hear what your research turned up.

2. The Main Traffic Driver

We continue to question the basis of the Hurricane-Ivins traffic as driver for the Northern Corridor and would like to understand it more since it doesn't make common sense to us. It may be understandable that construction traffic from the Hurricane area to Ivins (or the Ledges, Santa Clara, north St George) is driving the current traffic, but not as those areas get built-out. We'd like to understand the reasons behind the expected traffic.

3. Options

We didn't get to dig very deeply into options and would like to work on modeling options for them:

- Diversion of thru-traffic to the Southern Parkway instead of down I-15
- A more "porous" I-15, with additional over/underpasses for traffic just wanting to get from one side of I-15 to the other. Currently this traffic is forced through the main congestion points, which is probably driving them to be worse.
- One-way traffic loops through downtown
- Improved traffic light timing allowing one-stop travel at the speed limit through main passages
- The fly-over connection of Red Hills PW and I-15: we'd like to understand why this helps later but not sooner.

4. Incorporating Trends

We'd also like to understand how the model could be adjusted to include better accommodate trends including self-driving vehicles (faster with less separation), electric vehicles (negating the issue of pollution caused by traffic/idling), shared vehicles, mass transit independent of projected congestion points, automated delivery services, etc.

5. Zoning and Mass Transit Planning

Much of our traffic issues seem to be self-inflicted by our zoning practices. We'd like to work with you on how to address this with our local cities. It also seems that now is the time to plan mass transit for our areas to alleviate future traffic. Most growing metro

areas postpone this to a point where it becomes very expensive. Buses on crowded roads are not the answer.

6. The Assumption of the Northern Corridor

We're concerned that several past and current road modifications have been designed under the assumption that the NC is going to happen. The current Washington Parkway project under consideration is another example. Is there a way to have more public visibility and input on this assumption driving project designs?

My notes taken during the meeting – not to be included in the message to Myron

- The relative degree of congestion
- "Elasticity" of traffic: avoidance/modification of travel behavior as congestion increases
- The basis for the Hurricane-Ivins future traffic volumes: this primary driver for the NC doesn't seem to make sense - it may be construction traffic as Ivins is built-out and would decrease rather than increase over time
- The options: more porous I-15 (more roads over/under it), major I-15 bypass routes (via Southern Parkway), alternative city-center traffic flows (one-way streets, traffic light synchronization, etc.), mass transit, development prioritization, Smart Growth zoning implementation
- Why some options only make a difference much later (e.g., the direct connection of Red Hills PW to I-15) and why some mistakes have been made (e.g., the bias of the Snow Canyon/Red Hills PW - Bluff St/SR18 intersection for N-S traffic instead of E-W traffic)
- The impact of trends (e.g., working from home, autonomous vehicles, delivery services)
- Impact of the assumption that the NC will be approved on other road projects; for example
 - Would the Washington Parkway extension to Green Springs be accelerated without this assumption?
 - Past projects based on this assumption would have to be redesigned if the assumption ends up being not true