

SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

MEDIA ADVISORY MEDIA ADVISORY MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The Salt Lake City Council will hold a public hearing relating to a proposal from the Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency (UTOPIA) to build a fiber optic network for use by private companies to provide retail services to homes and businesses. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 315 of the City & County Building, 451 S State Street, Salt Lake City.

Each person wishing to comment will be welcome to speak for up to two minutes. The City Council also welcomes written comments regarding the UTOPIA proposal. Mail your remarks to the City Council Office, 451 S State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111 or email comments to council.comments@slcgov.com. Voice comments can be left on the Council's 24-hour comment line at 535-7654.

In March 2003, Salt Lake City joined with 17 other Utah cities in forming an interlocal agency named the Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency commonly referred to as UTOPIA. The purpose for Salt Lake City joining the Agency was to study whether a fiber optic network was financially feasible and whether it would help ensure that Salt Lake City is a favorable place to live and work. Now that the studies are complete, UTOPIA is proposing to sell bonds to finance the installation of fiber optic cable to every home and business within the 18 cities. Operating costs and debt would be paid from fees charged to private service providers that use the network to serve their customers. A copy of UTOPIA's feasibility study and other information prepared by UTOPIA about the proposed fiber optic network is available on UTOPIA's web site at www.utopianet.org.

UTOPIA is requesting that the 18 cities guarantee a portion of the initial bonds so that a more favorable interest rate can be obtained. A key issue that the City Council must evaluate is whether projects of this nature are properly the role of government, or whether they should be left to private businesses. The City Council must also assess the financial risk involved with guaranteeing the bonds. Your input will be appreciated.

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