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# The Salt Lake Tribune

APRIL 3, 2018 « TUESDAY »



Jay Wright

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## WILDCATS WIN

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# Hughes' fast one on inland port

Land-based trade hub that promises rich economic opportunity for Utah got last-minute nod on Hill with little regard for capital city's interests.

By **BILL DENTZER**  
*The Salt Lake Tribune*

Exactly 9 miles due west of Temple Square, at the 7200 West exit on Interstate 80, you can look north over the barren, salty mud flats, where Salt Lake City used to dump its

trash, and conjure up a vision that has tantalized landowners, business interests and politicians for decades.

Squint at the landscape, and imagine the long-closed landfill disappearing under a slab of concrete spanning hundreds of acres, train tracks branching over it. Loaders move freight

between train cars and truck trailers — inbound from overseas to locations across the West, outbound for export around the world. For miles in every direction, new businesses have arrived to support the enterprise or profit from its location.

That's the vision of an international port in Utah — a land-based trade hub that boosters tout as the most significant economic development opportunity the state might ever see. It would be the only such facility between the

Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean, anchoring Utah as a major commercial crossroads and adding potentially hundreds of millions in revenue to the state's economy.

Commercial and government interests have chased that vision since 1974. This year, a legislative push spearheaded by outgoing House Speaker Greg Hughes, R-Draper, brought the vision closer to reality in just 44 days, passing a bill one day before adjournment.

Please see **INLAND PORT, A4**

ROADWORK » MAJOR PROJECTS KICK OFF ON I-15, I-80, I-215



RICK EGAN | *The Salt Lake Tribune*

Crews work on the intersection of Interstate 215 and Redwood Road, which Utah Department of Transportation has identified as one of the 10 big construction projects for 2018.

# Spring is here, and so are UDOT's orange cones

By **LEE DAVIDSON**  
*The Salt Lake Tribune*

State officials joke that springtime in Utah brings the blooming of daffodils, tulips — and orange construction barrels.

The Utah Department of Transportation kicked off the 2018 construction season Monday with a news conference outlining its top 10 projects this year among the 188 it has scattered statewide costing a total of \$1.45 billion. Many are just beginning now or will later this month.

They include adding lanes on most of Interstate 15 from 2100 South in Salt Lake City through Lehi, major reconstruction of Interstate 215 in North Salt Lake, finishing four freewaylike interchanges on Bangerter Highway, adding a lane to Interstate 80 in Parleys Canyon and new bridges in Tooele County.

Some projects were accelerated by using \$350 million in state bonds issued so far, part of \$1 billion approved by the Legislature last year. For example, a project to widen I-15

Please see **ROADWORK, A5**

## UDOT's Top 10 projects in 2018

UDOT crews will work on 188 highway-construction projects around the state this year, costing a total of \$1.45 billion. Following are the Top 10 projects it has planned:

- 1 I-15 Technology Corridor, \$450 million
- 2 I-15 Southbound—2100 South to 12300 South, \$180 million
- 3 I-215/Redwood Road Diverging Diamond Interchange—North Salt Lake, \$40 million
- 4 I-80/S.R. 36 Bridge Replacements—Tooele County, \$30 million
- 5 Bluff Street—St. George, \$51 million
- 6 I-80—Parleys Canyon, \$30 million
- 7 Mountain View Corridor—Utah County, \$41 million
- 8 Bangerter Highway Four Interchanges, \$201 million
- 9 S.R. 9—Springdale, \$19 million
- 10 S.R. 108—Syracuse, \$52 million



Source: Utah Department of Transportation, Google Maps

*The Salt Lake Tribune*

# Festival's star power to aid young LGBTQ

**LoveLoud** » Last year's success prompted Imagine Dragons' singer to expand the concert, which will bring bigger names to Rice-Eccles Stadium in SLC.

By **ERIC WALDEN** | *The Salt Lake Tribune*

A few hours before he went onstage before 17,000 people in Orem last August, Dan Reynolds, frontman of the Grammy-winning alt-rock band Imagine Dragons and a member of the LDS Church, promised that the LoveLoud Festival — the concert event he organized to bring support to LGBTQ youths — would become an annual event, and that bigger, national acts would perform in future years.

He kept his word.

Reynolds announced Monday that the second annual LoveLoud Festival will be held July 28 at Rice-Eccles Stadium in Salt Lake City. This year's lineup features Imagine Dragons, electronic dance music star Zedd, former Linkin Park member Mike Shinoda, teen

Please see **LOVELLOUD, A4**

# Tech woes and trade tensions with China sink U.S. stocks

**NATION** » Stocks fell sharply Monday as investors responded to rising trade tensions between the United States and China and mounting scrutiny of big technology companies. » **A3**



Associated Press file photo

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela attends the memorial service in Soweto for her ex-husband, former South African President Nelson Mandela, in December 2013.

# Winnie Mandela, S. Africa's 'mother of the nation,' dies at 81

**WORLD** » Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the former wife of Nelson Mandela and for decades one of South Africa's most prominent and polarizing figures, died Monday in Johannesburg. » **A10**

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## LoveLoud

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singer-songwriter Grace VanderWaal, Neon Trees frontman Tyler Glenn, Vagabon and A.W. Stand-up comedian, actor and writer Cameron Esposito will also perform and emcee.

More performers are expected to be announced in coming weeks. Tickets will go on sale Friday at 10 a.m. MT via SmithsTix.com. Tickets range from \$29.50 to \$129.50.

“We at LoveLoud are determined to help create a more loving and accepting environment for them, while also hoping to raise more than \$1 million for local and national LGBTQ+ charities,” Reynolds said in a prepared statement. “We look forward to a day dedicated to celebrating their diversity while listening to great music and inspiring speakers.”

The LoveLoud Foundation

will donate proceeds from this year’s event to LGBTQ organizations including Encircle, the Tegan and Sara Foundation, and the Trevor Project.

Reynolds created a documentary last year, called “Believer,” to chronicle the events leading up to and including the first LoveLoud Festival. The film was runner-up for the Festival Favorite Award at this year’s Sundance Film Festival and will premiere on HBO in June.

At a news conference at the UCCU Center before last year’s concert, Reynolds said his primary goal was simply to get people talking about LGBTQ issues, noting that the leading cause of death among teenagers in Utah is suicide. (And suicide is the second-leading cause of death among all teenagers nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)

He said he could no longer

## LoveLoud

» 2018 LoveLoud Festival will be held July 28 at Rice-Eccles Stadium in Salt Lake City.

» Doors for the festival will open at 2 p.m. and the music is set to begin at 3:30.

» The festival will feature food, beverages and various activities.

ignore the “divide between my religion and the LGBTQ community.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that while same-sex attraction is not a sin, acting upon that attraction is — a teaching that is problematic for young people already struggling to balance the ideals of their faith against their own nature.

“I decided I wanted to put together an organization whose goal is to have conversations that are sometimes



RICK EGAN | Tribune file photo

Imagine Dragons perform at the LoveLoud Festival at UVU campus in August 2017.

painful, sometimes uncomfortable, sometimes take people out of their comfort zones,” Reynolds said then. “... I was taught from a young age that if you want to make

a difference in the world, you start with your community.”

The 2017 iteration drew 17,000 concertgoers to Brent Brown Ballpark in Orem, helped in part when the LDS

Church reached out to Reynolds in the weeks leading up to the concert, offering an endorsement via a statement of support on its newsroom website.

## Inland port

» Continued from A1

Curious timing, and a surprise concession by the bill’s sponsor that seemed to betray long hours of negotiations with Salt Lake City, prompted veteran observers of session endgames to suspect the port bill got caught up in legislative deal-making to secure passage of what Senate leaders considered a must-pass transportation measure.

The capital city fought the bill, protesting state overreach, loss of millions of dollars in tax revenues and a worrisome precedent for future state land grabs. The Utah League of Cities & Towns called it “nothing short of a state takeover of a swath of Salt Lake City without the city’s consent” with “irreparable legal, taxation, and policy precedents.”

Over the bill’s five-week trip through the Legislature, the city seemed to be making headway with its lobbying effort, winning favorable changes and then Senate passage.

In just 15 minutes on the session’s second-to-last night, however, a major rewrite of the bill far more hostile to the city’s interests — one that few lawmakers could have had time to read — passed the House with no substantive discussion. Fifteen minutes later, the Senate concurred with the House bill, surprising Capitol watchers who expected House and Senate differences to get worked out in a conference committee.

The Senate version “was a bill that I didn’t like, but it was a bill that we could live with,” Hughes told The Salt Lake Tribune after adjournment. Yet, the city’s continued pushback despite Senate concessions frustrated him, he said, as if “we’re negotiating against ourselves.”

“It gets to a point in a 45-day session,” he said, “when you’re in Day 44, you’ve got to figure out if the clock is being run out on you or you’re still moving forward on getting a bill passed.”

How the bill ultimately passed with conditions so harsh to the city’s interests showcases the antagonism between the progressive, Democrat-run urban capital and the more rural-minded, and staunchly conservative, Republican-ruled Statehouse. The opposing sides always agreed on the economic benefits of the inland port. But they were at odds over control: of land use authority, tax revenue, even potential environmental issues arising from the port’s operations. And the city lost on all counts.

Gov. Gary Herbert signed the port bill, SB234, on March 16, amid concerns from the original sponsor, with the caveat that disagreements between the city and state should be resolved in a special session in the coming months. But there is no certainty that session will be called or that changes will be enacted next year or later.

The Tribune retraced how the inland port bill got to Herbert’s desk in interviews with observers, stakeholders and participants in a process that took the plan from PowerPoint slides to law in six weeks. Its legislative path saw Salt Lake City’s prospects for local control go from acceptable to awful. The only good news for Mayor Jackie Biskupski and her city government colleagues? It could have ended even worse.



The proposed inland port project could be built on the former site of the Salt Lake City landfill on the north side of Interstate 80 between 5600 West and 7200 West.

STEVE GRIFFIN  
The Salt Lake Tribune

## State vs. local control

Hughes, at a Salt Lake County media event Jan. 29, confirmed for the first time publicly that legislation was in the works to set up an inland port in mostly undeveloped northwest Salt Lake City, the same area chosen by the state a year earlier for a new prison over the capital’s objections. He said the opportunity was so great and challenges so daunting, “that I particularly wouldn’t want to foist [them] on one jurisdiction or municipality.”

But going it alone was exactly what Salt Lake City had in mind. The city in early January approved a master plan and agreements with northwest quadrant landowners committing to pour millions in future tax revenue right back into the area to aid development.

The state had its own ideas: Port legislation popped up in a trial balloon at the end of the 2017 session, a conversation starter to get the subject on the broader policy radar. It got a boost in the summer when the governor appointed a committee to do a feasibility study.

Initially, after Hughes’ announcement, a group of stakeholders was to be briefed at a speaker-hosted meeting on Feb. 1. That small gathering evolved into a much larger public event in the Republican House caucus room. There, Hughes extolled the largely undisputed economic benefits of an inland port but argued that it would require a multi-jurisdictional effort.

Biskupski and other city officials fumed at what seemed like a setup. She parsed her words, saying the city was hearing specifics “for the first time” and needed more information.

## ‘We want to be in the room’

Salt Lake City sounded the alarm: The City Council tabled its Feb. 6 agenda to hear instead from Hughes and the respective Senate and House bill sponsors, Republican Sen. Jerry Stevenson of Layton and GOP Rep. Francis Gibson of Mapleton, on legislation that still hadn’t been written, or at least

publicly released.

Over 90 minutes, Hughes repeated how the port plan was too big an undertaking for the city — an unfair burden, in fact. The mayor challenged the state’s sudden urgency to enact a plan, but, if it was going to happen, city officials wanted “to be in the room” when the bill was written.

When SB234 finally dropped in the sixth week of the session, it came laden with the worst of the city’s concerns about losing tax revenue and ceding land-use control to a new state-dominated agency. The city’s ideas “aren’t in the bill,” Biskupski said.

By the time it was heard in Senate committee later that week, the city had made some headway: The bill moved to the Senate floor with a smaller jurisdiction and narrower land-use appeals authority. It passed the chamber with a cutback on how much local tax revenue the new agency could scoop up.

Two days later, when the bill arrived in the House on March 7, the tide turned back the other way.

## ‘Roll with it’

That night, the 44th of the 45-day session, a fourth version of the bill came out at 8:47 p.m. Just over a half-hour later, Gibson, the House majority whip, told the chamber he had a new version, adding: “We’d like to roll with it.”

He spent a few minutes on a big-picture summary of the bill. Rep. Sandra Hollins, a Salt Lake City Democrat, rose to say she would vote “no,” aligning with her constituents. Rep. Mike Winder, a Republican from bordering West Valley City, rose to praise it. (The new version, yet unknown to most, had changes favorable to his district and also pushed the project boundary into Magna.) The question was called to a vote immediately after, passing 61-11 after 13 minutes on the House floor. All Republicans voted “yes,” and all Democrats, except the representative from Magna, voted “no.”

The House version contained substantive, almost punitive, changes.

Besides expanding the area of the port jurisdiction, it vastly added to its taxing power — it could now claim up to 100 percent of all county, city and school district property taxes, up from just 2 percent in the Senate version.

Another change prohibited any ban on moving or temporarily storing natural resources on the

34-square-mile zone around the port complex. Opponents read that as a virtual guarantee that Utah coal will move through the port without the stricter environmental controls Salt Lake City would likely impose.

## Surprise in the Senate

City officials expected the House to vote a harsher bill. They also were confident that differences between the House and Senate versions would get worked out in a conference committee — a small negotiating unit with three members from each chamber. Hughes, in fact, had said as much to Rep. Brian King, the Democratic House minority leader from Salt Lake City.

“He thought there’d be a conference committee, and he asked me to be a part of that committee,” King said. “But it never came to that. That was surprising to me.”

The conference never happened because a subdued Stevenson, the Senate sponsor, rose from his seat in chambers 15 minutes after the House passed the bill and moved for the Senate to concur. The Senate did so, voting 20-6. All Democrats voted “no,” except the one from West Valley City.

Outside chambers, city lobbyist Ken Bullock blew his stack at no one in particular, later apologizing for his outburst. Others were equally surprised, if less vocal.

Lack of transparency — and there was little of it regarding the port bill — breeds conspiracy theories. Observers thus read intrigue into the timing of the port bill and another that moved through the Legislature at roughly the same time: Senate Bill 136, a must-pass transportation bill in the view of Senate leaders, that met resistance in the House.

Hughes and Senate President Wayne Niederhauser, R-Sandy, appointed themselves to serve on the conference committee on the bill, a rare move that drew mock “oohs” on the House floor when Hughes announced it.

That 7 p.m. conference led to the transportation bill narrowly passing the House at 8:57 p.m. on a 40-32 vote. Members then approved the substitute port bill at 9:34 p.m. The Senate approved the transportation bill at 9:44 p.m. and concurred on the port bill at 9:51 p.m.

Niederhauser and Hughes said disagreements over the transportation bill were resolved independent of discussion on any other legislation. “I was right in the middle of SB136,” Niederhauser said. “The

inland port bill was never part of that discussion.”

Hughes said: “What would the transit bill have to do with the inland port?”

Still, Stevenson’s move to concur on the port bill surprised many lawmakers, not to mention Salt Lake City officials and lobbyists. Senators had not had time to read the new version and had no idea what city leaders thought of it.

After the session, Stevenson acknowledged that he “acquiesced” to the House on his bill, hoping that disagreements he had tried to resolve would get “straightened out” in talks on the way to a special session to make changes. He was downcast in calling for the vote that night, his shoulders slumped. The next day, he seemed distraught — weeks of work to address the city’s concerns and find a middle ground had been for naught. Meanwhile, senators had heard talk that the House, with its version of the bill, essentially had sought to punish Salt Lake City for its obstinance.

Stevenson would not confirm claims by some observers that he had gone so far as to ask the governor to consider a veto. “I certainly wanted him to take a look at it from a little different perspective, but he didn’t, and that’s not what we’re dealing with right now.”

Hughes called the version that prevailed a compromise in itself — his chamber had alternate plans for an even stronger port agency, one that would have further angered the city. The Senate version, he said, didn’t give him “high confidence that the inland port was actually going to happen, so we were going to substitute that bill.”

“There was a reasonable belief that what we put together wouldn’t be accepted by the Senate,” he allowed, “but you always hope you can find compromise.”

It hardly seemed a compromise with the Senate, much less the city. And unlike the transportation bill, which saw a lot of public debate, the port bill slipped through on an audible called by Hughes — a hasty, last-minute substitution that injected distrust and suspicion into an already polarizing, divisive issue.

“I was pissed off about that process. Nobody had a chance to read that bill,” King said. “It’s why having a more transparent and more thorough and more considered deliberative process is important. It does inevitably lead to a lot of suspicion and cynicism and ‘the game is rigged’ kind of thinking.”