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# M E M O R A N D U M

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**DATE:** September 15, 2006  
**TO:** City Council Members  
**FROM:** Russell Weeks  
**RE:** Downtown Transportation and Development Briefing  
**CC:** Cindy Gust-Jenson, Rocky Fluhart, Louis Zunguze, Alexander Ikefuna, Tim Harpst, Gary Mumford, Janice Jardine, Jennifer Bruno, Doug Dansie

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This memorandum pertains to a series of briefings about the status of efforts to coordinate medium and long-term planning goals so they will cohere with each other and with construction projects that are on a more immediate horizon. No formal City Council action will be required at the City Council meeting September 19.

The City Council will hear four briefings in the following order:

## **Downtown Transportation Master Plan Study**

Utah Transit Authority consultant Alice Steiner and City Transportation Director Tim Harpst will summarize comments the study's team is receiving on proposals for expanded light rail and bus service that were presented at a "community leaders breakfast" earlier this summer and will note the next breakfast will be held on September 20. That breakfast will focus on ideas for a downtown circulator system, concepts about the free-fare zone, and improving the downtown for travel by foot and bicycles. The two will summarize public involvement efforts and plans to make monthly presentations to the Transportation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission. The two also will ask the City Council for its preference on the frequency of briefings similar to the Tuesday briefing.

## **Downtown Rising**

Natalie Gochnour of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce will present a status report on the Downtown Rising study launched publicly in August with a news conference and the publication of a newspaper insert on August 28. Ms. Gochnour also will present information about the number and kind of public comment it has received to date.

## **Downtown Land Use Master Plan**

Planning Director Alexander Ikefuna will present information about the Planning Division's preparations to make presentations to the three community councils – People's Freeway, Central City and Downtown – whose neighborhoods would be affected by revising the

Downtown Land-Use Master Plan. The presentations will include information from the Chamber of Commerce and Envision Utah or both to insure cohesion with the Downtown Rising study.

**Short-term Construction Issues**

Community Development Director Louis Zunguze will introduce William Knowles as the downtown construction ombudsman. Mr. Knowles, who performed similar duties for Salt Lake City and the Utah Transit Authority during construction of the downtown to University of Utah leg of the light rail system, will act as a trouble-shooter and coordinator of issues involving construction projects downtown. For about a year, developers and agencies such as UTA have indicated that work on projects such as the light rail extension to the Intermodal Hub and the construction of a downtown office building could start in autumn 2006.

In addition, Mr. Zunguze will present a preliminary briefing on issues that may be involved in a proposed ordinance that would, probably temporarily, expedite the City's processes for obtaining construction permits for large-scale construction projects such as the light rail extension and the office building. (Please see attachment.)

SEP 14 2006

# Communication to the City Council



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Department of Community Development  
Office of the Director

**To:** Rocky Fluhart, Chief Administrative Officer

**From:** Louis Zunguze, Community Development Director

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**Date:** September 13, 2006

**CC:** Brent Wilde, Community Development Deputy Director  
Tim Harpst, Transportation Director  
Alex Ikefuna, Planning & Zoning Enforcement Director

**Re:** Expedited Permitting for Downtown Reconstruction Projects

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During the course of working with the mall developers, light rail extension planners, and representatives of other major projects being planned for Downtown, the Administration has determined that it is in the City's best interest to take a proactive approach to addressing construction process needs and impacts that will likely result from major construction activities in the Downtown area. To that end, the Administration is proposing ordinance revisions to facilitate expedited approval processes for temporary construction-related activities.

The information provided below is categorized into:

1. Issues that require immediate City Council action,
2. Issues for City Council consideration, and
3. Issues that require City Council direction.

The intent of this proposal is to anticipate construction-related issues that might negatively impact the timely completion of projects and create an overall negative perception if the City is not in a position to provide an immediate response.

In order to create a frame of reference, the boundaries for the area under discussion are:

North: North Temple  
South: 600 South  
West: Interstate 15  
East: 200 East

## 1. Issues Requiring City Council Action

- Zoning Issues: Signage (both business advertising and public necessity signs), driveway width and location, landscaping requirements and the size and location of temporary buildings.

Approval Authority: Planning Director

Process & Approval Standards: Expedited Planned Development process and Planned Development evaluation standards as outlined in Chapter 54 of the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance. For the purposes of expediting the necessary temporary approvals, the approval process shall include a letter of approval in a "temporary zoning approval" file that shall be maintained in the Planning Division offices for public information during the duration of the temporary approval time frame.

- Temporary Land Uses that Are Not Permitted in the Zoning District: Examples of potential temporary uses include construction trailers, construction staging areas, construction materials storage, parking lots, and construction equipment storage.

Approval Authority: Planning Director

Process & Approval Standards: Standards for a Zoning Amendment as outlined in Chapter 50 of the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance. For the purposes of expediting the necessary temporary approvals, the approval process shall include a letter of approval in a "temporary zoning approval" file that shall be maintained in the Planning Division offices for public information during the duration of the temporary approval time frame.

- Public Way Encroachments: This category includes any structure located in the public way to facilitate an applicable Downtown construction project such as signage barricades, ramps, and similar temporary structures.

Approval Authority: City Civil Engineer and/or the City Transportation Engineer

Process & Approval Standards: Where not otherwise authorized by City Ordinance, for the purposes of expediting the necessary temporary approvals, the approval process shall include a letter of approval in a "temporary public way encroachment approval" file that shall be maintained in the City Transportation Division office for public information during the duration of the temporary approval time frame.

## 2. Issues for City Council Consideration

- **Parking Meter Fees:** Bagging or removing parking meters during the construction phase of major projects in the Downtown area is an essential part of the construction process. City Ordinance requires that a fee of \$25 per day for each meter that is put out of operation during a construction process. To put this into perspective, \$25 per day for 365 days is \$9,125. As such, this is a significant expense for any major project that will eliminate many meters for an extended period of time. The City Council may want to consider whether it is in the City's best interest to temporarily reduce the cost of taking a meter out of operation for major projects as proposed or put a cap on the total amount charged.

**Approval Authority:** The City Council

**Process & Approval Standards:** If the City Council decides to reduce, eliminate, or cap fees for taking parking meters out of service, the approval process shall include a letter of approval in a "Temporary Parking Meter Bagging" file that shall be maintained in the Transportation Division office for public information during the duration of the temporary approval time frame. Upon receiving approval from the City Council for a reduced fee for taking a parking meter out of service, the City Transportation Engineer shall authorize the elimination of functioning parking meters, if the justification presented by the applicant is consistent with the Council's intent.

## 3. Issues Requiring City Council Direction

- **Other Construction-Related Activities that May Require Expedited Approval:** This category includes, but is not limited to unique holiday/winter needs, waiver of limitations regarding construction hours of operation, and applicable noise ordinances.

**Approval Authority:** The authority to authorize exceptions to the various issues as identified above that might arise during a construction process, is varied and for issues such as noise County agencies will be involved.

**Process & Approval Standards:** The Administration is seeking direction from the City Council regarding this issue. The Administration could begin contacting the applicable agencies to initiate discussions pertaining to likely construction phase regulatory exceptions that may be necessary, or the City Council may prefer to take the lead regarding these issues. In establishing a decision-making process for the types of issues that may arise, the City should designate the authority to make decisions. Such decisions must be based on the justification for the request as presented by the applicant and be weighed against any potential negative impacts on adjacent property owners and uses.

## **Recommendation**

The Administration recommends that an ordinance be created to enable the City to grant temporary approval or regulatory exceptions for a variety of construction-related structures and activities and/or programs in the Downtown area as described above, during the construction phase of major Downtown development projects and light rail construction.