

2.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Action

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2.1 Introduction

A broad range of alternative sites was identified and evaluated in the original 1998 West Valley City Intermodal Center EA (WVC 1998), leading to the selection of a preferred site on 2700 West Street at the Valley Fair Mall. Because of the inability to finalize any agreement with mall owners for project development at the original site and the conclusions derived from subsequent City Center planning and vision studies conducted by West Valley City (WVC 2000, 2004), a new site evaluation process was initiated in 2005 that focused on the interior block encompassing the City Center offices and the UTA-owned parcels on South Market Street.

Nine potential sites and a no-build alternative were examined in the 1998 EA. The sites evaluated were located in an approximate 1-square-mile geographic area surrounding the Valley Fair Mall and the E-Center in West Valley City. The original project site was identified as an important area for intermodal transportation improvements due to high trip generation, concentration of existing transit services, and a relatively high intensity of commercial land uses (WVC 1998).

The Preferred Alternative in the 1998 EA is located on approximately 2 acres of land near the west central portion of the Valley Fair Mall parking lot (Figure 2-1). Based on the findings of the 1998 EA, the FTA issued a FONSI for the Preferred Alternative in 2000 (FTA 2000). The Preferred Alternative was not implemented at the selected site for reasons described in Chapter One.

Since 1998, significant changes have occurred in West Valley City's redevelopment and land use plans in the project vicinity. The new City Center Vision Plan and the need to consolidate transit services at one location meant that a new purpose and need for action and a new site analysis process were needed. The Preferred Alternative from the 1998 EA was considered to have "stature" because of the FTA FONSI; however, neither it nor any of the alternative dismissed in the 1998 EA meet the current purpose and need.

The new site analysis process focused on four parcels of land on Market Street (currently owned by UTA) located immediately west of the City Center offices, and examined

opportunities for utilizing these parcels in conjunction with other property owned by West Valley City and portions of the City Center offices parking lot (Figure 2-1). A variety of alternatives were developed for these locations. Each of these alternatives is described and analyzed in this chapter. The Preferred Alternative from the 1998 EA was also considered during this process and is discussed in this chapter.

2.2 Alternatives Considered

The preliminary design of the West Valley City Intermodal Center Project and creation of the West Valley City Master Plan (WVC 2006) were conducted simultaneously with the environmental analysis process. The alternatives considered in this EA were developed as part of this larger joint-planning effort and include both the No-Action Alternative and the original Preferred Alternative, which were analyzed in the 1998 EA (WVC 1998). The joint-planning effort involved a variety of interested parties that formed a steering committee for the project: representatives from West Valley City, WFRC, UTA, Valley Fair Mall, and Woodbury Company (West Valley City's Development Partner).

The development of alternatives was constrained by several factors. The location of the Intermodal Center was evaluated in a number of related planning studies conducted by the City (WVC 1998, 2000, 2004). Most recently, West Valley City has updated plans for its City Center with a City Center Vision Plan (WVC 2004). The City Center Vision Plan calls for "a recognizable center with landmarks focusing on 3500 South Street, 2700 West, and Market Street, that includes a revitalized mall, an Intermodal Center, grand entrances from both directions along 3500 South, and a new mix of uses in the Market Street area" (WVC 2004). These studies concluded that the Intermodal Center should be developed on the interior portion of the block that encompasses the City Center offices and would meet the City Center vision. Based on these previous studies, a study area for this project was defined as a 1/2 mile circle centered on the intersection of Lehman Avenue and Market Street.

Although not considered during the evaluation process, consistent with the City's plans, UTA acquired several parcels on Market Street between Homer Street and 3650 South at the request of West Valley City in 1996 and 1997 specifically for use as a future transit facility for West Valley City. West Valley City's ownership of an adjacent parcel north of the UTA residential property and ownership of the former church property on Market Street immediately north of Lehman

Avenue further enhance the feasibility of this site location.

Other locations in the interior portion of the block that encompasses the City Center offices were evaluated for site feasibility. Use of the current City Center public parking lot on the west side of the City Hall and Administration Offices was dismissed from consideration because the parking lot is functioning at capacity and needed for West Valley City and public access to the City Hall, City Administrative Offices, and West Valley City Police Department. Other locations would require extensive acquisition of private residences along Lehman Avenue or private commercial property north of City Hall (see Figure 2-1). The extensive property acquisitions were determined to be unreasonable. In addition, other alternatives for surrounding sites had been evaluated and dismissed in the 1998 EA (WVC 1998).

For the above reasons, the only reasonable location for the Proposed Action was determined to be on the west side of Market Street on land primarily owned by the UTA and West Valley City. The footprint for this location is shown in Figure 2-1.

Within the location footprint for the proposed Intermodal facility, a variety of design concepts and layouts were developed by the project steering committee. A total of seventeen design layout variations were developed that would potentially fit within the site location for the Proposed Action. The following section presents each of these initial design alternatives along with appropriate text describing each. Seven criteria were developed for use in determining which design concepts to advance for analysis. These criteria included:

- feasibility/viability,
- economic value,
- feasibility of environmental permitting,
- conformity with city vision,
- phasing ability and compatibility with potential future transportation modes,
- traffic circulation, and,
- access to Valley Fair Mall.

Using these criteria, alternatives were screened by the steering committee, reviewed by the West Valley City Council and Planning Commission as part of a public workshop, and given a final review as part of a City Council meeting.

2.3 Alternatives Dismissed

This section briefly describes each alternative and the reasons for dismissing various design alternatives. Each alternative is graphically shown at the end of this chapter. A complete description of each alternative appears in Appendix A.

Alternative 1 Alternative 1 (see figure 2-2) co-located the bus hub with BRT on the former church site. In this alternative parking was located on the southern UTA-owned properties fronting Market Street between Lehman Avenue and 3650 South. The LRT was located between the City Center and the Justice Center. This alternative was dismissed because it could not accommodate the planned LRT terminus. An analysis of the West Valley City LRT is currently being conducted as a separate project. If the LRT project is implemented, it is expected that the terminus would occur at the Proposed Action. Alternative 1 would not provide the space or configuration to accommodate the LRT tail track necessary for a terminal station. The LRT track configuration on 2700 West would conflict with vehicle operations and intersection functionality. In addition, the bus hub could not accommodate the requisite number of bus bays. Alternative 1 was determined not to meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and was therefore not a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 2 Alternative 2 (see figure 2-3) was very similar to Alternative 1. However, the LRT was located on 2700 West Street. This alternative was dismissed because future phasing of the LRT would be incompatible with the City Center vision for the interior block and Market Street. Also, the LRT platform would conflict with vehicle operations on 2700 West. Again, the bus hub could not accommodate the requisite number of bus bays. Therefore, it was determined that Alternative 2 did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and was not a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 3 Alternative 3 (see figure 2-4) located the bus hub on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street. The parking was located on the west side of the current City Center and required a near-term parking structure. Alternative 3 was dismissed because it included separated facilities for bus and BRT staging that would reduce needed parking requiring use of the current West Valley City parking lot, which is already functioning at capacity. In addition, the ability to accommodate future LRT was limited because platform configuration would conflict with long-range plans

(WFRC 2003) for development on Lehman Avenue and vehicle operations on 2700 West. Therefore, it was determined that Alternative 3 did not meet the purpose and need and was not a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 4 Alternative 4 (see figure 2-5) co-located the bus hub with BRT on the west two-thirds of the current City Center parking lot. Parking was located on the former church site. Alternative 4 was dismissed because the bus hub and BRT station were located on the City Center parking lot with parking provided at the north property, which would limit available parking for City Hall and the Administration Offices. In addition, the configuration would not accommodate the LRT tail track necessary for a terminal station. Therefore, it was determined that Alternative 4 did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and was not a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 5 Alternative 5 (see figure 2-6) located the bus hub only on the west 2/3 of the current City Center parking lot. Parking was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street. Alternative 5 was dismissed because the bus hub was located on the City Center parking lot with the BRT station located at the north property, which would eliminate much of the available parking for City Hall and the Administration Offices as well as limit parking opportunities for bus/BRT patrons. In addition, the configuration would not accommodate the LRT tail track necessary for a terminal station. Therefore, it was determined that Alternative 5 did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and was not a reasonable alternative.

Alternative 6 Alternative 6 co-located (see figure 2-7) the bus hub with BRT on the former church site. Parking was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street between Lehman Avenue and 3650 South. Alternative 6, was a variation of Alternative 1, and was also dismissed because it could not accommodate a future LRT platform and future LRT track configuration would conflict with vehicle operations on 2700 West. Also, the bus hub could not accommodate the requisite number of bus bays. Therefore, Alternative 6 was not a reasonable alternative and it was determined that it did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1.

Alternative 7 Alternative 7 (see figure 2-8) located the bus hub on the former church site. Parking was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street

between Lehman Avenue and 3650 South. The LRT platform was located where the current Justice Center is located. Alternative 7 was dismissed because it was incompatible with LRT phasing; the platform location could not accommodate a tail track. The alternative was not compatible with future access between the transit center and the mall, since the Lehman Avenue corridor between Market Street and Valley Fair Mall could be constricted by future LRT and BRT platforms. The alternative could not be constructed without demolishing West Valley City's storage facilities and was therefore unacceptable to the City. Further analysis showed that the bus hub could not accommodate the requisite number of bus bays. Therefore, Alternative 7 was not a reasonable alternative and it was determined that it did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1.

Alternative 8 Alternative 8 (see figure 2-9) was identified as the Preferred Alternative in the 1998 West Valley City Intermodal Center EA (WVC 1998). This alternative located the bus hub and parking on property owned by the Valley Fair Mall. During the original evaluation phase of the project, mall owners appeared to be willing participants. However, since 1998 mall owners have equivocated on their preliminary agreement because their future plans for the mall have changed, and as time progressed it became apparent that it would be difficult to implement the project at this location. In addition, the City Center Vision Plan concluded that the best location for the Intermodal Center would be on the interior block of City Center and in conjunction with future development in the Market Street area (WVC 2004). As such, without the support of previous mall owners and in light of West Valley City's long range plans, Alternative 8 was determined not to be reasonable.

Alternatives 9a and 9b Alternative 9a (see figure 2-10) located the bus hub on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street. Parking was located on the former church site. Alternative 9b (see figure 2-11) located the bus hub on the former church site. Parking was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street. In both alternatives the LRT platform was located north of the Justice Center where the current Staples building is located. Both were dismissed because they failed to accommodate future phasing of LRT and the necessary tail track for a terminal station. In addition, both variations would conflict with traffic operations on 2700 West if LRT was implemented. The BRT routing and station location would require acquisition of additional commercial properties, which was not

considered reasonable. In Alternative 9a parking adjacent to the bus hub would be limited and was therefore considered not practicable. In Alternative 9b the requisite number of bus bays was not accommodated. Therefore, it was determined that Alternatives 9a and 9b did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and are not reasonable alternatives.

Alternatives 10a and 10b Both Alternative 10a and 10b (see figures 2-12 and 2-13) co-located the bus hub with the BRT platform on the former church site. Parking for both was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street. The main differences between the two was that 10b did not show Lehman Avenue constructed with auto lanes (LRT platform only) and it also kept the BRT functioning with the bus operations. Both variations were dismissed because the possible future LRT platform would constrict the Lehman Avenue corridor between Market Street and the Valley Fair Mall. In addition, a future LRT terminus at this location would not have sufficient space to install a tail track. Also, the bus hub would not accommodate an adequate number of bus bays to meet bus demand. It was determined that Alternatives 10a and 10b did not meet the purpose and need as outlined in Chapter 1 and are not reasonable alternatives.

Alternative 11 Alternative 11 (see figure 2-14) located the bus hub south of the BRT platform on the former church site. Parking was located on the southern UTA-owned property fronting Market Street with additional parking north of the tail track on the northern property. This alternative appeared to have the best opportunity to meet the vision of the City Center Vision Plan (WVC 2004) and be compatible with future transit phasing and development while making best use of currently owned property. However, some elements were considered substandard for instance the limited number of bus bays would not accommodate current bus operations. Therefore, the alternative was dismissed.

Alternative 12a, b and c Although all variations of 12 were dismissed, they were refined to meet design requirements that would ensure compatibility with long-range West Valley City plans, future transit phasing, and current functioning of bus operations and future BRT operations and became the basis for the alternative advanced as the Proposed Action. Alternative 12a (see figure 2-15) located the bus hub south of the LRT tail track on the former church site. In this alternative parking was located on the southern

UTA-owned property with additional parking located north of the tail track. Alternative 12b (see figure 2-16) located the bus hub on the southern UTA-owned property intruding slightly onto the east library parking lot. In this alternative parking was located on the former church site which was bisected by the tail track in the long-term. Alternative 12c (see figure 12-17) is the same as Alternative 12b except that it had two additional bus bays.

2.4 Alternatives Advanced

2.4.1 Build Alternative

Final refinements to Alternative 12 included moving the bus hub south along Market Street on the UTA properties, closing Market Street from Lehman Avenue to 3650 South Street to automobile traffic, and providing parking at both the north and south properties. These design refinements resulted in Alternative 13 (see figure 2-18), which the steering committee agreed should be the Preferred Alternative (see figure 2-19).

This would increase the bus hub capacity as required for UTA operations and provide better future development potential, as well as opportunities for future transit-oriented development. Other design refinements included a realignment of Market Street and redesigned intersection of Lehman Avenue and Market Street. In addition, the road prism of 3650 South Street was redesigned to include a center turn lane for the bus hub and better pedestrian access.

On September 20, 2005 the Preferred Alternative was presented to the City Council and formally adopted as the Proposed Action for the West Valley City Intermodal Center Project. On November 29, 2005, a public open house was held in West Valley City to present the Proposed Action to the area residents. The completed public comment survey forms that were distributed for that meeting are included in Appendix F. The Proposed Action was the only build alternative advanced for evaluation. A detailed description of the Proposed Action is presented in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.

2.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative the Intermodal Center would not be built; however, redevelopment of the City Center area would occur and the demand for transit services would increase. Under the No-Action scenario, only minor

and relatively low-cost improvements would be implemented. These might include:

- consolidation of bus stops to provide for easier transfers,
- addition of bus shelters and benches,
- addition of paved pedestrian areas for boarding, alighting, and waiting, and,
- posting of route signs and route maps.

Although the No-Action Alternative is advanced for consideration, it does not meet the purpose of the project, which is to improve transit facilities at the West Valley City Center. The No-Action Alternative fails to address the current and future mobility needs as described in Section 1.2. The No-Action Alternative would not reduce or eliminate deficiencies inherent in existing facilities including spatially separated bus boarding areas, which makes bus transfers difficult and often requires passengers to cross a busy arterial with only one lighted crosswalk. The No-Action Alternative would not improve the deficient bus stops with limited shelters, seating, and paved pedestrian pads; nor would the No-Action alternative eliminate the confusion of which spatially separated bus stop accommodates which bus route. The No-Action Alternative would not provide for consolidated parking and kiss-and-ride patrons. As such, transit would not become accessible to a larger population of travelers.

The No-Action Alternative would also fail to meet the needs of long-range planning as described in the Long-Range Transit Analysis for the Wasatch Front Region (WFRC 1996), the WFRC Long Range Transportation Plan (WFRC 2003b), and the West Valley City Major Investment Study (WVC 2000). The No-Action Alternative would not meet the needs identified in the West Valley City Center Vision Plan.