

Sustainable Transportation Case Study:

Salt Lake City, Utah



Transit oriented development plans in Salt Lake City.

Summary:

Salt Lake City is employing public transportation and land use planning to build a sustainable transportation system that offers a growing population access to destinations and quality of life while minimizing environmental impact.

“Envision Utah” formed in 1997 as a public/private partnership to create growth strategies to preserve critical lands, promote water conservation and clean air, improve the region-wide transportation system, and provide housing options for all residents. The region faced the prospect of adding a million residents by 2030. If pursued in the same manner as in the 1990s, this population growth would mean urbanizing 87 percent more land by 2020, requiring new water sources by 2010, and risking increases in air pollution, congestion, infrastructure needs, and costs for businesses and families.

Through a participatory process called “Envision Utah,” residents selected a plan for growth and economic development around new public transit rail lines. Utah Transit Authority is building new transit lines with grant funding from FTA’s New Starts program as well as local sources. The transit authority is also reducing its environmental impact through its use of FTA sponsored Environmental Management Systems training and its commitments as a signatory to the APTA Sustainability Commitment and the Climate Registry.

Results:

- Improved air quality
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Increased mobility and transportation choices
- Critical lands preserved

- Conserved and maintained availability of water resources
- Provided housing opportunities
- Maximized efficiency in public infrastructure investments

Next Steps:

Utah Transit Authority continues to build additional transit lines to fulfill the Transit 2030 plan. The next set of investments includes \$3.8 billion in bus rapid transit, commuter rail, and streetcars. The region also continues to focus growth in transit oriented developments, such as the planned City Creek Center development downtown.