

West Quarter Marks ‘Topping Out’ Milestone

Romney visits UDOT’s Traffic Operations Center; Coachman’s Mixed-Use planned; two SLC-based architectural firms acquired.

Downtown West Quarter Project Celebrates ‘Topping Out’

Representatives from The Ritchie Group of Salt Lake and Layton-based Garn Development were on hand August 26 to celebrate the steel “Topping Out” ceremony on the highly anticipated West Quarter development, a contemporary mixed-use project in downtown Salt Lake City (200 South 300 West), along with more than 300 construction field workers and Salt Lake City Council representatives.

“It’s exciting,” said Ryan Ritchie, Principal with The Ritchie Group of Salt Lake, adding that his firm’s vision for this project started in 2015, so it’s been a long time coming to get this point. “It’s always fun to hit milestones without any major accidents. The teams have worked well together. We’re on schedule; we didn’t have a single shutdown through COVID—a remarkable achievement for the construction team. Supply chain issues are challenges for everybody, but to be at this point is [gratifying]. It’s a fun day to celebrate.”



The 1.7 million-SF Phase I will include 242 apartment units, a subterranean parking garage, 12,000 SF of retail on the ground level, and a trendy 270-room hotel tower. Another noteworthy aspect is Quarter Row, a curb-less street that cuts through the development and focuses on enhancing the pedestrian experience with modern, posh restaurants, hip bars, and specialty retailers unique to Utah’s capital city.

HKS Architects of Salt Lake is the design firm; Holladay-based Beecher Walker

Associates is the Project Architect.

“This is really transformative,” said Gary Ellis, Jacobson Construction CEO, to the assembled crowd. “To everyone working on this project, please go home with a lot of pride in your hearts today. Go home and tell your kids about what you’re doing, because this [project] is going to be generational. It’s an amazing thing being able to build this during COVID. It’s a wonderful challenge and you’re rising to it.”

“We’ve couldn’t do this without public and private participation,” said Ritchie in his address. “We’re grateful for the great work you’re doing. Community participation was key in influencing design elements.”

Romney Visits UDOT Traffic Operations Center, Talks Infrastructure

Utah Senator Mitt Romney visited with UDOT executives at its Traffic Operations Center in West Valley City August 26, where he toured the facility and spoke about potential U.S. infrastructure spending.

Romney mentioned the recent \$1-trillion infrastructure bill—passed by the Senate but currently stuck in House of Representatives political channels—of which approximately \$3 billion would go to



Employees from the Utah Department of Transportation welcomed Utah Senator Mitt Romney August 26, where he toured UDOT’s Traffic Operations Center and spoke about the potential of a federal infrastructure bill.



Utah for future roads, bridges, transit/rail, water and broadband projects.

In an email response, Romney said the U.S. “depends on modern infrastructure that all Americans can rely on. This [includes] safe roads and bridges, navigable waterways and clean drinking water. [...] The biggest benefit is that we were able to ensure Utah will receive sufficient funding to help upgrade its infrastructure.”

Romney added that the bill would secure vital funding for the Navajo Nation in Utah for needed rural water and broadband projects.

Coachman’s Mixed-Use Project May Include Reincarnation of Iconic SLC Diner
When legendary local restaurant

the end of an era.

But like a Phoenix rising, it was announced in September by owner Mike Nikols that his intentions are to open a new-and-improved version of the iconic diner. As part of a newly proposed mixed-use development at the corner of 1300 South State Street, it will be appropriately titled Coachman’s Mixed-Use.

Nikols was quoted as saying it’s not 100% certain at this time if a reincarnation of the diner will really happen; it will depend on project progress. Salt Lake City agreed to Nikols’ proposal to rezone the property earlier this year to make way for the ambitious, almost two-acre development, expected to take 18-plus months to complete.

The six-level, nearly 170,000-SF structure is highlighted by 112 condominiums—a mix of studio and one- and two-bedroom units—marking one of the few new condo projects in the Wasatch Front’s bustling multi-family market. It also includes below-grade parking, commercial restaurant/retail space at street level, and condos above that.

The project is located in the City’s Liberty Wells neighborhood and was designed by Murray-based Think Architecture, with South Jordan-based AE Urbia serving as Project Architect. Stout Building Contractors of Salt Lake is the general contractor; Anderson Wahlen & Associates of Salt Lake is the civil engineer.

E4H Acquires Dixon + Associates

E4H Environments for Health Architecture (E4H), a prominent national firm with >>



Rendering of Coachman’s Mixed-Use project at 1300 South State in Salt Lake, which will replace the former legendary restaurant and outdated retail buildings with a six-level, 170,000 SF structure highlighted by 112 condominium units (rendering courtesy Think Architecture).



Workers secure the final steel beam to be lifted into place on The West Quarter project in downtown Salt Lake City. The 1.7 million SF Phase 1 of this ambitious project is slated to open in Summer 2022.

offices in eight prominent markets including New York, Boston, Washington D.C., and Dallas, announced the acquisition of Dixon + Associates of Salt Lake City, a niche architectural design firm focused on the healthcare and medical design industry.

“We are extremely excited about expanding our physical footprint and enhancing our services to the Western United States in partnership with the talented Dixon + Associates design firm,” remarked Jim Johnson, E4H Managing Partner. “The addition of Dixon is integral to our strategies of geographic growth and continuous cultivation of our dedicated expertise.”

E4H has 200-plus architects and planners across the U.S. and has completed more than 9,000 healthcare and other projects over four decades. The firm’s portfolio includes more than \$6 billion in projects, encompassing community hospitals, academic medical centers, life science laboratories, R&D spaces,

children’s hospitals, mental health facilities, ambulatory care centers, rehabilitation facilities, assisted living, and medical office buildings.

Founded in 1990, Dixon + Associates has a reputation as being innovative with healthcare design.

“We have built a reputation in the Salt Lake City region over the last 30 years and are excited to expand our services across the broader Intermountain West as a part of the E4H team,” said David Dixon, Founder of Dixon + Associates. “We have had a great working relationship with E4H serving clients together in the past, and are now looking forward to bringing E4H’s capabilities to our healthcare clients.”

JRCA Acquired by Galloway & Company
Denver-headquartered Galloway & Company, Inc. recently announced that it has acquired Salt Lake-based JRCA Architects (JRCA), a firm that ranked No. 17 in Utah Construction & Design’s 2021 Top

Utah Architects survey in May with \$3.1 million in revenues from 2020.

JRCA is highly regarded for its design of healthcare, public works, public safety facilities, and government and justice centers. The firm’s expertise in these markets will complement Galloway’s extensive portfolio in the commercial, multifamily, industrial, and federal markets.

“JRCA brings an excellent reputation and resume to Galloway,” said Galloway President Dave Guetig. “This has been a long, but fulfilling, process for the JRCA shareholders as well as the Galloway transition team. We believe that the alignment of culture and values between JRCA and Galloway will help make this a smooth transition.”

Founded in 1983 by Jim Child, JRCA has built meaningful relationships in the local community through myriad project designs spanning nearly 40 years.

“Our goal has always been to provide both the expertise and capacity to meet

the unique needs of our clients,” said Child. “Joining Galloway expands our capabilities while also enabling our staff to grow as professionals within the company. This acquisition provides exciting opportunities for our clients as well as our team members.”

Galloway is headquartered in Denver with six regional offices. The firm’s staff of nearly 250 professionals provides a full-service approach to architecture and engineering. Its active portfolio includes projects in 26 states. The firm has an annual average growth of 13% since 2013.

The firm’s regional growth has also been accompanied by the addition of new services. Originally recognized for its civil engineering and fuel system design programs, Galloway has expanded to become a multidisciplinary firm with 13 in-house A/E disciplines.

“This acquisition evolved from our desire to create opportunity for Galloway’s staff and clients. It was a strategic decision as part of Galloway’s overall growth

plan to add capabilities and expand our regional influence,” said Kristoffer Kenter, Director of Architecture.

Natural History Museum of Utah Earns Coveted ASLA Award

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) announced October 4 its 2021 Professional Award winners, with the Natural History Museum of Utah capturing an “Award of Excellence” in the General Design category. It was a one of 40 award-winning projects internationally and competed head-to-head against domestic and international projects.

The 163,000-SF museum, which opened to the public in November 2011, provides an introduction to a remarkable landscape and celebrates unique paleontological discoveries, unusual gems and minerals, and preserved prehistoric artifacts, with stories told by contemporary native people. Bridging a divide of nature and culture, the Museum offers an abstract

extension and transformation of the land: its campus is an expression of a landscape defined by rock, minerals, and vegetation.

Prompted by increased collections and research initiatives, the museum embarked upon a campaign to build a landmark of contemporary architecture and land stewardship, exhibiting communication that would resonate with 21st-century visitors. In collaboration with the architect, the landscape architect designed a campus that embodies the museum’s mission to highlight the natural world through scientific inquiry, educational outreach, multi-cultural experience, and human engagement. Digital terrain modeling, utilized to make the steep terrain accessible for all users, blurs the line between intervention and conservation. Sustainable design elements including rainwater recapture, permeable surfaces, and native plantings resulted in a landscape that mimics and restores the natural conditions of the environment and site. »

SL Chamber President Miller Keynotes URMCA Meeting

The strength of Utah's economy and the state's overall viability as a great place to be in business was emphasized October 13 at the Utah Ready Mix Concrete Association's (URMCA) chapter meeting at the Associated General Contractors of Utah headquarters in Salt Lake. Derek Miller, President of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, was the keynote speaker, highlighting a number of factors of why the Beehive State is so productive economically.

"We're all living in a pretty special state—we have the fastest growing economy, the fastest growing population over the past decade, and Utah is ranked by numerous outlets as the best [state] to do business," said Miller. "It's also one of the most diverse economies, which is extremely important."

Miller provided examples to back his words: U.S. News and World Report ranks Utah No. 1 for economic growth; Wall Street Journal recognized the Salt Lake Metro area (spanning essentially the entire Wasatch Front) as the best performing economy in the U.S.; the Milken

Institute's (a non-profit think tank with three U.S. and three international offices) 2021 list of "Best Performing Cities" had Provo/Orem No. 1, Salt Lake City No. 4, and Clearfield/Layton No. 9, while St. George and Logan both cracked the Top 5 for small metropolitan areas.

"Utah also had the highest job growth creation and lowest mortality numbers during the pandemic," Miller added, saying he gets a lot of phone calls from out-of-state people who want to know why the state is thriving economically.

Keys of Economic Growth

Miller highlighted three main reasons for Utah's strong economy over the past 18 months.

(1) Utah is a Top 10 state in exports, and a Top 5 state in export growth. "We do well when it comes to international business and international engagement," he said. "We export goods that are produced here."

(2) Utah displays "fiscal prudence" both publicly and privately. "We don't

spend a lot of money if we don't have to," said Miller. "We are blessed to have a fiscally conservative legislative body. Utah has stable tax rates, low tax rates, and low regulatory burdens on business, and elected officials for the most part want to keep it that way."

(3) Miller said "collaboration is the secret sauce of Utah. It's SO important to us."

He also discussed the main challenges facing Utahns, including housing shortages, the need for greater workforce development, and immigration reform. Regarding housing, there are 50,000 more households than places for these families to live. There has been a "perfect storm" of demand, higher material costs, and labor shortages, which have all led to a massive increase in home prices.

Finally, Miller said Utah has great future development opportunities, highlighted by the Point Redevelopment at the site of the Utah State Prison, a 600-acre site that will drive future development of another 20,000 open acres.

Miller also said the Inland Port is a

great economic opportunity, with 8,000 acres south and 10,000 acres north of Interstate 80. "Utah has long been known as the crossroads of the West," he said, and the prospect of building a future transfer station and transfer load facility will spur long-term economic growth.

URMCA lobbyist Dave Spatafore said Utah is flush with extra money, including \$1.3 billion the state got last February in ARPA Funds, with new construction projects likely to be built from this money. He said \$500 million has been appropriated, with \$800 million left for potential new affordable housing and infrastructure projects (water, sewer, roads).

Concrete's Versatility Highlighted

Other speakers talked about concrete's versatility as a building material, including concrete paving, the up-front affordability of insulated concrete form (ICF) blocks, and having ready-mix concrete utilize cement with a higher percentage of limestone,

which reduces carbon emissions by 10%.

Patrick Matsche of the National Ready Mix Association (NRMA) also praised Utah's collaborative efforts and touted his association's "Build with Strength" program, which looks for ways to convince owners to switch from wood and steel building structures to concrete.

"Concrete is cost-effective, not just ICF, but all forming solutions," said Matsche.

Randy Daniels, an Account Manager for Fox Blocks ICF (headquartered in Omaha, Neb.), said projects using ICF blocks used to cost approximately 3% more upfront, but that number has dropped the past two years to where it is equal with wood or steel. ICFs are specified in virtually every commercial building market, with 65% of the Western U.S. market volume coming in educational, commercial, institutional, public works, military, and entertainment.

Also, healthcare, religion, and hospitality are potential rising market segments that utilize ICFs. In Utah, ICFs

have been a staple for movie theater projects for more than 20 years (Jordan Commons was one of the first ICF theater projects in Utah), and in the past two years four schools—Roy Jr. High in Roy, Ellis Elementary in Logan, Sunrise High in Brigham City, and Wasatch Elementary in Ogden—have been built using ICFs, with three more ICF schools in the works.

"Stick framing and metal studs are not cheaper today," said Daniels. He also spoke of the long-term operational savings of ICF projects vs. other materials. He said the owner of a Hampton Inn in Arizona used ICF on a five-story project three years ago, and also has a similar hotel project built with stick frame construction. The stick frame building costs \$14,000 to operate per month; the ICF building is \$8,000 per month, which equates to more than \$70,000 per year in savings.

"We can make a run at (stick frame) today on first cost," said Daniels. "We couldn't say that a few years ago." ■



(left to right) Brad Stevenson, URMCA Executive Director; Tammy Meldrum, ACI Intermountain Chapter Executive Director; Derek Miller, President of Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce.

