

SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

Salt Lake City's Greater Transparency for Collaborative Government Initiative 90-Day Progress Report April 13, 2009

On January 6, 2009, the Mayor and City Council jointly announced Salt Lake City's Greater Transparency for Collaborative Government Initiative. This initiative itself was designed to be transparent and it is in that spirit we presented our 30-Day Progress Report on February 6 and now present our 90-Day Progress Report. We expect to issue future progress reports at 180 days and one year. People interested in following the progress of the transparency initiative on a more frequent basis should visit online at www.transparencyslcgov.com.

The most visible work the City has undertaken since the 30-Day Progress Report has been the actions taken to make the budget process more transparent. Development of the annual budget is one of the most important things City government does. Because of the financial challenges the City faces in the upcoming fiscal year and the difficult decisions the City will have to make, we strongly believe the budget process needs to be more transparent.

The Budget Workshops the City has held and the upcoming Citizen Survey are described in greater detail in the report. The citizen task force working with the City's Planning Division on the Zoning Amendment Project is also described.

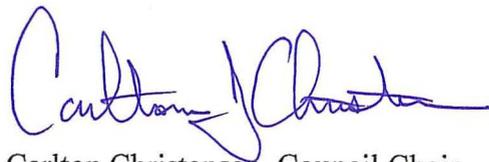
Mayor Becker is also sending out today a request to Department Directors to submit to him by July 10 a written assessment of the information their departments currently provide on slc.gov.com and of their current practices for obtaining public input, along with their plans for more effective communication.

Looking forward, we expect a draft city policy on transparency will be released for public comment around the beginning of May. At the same time, revisions to the draft work plan based on the public comment we have received will also be released.

We are pleased by the progress the City is making.



Ralph Becker, Mayor



Carlton Christensen, Council Chair

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Salt Lake City's Greater Transparency for Collaborative Government Initiative 90-Day Progress Report

Overview

As stated in the 30-Day Progress Report, two basic components to the greater transparency initiative will be pursued: development of policy guidelines on transparency and implementation of specific actions to provide greater transparency and collaboration. Both the policy development and the implementation components are being pursued simultaneously.

I. Policy Development

Our Schedule remains essentially the same:

January 6, 2009	Announcement of the Transparency Initiative and Release of Draft Work Plan for Public Comment
January 6- May 8, 2009	Review Public Comments
January 19- May 8, 2009	Discussions with Community Councils and Other Interested Organizations
February 6, 2009	30-Day Progress Report
April 6, 2009	90-Day Progress Report
May 8, 2009	Revised and Prioritized Work Plan Submitted to Mayor and City Council
May 8, 2009	Preliminary Draft of City Policy on Transparency Released for Public Comment
May 8- July 10, 2009	Public Comment on Draft City Policy on Transparency
July 10, 2009	180-Day Progress Report
July 10, 2009	Proposed City Policy on Transparency Submitted to Mayor and City Council
January 6, 2010	One Year Progress Report

(1) Public Input at Community Council Meetings

Since the January 6 announcement, City representatives have met with all but one of the community councils to discuss the Transparency Initiative.

Attendees at the community council meetings were asked to respond to a three-question survey:

- (1) On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very transparent or “open” and 1 being not transparent or “closed,” where would you place Salt Lake City government today?
- (2) What specific things do you think Salt Lake City already does well in providing transparency or openness?
- (3) What specific ways would you like to see Salt Lake City government provide greater transparency or openness?

The responses to Question 1 from Community Council Meetings are distributed as follows with an average of 3.2 :

Responses to Question 3 are quite varied. Examples of responses to the question of what specific

“Closed”				“Open”		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5		
[9]	[20]	[61]	[51]	[8]	16	

ways Salt Lake City government could provide greater transparency or openness included collecting more public input on core service priorities; providing more information in Spanish; providing more information about the decision process; providing more transparency and openness in the planning process; holding fewer closed special sessions; holding open forums with council reps and Mayor to better understand the issues and goings on; providing better explanation of how to use the City’s electronic resources; holding more open meetings in the local communities to discuss local community issues; improving readability of documents; providing more information on the process of obtaining a business license; providing better program listing for SLC TV Channel 17; and providing information on the awarding of all contracts.

In terms of specific things the City already does well, responses to Question 2 listed the work of community liaisons with community councils, the City’s website, the City’s television station, notices of public meetings, and City Council communication.

The same survey is also available online and the results are posted at www.transparencyslcgov.com.

(2) Transparency Website Activity

The Transparency Initiative Website at www.transparencyslcgov.com went live on January 6, 2009. To date, this website has received 1,924 visitors with a total of 5,911 visits, and 37,996 individual page views. (The data provided in the 30 Day Progress Report was incorrect.)

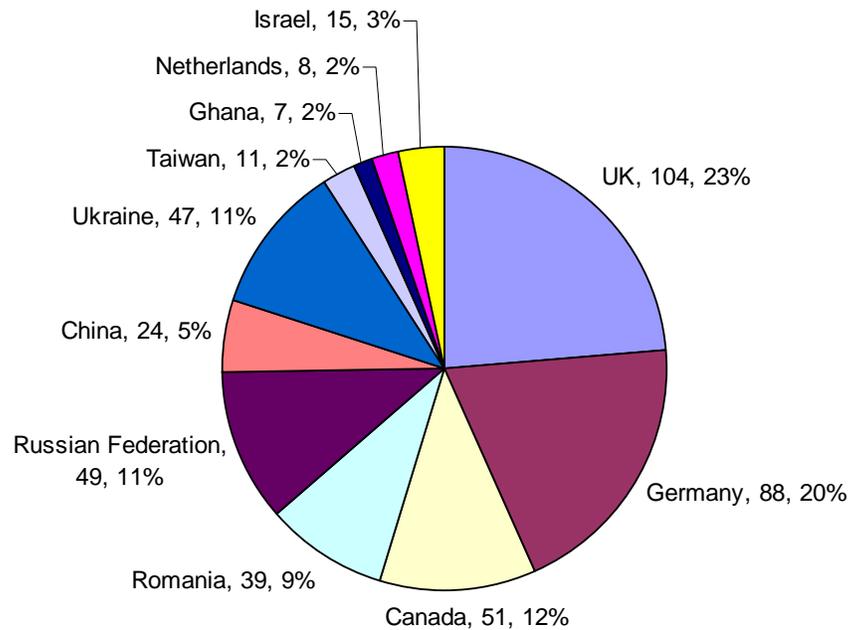
Most of the activity to the webpage came from within Salt Lake City boundaries, with a total of 311 visits. The most visits from Utah cities outside of Salt Lake City came from Centerville, Provo, and Ogden. There were also several visitors from cities outside of Utah, with the most visits from San Diego, Seattle, and Washington DC (see Figure 1).

This website also received hits from outside of the United States. Of the 443 known foreign visits, percentages ranged from 23 percent from the United Kingdom to 2 percent from Ghana, Taiwan and the Netherlands. (See Figure 2).

Figure 1. Visits by City

City	Total Visits
SLC	311
San Diego	111
Lawrenceville	70
Seattle	51
Centerville	15
Provo	14
Washington DC	13
Ogden	11
Dallas	10
Houston	17
South Jordan	8
Los Angeles	5
Longmont	4
Bountiful	3
Chicago	3
Park City	3
Smithfield	2
Tampa	2
Pocatello	1

Figure 2. Visits by Country



(3) Public Education

Since February 6 (date of 30-Day Progress Report) the following blogs have been added to the site:

“Financial Transparency” (Gordon Hoskins)

“Transparency in the Police Department” (Lara Jones)

“Greater Transparency for a Collaborative Government” (Mayor Becker)

“Information Available through the Recorder’s Office Website” (Chris Meeker)

Plans are to add one new blog at least every two weeks. Future blogs will include reports on transparency actions being taken by individual City departments.

(4) Public Input

The website includes both a “forum” feature and a “wiki” feature for the public to provide comments. Very few comments have been submitted to the forum page; none on the wiki. Hopefully members of the public will use these features as they become aware they exist.

Website visitors may respond electronically to the same survey being distributed at community council meetings. Survey responses from community council meetings and electronic survey responses will be posted.

II. Implementation of Specific Initiatives

The following are specific actions that have been taken since the 30-Day Progress Report. Each action is coupled with an explanation of why the action will promote greater transparency and collaboration in government.

(1) Increased Transparency in the Budget Process - Public Budget Workshops

Transparency Rationale: Preparation, review and adoption of the City's budget are among the most important actions the Mayor and City Council take. The financial challenges the City faces for the upcoming budget make transparency — both in terms of providing background information to the public and receiving public input on the issues — more important than ever. [See Draft Scope of Work, paragraphs 9, 10, 18, 29]

Description: Salt Lake City conducted three Public Budget Workshops. These workshops were intended to educate the public about the City's budget process and receive feedback about the public's priorities. The workshops were offered at the Salt Lake City and County Building, Rowland Hall School, and Pioneer Police Precinct. In total, 72 people attended.

The workshop contained three sections. The first was a detailed presentation from department directors about the City's budget, its various accounts, and current spending priorities by each department. Participants were then asked to complete a mock budget: "Assuming Salt Lake City's budget was \$100, how would you appropriate the public's funds?" The final section addressed the revenue crisis facing Salt Lake City as a result of the economic recession. Workshop participants were asked to reduce their \$100 mock budget to a \$90 revised budget and then explain their rationale.

Interestingly, participants of the workshops tended to focus on traditional and non-traditional methods of increasing revenue. Participants were also especially interested in the stimulus plan and ways that might provide additional resources for Salt Lake City. Discussions and feedback did not seem to support a decrease in services in any particular area.

Ongoing Process: Salt Lake City has posted the budget workshop online and will take ongoing feedback over the next two months. To view the workshop from your personal computer, visit www.slcgov.com/budgetworkshop.

(2) Citizen Budget Survey

Transparency Rationale: Citizen input on the difficult budget choices that Salt Lake city faces is particularly important this year. [See Draft Scope of Work, paragraphs 10, 18.]

Description: Salt Lake City has conducted a citizen survey on a biennial basis since 1994. Telephone surveys have been conducted by Dan Jones and Associates and have consisted of approximately 120 questions with at least 700 respondents (100 in each of the seven council districts).

The purpose of the survey, to be conducted early in April, is to gauge the level of citizen satisfaction or dissatisfaction with city services. This year, for the first time and as part of the city's Transparency Initiative, the survey includes a series of questions regarding the city budget. Several questions that were no longer relevant were deleted to make room for 20 questions relating to the difficult choices facing the city as a result of the faltering economy and the accompanying decrease in revenue. The questions were designed to provide the greatest transparency possible in the preparation of the city's Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget.

The survey taker explains that Salt Lake City can only increase city revenue through an increase in property taxes, fines, or fees paid for specific services such as garbage collection. The respondent is then asked if the city must increase revenue, which source would be preferred – property taxes, fees or fines. The survey taker further explains that the city is required to balance its budget and asks if respondents would prefer to have an increase in property taxes or a decrease in services.

Respondents are also asked if they would be willing to support a property tax increase to maintain a range of services: police, fire, road maintenance or repair, neighborhood planning, parks and open space, recreation centers, youth programs, library services, pedestrian and bike trails, commuter bike lanes, and justice programs.

In the reverse, respondents are asked which service reductions they would choose to make if necessary in a variety of areas. For example, in the area of public safety, respondents are asked if they would prefer cuts in crime investigation, police patrols, gang prevention, traffic control, fire services or fire prevention. In the area of public services, respondents are asked if they would choose to make services cuts to street repair and maintenance, recycling, sidewalk repair, or park maintenance. Since these are all important city services, each respondent is given an opportunity to face the same difficult choices city decision makers must face.

Salt Lake City is considering asking residents to support, through a general election, a general obligation bond to build a public safety building. Respondents are told that a \$100 million bond would add approximately \$58 to the yearly property tax on a \$250,000 home and are given an opportunity to respond positively or negatively.

The survey gives respondents a sense of the complexity of the budget and provides the city's decision makers with a statistically significant insight into the opinions of city residents.

Location: The survey report will be placed on slcgov.com when completed.

(3) Citizen Task Force for Zoning Amendment Project

Description: In February the Planning Division began a project to revise various sections of the Zoning Ordinance to help clarify regulations, implement sustainability goals, promote progressive planning regulations and provide predictability to the process for applicants and citizens.

The project includes focusing on the following types of regulations: Zoning Amendment Standards, Notification and Appeals, Purpose Statements for Zoning Districts, Conditional Use Standards, Non-Conforming Uses/Non-Complying Structure Standards, Conditional Building and Site Design Review Standards, Special Exceptions, Planned Development Regulations, Zoning Map Changes, Tables of Permitted and Conditional Uses and Definition of uses, and Off-Street Parking Regulations and Policies.

One way the Planning Division is obtaining public input is through a Task Force of individuals who represent business, community councils, City boards and commissions, citizens interested in planning issues and those who have taken projects through the planning process.

On February 9, 2009, the Task Force held its first meeting to give feedback to the Planning Division relating to Zoning Amendment Standards and Notification and Appeals regulations. This group will continue to meet to review other topics through June, 2009.

Another way the Planning Division is obtaining public input is through the Planning Division's monthly open houses. These open houses are held on the third Thursday of the month from 4:30-6:00 p.m. on the first floor of the City & County Building at 451 S. State Street. The February Open House included review of the Zoning Amendment Standards, Notification and Appeals regulations, and the initial input on revisions to the Purpose Statements of the Salt Lake City Zoning Districts.

Information regarding this project is also located on the Planning Division Website at:

www.slcgov.com/ced/planning

Individuals can review proposed amendments as they are prepared and send comments to the Planning Division through this site.

Location: www.slcgov.com/ced/planning

Transparency Rationale: Public input on potential zoning amendments will help produce more effective solutions. [See Draft Scope of Work, paragraphs 10, 12]

(4) Redesigned and updated Boards and Commission Website

Transparency Rationale: Constituent boards and commissions play an important role in Salt Lake City government. The City has received feedback about the ability to research certain boards and commission, identify their members, and learn more about their meetings.

Description: Salt Lake City has 26 public boards and commissions. These groups advise the Mayor and City Council on a number of policy objectives, provide regulatory oversight over a number of building and zoning issues, and advise specific divisions of Salt Lake City government. These boards are one of the best ways individuals can gain a

better understanding of Salt Lake City government and provide input on policy objectives. The new website will provide in-depth information regarding each board or commission, its activities, and its members.

Location: www.slcgov.com/boards

[See Draft Scope of Work, ¶ 12]

(5) Recovery.slcgov.com

Transparency Rationale: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is setting the foundation for economic recovery in Salt Lake City and Utah. The program will invest over \$1.6 billion in Utah. As a result, the public has been very interested in how all levels of government will be using these funds. The website will help the public learn how the City is maximizing the use of available funds.

Description: Salt Lake City's Recovery and Reinvestment website will provide information on how Salt Lake City is investing recovery dollars within the City. All programs, plans and reports will be available for public review. The site also provides links to a variety of information regarding federal grants and available funds.

Location: www.slcgov.com/recovery