

### PLANNING FOR MASS TRANSIT

#### What is Mass Transit?

Mass means “a lot” and transit deals with getting from one place to another. Many large cities throughout the world help people move from place to place with subways, elevated trains, light rails, “bullet trains,” or buses. Mass transit provides another choice for people who choose not to drive. Increasing the number of riders per vehicle reduces road traffic and pollution. It also provides transportation to those who are unable to drive or who do not have a car. The elderly, the disabled, and children benefit from public transportation.

Mass transit requires special planning in the design of streets and sidewalks. Salt Lake City’s light rail closed roads and caused traffic problems while it was being built. Many people felt that no one would use this service, but it has been a great success. Public buses are available in many Utah cities. Planners use guidelines when considering mass transit. Here are the guidelines that help cities plan for the use of buses.

#### Street Guidelines for Buses

- Minimum bus-stop width should be ten feet.
- Provide clearly marked pedestrian crossing areas near transit stops.
- Bus stops should be at regular intervals: between one-eighth and one-fourth mile where they are used a lot.
- Bus turn-out areas increase passenger safety and minimizes traffic delay behind stopped buses.
- “Park and ride” lots help commuters and people who wish to carpool.

#### Sidewalk Guidelines for Buses

- Make sure that bus stops are accessible to pedestrians and wheeled traffic (bikes and wheelchairs).
- Benches, shelters, and lighting provide comfort for users.
- Provide places for bikes to be parked by bus stops and allow bikes on the bus.
- The distance between the waiting area and the curb should be at least two and one-half feet, and preferably six feet.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) establishes a minimum clear zone of five feet by eight feet for bus stops.

**In your presentation, explain what mass transit means and how cities can provide for public transportation. Explain some of the rules that help provide safe buses in cities and towns. Ask the class what public transportation is available and ask for suggestions to make it better for your community.**

