

Jordan River Commission Technical Advisory Committee

February 15, 2024 | 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Location

This is a virtual meeting conducted via Zoom, with an anchor location at the Jordan River Commission office.

Meeting Attendees

Technical Advisory Committee Members

Marian Rice, Chair, Associate Director, Peak Water Sustainability Engine (University of Utah)
Ali Avery, Long Range Planner, North Salt Lake
Anthony Baimont, Parks Project Manager, South Salt Lake
Brad Knoles, Regional Business Manager, Rocky Mountain Power
Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent, Murray City
Cary Necaie, Public Works Deputy Director, Riverton City
Dan Potts, Aquatic Ecologist, Salt Lake Fish & Game Foundation
Eric McCulley, Project Coordinator, Utah Reclamation Mitigation Conservation Commission
Gina Grandpre, Senior Planner, Saratoga Springs City
Heidi Hoven, Gillmor Sanctuary Manager, National Audubon Society/Audubon Rockies
Isaac Gomez, Engineer, South Salt Lake City
Jack Jacob, Associate Director, Tree Utah
Josie Showalter, CDBG/Grant Administrator, Millcreek City
Laura Haskell, Jordan River Basin Area Specialist, Division of Water Resources
Lynn Berni, Watershed Planning & Restoration Coordinator, Salt Lake County
Matt Ryan, Connection Planner, Wasatch Front Regional Council
Melissa Lewis, Natural Lands Supervisor, Salt Lake City
Michele Rehbein, Education Specialist, Salt Lake City Mosquito Abatement District
Morgan Faulkner, Sovereign Lands Coordinator, Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect, Salt Lake City Public Lands
Sandy Wingert, Environmental Scientist, Utah Division of Water Quality
Shane Swensen, Chief Engineer, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
Todd Munger, Sustainability Director, Lehi City; Jordan River Foundation
Todd Taylor, Planner, Draper City
Tori Bird, Conservation Action Coordinator, Utah's Hogle Zoo

Commission Staff

Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager
Rae Robinson, Vegetation Project Coordinator (Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands)
Soren Simonsen, Executive Director/Secretary

Visitors and Guests

Greg Paley, Vice President of Lands- Oakwood Homes
Jennifer Shah, Department of Geology- University of Utah
Matt Lancaster, LAI Design Group
Rick Haering, LAI Design Group

Meeting Minutes

Marian Rice, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Introduction and roll call of Technical Advisory Committee members and other meeting participants.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Committee Business

Committee Officer Nominations & Appointments

Marian Rice stated that the position of Committee Vice Chair is open, and there are no nominations at this time. She mentioned that she enjoyed serving in that position before she became Chair of the Committee.

Meeting Minutes – January 18, 2024

Dan Potts moved to adopt the January 18, 2024, meeting minutes. Morgan Faulkner seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved by Commission members present.

4. Presentations & Discussion – Community Development Work Group

Park Development Updates

Several large park developments, including new parks and major park redevelopments, are underway or in the planning stages across the Jordan River Parkway. The Committee heard updates on two of these parks, in Saratoga Springs and Salt Lake City, and a brief overview of a new regional park master plan in Salt Lake County.

Wander Development Riverside Park (Saratoga Springs): Gregory Paley, Vice President of Land with Oakwood Homes, and members of the planning and design team for the Wander community development in Saratoga Springs, presented an update of the Wander Riverside Park. It is located along the Jordan River between Saratoga Road/Pony Express Parkway and Pioneer Crossing Blvd. It is still in the planning stage, but they plan to go above and beyond regulatory requirements to create a highly functional and family-friendly park. Construction will begin towards the end of 2025.

Dan Potts noted that the Jordan River provides excellent fishing opportunities and suggested that a fishing pier could be a beneficial addition. He asked about possible fishing access in the Park.

Marian Rice mentioned that Oakwood Homes is essentially donating the Park, so it will be considered public land. Existing trails will not be changed, which does provide some fishing access.

Heidi Hoven commented that this plan is very exciting to see and agreed that including angler access would be beneficial. She also requested that wildlife protection measures be included in the planning.

Marian replied that this is only a conceptual plan at this time and that those considerations are being discussed. She noted that they have also plans related to native plant restoration, and that wildlife protection precautions will be considered.

Soren Simonsen summarized some of the history of this area, some of the issues it has seen over the years, and some of the active restoration projects that are already in progress.

Jennifer Shah asked about riparian buffers.

Gina Grandpre replied that their city codes require landscaping with native plants that are beneficial to wildlife in riparian areas. Additionally, manicured lawns are prohibited in riparian areas. Their riparian setback requirement is 50 ft.

Marian asked if restoration work would be necessary on the stream bank.

Greg replied that minor work would be needed in this area.

Soren Simonsen added that areas considered to be public lands require larger riparian setbacks of up to 150 ft.

Glendale Regional Park: Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect with the Salt Lake City Department of Public Lands, presented an update on the Glendale Regional Park, which includes the redevelopment of the former Seven Peaks Water Park around 1700 South at the Jordan River in Salt Lake City. She described the extensive planning they have undertaken to provide a broad range of amenities. She reported that it includes the most ambitious playground that Salt Lake City has ever developed.

Dan asked if there are plans to improve and modify a poorly designed boat launch that is located within the park boundaries.

Nancy replied that her team must first complete cost analyses and take projects on incrementally, but that she would like to improve the boat launch if they are able to.

Soren thanked Nancy for coming to present this plan to the Committee. He acknowledged that the planned impervious surface reductions will assist greatly with groundwater recharge. He also noted that the bioswales will help manage stormwater runoff.

Nancy replied that they seek to use best practices and well-tested systems to achieve the highest level of sustainability possible. She also described their efforts to preserve some of the large existing trees at the site.

Soren noted the Commission frequently utilizes the boat launch described by Dan. He asked if it would still be accessible during construction.

Nancy replied that they would maintain access during construction.

Jordan River Regional Nature Park: Dustin Wiberg, Park Development Project Manager with Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation, shared a brief overview of the upcoming master planning for the Jordan River Regional Nature Park, which encompasses an area of the Jordan River between Highway 201 and 5400 South. He noted that there is a lot of emphasis on the Jordan River in this plan. He also announced that the Request for Proposal was recently published and they are looking to hire contractors to carry out the work.

Dan commented that the section of the river going through the nature area of the plan attracts a lot of birds and other wildlife. He noted that it is currently going through a canal and asked that they consider restoring the natural hydrological function there.

Dustin replied that they are looking to help heal the area and help the river function the best it can. He reports that is a challenging area to restore because of the levees there.

Marian asked if Dustin's team would be working with County Watershed Planning and Restoration.

Dustin replied that they would be, as they are an important partner in these efforts. He also mentioned that they are looking to develop river meander areas if possible.

Melissa Lewis mentioned that she is interested in standardizing certain measures along the Jordan River and asked if that had been part of the conversation on this project.

Dustin replied that they are part of the Emerald Ribbon Action Plan Committee, and coordinate with them. He agreed that it would make sense to unify approaches between the various projects along the river.

5. Commission Staff Report(s)

Director's Report

Soren Simonsen described several regional planning efforts around the watershed. This is a cooperative effort looking at riparian health, water quality, and recreation opportunities.

Legislative Updates: Soren described a piece of legislation that is held in committee but would greatly assist with active transportation facilities in canal corridors. At some sites in this program, the canal would be put underground to become a trail, and at other sites, trails would be developed alongside the canal. If this legislation were to pass, it would provide funding that could help with weed management, improving water flows, and increasing active transportation opportunities.

Soren reported that the Utah Department of Transportation recently released their initial plan for several projects related to active transportation. They have received \$90 million in legislative appropriations and are undertaking several projects already.

He is tracking 34 bills during this legislative session. He is paying special attention to some social services bills due to the homelessness and drug activity that has been causing issues along the Jordan River. The legislature's current proposal would cut Governor Cox's funding request to address this growing issue by more than half.

There is a Riparian Amendment bill under consideration, but it is facing pushback from landowner associations and some rural legislators. Several groups are looking for ways to protect riparian areas through city and county ordinances.

Soren mentioned that there is a Great Salt Lake Revision bill under consideration that would designate the Great Salt Lake Council as the Great Salt Lake Watershed Council. He hopes that Council will be established soon.

Grants & Funding Updates & Opportunities: Soren mentioned that the Commission is in the middle of several grant projects. The Commission has applied for a Recreation Trails Program grant through the Division of Outdoor Recreation to develop a mobile app. This will help increase information accessibility and community education. They are also working on updating their existing website and migrating it to a ".gov" domain.

6. Upcoming Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024 – Cooperative Weed Management Area Work Group

Possible Field Trip: Rae Robinson reported that Riverton is preparing to host a tour of their riverbank restoration efforts on March 21, 2024.

7. Adjourn

Laura Haskell moved to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Holyoak seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

A meeting recording, presentation and handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at <https://www.utah.gov/pmnl/sitemap/notice/893349.html>.

Meeting minutes prepared by Ren Griffeth, Jordan River Commission Administrative, Grant & Research Specialist, and Soren Simonsen, Commission Secretary.

Meeting Minutes adopted 10/17/2024.