HERITAGE

THE UTAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2014

A Streetcar in Ogden? The debate for future transit. **page 4**

Preservation Conference Homes Tour and Conference **page 5**

2014 Heritage Awards **page 6**

Modern Streetcar in Utah Presents Zoning Challenges

BY SUSIE PETHERAM, AICP, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL/PLANNING & PRESERVATION, CRSA

In the early to mid-20th century, due to the advent of new transportation technologies such as the gas-powered rubber-tired motor coach, streetcars were phased out as a public transportation option. After 75 years of service, the last streetcars in Salt Lake City ran in 1946, while Ogden ceased 50 years of service in 1935. In smaller towns, such as Logan, Brigham City, and Provo, the streetcar operated for brief periods ranging from 1910 to 1924.

Fast forward 67 years, and the streetcar is beginning its comeback. On December 8, 2013, the first modern streetcar made its debut in Utah. The S-Line connects between the west edge of the Sugar House Business District and Central Pointe station at 2100 South, where riders can transfer to the TRAX Red Line (Draper to Downtown Salt Lake City) and the Green Line (West Valley City to Airport). Adjacent to the streetcar track is the linear greenway park, currently installed from 500 East to McClelland Street, with the remainder to be implemented through South Salt Lake City in the near future.

The S-Line at its easternmost stop, Fairmont Station (McClelland Street).

While it may seem retro, the modern streetcar isn't about nostalgia and it's more than just another transportation mode. The modern streetcar is linked to land use, economic development, and historic preservation. In contrast to the streetcars of the past, which often provided the means for new, suburban development, the modern streetcar is primarily considered within established neighborhoods.

What does this mean, what can residents expect, and how can they stay

(continued on page 3)

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First Word in Preservation

BY KIRK HUFFAKER

For over a decade now, Utah has been a leader in creating new accessible modes of transportation including a world-class local rail system. The latest addition to this system is the S-Line, the first modern streetcar in the state. More streetcars are currently being planned. But what will the cost be to our historic neighborhoods of developing more rail lines?

These rail lines are community investments and city leaders are looking for a return on that investment through higher density development adjacent to and very near stations. Most often referred to as transit oriented development (TOD), these areas return a higher tax base to the cities while providing ridership to the transit system. So it's to their advantage to "upzone" the areas surrounding transit to create higher density. Unfortunately, this often creates conflicts with adjacent historic neighborhoods that are good places to live and economically strong, and are about to be surrounded by large buildings and/or threatened with selective demolition by developers. Our feature stories bring focus to this issue in ongoing discussions in Ogden and Salt Lake City and provide ways for you to get involved.

Utah Historic Preservation Strategic Plan Survey

Over the next year, the Utah State Historic Preservation Office within the Utah Division of State History will lead a concerted effort to assess the state of historic preservation in Utah, through collaboration with state and federal agencies, local governments, various non-profit stakeholders, and as many members of the Utah public as possible. We hope to find a set of common goals and objectives to guide Historic Preservation in Utah over the next seven years.

A first step in this effort is to assess the current knowledge of historic preservation issues in Utah through an online survey. To take the survey by scaning the QR code or go to:
http://heritage.utah.gov/history/preservation-survey

If you would like to learn more about the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan process, please go online to the National Park Service's webpage:
http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/pad/stateplan.html

Modern Streetcar in Utah

CONTINUED

Main Street ca. 1905. Photo courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

informed and be involved in the process? The key is to be informed and understand more about what the streetcar is, how it functions, and what the objectives are in both the short and the long-term from a neighborhood and regional perspective.

In addition to considering what destinations the new streetcar routes will connect, residents need to consider how the areas adjacent to the route and around stops will respond and shift to the new transportation mode. Land use planning and zoning changes are likely to be considered, especially in commercial areas that have evolved over the past century to be more automobile-centric in design. Redevelopment and infill development can start to integrate more walkable, pedestrian oriented features and connections, often bringing back a physical culture that historic neighborhoods once enjoyed, but became eroded when accommodating the automobile-centric development of the 50's and 60's and beyond.

Some lessons were learned from the process of creating the S-Line, which was more of a public-private partnership effort than the earlier TRAX light rail system. The opportunity to re-use the Rio Grande Railroad corridor for the S-Line streetcar and greenway helped create new vitality in an abandoned corridor. Residents helped vision about what the corridor could become and what elements would help achieve those goals. By contrast, a better integration of residents' perspectives could have been achieved on the land use side – regarding location of stops and stabilizing existing neighborhoods while providing opportunities for higher density in areas of change. The balance between long-term planning perspectives and short-term ridership goals and land use can be a tricky compromise.

Currently, Salt Lake City is in the midst of an Alternatives Analysis for streetcar expansion, after which environmental conditions will be documented and financial strategies explored over the next two years. Once these steps are completed, possible construction could start anywhere from 2017 to 2025 on new lines in Sugar House and possibly downtown. Two levels of analyses have taken place in the current Alternatives Analysis Study to evaluate and recommend route options. Public input was gathered and considered at both stages and the city is in the process of recommending a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Look for a third open house sometime this summer to provide feedback on the LPA routes. Moving forward, residents can expect to consider the issues of land use, zoning, and planning related to the LPA routes identified.

Visit the following websites to get involved:
Sugar House Streetcar - http://www.shstreetcar.com/
Sugar House Corridor rezoning proposal - http://bit.ly/1kLk7J8
Downtown Streetcar - http://bit.ly/1l16M4f

Rider waits at the Sugarmont Station (900 East) to ride the S-Line streetcar.

A Streetcar in Ogden: The Debate for Future Transit

BY ALISON FLANDERS

About ten years ago, Ogden City began considering some new local mass transit options for the city. They are currently evaluating the potential for either a streetcar or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to improve transit connections between the intermodal hub downtown, Weber State University, and McKay-Dee Hospital. But is it the best option when you start to delve into costs, who it serves, and community impact?

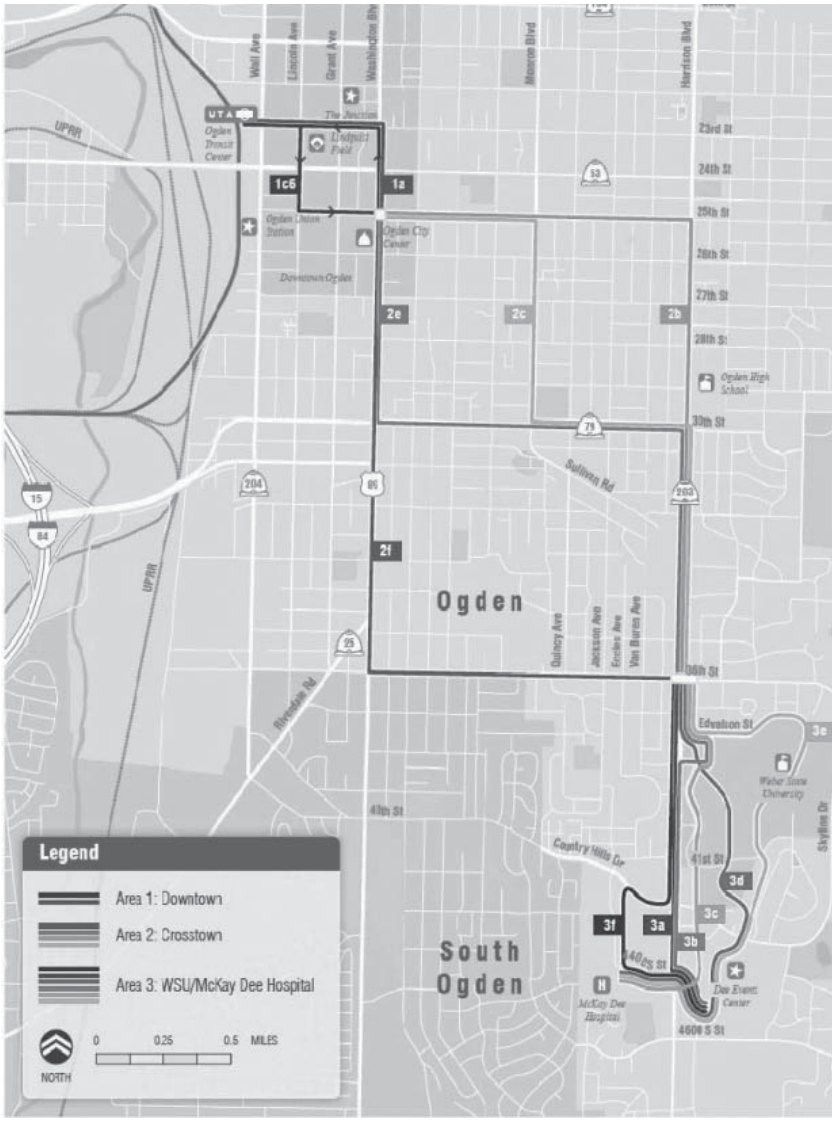
While a streetcar project requires an investment of time and resources from many organizations, this effort builds on previous studies evaluating different transit modes and routes. Most residents are in agreement that some additional mode of transportation would be beneficial to the city, but there are many questions about the goals of both BRT and a streetcar and who it serves.

There are several route options being considered for the streetcar. One option proposes to build the line to serve the most people now and provide options for the underserved populations. This line goes through existing and historic neighborhoods in the East Bench neighborhood. In Ogden, the underserved populations includes university students, workers in the central business district, workers and patients of McKay-Dee Hospital, and those who need additional access to public transportation via the intermodal hub. These are existing customers that might choose the new rail system if it proves to be more convenient and reliable than the existing system.

Another option is to construct a line that would lay the groundwork for new transit oriented development that can help to grow the local economy through building higher density development. This proposal emphasizes the future potential of Ogden and is not as concerned with the streetcar initially serving existing populations for high return on investment in the short term.

Like the effort in Salt Lake City, the choices made will play a role in stimulating economic development and revitalization of existing, historic neighborhoods. **An open house is scheduled for June 25 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Ogden High School.**

The map below was taken from the final report of the tranist study and shows several options for new rail transit in Ogden. For the full report visit: http://www.rideuta.com/mc/?page=Projects-OgdenWSUTransitStudy



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The 2014 Utah Preservation Conference took place May 8-10, and was a success thanks to our sponsors, attendees, and volunteers.

Special thanks to our presenters including Stuart Burgess of Mojave Underground, (pictured above) and Charles Belfoure, along with our breakout session presenters.

We also would like to thank the property owners who opened their homes for our 43rd annual Historic Homes tour in the Marmalade neighborhood and the almost 300 volunteers who make this event possible.

2014 Heritage Award Winners

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Downtown Developers for the Salt Lake Tribune Building, SLC

Draper City for the Day Barn, DRAPER

STABILIZATION, RESTORATION, OR RENOVATION

Allen Family for the CC Keller Building, OGDEN

Jim Laub for Herm's Inn, LOGAN

Scott and Connie Maves for 1341 E. Michigan Avenue, SLC

Craig Paulsen for the Baxter House, SPRING CITY

Jim and Mel Robertson for 929 Park Avenue, PARK CITY

Kelly and Macae Wanberg for the Grantsville Church, GRANTSVILLE

Wasatch Academy for Liberal Hall, MOUNT PLEASANT

Beverly Hanson and Myron Willson for 1025 E. Herbert Avenue, SLC

Gordon Wood for the Brinton-Dahl House, SLC

ORGANIZATION

Ladies' Literary Club, SLC

Utah Center for Architecture, SLC

LUCYBETH RAMPTON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Cindy Cromer, SLC

Heritage Awards winners clockwise from top:

Salt Lake Tribune Building, Herm's Inn, Baxter House, Herbert Avenue

For additional photos of all our Heritage Award winners visit our website.

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Learn more about planned giving to Utah Heritage Foundation on our website: www.utahheritagefoundation.org/supportus. Or contact Kirk Huffaker, Executive Director, at (801) 533-0858 ext. 105 or kirk@utahheritagefoundation.org and he would be happy to meet with you.

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