

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

Salt Lake City Transportation Division Office - 349 South 200 East, Suite 150 - P.O. Box 145502
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5502

October 10, 2022

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support – Salt Lake City Reconnecting Communities Planning Grant 2022

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

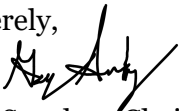
On behalf of the Salt Lake City Transportation Advisory Board, I write in support of Salt Lake City's initiative to address east-west connections across the I-15 and north-south rail corridors, particularly for people walking, biking, and taking transit.

Salt Lake City is divided into east and west sides by the Jordan River. Early planners of the city used the river to accommodate agricultural, irrigation, and hygiene uses for the settlers. The east-west division was further engrained by the construction of the railroad, industry, and eventually the routing of Interstate-15 through the city. Today, the Salt Lake City's Westside has a very culturally and economically diverse population, in comparison to the east side. The Westside transportation needs, especially with public transit, have often been overlooked. Recent city leaders and administrations have been seeking ways to bridge those obstacles that will help remit missed opportunities that will benefit all the communities of our city.

Salt Lake City has a higher student population on the westside, but the designated high school is on the east side of the railroad tracks and Interstate-15. Students in these neighborhoods have to plan alternate routes to get safely to school on time without having to wait for a train or have to reroute over a mile to the overpasses. In some extreme cases, students have crossed between the rail cars to not be tardy for classes. Salt Lake City has been negotiating with Union Pacific for over 10 years to find a viable solution for students to be able to cross these obstacles safely; after extensive efforts from community members and city leaders, a new pedestrian bridge is finally being installed. In addition, all heavy rail crossings are located on the westside of the city. This is one of many examples of the east-west connections that need to be bridged in our city for more equitable access to our communities.

The Transportation Advisory Board supports Salt Lake City's grant application to the federal Reconnecting Communities program to conduct a comprehensive planning project to make improvements to multiple east-west crossings between 600 North and 2100 South. This work will improve our community relations and provide equitable access to critical parts of the city.

Sincerely,



Greg Sanchez, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board