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## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Draft Screening Results

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# Kimball Junction EIS Alternatives Screening Report FAQ

The following comment and question themes were frequently submitted to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) during the February 26, 2024, to March 27, 2024, public comment period for the *Draft Alternatives Development and Screening Results Report* for the Kimball Junction Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

## Traffic Analysis

### 1. Will the alternatives induce traffic demand?

- The purpose of the project is not to increase traffic but to address existing and future traffic growth through 2050 as the population increases. The project team uses a regional travel demand model to predict future traffic growth and account for potential shifting traffic volumes for each alternative.
- A travel demand model is a computer model that predicts the number of transportation trips (travel demand) in an area at a given time. This prediction is based on the area's expected population, employment, household, and land use conditions.

### 2. Has the traffic impact from the proposed Dakota Pacific project been included in the analysis?

- Yes. The traffic forecasts consider the area's expected population, employment, household, and land use conditions (such as new development). The EIS assumes population increase and development expected by 2050, including major regional developments such as the Dakota Pacific development and Canyons Village. The study alternatives were screened to determine whether they could accommodate the increased traffic from the projected growth.
- The Summit County Council, not UDOT, is the governing body coordinating with Dakota Pacific on development plans in the Kimball Junction area.

### 3. How has UDOT balanced the different needs of local traffic and tourism/ski traffic in the area?

- The alternatives screening criteria (measures used to determine whether an alternative will be carried forward to the Draft EIS) include vehicle through-travel times on SR-224. In other words, we evaluated the time it takes for a vehicle or traveler to move through Kimball Junction on SR-224. This reflects the travel patterns of most tourism and ski trips, commuter trips, and school trips into Park City. Screening criteria also include delay for travelers making a local trip to or within Kimball Junction. This is measured by the overall intersection level of service (LOS), which evaluates the average delay of vehicles traveling through the intersection.
- The transit travel time and pedestrian- and bicyclist-oriented screening criteria reflect the needs of both groups. For pedestrians and bicyclists, this was measured by the walking travel time and level of traffic stress (LTS). Level of traffic stress is the degree of comfort, safety, and convenience experienced by these users, and it considers factors such as sidewalk width, traffic speed and volume, intersection design, crossing opportunities, and the presence of amenities such as lighting and benches.

## Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Mobility

### 4. How will cyclist and pedestrian safety be accounted for in these alternatives?

- Part of the project's purpose is to improve pedestrian and cyclist mobility (the ability of people or goods to move freely and efficiently from one place to another within a transportation system or network). For this reason, pedestrian and bicyclist comfort was included in the alternatives screening criteria, as measured by level of traffic stress (LTS).
  - The LTS methodology assigns a numeric value to streets and trails based on attributes such as traffic speed, traffic volume, number of lanes, ease of intersection crossings, presence of bikeway facilities, turn lane configurations, and other attributes.
  - A lower LTS number indicates a more pleasant and safer pedestrian and cyclist environment, while a higher number suggests a less comfortable and more hazardous experience for pedestrians and cyclists.
- In response to comments received on the *Draft Alternatives Development and Screening Results Report*, UDOT has now included bicycle lanes on SR-224 as part of Alternatives A and C.
- Depending on the alternative selected, cyclists and pedestrians will be able to use grade-separated crossings or crosswalks to travel across SR-224.

## Screening Criteria

### 5. Are all alternatives screening criteria weighted equally?

- Yes. No single screening criterion is more important than another, and an alternative needs to pass each criterion at Level 3 and Level 4 screening to be considered for detailed evaluation in the Draft EIS. The 2050 No-Action measurement (what traffic would be like if UDOT didn't build the project) is used as the basis for the analysis, meaning that the resulting measure for each alternative needs to be better than the conditions in 2050 with the No-Action alternative.
- Level 3 screening criteria eliminated alternatives that do not meet the purpose of the project. These criteria are based on personal vehicle and transit travel times, vehicle queue lengths, and pedestrian and bicycle mobility and accessibility. In Level 3 screening, criteria used to evaluate vehicle traffic performance are equally as important as criteria used for active transportation (human-powered means of travel like walking, cycling, or using a wheelchair).
- Level 4 screening criteria eliminated alternatives that meet the purpose of the project but would have unreasonable impacts to the natural and human environment (such as business and property impacts), would not meet regulatory requirements, or could be replaced by a less costly concept with similar impacts. Federally regulated resources often drive alternatives analysis since one of the primary purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is to identify ways in which the environmental effects of a project can be avoided or minimized. Examples of federally regulated resources include waters of the U.S. (bodies of water that fall under federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act), threatened and endangered species, and Section 4(f) resources

(specifically, publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and public or private historical sites).

## Alternatives A, B, and C

### 6. Why was Alternative B eliminated from consideration?

- Even with the various refinements to Alternative B, it does not meet the project's purpose (it failed Level 3 screening for pedestrian and bicyclist mobility and comfort), would have the most waters of the U.S. impacts (bodies of water that fall under federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act), the most relocations, and the highest cost. Therefore, it was not advanced for further evaluation in the Draft EIS.

### 7. Alternative A would increase traffic on Landmark Drive; how will residents in the area be affected by the surge in vehicles?

- Summit County is responsible for deciding the cross section and implementing a design for the widened roadway on Landmark Drive. A widened Landmark Drive is included as part of the 2050 No-Action Alternative since it's shown as a Phase 1 project in the County's long-range transportation plan (LRTP).
- Alternative A would shift traffic volumes in the study area. During the 2050 PM peak hour (4 p.m. to 5 p.m.), traffic volumes on SR-224 between I-80 and Ute Boulevard would decrease by 1,020 vehicles (about 20%), and traffic volumes on Landmark Drive just north of Ute Boulevard would increase by 510 vehicles (about 30%) compared to the 2050 No-Action Alternative. No impacts to Kilby Road are expected.
- The planned widening of Landmark Drive by Summit County will accommodate the expected traffic volumes. Converting the Landmark Drive/Ute Boulevard roundabout to a signalized intersection, as identified for Alternative A, would result in an acceptable level of service for the intersection.
  - Landmark Drive is assumed to be widened to four lanes from north of Ute Boulevard to the roundabout at Outlets Park City as part of the No-Action Alternative, according to the Summit County LRTP (2022).
  - The proposed Landmark Drive/Ute Boulevard traffic signal would operate at level of service (LOS) of D or better. LOS D means that congestion is present but manageable, with traffic flow experiencing significant delays only infrequently. Signals are often the capacity constraint on a road, and UDOT expects that Summit County's planned widening of Landmark Drive will allow the road to operate adequately with traffic shifting from SR-224 to Landmark Drive.

### 8. How do the one-way frontage roads in Alternative A and Alternative B work?

- The Alternative A frontage roads would allow a driver to access either Landmark Drive or SR-224 from a single I-80 off-ramp. Likewise, they would allow a driver to access an I-80 on-ramp from either Landmark Drive or SR-224. The proposed one-way frontage roads would use part of the existing on/off-ramp alignments on the west side of the single-point urban interchange (SPUI), but the roadway elevation would be raised to tie into the new bridge at Landmark Drive. A SPUI is a type of interchange in which the streams of traffic making left turns don't cross, and all traffic passes through a single traffic signal system in the center of the intersection.

- The Alternative B frontage roads parallel the depressed portion of SR-224 (they don't parallel I-80) and would allow drivers to access Ute Boulevard and Olympic Parkway/Newpark Drive.

**9. In Alternative A, were roundabout designs on SR-224 considered?**

- Yes, roundabouts were considered but dismissed as not viable once the traffic analysis indicated that three circulating lanes would be needed. A “circulating lane” is a lane within a roundabout. Vehicles in the circulating lane have the right-of-way over vehicles entering the roundabout. The circulating lane allows for continuous movement of traffic, thereby reducing the likelihood of collisions.
- A roundabout with three or more circulating lanes has a large footprint, is complex for drivers to navigate, is challenging for pedestrians to cross, and is not widely used in the United States.

**10. Why is the existing Ute Boulevard/Landmark Drive roundabout removed with Alternative A?**

- The Ute Boulevard/Landmark Drive roundabout is removed with Alternative A because the increased traffic volume on Landmark Drive would cause the roundabout to fail (that is, operate at LOS F). A traffic signal is needed to achieve a better level of service (how well a road or intersection is functioning based on traffic flow and congestion).

**11. How do the alternatives address the southbound left-turn lane from SR-224 onto Ute Boulevard to get to the east side of the Kimball Junction area? This turn causes traffic to back up at this location.**

- Dual left turns at Ute Boulevard are a part of the proposed alternatives and would allow the intersections at Ute Boulevard and Olympic Parkway to move vehicles more efficiently.

Alternatives – Other

**12. Can UDOT combine alternative options—for example, combine elements of Alternatives A and C?**

- Yes. Alternative A has been revised to include the additional lanes on SR-224 that are part of Alternative C, and this new version of Alternative A will be carried forward for detailed evaluation in the Draft EIS in place of the refined Alternative A presented in the draft screening report.

**13. Why isn't a bypass route behind the Powderwood and Crestview condominiums being considered?**

- During the Area Plan, UDOT considered a bypass road through the southwest quadrant of the I-80/SR-224 interchange around the southwest edges of the Kimball Junction development that would connect to I-80 with a new interchange about 1 mile west of the current SR-224 interchange.
- Level 2 travel demand modeling in the Area Plan showed that the bypass alternative would not alleviate existing or future traffic problems in the study area. Even with a bypass, vehicles would likely back onto the I-80 mainline, travel time through Kimball Junction would not improve sufficiently, and vehicle mobility would remain at LOS F, all of which would fail to meet the project's goals.

- The bypass alternative also lacked community support; it received the lowest rating among the alternatives in a public survey completed during the Area Plan.

**14. Why can't we have a flyover and a business exit? Let those heading straight to the Park City resorts avoid Kimball Junction altogether.**

- During the Area Plan process and preliminary evaluations for the EIS, UDOT evaluated various flyover concepts. All of the flyover concepts failed screening due to feasibility, steep existing terrain at Kimball Junction, and tight spacing between intersections.

**15. Why aren't more public transit options being considered?**

- Standalone transit alternatives wouldn't meet the purpose of the project because they wouldn't address the capacity, mobility, safety, and operational needs of the roads in the Kimball Junction area.
- High Valley Transit completed an environmental study for the SR-224 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in 2023. Information regarding the BRT project is available on High Valley Transit's website: <https://www.highvalleytransit.org/sr224-bus-rapid-transit>.

## Community and Social Impacts

**16. How will the alternatives impact businesses and residents?**

- The Draft EIS will evaluate the expected effects of the alternatives on a variety of community-related resources including neighborhood cohesion, safety, traffic, recreation resources, and public services and facilities, as well as potential property and economic impacts.

**17. How does UDOT plan to mitigate potential noise effects for residents in the area?**

- The Draft EIS will analyze the expected noise impacts in the project area using [UDOT's Noise Abatement Policy](#). The Draft EIS will also evaluate the potential need for noise mitigation measures.

**18. How will these alternatives impact business accessibility in the area?**

- The Draft EIS will assess the project's expected economic effects on destination businesses (those that people visit regardless of location) and convenience businesses (those that generate business from people traveling past them), including direct impacts such as changes to access or parking.

## Wildlife

**19. How has UDOT focused on reducing the potential for wildlife-vehicle collisions and preserving wildlife habitat with the proposed alternatives?**

- Wildlife impacts will be further evaluated in the resource impacts analysis for the Draft EIS.
- UDOT has taken measures to reduce impacts to wildlife in the Kimball Junction area. In 2022, UDOT reduced the speed limit from 55 miles per hour (mph) to 45 mph on SR-224 to help reduce the number of vehicle-wildlife collisions, and UDOT recently installed wildlife fences on both the eastbound and westbound sides of I-80 up to the west side of Kimball Junction. A project is currently underway and partially constructed to install more

wildlife fences on both the eastbound and westbound sides of I-80 between mileposts 144.5 and 145.75, which will result in the entire Kimball Junction EIS study area along I-80 being fenced.

## Project Funding

### **20. Will UDOT be including this project in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)?**

- For a project to be included in the STIP, funding needs to be identified for that project. At this time, the project is unfunded. If an action alternative is selected and approved after the study process, the Utah Transportation Commission could incorporate that project into its prioritization process for future funding considerations.