

# Looking Forward

2019: SUCCESS NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE



UTAH TRANSIT AUTHORITY



## CARLTON CHRISTENSEN

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIR/**  
REPRESENTING SALT LAKE COUNTY



## BETH HOLBROOK

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES/**REPRESENTING  
DAVIS, WEBER & BOX ELDER COUNTIES



## KENT MILLINGTON

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES/**REPRESENTING  
UTAH & TOOELE COUNTIES

# MESSAGE FROM THE UTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*The mission of the Utah Transit Authority is simple—we move people. As the agency approaches its 50th anniversary in 2020, UTA has renewed its emphasis on improving service and facilitating further economic development with an integrated, efficient system of bus, rail, paratransit and rideshare services. We are also exploring innovative new technologies like autonomous vehicles and on-demand microtransit service.*

2019 was a dynamic year at Utah Transit Authority. Our newly formed Board of Trustees and executive leadership are moving forward, having established a clear vision and strategic priorities designed to enable the agency to:

- Increase service to deliver more responsive, effective service to our customers and the community
- Strengthen collaboration with elected officials, community organizations and the public
- Forge new, innovative transportation solutions designed to meet the needs of our growing population
- Improve efficiency through technology, partnerships and doing more with existing resources

The future is bright at UTA. We are committed to ensuring the agency's continued success by building meaningful connections with those we serve and honing a sharper focus on service, stewardship and people.

## NEW LEADERSHIP TAKES UTA FORWARD

After an extensive nationwide search, the Board of Trustees selected Carolyn Gonot as UTA's new executive director. She joined the agency in August after almost 25 years at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) in California, where she held a variety of leadership positions. Gonot's depth of experience in the transit industry covers a range of capabilities, from service and program planning to overseeing major capital projects.

The new three-member UTA Board of Trustees restructuring concluded on January 29, 2019, with Kent Millington being sworn in as the board's third and final member. Throughout the year, the board visited with city and county councils, participated in civic meetings and regional transportation planning discussions, and engaged with the community to better understand their transit needs. The board also implemented a number of changes within the agency in 2019, including reviewing and approving new policies to enhance accountability and transparency.



CAROLYN GONOT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# IMPROVING SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES

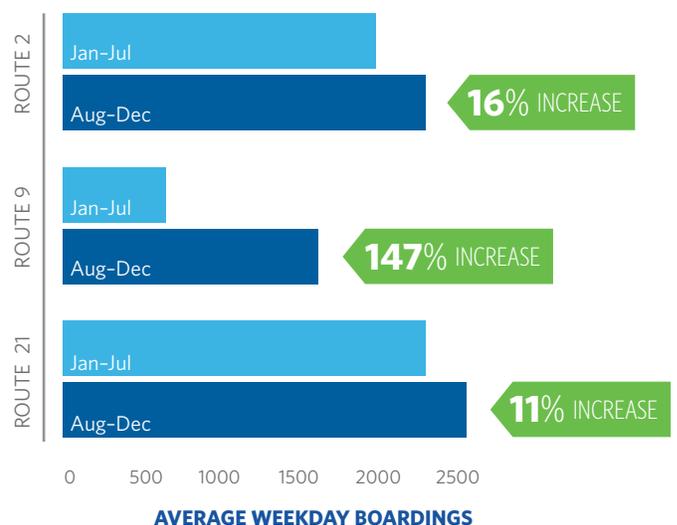
*UTA's first priority is our customers. Providing safe, reliable service within the six counties and more than 80 cities we serve is the driving force behind everything we do. Here are some highlights outlining our commitment to expand and improve service in 2019.*

**Service Choices:** In 2019, UTA launched Service Choices, a major outreach initiative to engage the community in shaping UTA's future bus system. We asked whether the agency should focus on bus service that emphasizes ridership or coverage. A ridership model would focus bus service on more densely populated corridors with greater frequency, and a coverage model would focus bus service in less populated corridors with less frequency but servicing a larger area. With feedback from the public and community stakeholders regarding what mix of ridership versus coverage they would prefer, UTA is now designing bus service plans that are even more tailored to community needs.

**Expanded Bus Service:** August 2019 brought some of the biggest changes in UTA's history, with new and expanded bus service implemented throughout the agency's service area. New routes were created in Ogden and in northern Utah County, and service was redesigned in Tooele County to provide more local coverage as well as all-day service to/from Salt Lake City. Three routes in Salt Lake City—Routes 2, 9 and 21—saw increased frequency and expanded service hours due to funding from Salt Lake City's Funding Our Future program, while other routes in Salt Lake County were realigned to provide more frequency and midday service.



**Ski Service Partnership:** With funding from the Central Wasatch Commission, UTA increased Ski Bus service in the Cottonwood Canyons for the 2019/2020 ski season. More trips were added to routes serving Snowbird, Alta Ski Area, Solitude Mountain Resort, and Brighton Resort. UTA increased carrying capacity by removing the interior ski racks to allow more passengers on the buses, and reduced travel time by removing stops that encounter major traffic congestion.





**Transit Studies:** UTA conducted several planning studies in 2019, focusing on ways to better engage elected officials and the public to be involved and provide input. The Point of the Mountain Commission, created by the Utah State Legislature, asked UTA to facilitate a study to analyze transit corridors and options between southern Salt Lake County and northern Utah County, which would occur with the relocation of the state prison. UTA is also continuing studies for bus rapid transit service between southern Davis County and Salt Lake City, with the potential to include Farmington as a northern terminus and alternative routing and connections in downtown Salt Lake City.

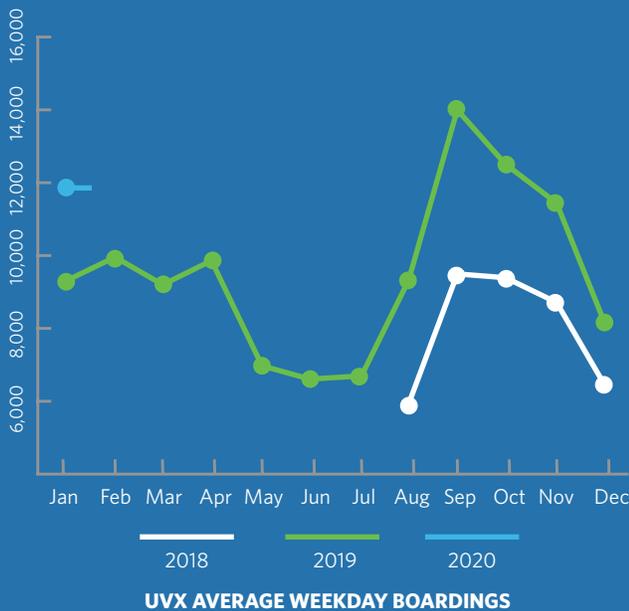
**TIGER Projects:** Through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) federal grant program, UTA continued to work with our grant partners in 2019, completing 80 of the 161 TIGER projects that will improve access and connections to transit. These projects include bus stop improvements, creating or enhancing bike racks and paths, ADA ramps, repairing sidewalks, building pedestrian paths or bridges, improving crosswalks, and providing message boards and accessible signage.



## GOING THE DISTANCE

*Several exciting milestones and events took place in 2019, each reflecting UTA's collaborative efforts with the community and in providing connected, multimodal service throughout the Wasatch Front. Our commitment includes taking transit to an even greater level of mobility, environmental benefit and economic vitality as we move forward.*

**Spike 150 Celebration:** On May 10, 2019, an estimated 100,000 people celebrated the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, with around 40,000 traveling to Promontory Point to witness the event's formal commemoration. Thousands boarded FrontRunner heading to Ogden, where UTA provided bus shuttle services for the Spike 150 festivities. UTA also operated van service for groups attending commemorative events around Salt Lake City.



**First Year of UVX:** In August 2019, the Utah Valley Express (UVX) bus rapid transit line between Orem and Provo completed its first year of service. After opening in the summer of 2018, UVX reached its 1 millionth rider in just five months. By September 2019, UVX was carrying almost 14,000 riders each day, and reached 3 million riders by the end of the year. Contributing to this success are UVX's exclusive lanes, limited stops, frequent service, and a three-year federal grant allowing the public to ride free. In addition, the students, faculty, staff and dependents from Utah Valley University and Brigham Young University have passes funded by the universities to ride UTA.

## INNOVATIVE ANSWERS MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS

*2019 was also a year of exploring innovative new technologies to find solutions to the multimodal needs of the area's growing communities. Pursuing out-of-the-box thinking illustrates how problem-solving, collaboration with transportation partners, and continual improvement are thriving at UTA.*

**AV Shuttle:** In April 2019, UDOT and UTA partnered to launch a year long pilot of the state's first autonomous vehicle (AV). The AV shuttle traversed Utah throughout the year to demonstrate its capabilities in various communities. It is part of UTA's vision to meet growing needs for accessible, safe travel in locations where traditional bus or rail service is less practical or efficient. This project is providing valuable insights and lessons that the UTA and UDOT can apply as we leverage the vast possibilities of this technology.

**UTA On Demand by Via:** UTA partnered with Via in November 2019 to launch a new microtransit pilot service in southern Salt Lake County. Microtransit is an innovative form of on-demand transportation that connects riders with other transit services, as well as to other local destinations in the community via a mobile phone app. The pilot covers



## 20 YEARS OF TRAX

*On December 4, 2019, TRAX marked its 20th anniversary. The collective vision of elected officials and stakeholders to build 45 miles of light rail over two decades has transformed the communities along the three TRAX lines by increasing mobility and spurring extensive economic development. The Salt Lake Chamber and several mayors from the cities along the original Sandy-Salt Lake line joined UTA for a special media event to commemorate the 20th anniversary.*



about 65 square miles in the cities of Bluffdale, Draper, Herriman, Riverton and South Jordan, and connects with seven TRAX and FrontRunner stations. The one-year pilot is off to a strong start and will help UTA study effective first and last-mile connections to transit.

**UTA Open Data Portal:** On August 26, we opened our virtual doors and launched the UTA Open Data Portal, accessible on UTA's website. Anyone—riders, researchers, planners or the general public—can view and download the latest ridership data, stops and routes. In addition to data, the site includes a map feature to illustrate the routes and stops available in an area you specify.

## SAFETY, EFFICIENCY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

*Safety is No. 1 at UTA. Which means we continue to invest in efforts that provide the utmost in safe service to our riders. We'll also continue seeking opportunities to maximize local taxpayer dollars and find more environmentally friendly ways to provide transit service.*

**TRAX Rail Replacement Project:** Over a 21-day period in 2019, UTA completed its largest rail maintenance project: replacing 18-year-old tracks and switches on Main Street at 150 and 400 South. After almost two decades of wear and tear, this critical section of TRAX needed to be replaced to keep the rail system in a state of good repair while maintaining safety and rider comfort. UTA scheduled a complete closure of TRAX and local streets in the area in order to complete the work in weeks, instead of months. UTA also scheduled the work during a period with the fewest large events taking place downtown. Throughout the project, UTA worked diligently to assist riders with walking bridges and shuttles—providing extensive information each day—and supporting local residents and businesses who were affected.

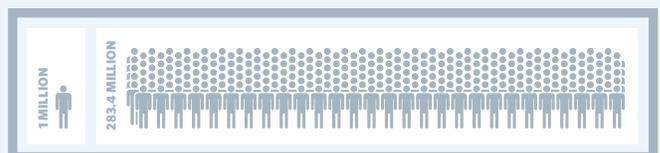
**100,293**  
RIDERS IN ONE DAY

On September 11, 2015, TRAX carried a record 100,293 people—as a University of Utah football game, Jazz basketball game, Salt Palace event, Utah State Fair, Real soccer game, and a concert at Abravanel Hall all took place on the same day.

**615**  
THOUSAND

During the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, TRAX carried 615,000 riders.

We served our 1 millionth rider in 2000 and had carried 283.4 million riders by the end of 2019.



**Leveraging Local Dollars:** In 2019, UTA was awarded \$79.5 million in federal grant money to help support the costs of maintaining and operating our transit vehicles and systems. A significant portion of those funds were designated for preventive maintenance on both vehicles and fixed guideways, saving money in more costly repairs in the future. UTA was able to leverage just over \$20 million in local funds to match and obtain the federal dollars.

**Clean and Alternative Fuel Vehicles:** UTA continues to integrate cleaner diesel and alternative-fuel vehicles into its fleet. UTA's current bus fleet now includes diesel-electric hybrid, compressed natural gas (CNG), diesel, and clean diesel buses. By replacing older buses with newer clean diesel buses, UTA has reduced NOx emissions from the entire bus fleet by more than 72% since 2007. Particulate matter (PM) is estimated to have been reduced by more than 71% for the same period.

**New All-Electric Buses:** UTA and the University of Utah received five new all-electric buses through the Low-No (Low or No Emissions) federal grant program in 2019. UTA will operate three of the buses—the first all-electric buses in the fleet—with the other two being operated by the University of Utah. Construction of the charging stations began in 2019 and UTA started limited testing of the buses in service.

**Depot District Clean Fuels Technology Center:** While UTA is increasing the number of alternative fuel buses in the fleet, construction of a new maintenance and fueling facility continues on our operations site adjacent to Salt Lake Central Station. UTA's nearby Central Bus Garage is over capacity and was not designed to maintain alternative fuel vehicles. In 2019, UTA demolished older, deteriorated buildings to make way for the new, LEED-certified bus facility that is capable of servicing up to 150 alternative-fuel vehicles.

