

08-08-2024

Sweet Streets SLC
<https://sweetstreetsslc.org/>



To the Governing Bodies of:
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and the State of Utah,

Sweet Streets SLC fully supports the Rio Grande Plan

As Salt Lake City moves towards a more walkable, bikeable, and transit friendly future; it is important that Utahns and other visitors from across the state have a safe, reliable, and convenient way to access our beautiful city without having to drive in and contribute to congestion, to pollution, and to competition for parking. Frontrunner is a gem. It is among the best regional rail lines in the country, and more than capable of ferrying more Utahns in and out of Salt Lake City more efficiently than I-15. The main thing holding it back is a station on the outskirts of downtown surrounded by rail yards and vacant lots. Bringing the station in to a more central, beautiful location which feels safe for families will greatly amplify the investment we have already made and continue to make into the Frontrunner system.

With the completion of the Rio Grande Plan, Utahns across the state would have easier access to all that our capital city has to offer. This includes Salt Lake City International Airport, the Delta Center, Temple Square, and the medical, educational, and research resources at the University of Utah. This is all not to mention the huge strides that would be taken towards reconnecting the east and west side of Salt Lake City, and all of the land that would become available for the sustainable, dense, and centralized development and housing that our fast growing state so desperately needs. Connecting communities by rail demonstrates a long-term political and fiscal commitment by the state government to communities across the state, large and small. This aligns well with the Federal Railroad Administration's Long-Distance Study, Amtrak's "Connects US" plans, and LinkUtah's statewide strategic vision.

The Rio Grande Plan is an ideal candidate to receive federal funding earmarked for reconnecting communities by improving transportation infrastructure. With large amounts of capital already slated for Salt Lake City for the National Hockey League, the National Basketball Association, and the upcoming 2034 Winter Olympics, the Plan is a way to help share these investments with all Utahns. Now is the time to change the rail infrastructure of the city and state, and Utah should begin with the Rio Grande Plan.

Sweet Streets SLC fully supports the implementation of the Rio Grande Plan, and urges Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, the State of Utah, and the US Department of Transportation to formally support this innovative and transformative grassroots project.

Sincerely,
Sweet Streets SLC