

Air Quality Committee

Meeting Format Recommendation for 2017

Background

In August 2008, the Wasatch Front Regional Council created the Air Quality Committee (AQC) as a subcommittee to the Regional Growth Committee (RGC). The RGC specified that the AQC is to be chaired by an elected official appointed by the RGC. Other members of the AQC include executive level representatives from the Utah Air Quality Board, Division of Air Quality, Utah Department of Transportation, Utah Transit Authority, and other WFRC members (in practice there has been at least one WFRC member from Weber, Davis, and Salt Lake Counties). The August 2009 stated purpose of the AQC is:

1. Recommend effective transportation strategies for improving air quality
2. Inform the Council about emerging air quality issues
3. Cooperate with the Division of Air Quality in developing State Implementation Plans
4. Inform the public on WFRC transportation-related air quality improvement activities
5. Keep informed on air quality issues and control strategies that are not directly related to transportation.

Changing Needs

At the time the AQC was created there was not a forum available to WFRC members to adequately address air quality needs. Since that time, a number of forums and programs have been established that are well equipped to address air quality strategies including Utah Clean Air (UCAIR), the Clean Air Action Team, the Salt Lake City Office of Sustainability, and the UDOT Travelwise program to name a few. With the advent of these air quality oriented groups, the primary function of the AQC has gradually shifted to providing a valuable forum for sharing air quality related information.

The WFRC also includes air quality impacts as an integral step in the analysis of long- and short-range plans and programs. This consideration of air quality impacts is in addition to the air quality conformity analysis required of all transportation plans and programs. For example, the evaluation of alternative scenarios in developing the Regional Transportation Plan includes estimation of transportation emissions. The key objective of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program, which WFRC is able to administer in its urbanized areas, is to improve air quality.

Recommendation

Given these developments, the AQC is recommending that the issues of air quality impacts and changing regulations be shared with a larger audience. Specifically, the AQC is recommending that beginning in 2017 this subcommittee continue as structured with a Chair and designated members. However, separate meetings of the AQC will only be scheduled as needed. Most air quality information items would be addressed as part of the RGC agenda. The AQC believes that the stated purpose of the AQC listed above can be fulfilled more efficiently with this recommendation.