

Media Release



Contact: Remi Barron, 801-859-6095, Rbarron@rideuta.com

New UTA CEO Streamlines Management; Shifts Focus to Improving Customer Service, Building Public Trust

SALT LAKE CITY – Newly appointed UTA President and CEO Jerry Benson today announced he is restructuring the organization’s leadership team to support a “new era” centered on improving customer service and building public trust. The completion of major capital projects, as well as growing and shifting needs of customers, means that UTA must adapt to meet new challenges, according to Benson.

Departments will now fall into five groupings, each headed by an executive reporting to Benson, rather than the previous arrangement in which eight executives oversaw a variety of functions and reported directly to the CEO.

“Effective today, I’m changing our organizational structure to streamline the number of people who report directly to me from eight to five,” Benson said at a morning staff meeting for all 2,400 UTA employees. “This is designed to better align how we’re organized to deliver optimal customer service. I will be placing a great deal of responsibility and confidence in these five people – three Vice Presidents and two section Chiefs.

“This will also allow me to spend a significant amount of my time and energy working to restore the public’s trust and improve our standing in the community,” Benson added. “I’ll focus my attention on communicating with and seeking feedback from you, UTA’s employees, as well as reaching out to our many diverse external stakeholders.”

A shift in vision and needs

The growing and shifting needs and desires of customers and stakeholders in UTA’s large service area, combined with the successful completion of the organization’s ambitious

UTA Management Changes at a Glance:

- Streamlines top-level administration and focuses attention on improving customer service, building public trust.
- Reduces eight top executive positions to five and realigns departments.
- Includes no layoffs.
- Doesn’t change job functions for many employees, including bus and train operators.
- May lead to changes in responsibilities and compensation for some HQ and management staff.
- Salaries for new executives to be set after review of revised responsibilities and of comparable positions in similar organizations.

FrontLines 2015 rail expansion program, call for an executive leadership team tailored to focusing attention on the future, Benson said.

“For a long time, we were organized to build and manage massive and complex capital projects, which we did extremely well. Together, we completely modernized the Wasatch Front’s transit infrastructure with light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit,” Benson said.

“Systems like ours are now the envy of metro areas larger than ours and we frequently host delegations from places like Kansas City and Omaha that are eager to catch up. But the era of significant capital-investment expansion is behind us for now, and we must all re-engineer and re-focus the organization around providing the best service and customer experience possible.”

New leadership team

UTA’s new departmental structure will be overseen by three Vice Presidents and two section Chiefs, all current UTA executives who formerly managed one or more of the functions in their new portfolios. The five-member leadership team includes:

- **Vice President of Operations and Capital Todd Provost** manages the agency’s day-to-day transit operations, which include bus, light rail, commuter rail and streetcar services; the facilities throughout UTA’s seven-county service areas that support operations; and capital projects, including transit.
- **Vice President of External Relations Nichol Bourdeaux’s** responsibilities include customer and public communications functions such as public relations and marketing; relations with local, state and federal government agencies; planning and policy; and providing support to UTA’s Board of Trustees.
- **Vice President of Finance Robert Biles** oversees development and management of the agency’s budget; day-to-day accounting, money-management and investment activities; purchasing of goods and services; transit-oriented development and management of real estate owned by UTA.
- **Chief Safety, Security and Technology Officer Dave Goeres** manages UTA’s transit police force, security and emergency response, as well as a number of business functions and special projects.
- The **Chief People Officer** position is yet to be filled. The job includes directing human resources functions that support the authority’s 2,400 employees; managing recruitment and staff training; and overseeing labor relations with unions that represent certain groups of UTA employees.

Benson told employees he’s still assessing where to place a few small functions in the new structure, but committed to provide more information as soon as it is available. Noting that change

can bring with it worries and uncertainties, Benson said he's asked the newly appointed executives to meet immediately with managers – and as quickly as possible with all employees in their departments – to answer questions about the reorganization, as well as their management style and expectations.

"I understand the upset and unknowns that can come with change," Benson said, "but I assure you that we will communicate more as we adjust to a revised organizational structure. In the meantime, I appreciate your patience and dedication."

No layoffs planned, but job functions and salaries may change

No layoffs are planned, but the reorganization may mean changes for employees throughout UTA, although primarily for those in higher-level management jobs. The largest group of employees, those who operate UTA's buses and trains, will see little or no changes to their job responsibilities.

The new leadership team has been asked by Benson to fully review and assess all business functions within their areas of responsibility, and to make or propose changes. As a result, some employees' roles and responsibilities may change and job descriptions and compensation levels may be adjusted.

A similar review of the responsibilities assigned to the executive team will take place in the near future, and their compensation may be revised in accordance with their new duties.

#