



Final Report of the Prison Relocation Commission

Improving our Criminal Justice System by
Building a Leading-Edge Correctional Facility

August 17, 2015

Prison Relocation Commission

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Rep. Brad R. Wilson

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August 14, 2015

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert
Governor
State of Utah

The Honorable Wayne L. Niederhauser
President
Utah State Senate

The Honorable Gregory H. Hughes
Speaker
Utah House of Representatives

Gentlemen,

The Prison Relocation Commission was created in 2014 by the Utah Legislature and Governor to study where and how to relocate the Utah State Prison now located in Draper. For more than a year, the commission carefully considered more than 50 potential sites voluntarily offered by land owners and their representatives. After screening and assessing the sites for suitability, the commission has spent the last several months conducting rigorous technical evaluations on four of the most promising sites.

At its August 11, 2015 meeting, the commission voted unanimously to recommend the I-80/7200 West site, located three miles west of the Salt Lake City International Airport, as the location for a relocated state correctional facility. The commission believes that this site offers the greatest overall value for Utah residents and taxpayers, including the best accessibility for employees, volunteers, and visitors, the best location for a correctional facility that will promote the state's criminal justice reinvestment initiative, the lowest long-term operational costs, and the greatest opportunity for nearby compatible economic development.

The following report briefly summarizes the history of the commission's efforts, provides a description of the four finalist sites, and describes our reasons for selecting the recommended site.

Thank you for your continued support of the commission's efforts,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jerry Stevenson".

Senator Jerry W. Stevenson
Senate Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brad Wilson".

Representative Brad R. Wilson
House Chair

The Work of the Prison Relocation Commission

Commission Creation

During its 2014 General Session, the Legislature passed and the governor concurred in H.C.R. 8, "Concurrent Resolution Regarding Moving the State Prison." That resolution states "that the Utah State Prison facilities currently located in Draper should be relocated from that site to one or more other suitable locations in the state" and "that the relocation of the prison facilities should be guided by the principles" stated in the resolution, including being conducive to future inmate programming, facilitating an adequate level of volunteer and staff support, and ensuring access to courts, medical facilities, and visitors.

The Legislature also enacted S.B. 268, "Prison Relocation Commission," which created the Prison Relocation Commission, outlined its membership, and established its duties. Under a contractual relationship with the commission, MGT of America, Inc., and its partners, including The Louis Berger Group, Inc., Epic Engineering, Rosser International, Inc., and the Criminal Justice Institute, Inc., have played a vital role in every aspect of the commission's work. The Division of Facilities Construction and Management (DFCM), with the assistance of the local office of Jones Lang LaSalle, has also worked in concert with the commission.

During its 2015 General Session, the Legislature passed H.B. 454, "Prison Development Amendments," which modified the responsibilities of the Prison Relocation Commission. H.B. 454 requires the Prison Relocation Commission to "choose the site for the construction of new prison facilities" and "report the commission's choice to the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the governor." This report completes those requirements.



Selecting a New Site: What has the Prison Relocation Commission Accomplished?

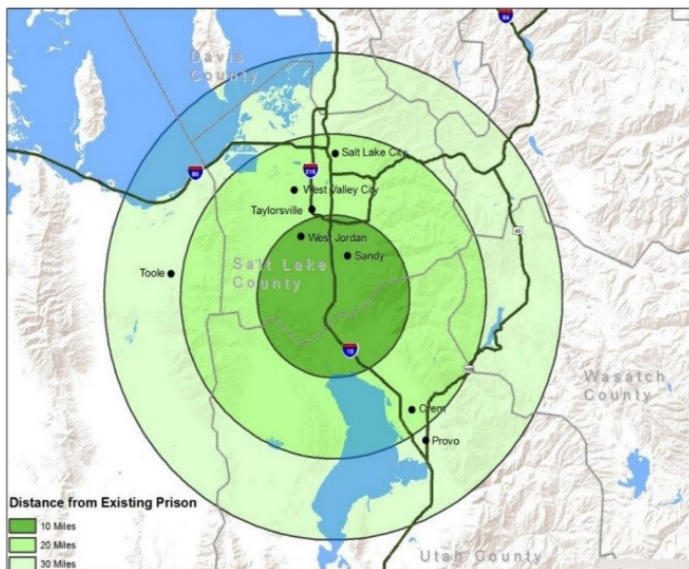
From its inception, the commission believed that selecting the best possible site for a new correctional facility would help Utah's criminal justice system in general and the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) in particular function in a high quality manner while addressing the need for modern, efficient, and cost-effective institutions for current and future inmate populations. With the involvement of key community leaders at every step, the commission's site selection process consisted of nine steps:

1. Establishing a site search area;
2. Soliciting and identifying sites;
3. Establishing site screening criteria;
4. Screening identified sites against the screening criteria and eliminating sites unsuitable for correctional facility development;
5. Establishing assessment guidelines;
6. Assessing remaining sites based upon the assessment guidelines;
7. Conducting due diligence technical evaluations of highly ranked sites;
8. Engaging the public in potential host communities in a dialogue about the proposed correctional facility; and
9. Selecting a final site.

The commission has successfully completed each of these nine steps, which are explained in detailed below.

Establishing a Site Search Area

With both H.C.R. 8 and S.B. 268 requiring that the new correctional facility be located proximate to an adequate level of qualified staff and volunteers, courts, and medical facilities, the commission's site search area focused on the following area along the Wasatch Front:



Soliciting and Identifying Sites

From the very beginning, the commission's site selection process relied on willing owners to voluntarily submit their properties for consideration and possible sale. In addition to the expert help from its consultants, the commission also benefited from the work of UDC and DFCM. The commission's site selection effort began with over a dozen sites that had been previously identified by DFCM during its work with PRADA. The commission faced a challenging task of finding 400 to 600 acres of undeveloped land along the Wasatch Front with reasonable access to key infrastructure. With these challenges in mind, the commission actively sought additional sites by:

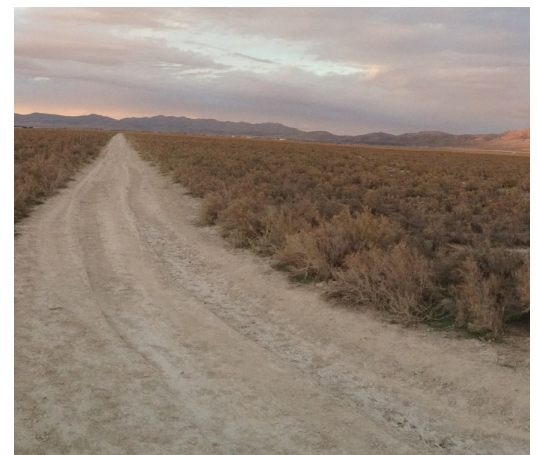
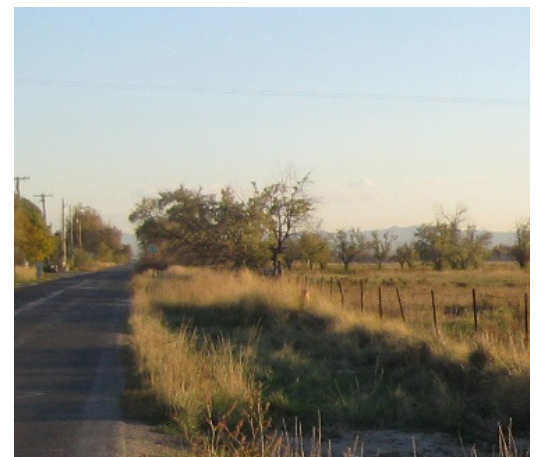
- Meeting with county and municipal economic development officials in Box Elder, Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, Tooele, and Utah counties;
- Soliciting sites via mass mailings to hundreds of real estate professionals;
- Publishing a Site Offer Form on the commission's website to receive and catalog potential sites;
- Publishing informational brochures;
- Meeting with many of the state's major private and public land owners, including several meetings with the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration; and
- Hosting a website that contained information and updates on the site solicitation campaign.

In all, the commission's efforts yielded 26 potential sites in its first round of searching conducted between July and December of 2014.

Establishing Screening Criteria

At its September 3, 2014, meeting, the commission adopted the following screening criteria and point system:

Criteria	Points Assigned
Proximity	35
Proximity to Staff, Visitors, and Volunteers	
Proximity to Medical and Treatment Providers	
Proximity to Legal Services	
Land and Environment	15
Land Area and Topography	
Soil Characteristics	
Wetlands	
Hazard Avoidance (floods, faults, landfills, etc.)	
Infrastructure	15
Access to Roadways	
Water Supply	
Wastewater Treatment	
Electric Power	
Natural Gas	
Telecommunications	
Community Services/Other	10
Emergency Response Services	
Adjoining and Nearby Land Uses	
Ownership	
Development Costs	10
Community Acceptance	15
GRAND TOTAL	100



Screening and Eliminating Sites

Having adopted screening criteria, the commission's consultant team began to apply these criteria against each of the 26 submitted sites. The screening team included urban and regional planners, civil engineers, environmental engineers, architects, environmental specialists, and geographic information systems specialists. To save time and money, only limited field visits were conducted to each site. No detailed field investigations were conducted during the screening process; rather, a variety of data sources were used to screen out 20 unsuitable sites, leaving six sites for further consideration. The results of the round one screening report were released at the commission's December 3, 2014, meeting. The commission also voted at that meeting to subject the following six sites to the next step of the selection process:

- Airport North (Salt Lake County)
- I-80/7200 West (Salt Lake County)
- Southwest Valley (Salt Lake County)
- SR 112/Depot Boundary Road (Tooele County)
- Northwest Utah Valley (Utah County)
- Lake Mountains West (Utah County)

Establishing Assessment Guidelines

Because S.B. 268 directed the commission to ensure that the new correctional facility be compatible with surrounding land uses for the foreseeable future and because of the high cost of performing technical evaluations of each site, at its December 3, 2014, meeting the commission voted to subject the six sites listed above to an additional assessment step. With this additional assessment step, the commission ensured that the costly technical analyses would be performed only on sites that merited further consideration after applying the assessment guidelines. The assessment guidelines adopted by the commission were as follows:

- Have any issues been discovered with the site to date that would make the site unreasonably difficult or costly to develop?
- Is there an identified, compelling state interest that would likely be impaired by locating the correctional facility on the site being assessed?
- Is the proposed site in the path of expected concentrations of population growth and increasing population density that will likely occur in the foreseeable future?
- What is contemplated in the land use plan of the local community where the proposed site is located?

Tentative Site Identification

At its December 22, 2014, meeting, the commission received the consultant's report applying the assessment guidelines to the above six sites. The report identified serious issues regarding the Airport North, Southwest Valley, and Northwest Utah Valley sites related to the potential existence of wetlands, the topographical and site development challenges, the impairment of a compelling state interest, and potential conflicts with the path of development. Based on these concerns, the commission voted to not advance these three sites for further consideration. After receiving the consultant's report, the commission voted to advance the following sites for in-depth technical evaluation:

- I-80/7200 West (Salt Lake County)
- SR 112/Depot Boundary Road (Tooele County)
- Lake Mountains West (Utah County)

Soliciting Additional Potential Sites

To ensure that the commission received, reviewed, and considered every possible site, at its December 22, 2014, meeting the commission also voted to direct the commission chairs to:

1. In consultation with community leaders, solicit and continue to accept, until January 31, 2015, additional voluntary site offers that generally met the screening criteria, reducing the weight given to proximity;
2. Actively solicit comments from and consult with the leaders of the affected communities in which these newly offered sites are located;
3. Determine which sites should be submitted for review, and submit them for review;
4. Report in writing to the commission, information about each newly offered site that is submitted for review; and
5. Schedule a report on the results of the review process at a future commission meeting.

As a result of these extended efforts to consider every possible site, the commission was offered an additional 24 properties for consideration. The commission also revisited seven properties that had been submitted in the commission's first round of searching. The commission screened and assessed these new properties in the same manner it had screened and assessed the properties evaluated in round one. The results of that screening and assessment were presented to the commission at its February 27, 2015, meeting. At that meeting, the commission voted to subject the following additional two sites to in-depth technical review:

- SR 138 Industrial Park (Tooele County)
- Cedar Valley South (Utah County)

At that meeting, the commission also voted to expand the I-80/7200 West site to include a property adjoining the original site. Several weeks after the addition of these final sites, the owner of the SR 112/Depot Boundary Road site voluntarily withdrew that site from consideration, leaving the commission with the following four finalist sites upon which it conducted in-depth technical evaluations:

- SR 138 Industrial Park (Tooele County)
- Cedar Valley South (Utah County)
- I-80/7200 West, and Expanded (Salt Lake County)
- Lake Mountains West (Utah County)



Technical Evaluation

With the four finalist sites selected, the commission's consulting team went to work conducting in-depth technical evaluations on each finalist site. These technical evaluations included:

- Cultural resources research;
- Phase I environmental site assessments;
- Wetland delineations;
- Special status species studies;
- Geotechnical investigations;
- Title research;
- Boundary and topographic surveys;
- Well development feasibility studies;
- Utility system studies;
- Water rights research;
- Road access studies;
- Capital cost estimates;
- Operation cost estimates; and
- Permits research.



Public Engagement in Potential Host Communities

At every step in its selection process, the commission has worked closely and conferred often with local officials. Commission members, consultants, and staff have met with the mayors, city council members, county commissioners, and other elected and appointed local officials of the potential host communities. While not always resulting in consensus, each discussion helped the commission understand the potential host community's needs and concerns.

To ensure that all perspectives were considered and each stakeholder's concerns were understood and considered, the commission also reached out to business leaders, environmental groups, labor groups, civic organizations, volunteer organizations, and others.

The commission conducted a public open house and question and answer panel discussion in each county in which a finalist site was located: Salt Lake County, Utah County, and Tooele County. At the open house events, citizens were able to browse informational displays and meet with corrections experts and commission consultants and staff. During the question and answer panel discussions which immediately followed the open house events, citizens had an opportunity to ask questions, hear their neighbors' questions and concerns, and receive answers to those questions. Each event lasted at least five hours. In total, the commission hosted more than 15 hours of formal public outreach events.

The commission also held a three-hour public hearing on June 16, 2015, where citizens had an opportunity to express their thoughts, opinions, and concerns directly to commission members.

Overall Descriptions of Finalist Sites

I-80/7200 West

This site is located west of the Salt Lake City International Airport and is currently used for grazing and other agricultural purposes. The site includes sufficient developable land and offers an ample footprint for the new correctional facility's conceptual design. The site features natural buffers of undevelopable conservation land on the north and west. Among the advantages of this site are its excellent road access via I-80 and the superior access that it provides to courts and medical providers. The site is close to the state's major population centers that provide staff and volunteers. The site also offers two viable water and wastewater service providers (Salt Lake City and Magna Water District) and the lowest capital cost for electric power extensions and upgrades among all finalist sites. Because of its proximity to medical centers, county jails, and courts, this site also offers the lowest annual inmate transport driving miles (390,000). Finally, development of the facility at this location, with its investment in water, power, sewer, and other infrastructure, provides the potential for the correctional facility to be a catalyst for further development in this strategically important area.

There are, however, several challenges to developing at this site, including complex subsurface conditions, which result in high site preparation costs, and proximity to environmentally sensitive areas, including conservation and recreation areas, wetlands, and canals. Additionally, some past land uses may require remediation.

SR 138 Industrial Park

Located near the Walmart distribution center in Grantsville, this site offers many advantages, including sufficient developable land that meets the conceptual design fit test. The site presents a low risk for environmental issues and a low potential for adverse impacts due to current and past land uses with a corresponding low risk of contamination. Other advantages of this site relative to the other finalist sites include the lowest capital cost for natural gas extensions and upgrades and the lowest capital cost for roadway improvements.

Challenges to developing this site include its sloping topography, which would result in the second highest site preparation costs compared to the other finalist sites; its proximity to residential areas, which make it the closest to residents of any finalist site; and its cost for wastewater treatment improvements (via the Grantsville City system), which would be the highest capital cost for such

improvements. Because of its relative isolation compared to other sites, this site has the second highest annual inmate transport driving miles (740,000) with corresponding air pollution emissions. It is also the farthest from medical centers, courts, employee base, volunteers, visitors, county jails, and major vendors.

This fact is particularly important when paired with knowledge that access to this site is dependent upon unimpeded travel on I-80, which on occasion is closed in both directions during traffic and weather emergencies. Additionally, the fewest current UDC employees currently reside in Tooele County, posing both potential short-term staffing challenges and further straining the single point of ingress and egress.

Lake Mountains West

This 600-acre site is located at the far southern border of Eagle Mountain and offers sufficient developable land to meet the conceptual design footprint. There are many advantages to this site, including low site preparation costs, few environmental issues with a low potential for adverse impacts, and low potential for contamination due to current and past land uses. With many current UDC employees now living near this site, there is less potential for disruption of facility operations. This site also offers the lowest capital cost for water supply extensions and upgrades and for wastewater treatment improvements when compared to other finalist sites. However, due to its distance from existing development, this site has the highest costs for roadway improvements and extensions.

Other challenges to developing at this site include its high annual inmate transport driving miles (710,000), with corresponding air pollution emissions, and its relatively long distance from medical centers, courts, county jails, visitors, and major vendors. Access would be dependent upon unimpeded travel on SR 73, which introduces additional risk during emergencies.

Cedar Valley South

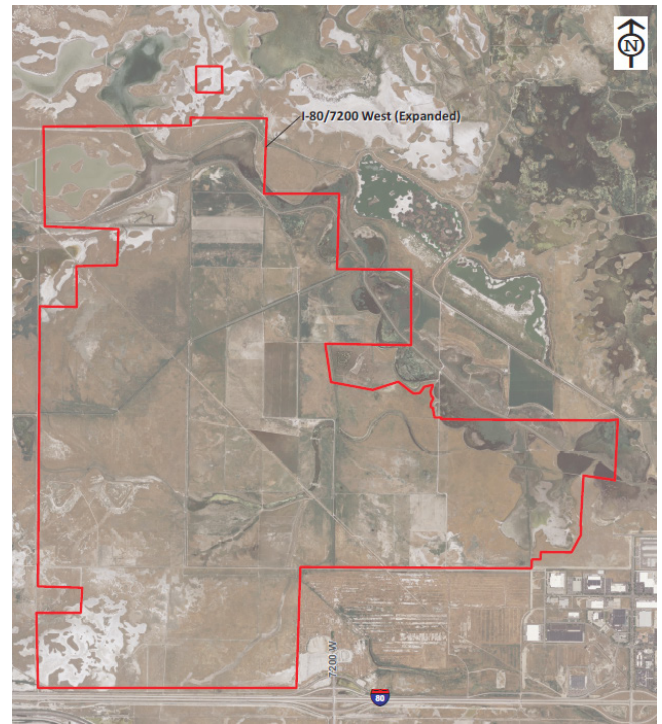
Located in the southern end of Cedar Valley in the Town of Fairfield, this site's advantages include its large land area providing ample space to find an optimal fit, low site preparation costs, low potential for environmental issues, and low risk of contamination due to current and past uses. Other favorable aspects of this site include its low property acquisition costs and low capital cost for roadway improvements.

However, this site also presents some of the greatest challenges compared to other finalist sites, including the highest capital cost for water supply extensions and upgrades, wastewater treatment service, and natural gas system extensions and upgrades. This site also poses the highest potential for having an impact on cultural resources in the area. Of all finalist sites, this site would have the highest annual inmate transport driving miles (760,000) with corresponding air pollution emissions. It is also relatively distant from medical centers, courts, employee base, volunteers, visitors, county jails, and major vendors. As with the Lake Mountains West site, access is dependent upon unimpeded travel on SR 73, which may be a risk during emergencies.

Recommended Site

At its August 11, 2015, meeting, in a unanimous and bipartisan vote, the commission recommended the I-80/7200 West site as the location for a relocated correctional facility. The commission believes that this is the best site because it offers:

- **The best proximity for UDC employees, volunteers, visitors, and major vendors.** From the very beginning of its deliberations, the commission has considered proximity to employees, volunteers, visitors, and major vendors to be the most important factor to consider in finding a new site. The Draper correctional facility has over 800 employees and 1,200 volunteers. Family visits are an important part of an inmate's post-release success. The recommended site is close to the state's major transportation networks and population centers.
- **The best location to build a correctional facility that supports the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Initiative.** The new correctional facility will be a critical component in implementing the comprehensive set of criminal justice reforms approved in the Legislature's 2015 General Session. The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is designed to reduce the number of offenders being sentenced to prison and to help keep those who do go to prison from committing new crimes or violating their parole when they are released. Over time, slowing the growth in the state's inmate population will reduce the need to make expensive additions to the state's two correctional facilities.



The challenge in building a new correctional facility is not in creating new space to house more inmates, but in providing the programming and training that will help those individuals avoid returning to the facility after their release. If a new correctional facility is constructed with programming and reform in mind, it can help reduce recidivism, improve outcomes for inmates, and save taxpayer dollars. Nearly all inmates will be released back into the community. While incarcerated, these individuals have sufficient time to be involved in programs and services to prepare them for successful reintegration back into the community.

A modern and highly functional correctional facility allows incorporation of the latest advancements in design and programming to reduce the likelihood that offenders will be re-incarcerated. A state-of-the-art and highly efficient design will also better serve the needs of staff, volunteers, inmate families, and visitors. Furthermore, overall public safety in our communities is improved when released inmates benefit from programs that help them successfully re-enter society and prevent their re-incarceration. Corrections reform that includes a new correctional facility is therefore in the best interest of all of Utah's citizens.

- **Substantial long-term operational savings compared to the other sites and the current location in Draper.**

The I-80/7200 West site is projected to save the state an estimated \$253 million in transportation and other key costs over the projected 50-year life of the facility compared to other sites. Developing the proposed correctional facility at this site is projected to cost \$65 million less than the Draper facility to operate over its lifespan. This is largely due to lowering costs for UDC's 1,700-1,800 monthly inmate transports to medical facilities, courts, and other services mainly located in northern Salt Lake County. Combining the total site preparation capital costs for each site with the total long-term key operational costs for that site provides a more complete understanding of the total costs associated with the site. Combining both sets of costs reveals that the I-80/7200 West site is the least costly alternative of the four sites, being an estimated \$233.5 million less expensive than the next-closest site.

- **A good balance between avoiding conflicts with existing land uses while still being close to key services.** The I-80/7200 West is situated within a very large, undeveloped area of Salt Lake City that is more than six miles from the nearest residences. At the same time, the site is only 10 miles from downtown Salt Lake City courts and 15 miles from the University of Utah Medical Center. This advantage is unmatched by any other site, including the current Draper location.

- **A high potential for nearby development of compatible light-industrial and commercial uses.** Compared to the other sites, the economic development potential near the Salt Lake City site is high. Construction of the correctional facility will likely serve as a catalyst to build compatible light-industrial and commercial buildings. Salt Lake City officials and landowners in the city's Northwest Quadrant have long desired its development, but have been stymied for decades, largely due to the high cost of extending utilities to the remote area. These utilities will be extended to service the new correctional facility, and the state has the opportunity to share utility costs with other landowners interested in developing the area. The site is also much less likely to be surrounded by or adjacent to future incompatible development, as is the case at the current Draper location.

