

## **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Study**

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) completed Phase I of a Transportation Study in Ogden Canyon in Spring 2015. The purpose of Phase I was to gather physical information and opinions concerning transportation through Ogden Canyon so a plan could be formed for future canyon uses and needs.

Phase II was initiated by the Utah Transportation Commission in September 2015 to further investigate spot improvements that could be made to SR-39 in Ogden Canyon. In Phase II, the study team met more extensively with people and groups who care about Ogden Canyon. The study team used information collected in Phase I to develop concepts that solve and mitigate controversy and that are feasible. Focus groups, made up of people who live, work, travel, and recreate in Ogden Canyon, were formed to evaluate these concepts and give input. Representatives from local governments and other agencies also participated in evaluating the concepts and gave feedback.

### **1.2 Public Outreach**

The transition from Phase I to Phase II was announced to the public in September 2015 through a press release and an email blast. During Phase II, a total of three press releases were prepared, resulting in five news articles. A sixth news article was generated after the Public Open House. A total of five email blasts were sent throughout Phase II. A project website was maintained to keep the public informed of the progress of the study. The project also had an email and hotline available for the public to ask questions and voice comments. Additionally, the project team met with six agencies and conducted three meetings with Ogden Canyon residents. The project team conducted several focus groups that were made up of residents, commuters, recreationalists, local businesses, and agencies. The focus groups are presented in Chapter 5.0. A Public Open House was held to present study results, and is discussed in depth in Chapter 6.0.

### **1.3 Management Committee Summary**

The Management Committee was formed to guide the direction of the study, to direct other committees in their work, and to give final approval of Phase II decisions. This committee was made up of senior leadership at the Utah Department of Transportation and Weber County, with assistance from the project consultant, Horrocks Engineers.

The members of the Management Committee were:

- Matthew Bell, Weber County Commissioner
- Holin Wilbanks, Weber County Public Affairs Director
- Rex Harris, UDOT Project Manager
- Kris Peterson, UDOT Region One Director



Advisors to the Management Committee were:

- Jim Horrocks, Horrocks Engineers Project Manager
- Tracy Conti, Horrocks Engineers Project Lead
- April Gordon, Horrocks Engineers Public Involvement Coordinator

The Management Committee met two times to discuss the project.

## 1.4 Technical Committee Summary

The Technical Committee was set up to review concepts generated during Phase I and provide feedback to the focus groups and the Management Committee. They were also tasked with setting the study parameters and providing new ideas. This committee was made up of staff at the Utah Department of Transportation and Weber County, with assistance from the project consultant, Horrocks Engineers. The members of the Technical Committee were:

- Jennifer Graham, Weber County Parks and Recreation Director
- Sean Wilkinson, Weber County Planning Manager
- Jared Andersen, Weber County Engineer
- Charlie Ewert, Weber County Planning Manager
- Holin Wilbanks, Weber County Public Affairs Director
- Rex Harris, UDOT Project Manager
- Walt Steinvorth, UDOT Planning Manager
- Jeff Harris, UDOT Planning
- Angelo Papastamos, UDOT Planning Manager
- Jim Horrocks, Horrocks Engineers Project Manager
- Tracy Conti, Horrocks Engineers Project Lead
- April Gordon, Horrocks Engineers Public Involvement Coordinator
- Brandon Tucker, Horrocks Engineers Roadway Designer

The Technical Committee met two times to discuss the project.

## 1.5 Focus Groups

Phase I of the Ogden Canyon Transportation Study collected public input through an interactive website which received 408 comments and a public survey that received 941 responses. From the feedback received through these avenues, it was apparent that many people are concerned about the future of Ogden Canyon. UDOT determined that the best way to proceed with Phase II was to involve as many of those stakeholders as possible in brainstorming ideas for transportation solutions and examining impacts of various options.

As a result, three focus groups were formed: Active/Transit, Roadway, and Environmental. These focus groups were made up of canyon residents, recreational users of the canyon, stakeholders (school district, police, fire, Forest Service), and residents of Ogden City and the Upper Valley. Each group met separately twice and then had a third meeting with all three groups. The focus groups helped develop a

vision of Ogden Canyon, set priorities, and screen options for roadway improvements and trails as detailed in Section 5.0.

## **1.6 Public Open House**

A Public Open House was held on April 28, 2016 at the Orbital ATK Conference Center, 890 Ogden Canyon in Ogden, from 5 – 7 p.m. There were 220 attendees who signed in. The purpose of the open house was to present the study recommendations, show the process by which the recommendations were determined, and gather public comment. Approximately 80 comments were received and are summarized in Section 6.0.

## **1.7 Recommendations**

### **Roadway Focus Group - Recommendations**

After learning of impacts to the mountain and river, the Roadway Group eliminated 40 and 45 mph design speed options throughout the canyon. They determined that one design speed in the canyon was not practicable, but making spot improvements to curves for safety was necessary. The group prioritized spot improvements, including preferred design speeds, after environmental impacts were presented:

- 1) Curves through the Narrows (35 mph design speed)
- 2) Curves near the Alaskan Inn and Hermitage Neighborhood (35 mph design speed)
- 3) Curves near Valhalla and Wildwood (30 mph design speed)

Widening the shoulder on both sides of the road to accommodate motorist and bicyclist safety was the highest recommendation in all three areas.

### **Active Transportation/Transit Focus Group - Recommendations**

This group reviewed and rated seven trail concepts for location, trail type, and trail uses. They determined that both a shared use path (hikers, walkers, and family biking) and wider shoulders on the roadway (serious cyclists) were needed to accommodate users.

### **Environmental Focus Group - Recommendations**

The Environmental Group reviewed recommendations from the Active Transportation/Transit and Roadway Groups and how they affected the environment (impacts to mountainside, river, visual, private property, etc.). Their conclusions in both categories are as follows:

#### ***Shared Use Trail***

- 1) Supports a trail system
- 2) Not important to connect trails to neighborhoods
- 3) Important to connect trails to scenic features in the canyon
- 4) Important to connect any new trails to existing trail system

#### ***Roadway***

- 1) Speed is not critical – preferred shoulder improvements only and no change to current Design Speed

### **Final Recommendations**

The final recommendations presented at the open house were based on information gathered from Phase I, engineering analysis, meetings with agencies and residents, and recommendations from the focus groups in Phase II. The recommendations were presented in three categories: design speed, roadway, and shared use trail.

## **1.8 Next Steps**

The next steps that UDOT and Weber County would need to take were presented at the public open house.

### **UDOT**

#### **Roadway**

UDOT is responsible for any future roadway improvements. UDOT will use the study's recommendations to prioritize projects for funding approval by the Transportation Commission. Each improvement will require an environmental approval. Maintenance and safety projects will be prioritized first.

#### **Upcoming Projects**

UDOT has upcoming projects in Ogden Canyon. One project will flatten a curve and widen the road in The Narrows (as recommended in the Phase I Study). The other project will replace the bridge at Grey Cliffs and perform minor rehabilitation on the two bridges located at the top and bottom of the canyon.

### **Weber County**

#### **Shared Use Trail**

Weber County is the lead agency on any future trail in the canyon. The County will assess this Study's final report and determine any future funding, phasing, and timing of a trail system.

The Ogden Canyon Transportation Use Study team has met with Pineview Water, Bureau of Reclamation, and PacifiCorp/Rocky Mountain Power and has received conditional approval to study a trail on their corridor. Further coordination will need to occur with these agencies, residents, and Weber County.

#### **Further Analysis**

Items that were not fully developed but warrant further analysis include access management, zoning and land use, property boundaries, parking, and corridor preservation.