



**South Salt Lake City Council
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Public notice is hereby given that the South Salt Lake City Council will hold a Regular Meeting on **Wednesday, March 11, 2026**, in the City Council Chambers, 220 East Morris Avenue, Suite 200, commencing at **7:00 p.m.**, or as soon thereafter as possible.

To watch the meeting live click the link below to join:

<https://zoom.us/j/93438486912>

Watch recorded City Council meetings at: [youtube.com/@SouthSaltLakeCity](https://www.youtube.com/@SouthSaltLakeCity)

Conducting Council Chair Sergeant at Arms
Sharla Bynum, District 3
Sharla Bynum
South Salt Lake PD

Opening Ceremonies

- 1. Welcome/Introductions
 - 2. Pledge of Allegiance
- Sharla Bynum
Ray deWolfe

Approval of Minutes

- February 11th, Work Meeting
- February 11th, Regular Meeting

No Action Comments

- 1. Scheduling
 - 2. Public Comments/Questions
 - a. Response to Comments/Questions
(at the discretion of the conducting Council Member)
 - 3. Mayor Comments
 - 4. City Attorney Comments
 - 5. City Council Comments
 - 6. Information – 10 minutes each
 - a. Civilian Review Board 4th Quarter & 2025 Annual Report
 - b. Water Conservation in City Parks & Facilities
- City Recorder
Valerie Flattes
Sharen Hauri

Action Items

Appointments by the Mayor

- 1. Sarah Jensen – Civilian Review Board Regular Member
 - 2. Catherine Taylor – Civilian Review Board Alternate Member
- Mayor Wood
Mayor Wood

Unfinished Business

- 1. A Resolution of the South Salt Lake City Council Adopting
A South Salt Lake Parks Plan
- Anthony Biamont

CITY COUNCIL

MEMBERS:

JOY GLAD
COREY THOMAS
SHARLA BYNUM
NICK MITCHELL
IRVIN JONES
RAY DEWOLFE
CLARISSA WILLIAMS

ARIEL ANDRUS
CITY RECORDER
220 E MORRIS AVE
SUITE 200
SOUTH SALT LAKE
UTAH
84115
P 801.483.6019
F 801.464.6770
SSLC.GOV

Public Hearing – 7:30 (Or As Soon Thereafter as Possible)

To receive public comment regarding proposed amendments to all 2025/2026 fund budgets.

1. Crystal Makin, for the City, to present information and answer questions
2. Open Public Hearing
3. Receive Public input
4. Close Public Hearing
5. Discussion by the City Council
6. At Conclusion of Discussion by the Council, Motion and Second by Council
 - a. To move action until a future specified meeting date;
 - b. To take it to a work meeting for further discussion; or
 - c. To take final action on the matter by adopting the budget amendment by Ordinance

Motion for Closed Meeting

Adjourn

Posted March 6, 2026

Those needing auxiliary communicative aids or other services for this meeting should contact Ariel Andrus at 801-483-6019, giving at least 24 hours' notice.

In accordance with State Statute and Council Policy, one or more Council Members may be connected electronically.

Public Comments/Question Policy

Time is made available for anyone in the audience to address the Council and/or Mayor concerning matters pertaining to City business. When a member of the audience addresses the Council and/or Mayor, they will come to the podium and state their name and City they reside in. The Public will be asked to limit their remarks/questions to three (3) minutes each. The conducting Council Member shall have discretion as to who will respond to a comment/question. In all cases the criteria for response will be that comments/questions must be pertinent to City business, that there are no argumentative questions and no personal attacks. Some comments/questions may have to wait for a response until the next regular council meeting. The conducting Council Member will inform a citizen when they have used the allotted time. Grievances by City employees must be processed in accordance with adopted personnel rules.

Have a question or concern? Call the connect line 801-464-6757 or email connect@sslc.gov

SARAH JENSEN

CONTACT

☎ 801-597-6022

✉ caddis114@msn.com



ABOUT ME

I have lived in South Salt Lake City for 23 and a half years. I am a mother of 3, the oldest being 22 and the youngest being 19. My husband, children and I have enjoyed living in SSL and have participated in many city activities and sports while residing in SSL. We have had the opportunity to participate in Neighborhood Watch and have had many leadership opportunities within our community church.

EDUCATION

2010 - 2013

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

- Master of Psychology

1996 - 1998

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

- Bachelor of Social Work

WORK EXPERIENCE

Bonneville Jr High

2014 - PRESENT

School Counselor

- Serve on the community council as a school representative working with community members to make decisions about the school, including environment, curriculum, school rules, etc.
- Serve on a District Leadership team both as a committee member and treasurer serving all school counselors in the school district. We have planned multiple learning opportunities and celebrations.
- Serve on school leadership team as an integral member creating school goals to increase student and teacher performance.

Jordan School District

2013 - 2014

School Counselor

- Conducted small group counseling in a variety of school settings at multiple schools throughout Jordan District.
- Planned multiple learning opportunities for a variety of educators within Jordan School District and taught multiple social and emotional learning topics.
- Collaborated with a team of school counselors to meet the needs of students within Jordan School District.

PROMISE SSL

2013-2014

Family Liaison

- Worked with a team of fellow employees to best meet the needs of families of South Salt Lake.
- Worked with individual families to know how to support them with their needs.
- Worked with community leaders to be able to communicate and evaluate needs of the community.
- Provided support to PROMISE after school programs.

SKILLS

- Leadership
 - Effective Communication
 - Collaboration
 - Teamwork
 - Planning Activities
 - Teaching
 - Critical Thinking
 - Getting Along with Others
 - Patience
 - Using data
-

Catherine Taylor

Catherine Taylor

South Salt Lake City, UT 84115

801.842.8203

ccwaterrat@gmail.com

Skills

Expertise in public policy analysis and legislative processes

Proficiency in grant writing, administration and evaluation

Effective communications with the public, governmental entities and constituents

Experience

State of Utah Department of Human Services (28 years)

1990-2018

The latest position was internal auditor-- conducted performance and compliance audits in the Department of Human Services.

Prior position- Regional Director/Public Information officer - supervised agency (Child Support) programs, conducted internal audits, responded to constituent complaints and requests for information (following HIPAA and GRAMA statutes). Wrote and evaluated agency policies related to confidentiality and information security, Wrote two (federal) 1115 grants to improve Child Support performance, one of which was fully funded. Special projects included outreach to women in the Utah State prison and hospital outreach to improve paternity establishment.

Legislative liaison for Utah Department of Human Services 2005-2014

Identified, tracked and worked to coordinate a legislative response in the best interests of Human Service Programs.

Coordinated across the Department and with other executive branch entities.

Health delivery and analysis/various positions in 20 years

- **House of Hope/ Director** (Residential SA treatment facility for women)
- **St. Benedict's Hospital-Alcohol and Drug Counselor**
- **Utah Department of Health/Program and Community Health Program Evaluator**
- **Medicaid Recovery Programs Director**

Positions have in common working with or providing expertise to analyze the conditions of populations at risk for or experiencing violence, poverty and social instability

Research Associateships and teaching

- **Utah State University and University of California, Santa Barbara**

Taught undergraduate courses or lectured in: Deviance, Social Psychology, Juvenile Delinquency, Environmental Psychology, Sociology of Mental Illness, Women in American Society

Volunteer/Community Service Work

USU Master Gardener since 2015

Utah Domestic Violence Advisory Council- former board member

Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault-former board member

Salt Lake City Police Department Victim's Advocate-former position

Rape Crisis Center Crisis Response Team

Education

USU Post graduate studies Rural Sociology

UCSB Graduate studies (Phd program in Sociology)

Completed coursework for PhD in sociology. Emphasis: sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis. Did not complete a dissertation.

Coursework included a focus on social science statistics and methods of social research.

USU Bachelor of Arts

Psychology sociology double major, certificate in women's studies. Spanish minor.



2025 –4th Quarter Report

Who is the Civilian Review Board?

7 Voting
Board
Members

1 Alternate
Members

0 Non-Voting
Advisory
Member

Types of Use of Force

- ACT
- Body Wrap
- Firearms
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- OC Spray
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- Conducted Energy Device (Taser)
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- Police Service Dog (PSD)
 - K9 Assist
 - K9 Influence
 - K9 Bite
 - K9 Apprehension
- Less than Lethal
- Pursuit
 - Foot
 - Vehicle

OCTOBER –DECEMBER 2025

Summary

Total Number of Use of Force Cases Review

Total 4th Quarter :60 Cases

Reviewed Written Statements:

4th: 60

Video Requested and Watched:

4th :31

Total Number of Use
of Force Cases where
the Board issued an
advisory opinion
finding violation of law,
policy, or procedure

Within Federal and State
regulations, and City Policy:

4th : 60

Not within Policy:

4th : 0

Inconclusive:

4th : 0

Number of Vehicle Pursuits

- 4th : 1

Number of Canine Bites

- 4th :0

Significant Discussion Cases

- 4th : 3
 - More discussion than the average case in time, questions, and/ or follow-up

Total Number
of Ride-Alongs

4th : 10

4th Quarter Training

NACOLE – 2 Board Members sent to conference

Citizen Complaints

- One (1) – Resolved before CRB review

Recommendations

None

Contact Information



[HTTPS://SSLC.GOV/158/CIVILIAN-REVIEW-BOARD](https://sslc.gov/158/civilian-review-board)



SOUTH SALT LAKE CITY HALL
220 EAST MORRIS AVENUE
SOUTH SALT LAKE, UT 84115
PHONE: [801-483-6000](tel:801-483-6000)

SOUTH SALT LAKE CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD

2025 Year End Report

CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD



Working to facilitate public transparency and accountability with respect to the South Salt Lake Police Department.

AGENDA

- Introduction
- 2025 By the Numbers
- 2025 Information
- Moving Forward

BOARD MEMBERS - 2025

- Brandon DeGraffenreid
- Conrad Campos
- Joy Glad – Chair
- Jason Keffer
- Kevin Miller – Vice Chair
- Lorrina Heisey
- Tom Mills
- Valerie Flattes
- Tara Shupe – Resigned
- Jason Keller - Resigned
- 1 Alternates – Sarah Jensen

2025 SUMMARY

MEETINGS

- 12 Regular Meetings

TRAINING

- Police Ride-Along – 12
- Open Publics Meeting Act
- NACOLE – National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement
- Body Wrap

CASE LOG

- Reviewed 360 Cases
 - 2023, 2024, and 2025
- 144 Cases – Required Watching BWC / Car Camera
- 216 Cases – By Narrative

Number of Cases
determined to be out of
State Statute or City Policy:
0

SIGNIFICANT DISCUSSION CASES

- 5 Cases
- 8 Sergeants Action Reports
- 1 Complaint – Resolved before review

STATISTICS

~43,000 Police / Public Interactions

0.4% of all
interactions lead to
Use of Force

CALLS BY DISPATCH

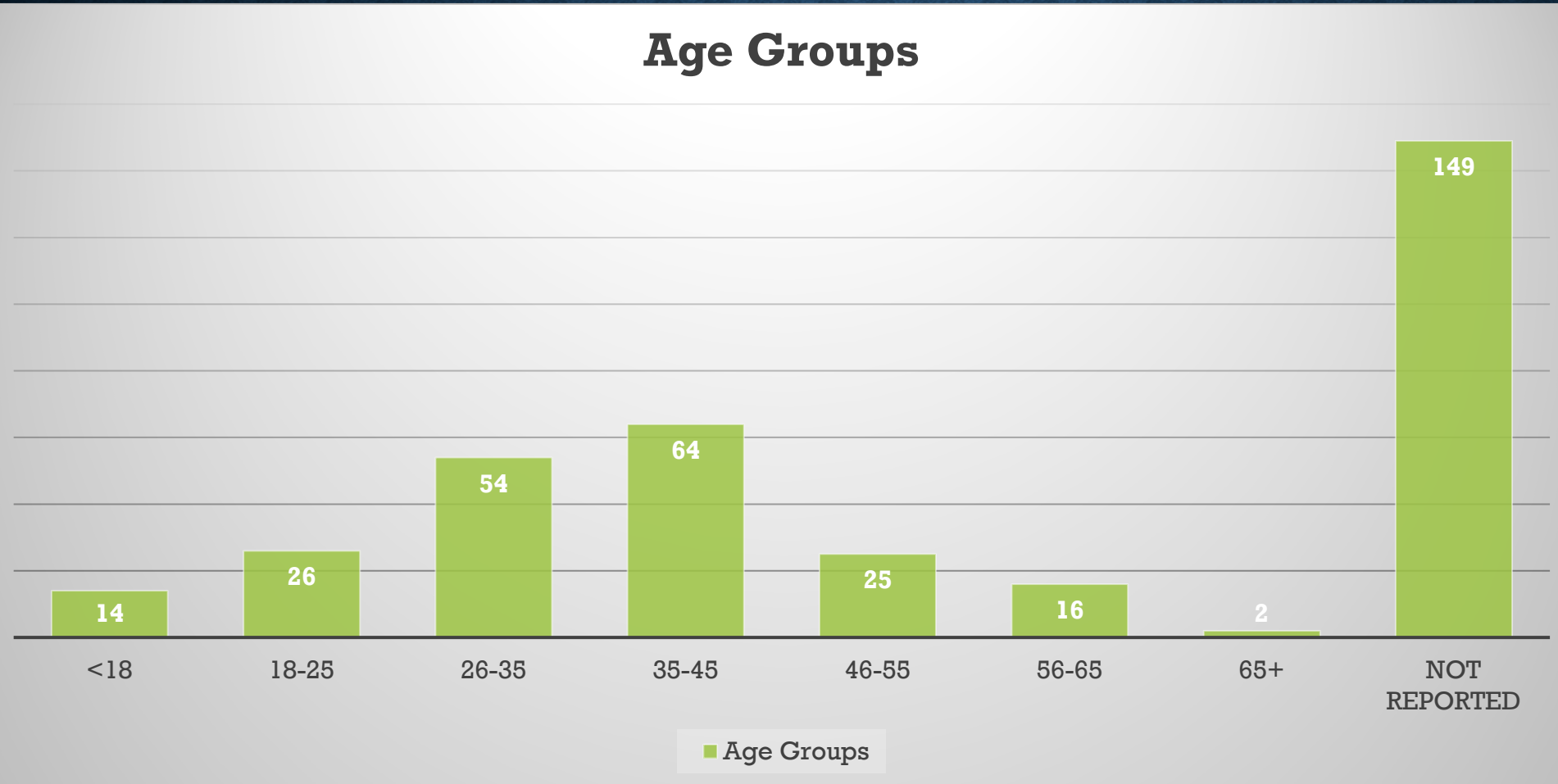
- Assault
- Assist FD
- Breaking and Entering
- Burglary
- Carjacking
- Child Endangerment
- Criminal Mischief
- Disorderly Conduct
- Domestic
- Fight in Progress
- Foot Pursuit
- Grand Theft
- Indecent Exposure
- Intoxication
- Juvenile Transfer
- Person with Gun
- Obstruction of Justice
- Pedestrian Stop
- Possession
- Property Damage
- Robbery
- Shots Fired
- Shoplifting
- Suspicious Circumstances
- Trespassing
- Warrant
- Welfare Check

TYPES OF USE OF FORCE

- ACT
- Body Wrap
- Firearms
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- OC Spray
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- Conducted Energy Device (Taser)
 - Display
 - Pointed
 - Deploy
- Police Service Dog (PSD)
 - K9 Assist
 - K9 Influence
 - K9 Bite
 - K9 Apprehension
- Less than Lethal
- Pursuit

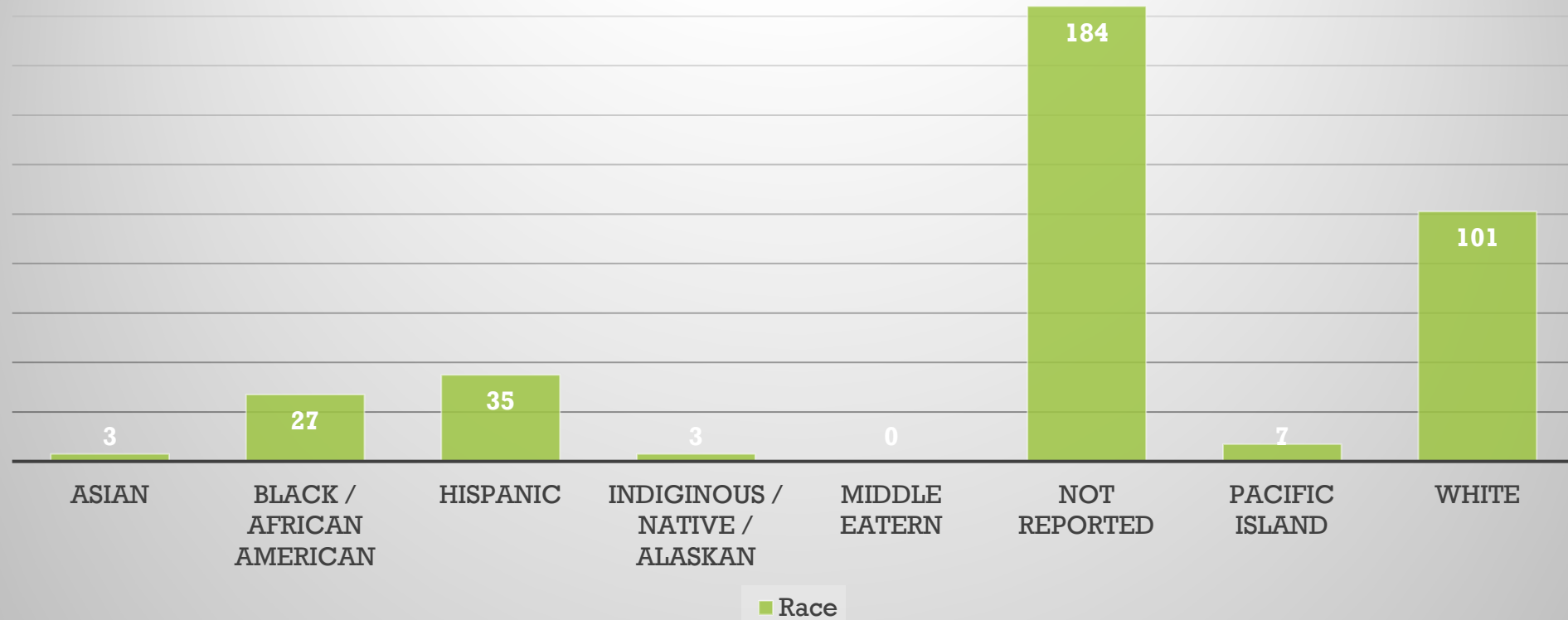
CASES BY AGE

Age Groups



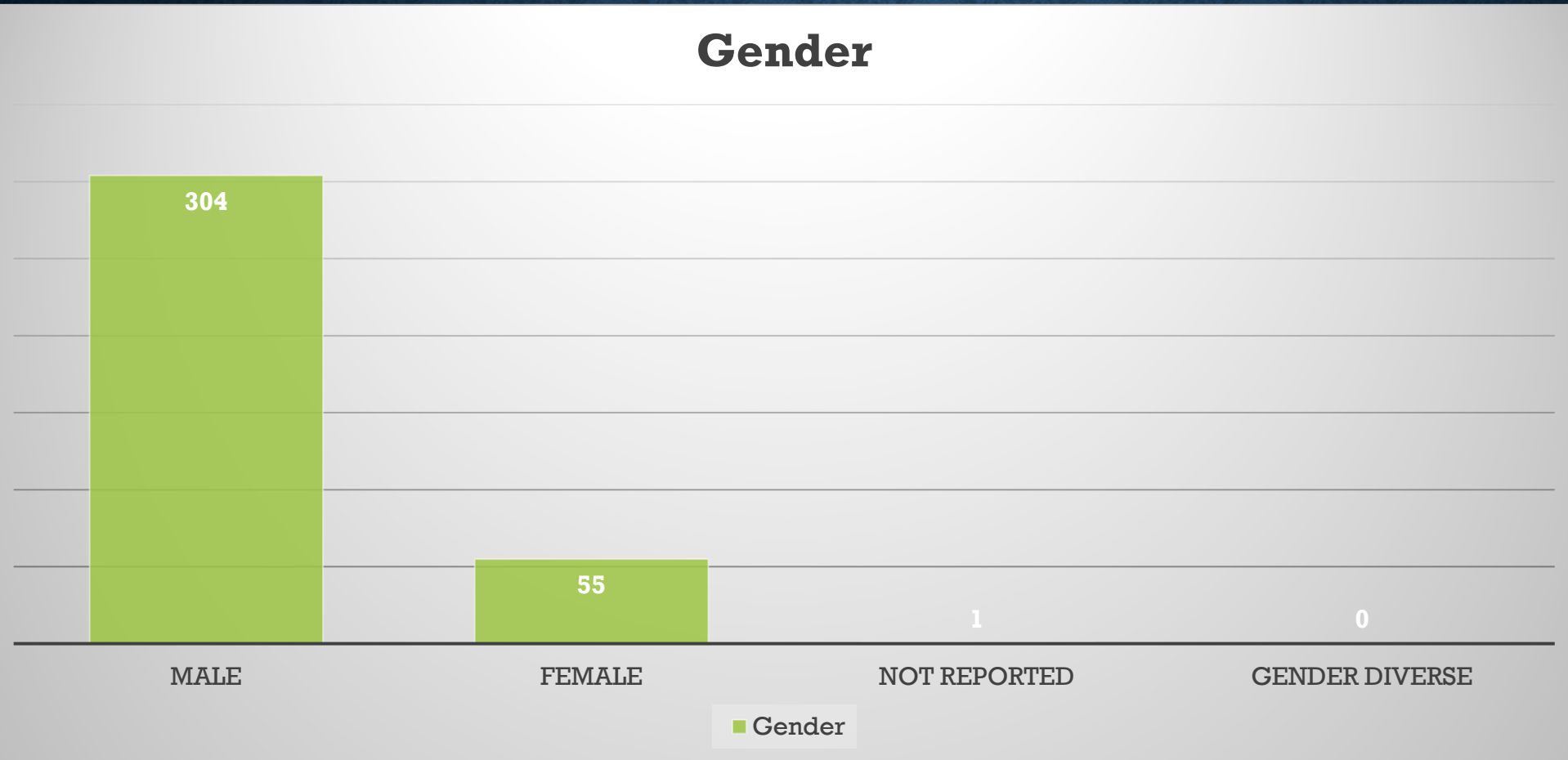
CASES BY RACE

Race

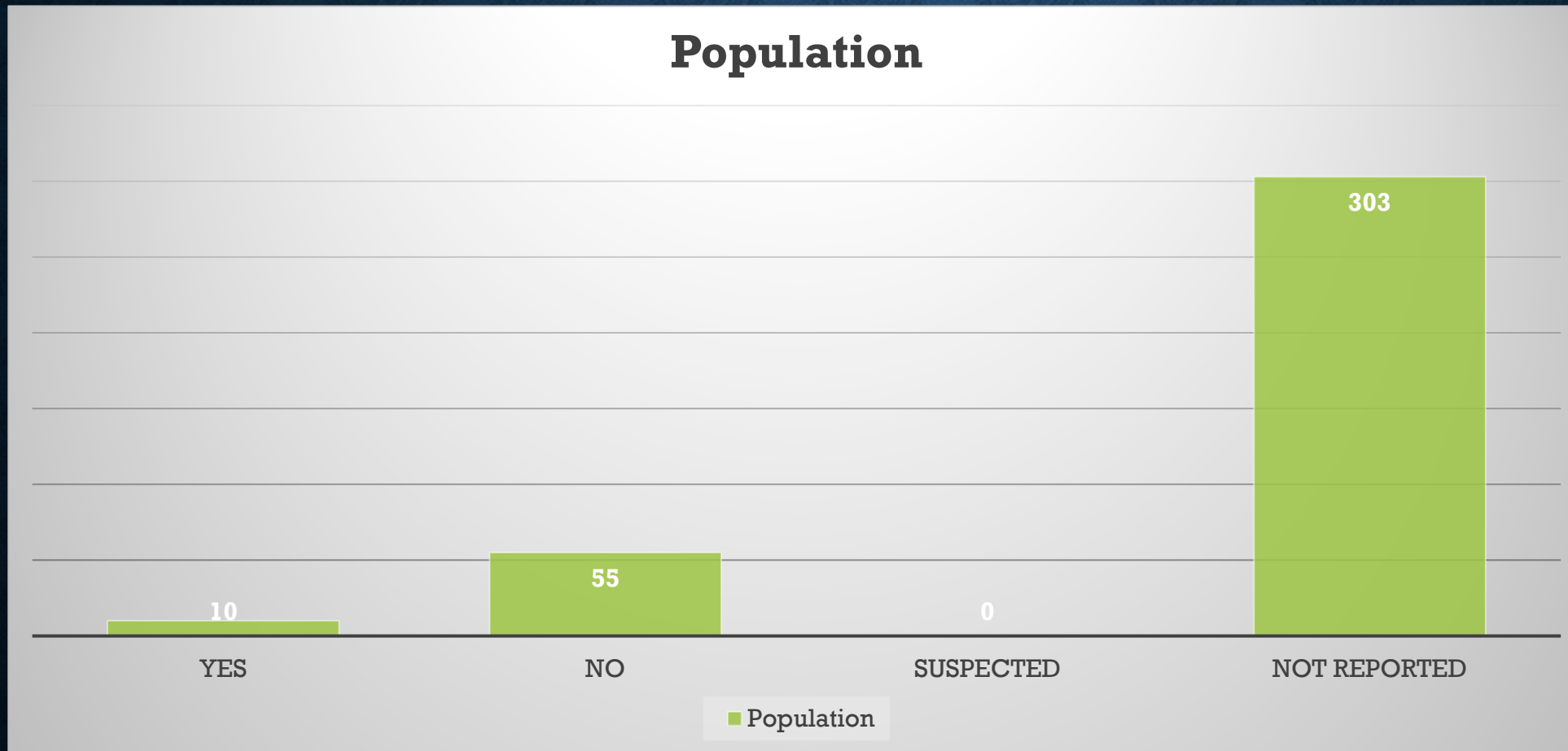


CASES BY GENDER

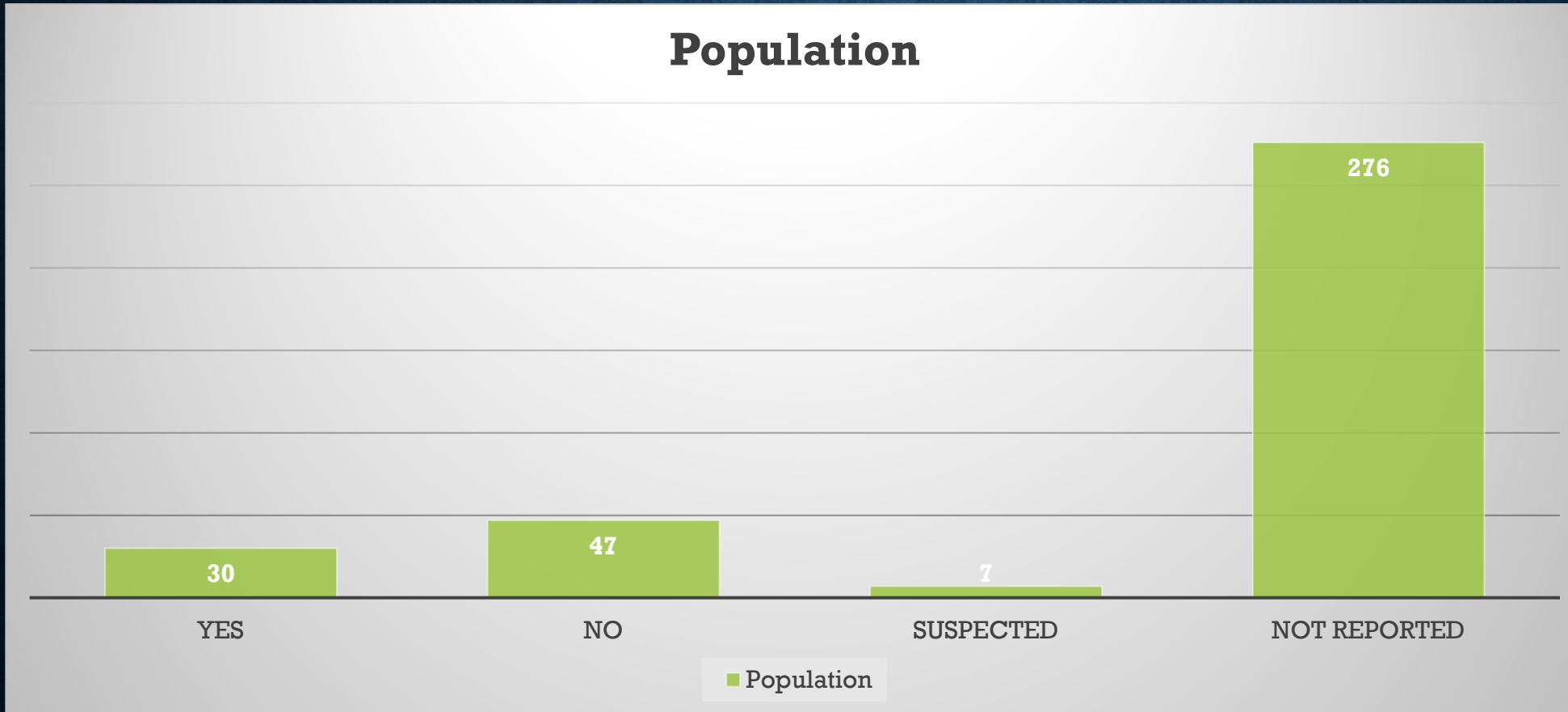
Gender



CASES INVOLVING HOMELESS POPULATION



CASES WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR MENTAL ILLNESS



2026

TRAINING

- K9 Policy 402
- Basic Handcuffing Techniques
- OC Spray
- Taser 10
- WRAP
- Pursuit Policy
- ACT – Arrest Control Techniques
- Graham v Connor Supreme Court
- Use of Force Policy 303
- Early Intervention
- Virtra Field Trip

2026 MEETING

1st Monday of the Month at
6:30pm
City Hall 2nd Floor

- January 5
- February 2
- March 2
- April 6
- May 4
- June 1
- July 6
- August 3
- September 14*
- October 5
- November 2
- December 7
- **SEPTEMBER** – Labor Day lands on first Monday in September. Move meeting to

CONTACT INFORMATION

- <https://sslc.gov/158/Civilian-Review-Board>
- South Salt Lake City Hall
220 East Morris Avenue
South Salt Lake, UT 84115
Phone: [801-483-6000](tel:801-483-6000)

Parks Water Conservation



City Council Briefing March 11, 2026



Where Can We Make a Difference?

1. We the city as a Water Utility (infrastructure)
2. We the city as a Water User (parks, facilities, etc)
3. We the city as a Supplier (consumer habits, education, enforcement)



2020 SSL Water Conservation Plan

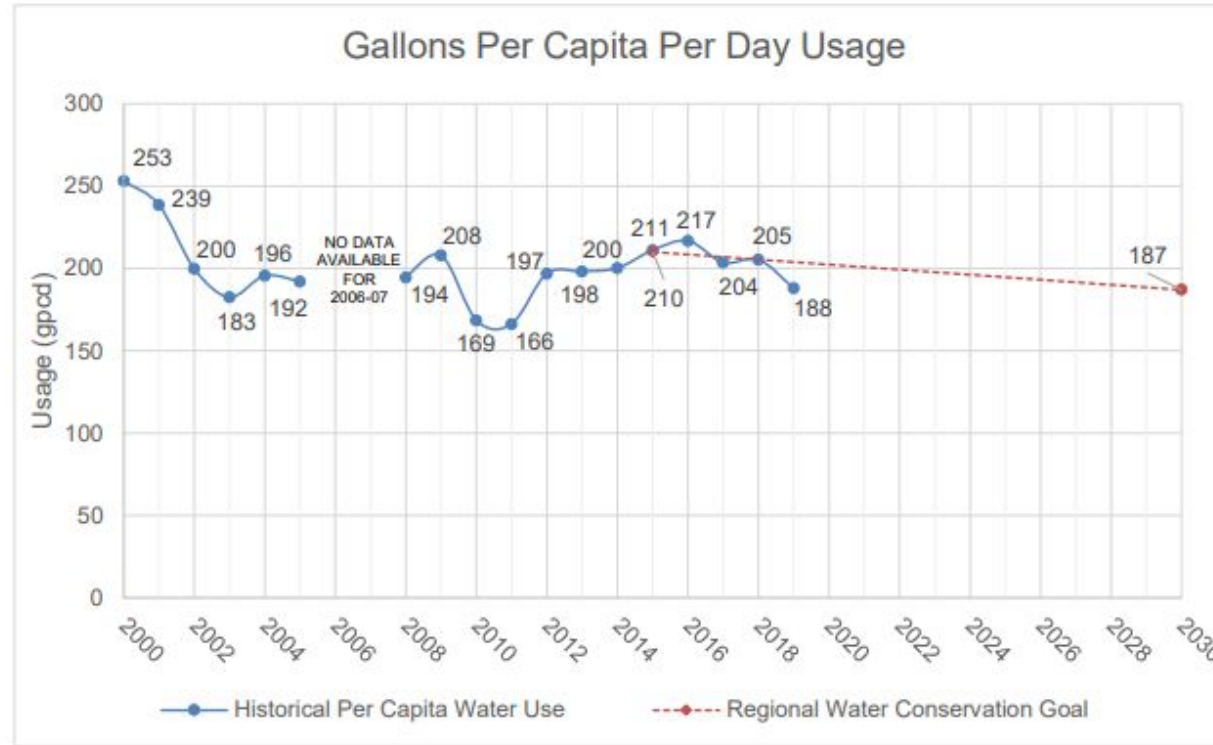


Figure 2-2: South Salt Lake Historical Per Capita Water Use

As noted above, improvements to the system were completed in 2001 to reduce serious water losses. The improvements contributed to a 21% reduction in water demand from 2000 to 2001. The City's water use has been relatively consistent since then, averaging approximately 196 gpcpd. Use was lower in 2010 and 2011, likely attributable to more precipitation during these years. The steady water use since 2002 may indicate that additional measures could be implemented to encourage improved conservation.

Purpose

1. Formulate strategy conserving water in our city park operations.
2. Prioritize “best bang for the buck” to meet conservation goals.
3. Become an integral part in city's water conservation planning.
4. Lead by example and encourage the community to follow suit.

Areas of Work

- Planning
- Monitoring Use
- Maintenance
- Renovations with “how-to” public relations
- Training
- Funding



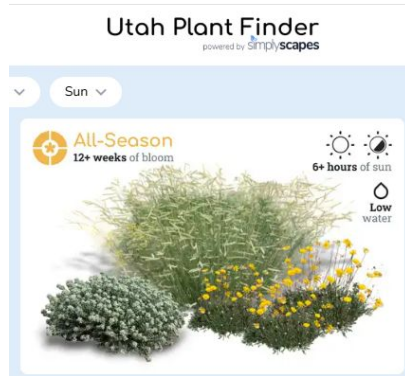
Parks Water Conservation Planning

- Inventorying all irrigation equipment and making system fixes.
- Establishing past use baseline and monitoring our future progress.
- Utilizing EyeOnWater to track water usage
- Preparing a *Drought Emergency Plan* for parks to prioritize watering.
- Planning for 3 water-conserving landscape projects in 2026, including some turf conversions.
- Training 2 staff as *Qualified Water Efficient Landscapers*.
- Teaming up with JVWD and Slow The Flow on messages and incentives.

Parks Water Conservation Planning

TYPE OF PROJECT	PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	NEXT STEPS	Time required	DEADLINE
Planning	1 year	Irrigation equipment inventory/assessment and replacement plan/budget	Parks-Jack	Make assignments. SH made spre	40 hrs	February 27
	1 year	Cost estimate + CIP + budget request for everything + irrigation FY27	Parks-Jack	Lee-collect - Anthony share CIP	10 hrs	March 6
	1 year	Irrigation inspection schedule + SOP + PMs	Parks-Jack	Schedule milestones	20 hrs	April 1
	1 year	Define non-essential turf and watering priorities (rules, and locations)	Sharen + Parks + Mayo	meet w-parks, present to Joseph/M	10 hrs	April 1
	1 year	Water conservation plan (with Water Dept)	Sharen + Comms	prepare scope + presentation	100 hrs	June 1
	1 year	Landscape ordinance updates	Sharen + Comm Dev	weekly meetings	100 hrs	June 1
	1 year	Summer Maintenance Plan + Task Hours	Parks-Joaquin	weekly meetings		March 15
	2 year	Landscape area redesigns - draw and measure savings, follow city ordinance	hire consultant			
	2 year	Park + facility update designs - draw and measure savings	hire consultant			
	2 year	Cost estimate + CIP - Long Term	hire consultant (include in designs)			
Monitoring	1 year	Calculate and track turf areas and turf area reductions	Parks-Jack	Assign, schedule	16 hrs	March 15
	1 year	Calculate and track water usage / utilities bills - Use Eye on Water	Parks-Brent	Assign, schedule	16 hrs	March 15
	1 year	Watering schedule tracking - are we following best practices, ordinance	Parks-Brian	Assign, schedule		March 15
Maintenance	1 year	Soil building (turf), mulching (trees/bed) for water conservation, reduce	Parks-Brian	Select locations, find costs	40 hrs	April 1
	1 year	Turf replacement - seed or sod with low water varieties-Whitlock, Fitts	Parks-Brian	Find costs, order from Chanshare	?	May 1
	1 year	Annual Irrigation audits at all properties - at startup season	Parks-Brian	NOW-Schedule each park, major facility (could b		May 15
	1 year	Create SOPs for Landscape/Turf best management practices	Parks-Joaquin	make a schedule for completing		April 1
	1-2 year	Irrigation conversions - spray to drip, or spray to rotor	Parks			Summer 2026
	1-2 year	Irrigation equipment upgrades - heads, flow sensors, pressure regulato	Parks			Summer 2026
	1-2 year	Irrigation controller upgrade	Parks			Summer 2026
	1 year +	Tree planting - long term results - shading turf - add a tree to Whitlock	Parks-Jack			April, Oct 2026
Renovations	1 year	Demonstration garden areas and labels / signs for public education-2 p	Comms-Joseph	meet with Comms, park warning si	20 hrs	May 1 install
	1-5 year	Non-Essential Turf replace/install - 2 projects each year (2026-Whitlock	Parks-Brian	reserve w-Chanshare		May 1 install
	1-5 year	LID (low impact design) - stormwater projects	Parks+Stormwater			
Training	1 year	QWEL (Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper) training	Parks-Jack+Brian	Joaquin-schedule Brian, Jack		April 22-24th
	1 year	CIT (Certified Irrigation Technician) Training	Parks staff	Joaquin find when offered		https://www.ir ?
Funding	1 year	City budget - Update operations budget for supplies, materials	Parks-Joaquin			April 1
	1 year	City budget - Update operations budget for staff (additional tasks above)	Parks-Joaquin			April 1

Expanding our Capacity by Partnering



UtahStateUniversity.

Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping
Extension

SLOW
THE FLOW



Public Water Conservation Opportunities



SSL Class - March 14



Public Water Conservation Messages

Continuing to spread the word

- Enforcement (*no daytime watering*)
- Example (*Beautiful Yard Award*)
- Education



Public Water Conservation Messages

Key Messages

- Track your water usage
- Tune up your irrigation system and schedule
- Reduce your watering
- Prioritize watering (trees first, then shrubs, and lastly turf)
- Replace/remove turf and sprayheads



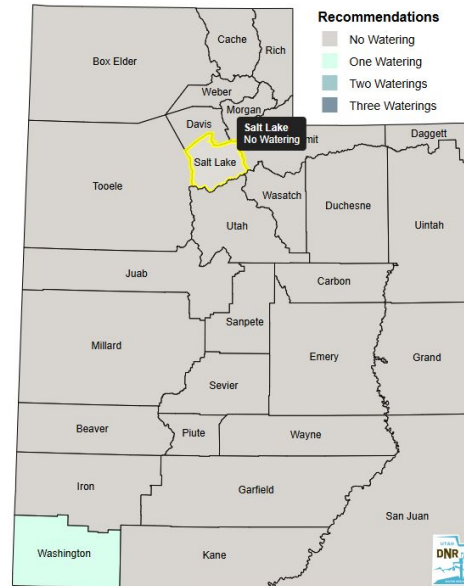
One Actionable Item for you

<https://conservewater.utah.gov/weekly-lawn-watering-guide/>

Utah Watering Guide



Lawn Watering Guide March 06 - 13, 2026



What's Next for Neighborhoods?

- Pray for Snow (20% chance we will get normal snowpack)
- Wait to Water
- Implement drought measures as needed - expect dry grass
- Participate in *Water Conservation Plan* update led by Public Works
- Host hands-on turf conversion project for residents
- Your ideas?



ORDINANCE NO. 2026-____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE SOUTH SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL AMENDING THE 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET

WHEREAS, the South Salt Lake City Council (the “Council”) met in regular session on March 11, 2026, to consider, among other things, amending the budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, Utah Code § 10-6-127 enables the City to review the individual budgets of the funds set forth in the City’s budget; and

WHEREAS, Utah Code § 10-6-128 allows the Council to adopt budget amendments by resolution or ordinance following a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Director has prepared and filed with the City Recorder the proposed amendments, which are attached to this ordinance and incorporated by this reference, and has submitted the same to the Council for its review and for the public review; and

WHEREAS, the amendments to the budget were the proper subject at a duly noticed public hearing held on March 11, 2026, at which everyone in attendance was given the opportunity to be heard for or against, amending the budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the amendments conform to the requirements of the Utah Uniform Fiscal Procedures Act and the Council finds it has satisfied all legal requirements required to amend a budget and that the proposed budget amendment is in the best interest of the City;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the City Council of the City of South Salt Lake as follows:

SECTION I: ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS. The budget amendments attached hereto as **EXHIBIT A** and incorporated herein by this reference are hereby adopted and incorporated into the budget for the City for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.

SECTION II: PUBLICATION AND FILING. Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. 10-6-118, a copy of the Budget for each fund within the Budget shall be certified by the Budget Officer and it is hereby directed that the Budget be filed with the State Auditor and in the Office of the City recorder and shall be available to the public in accordance with the law.

SECTION III: SEVERANCE. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this ordinance is, for any reason, held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such provision shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

SECTION IV. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective upon Mayor’s signature and publication, or after fifteen days of transmission to the office of the Mayor if neither approved nor disapproved by the Mayor, and thereafter, publication.

(signatures appear on next page)

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2026.

BY THE CITY COUNCIL:

Sharla Bynum, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Ariel Andrus, City Recorder

City Council Vote as Recorded:

Glad	_____
Thomas	_____
Bynum	_____
Mitchell	_____
Jones	_____
deWolfe	_____
Williams	_____

Transmitted to the Mayor's office on this _____ day of _____ 2026.

Ariel Andrus, City Recorder

MAYOR'S ACTION: _____

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Cherie Wood, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ariel Andrus, City Recorder

EXHIBIT A

**Amendments to the City of South Salt Lake Budget for the Fiscal
Year 2025-2026**

**FY 2026 Budget
Proposed Budget Amendments -March 2026**

General Fund

Item	Department	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:	
1	CED	Community Outreach	10-65-265-00	\$ 25,576		Community Art Marketing Grant received from Utah State	New Account Number
	CED	Misc. State Grants	10-3340-000		\$ 12,788	Community Art Marketing Grant received from Utah State	
	CED	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 12,788	City Match for Grant	
2	Finance	Professional Fees	10-41-310-00	\$ 150,000		To account for addiitonal advisory and outside accounting fees	
	Finance	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 150,000	To account for addiitonal advisory and outside accounting fees	
3	Facilities	Reserve Property-Maintenance	10-50-275-01	\$ 2,500		To account for unexpected repair costs	
	Facilities	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 2,500	To account for unexpected repair costs	
4	Facilities	Insurance & Taxes	10-50-530-00	\$ 68,000		To account for increased insurance costs for city building facilities	
	Facilities	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 68,000	To account for increased insurance costs for city building facilities	
5	Facilities	Creekside Bldg. Expenditures	10-50-657-00	\$ 1,000		To account for unexpected repair costs for two furnaces	
	Facilities	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 1,000	To account for unexpected repair costs for two furnaces	
6	Public Works	Utilities	10-61-270-00	\$ 45,000		To account for utilities at public works campus	
	Public Works	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 45,000	To account for utilities at public works campus	
7	Engineering	Overtime	10-62-140-00	\$ 10,000		To account for overtime incurred while supervising project	
	Engineering	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 10,000	To account for overtime incurred while supervising project	
8	Engineering	Equipment Acquisition	10-62-797-00	\$ 6,800		To purchase meters used by developers	
	Engineering	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 6,800	To purchase meters used by developers	
9	Recreation	Equipment Acquisition	10-66-797-00	\$ 4,200		To purchase a new vending machine for the SSLCC	
	Recreation	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 4,200	To purchase a new vending machine for the SSLCC	
10	Parks	Part-Time Salaries	10-67-120-00	\$ 25,000		To budget for additional seasonal grounds maintenance position	
	Parks	Sales Tax Revenue	10-3135-000		\$ 25,000	To budget for additional seasonal grounds maintenance position	
11	Animal Services	Permanent Salaries	10-71-110-00	\$ 14,000		To budget for new Animal Services Supervisor position	
	Animal Services	Animal Control Enforcement Revenue	10-3226-000		\$ 5,000	To budget for new Animal Services Supervisor position	
	Animal Services	Dog Licenses	10-3225-000		\$ 10,000	To budget for new Animal Services Supervisor position	

FY 2026 Budget

Proposed Budget Amendments - March 2026

Public Safety Special Revenue Fund

Ref	Department	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:
1	Police	Police Station-Maintenance	20-51-261-01	\$ 7,000		To budget for plumbing remediation at the police station
	Police	Sales Tax Revenue	20-3130-000		\$ 7,000	To budget for plumbing remediation at the police station

FY 2026 Budget
Proposed Budget Amendments - March 2026

Capital Fund

Ref	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:
1	300 W Sidewalk at 3300 South	40-80-742-00	\$ 400,000		Carryover-To budget for sidewalk upgrade-Grant Funded
	CDBG SL County Grant	40-3387-000		\$ 200,000	Carryover-To budget for sidewalk upgrade-Grant Funded
	Sales Tax Revenue	40-3130-000		\$ 200,000	50% City Match

FY 2026 Budget

Proposed Budget Amendments -March 2026

Water Utility Fund

Ref	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:
1	Community Outreach	51-70-263-00	\$ 5,000		To budget for lead pipe and conservation awareness campaigns
	Service Line Fees	52-3731-000		\$ 5,000	To budget for lead pipe and conservation awareness campaigns

FY 2026 Budget

Proposed Budget Amendments -March 2026

Sewer Utility Fund

Ref	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:
12	Utilities	52-72-270-00	\$ 18,000		To budget for utilities at public works campus
	Sewer Service Charge	52-3731-000		\$ 18,000	To budget for utilities at public works campus
13	Machinery & Equipment	52-80-751-00	\$ 44,000		To budget for OpenGov Cartegraph software
	Sewer Service Charge	52-3731-000		\$ 44,000	To budget for OpenGov Cartegraph software

FY 2026 Budget

Proposed Budget Amendments - March 2026

Stormwater Utility Fund

Ref	Description	Acct No	Uses:	Sources:	NOTES:
1	Equipment Maintenance	56-70-250-00	\$ 20,000		To increase budget for equipment repairs and maintenance
	Stormwater Fees	56-3715-000		20,000	To increase budget for equipment repairs and maintenance

RESOLUTION NO. R2026-____

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTH SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING A SOUTH SALT LAKE PARKS PLAN.

WHEREAS, the City of South Salt Lake (the “City”) is a political subdivision of the State of Utah, authorized and organized under the provisions of Utah law;

WHEREAS, the City owns and operates public parks and recreational spaces for the use and enjoyment of the City’s residents, businesses and visitors;

WHEREAS, over the past two years, with the coordinated efforts of City staff, City consultants, the Parks Plan Advisory Committee, Parks Plan Project Team, Promise South Salt Lake, South Salt Lake Recreation Department, the Mayor, City Council, the Planning Commission, and numerous other stakeholders, through stakeholders meetings and presentations, pop-up events, community workshops, electronic media outreach, research and analysis, the City gathered sufficient information to establish a plan for staff, officials, and the community to advance the City’s park system.

WHEREAS, the City is proposing adoption of the South Salt Lake Parks Plan, as shown in Exhibit A, containing the vision for the City’s park system and serving as a strategic guide for the development, management and preservation of parkland and recreational facilities, building upon the accomplishments of the 2015 Parks Master Plan.

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the adoption of the South Salt Lake Parks Plan aligns with the goals for Parks, Recreation and Open Space in the South Salt Lake General Plan 2040 and is in the best interests of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the South Salt Lake City Council that the South Salt Lake Parks Plan, attached as Exhibit A, is hereby approved and adopted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of the updated South Salt Lake Parks Plan be publicly available at the City offices and published on the City website.

(signatures on following page)

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of South Salt Lake, Utah on this _____ day of _____ 2026.

BY THE CITY COUNCIL:

Sharla Bynum, Council Chair

City Council Vote as Recorded:

Glad: _____

Thomas: _____

Bynum: _____

Mitchell: _____

Jones: _____

deWolfe: _____

Williams: _____

ATTEST:

Ariel Andrus, City Recorder

Exhibit A

SOUTH SALT LAKE PARKS PLAN

South Salt Lake Parks Plan

A vision for the future of parks, trails, and open space

Draft Released February 2026 / Adopted March 2026





Statement of Place

We collectively acknowledge that the City of South Salt Lake is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary homelands of the Shoshone, Goshute, Ute Tribes, and other Native peoples from time immemorial, and is a crossroad for Indigenous peoples.

We honor the original ancestors of this land and also offer respect to our other tribal communities.

We acknowledge this history to cultivate respect for and advocate with our Indigenous communities still connected to this land.

Acknowledgments

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Eliza Ungricht, Community Development Deputy Director
Jed Shum, Community Development Planner

Parks Plan Advisory Committee

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Krysta Dimick, Fitts Park Neighborhood
Sean Foster, 21st S Line Neighborhood
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Special Thanks

Madeleine Clark, Granite School District
Olene Walker Elementary School Family Engagement Center

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SOUTH
SALT LAKE



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Ducks near Spring Creek in Fitts Park

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The South Salt Lake Parks Plan establishes a comprehensive, long-range vision for the city’s park system, aligning it with evolving community needs and aspirations. This plan serves as a strategic guide for the development, management, and preservation of parkland and recreation facilities while prioritizing future investments and resource allocation.

It assesses the current system within the context of demographic shifts, modern development patterns, and emerging recreational trends to identify service gaps and improvement opportunities.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Rooted in the city’s history and the guiding principles of the ***South Salt Lake General Plan 2040*** and the Promise South Salt Lake initiative, this plan builds upon the accomplishments of the 2015 Parks Master Plan, which facilitated significant park expansions. This update provides a roadmap for the next decade, offering a framework for decision-making, partnership development, public education, and securing funding. It serves as a baseline for monitoring progress and holding the city accountable to its established objectives. Ultimately, this plan is a living document intended to guide collaborative efforts between city staff, officials, and the community to create a thriving, equitable park system.

Chapter 2: Our Parks System

South Salt Lake manages approximately 25 acres of green space at parks and community centers, primarily concentrated on the city’s east side. While 79% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, access remains significantly limited for those in western neighborhoods. Although the city provides more parks per capita than its peers, it falls short in total acreage and operational spending.

Key challenges include land scarcity, demographic shifts, the impacts of homelessness, and the effects of climate change. Consequently, the Parks Maintenance team’s responsibilities are expanding, necessitating increased resources and an enhanced on-site presence.

Chapter 3: Community Engagement

The plan’s extensive public engagement process reached over 500 residents through an online survey, interactive “pop-up” booths at events like Mural Fest and Craftoberfest, workshops, and stakeholder meetings. Feedback revealed that South Salt Lake has an active user base, with 73% of respondents visiting a local park more than once a week. While residents praised current park density and walkability, they gave the lowest satisfaction ratings to program communication and the variety of recreation offerings. Community preferences have shifted toward nature and social interaction—prioritizing trails, trees, beer gardens, and dog parks—while youth participants emphasized water play and sports facilities. A recurring theme was the critical shortage of full-sized sports courts and fields for teens and adults.

Chapter 4: Values, Vision & Big Ideas

Values

The plan is anchored by a vision of parks as inclusive civic hubs where all residents can connect with nature and their community. This vision is supported by four core values:

- **Belonging:** Ensuring spaces are safe, welcoming, and foster pride.
- **Opportunity:** Providing equitable access regardless of location or identity.
- **Stewardship:** Protecting natural assets and promoting environmental sustainability.

- **Quality of Life:** Enhancing the physical, mental, and economic wellbeing of South Salt Lake residents.

Vision

Parks are vital to the quality of life in South Salt Lake.

Our parks are inclusive civic hubs where people of all ages, abilities, identities, and backgrounds can thrive in nature, celebrate culture, and connect with their community.

We are stewards of our environment and our neighbors, committed to ensuring parks are safe, welcoming oases that promote wellness and a sustainable future for generations to come.

Big Ideas

These values inform a vision statement that defines parks as vital to the quality of life, serving as inclusive hubs for wellness and community connection. To translate this vision into action, the plan introduces six “Big Ideas”:

- **Parks for All**
- **Building Community**
- **Thriving in Nature**
- **Healthy Lifestyles**
- **Celebrating Culture**
- **A Sustainable Future**

Chapter 5: Programs & Policies

Systemwide programs and policies are designed to enhance the overall operations of city parks across the entire network. These recommendations are organized according to the plan’s six “Big Ideas,” focusing on systemic improvements that can be applied across the entire network. These programs and policies address long-standing challenges such as accessibility, safety, and recreational variety for all demographic groups.

A key theme of this chapter involves developing strengthened community partnerships and integrating new standards for urban forestry, water conservation, and workforce development. These policies collectively serve as a roadmap for parks staff and leadership to manage public land as dynamic community assets that can adapt to future growth and climate challenges.



Chapter 6: Projects

This chapter translates the community’s vision into a physical reality by identifying specific projects designed to bridge existing access and amenity gaps throughout the city. Driven by community priorities, these recommendations focus on expanding the recreational footprint into underserved neighborhoods, specifically targeting the “park deserts” west of State Street. The proposed initiatives include a diverse mix of new neighborhood parks, civic plazas, and multi-functional greenways intended to serve as vibrant gathering nodes for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Beyond the creation of new park spaces, the chapter prioritizes the expansion and enhancement of the city’s trail and greenway network to strengthen connectivity and promote active transportation. These projects are specifically designed to overcome physical barriers, like railroads and freeways, by establishing continuous, high-comfort routes for both pedestrians and cyclists. Collectively, these recommendations aim to support the objectives of the *Strategic Mobility Plan* to preserve a high quality of life in South Salt Lake, ensuring that as the city densifies, all residents maintain equitable access to the physical, social, and environmental benefits of open space.

Chapter 7: Implementation

The implementation framework establishes the planning and funding strategies necessary for the long-term success and fiscal sustainability of the plan’s recommendations. It outlines the current landscape for both capital and operational funding while detailing various strategies to secure the resources needed for full implementation. A key component is the use of an updated impact fee structure, ensuring that new development contributes its fair share toward system expansion as the city grows.

To realize this ambitious vision, the plan promotes a multi-faceted funding strategy that leverages a diverse array of financial tools beyond the City’s general fund and park impact fees. These strategies include:

- **External Grants:** Proactively pursuing federal, state, and county grants for recreation, trail connectivity, and water conservation initiatives.
- **Tax Increment Financing:** Utilizing Redevelopment Agency (RDA) funds and the Housing Transit Reinvestment Zone (HTRZ) to capture property tax growth for civic infrastructure.
- **Voter-Approved Mechanisms:** Exploring General Obligation (GO) Bonds for major capital projects and dedicated levies for ongoing maintenance.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborating with the Granite School District, other government agencies, non-profits, and businesses to share resources and development responsibilities.



1 introduction

CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Since the adoption of our previous Parks Plan, South Salt Lake has undergone a significant transformation, bringing both unique challenges and new opportunities to enhance our service to residents. The purpose of this updated Parks Plan is to establish a comprehensive, long-term vision that aligns with the community’s evolving needs, values, and aspirations. As a primary guiding document, it provides the strategic framework for developing, managing, and preserving our parkland and recreation facilities while ensuring informed decision-making for future investments.

The scope of this plan begins with a thorough assessment of our current system in the context of shifting demographics, modern development patterns, and emerging recreational trends. By identifying service gaps, the plan offers a bold vision for the future, supported by “big ideas” and actionable recommendations for implementation. We have prioritized these initiatives based on direct community input, feasibility, and resource availability. Furthermore, the plan addresses critical cross-cutting issues, including park accessibility, environmental sustainability, and the strengthening of stakeholder partnerships.

Ultimately, this Parks Plan is a living framework for future action—designed to be adapted as our city evolves. Its success relies on a collaborative implementation process driven by ongoing public engagement, stakeholder input, and the unified efforts of city departments.

Plan Timeline

Summer - Fall 2023

Community Event Pop-ups

- Mural Fest
- 85th Celebration
- Craftoberfest

Online Community Survey

Webpage Launch

Refine Scope of Plan

Winter 2024

City Council Presentation

Advisory Committee Launch

Survey Report

Youth Workshops

- Central Park Community Center
- Olene Walker Elementary School
- Granite Park Junior High
- Cottonwood High School

Spring 2024

Community Open Houses

- Fitts Park
- Olene Walker Family Engagement Center

Summer - Fall 2024

Community Event Pop-ups

- Mural Fest

Planning Commission Presentation

City Council Presentation

Winter - Fall 2025

Prepare Final Plan

Winter 2026

City Council Review

Parks Plan Launch

Parks Impact Fee Study

2026 & Beyond

Capital Improvements Plan

Property Acquisition and Agreements

Design and Construction



Lions Park off-leash dog area

Past and Present

Land History

The land within our community is inherited from the earth and from our ancestors. Our history stretches long before pioneers settled along Mill Creek in 1847. We acknowledge the original people of this valley, state, and continent.

We are in the state of Utah, which is named after the Yuta-Shoshone peoples and occupies the Newe (Shoshone and Goshute), Núuchiu (Ute), Nuwuvi (Paiute), and Diné (Navajo) territories.

To the Newe (Shoshone and Goshute) peoples, this place, between the Wasatch and Apa-ya-wi-up (Oquirrh) Mountains, is called Soonkahni (or Salt Lake Valley). The creek here gets its waters from Tempin Tekkoappah (Mill Creek Canyon) and is connected to Pia Okwai (the Jordan River) which flows into Pia-pa (Great Salt Lake).

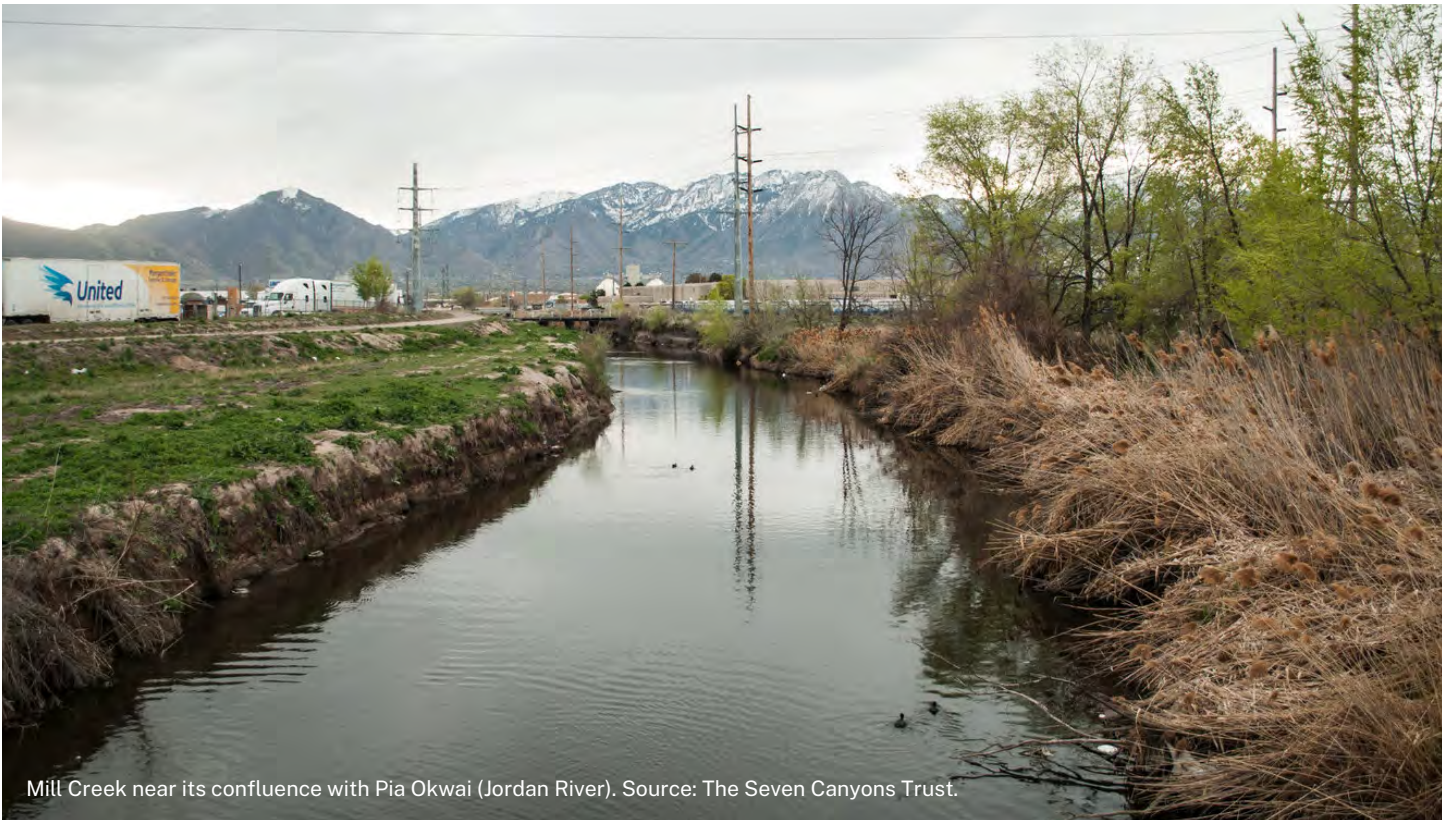
City History

For thousands of years, the abundance of water, flat ground, rich soils, and wildlife drew Indigenous peoples to the Salt Lake Valley. These resources also attracted European settlers to occupy this prime location. Mormon pioneers became permanent residents in the South Salt Lake area shortly after their arrival in 1847, building homes, growing crops, digging canals, and establishing mills along a stream that would later be aptly known as “Mill Creek.”

Among the area’s first landmarks were the Husler Mill (1860), the Winder dairy farm (1865), and the monumental Granite Stake Tabernacle (1903). A one-room schoolhouse near the creek eventually expanded and became Granite High School in 1906 and educated students for over a century until its closure in 2009. Early suburbs sprang up south and west from Salt Lake City including South Salt Lake, which was incorporated in 1938.



Pia Okwai (Jordan River) at western edge of South Salt Lake. Source: Tracy Aviary's Nature Center at Pia Okwai.



Mill Creek near its confluence with Pia Okwai (Jordan River). Source: The Seven Canyons Trust.

The Nature of Our City

South Salt Lake is located along the Jordan River within the lowest parts of the Salt Lake Valley. Expansive clay soils in the city trace back to the ancient Lake Bonneville and trap and hold water, resulting in many artesian springs around the city. Mill Creek makes its way from the Wasatch Mountains to its confluence with the Jordan River at the western edge of the city. The presence of various water sources in this semi-arid landscape creates an oasis for people and wildlife.

The city is located along an international migratory bird flyway. Birds following the Jordan River up to the great Salt Lake touch down along the riparian lands and can be observed throughout the city and at the new Nature Center at Pai Okwai. The river and creek are home to beaver, trout and of course, resident ducks, while the land is home to deer, skunk, and fox.

As the city grew from a small town and suburb, residents enjoyed these abundant trees, fishing streams, and large backyard gardens. While parks continue to provide a place to connect with family and friends, today they have also become some of the last vestiges of nature in the city – essential dashes of green relief found within the paved urban landscape.

Context

General Plan

On August 17, 2021, the **South Salt Lake General Plan 2040** was adopted. The three goals for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space within the General Plan are:

1. Increase the number and acreage of parks, open space, and recreation amenities to serve current and future residents.
2. Identify opportunities to add parks, open space and recreation amenities in currently underserved areas of the City.
3. Continue to provide equitable access to city programs and amenities for all residents.

Each of these goals is supported by strategies and actions to help guide policy makers when making policy decisions related to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.

Relevant Plans

This plan was developed within the context of other city and regional initiative and planning processes. These relevant plans have influenced

this plan or serve as complimentary documents to the values and goals of the Parks Plan:

- South Salt Lake Parks Master Plan (2015)
- South Salt Lake General Plan 2040 (2021)
- Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2026)
- Jordan River Reconnect Master Plan (2026)
- South Salt Lake Urban Forestry Management Plan (2026)
- South Salt Lake Arts Council Strategic Plan (2025)
- Central Pointe Station Area Plan (2024)
- Meadowbrook Station Area Plan (2025)
- Millcreek Station Area Plan (2025)
- South Salt Lake Strategic Mobility Plan (2021, Updated 2025)
- South Salt Lake Lighting Master Plan (2018)
- Life on State Implementation Plan (2018)
- Vision South Salt Lake Creative Industries Zone (2017)
- Water Tower Neighborhood Plan (2023)



Mill Creek Trail in Fitts Park



“What I want for myself and my family, I want for every person in our community.”

—Mayor Cherie Wood

Promise South Salt Lake

We are committed to give all youth and families in our city the opportunity to succeed. This commitment is built upon a unified vision of how we build up our community and support our neighbors.

History and Growth

The work of Promise South Salt Lake (Promise SSL) began in 2008 following the tragic loss of a young girl named Hser Ner Moo. This event rallied the community to advocate for expanded social programs and services to support residents from cradle to career.

Led by Mayor Cherie Wood and supported by key partners—including the South Salt Lake Police Department, United Way of Salt Lake, Granite School District, and the City’s Recreation Department—the initiative launched the Hser Ner Moo Community Center and its flagship afterschool program. Today, Promise SSL has grown into a holistic, community-wide initiative serving over 2,000 youth and families annually across 14 locations.

Our Approach

Promise SSL is modeled after other successful community programs but tailored specifically for our children, families, adults, and seniors. Mayor Wood and the Promise Team formulated goals that

became our Three Promises. These represent the highest hopes we hold for South Salt Lake resident:

1. Every child has the opportunity to attend and to graduate from college
2. Every resident has a safe, clean home and neighborhood
3. Everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and to prosper

Promise SSL works in partnership with our schools, families, and communities to provide a safe, stable, and secure environment that:

- Promotes and models respect and positive self-esteem.
- Supports academic achievement and lifelong learning.
- Affirms and appreciates individual differences through clear communication.

The Role of Public Spaces

Our community centers and parks are invaluable to the mission and programs of Promise SSL. While community centers host recreation, arts, and social programs, our parks offer residents the physical, mental, and emotional health benefits of outdoor recreation. These spaces are where social connections are forged, helping us deliver on our Three Promises every day.

2015 Plan Progress

In 2015, South Salt Lake was a ‘city on the move,’ breaking away from its previous reputation as a quiet suburb dominated by commercial and industrial zones. The *Parks, Open Space, Trails and Community Centers Master Plan* served as the city’s first comprehensive inventory and vision for the future of its public spaces. The plan recognized the city’s distinct advantages: walkability, affordable housing, a rising downtown, a diverse population, and growing economic potential. It also championed the city’s well-established recreation programs, unifying community events, and Promise South Salt Lake

Key Themes

Expanding Access and Amenities

The plan placed significant emphasis on increasing park acreage and expanding amenities such as sports fields, courts, and walking paths. A primary goal was to ensure that parks were within walking distance of every resident, acknowledging that major barriers — such as highways, railways, and busy roads — prevented some community members from accessing them. This led to the creation of a trail network, which was later adopted into the *Strategic Mobility Plan*; many of these projects have since been funded and completed.

Addressing Land Scarcity

A key conclusion of the plan was that additional land would be difficult to acquire. To address this, a “no net loss” policy for open space was established, alongside a proposed standard of 2.5 park acres per 1,000 residents. By identifying geographic gaps in the park system’s service area, the plan challenged city officials to seek new parkland, specifically in areas west of State Street.

Strategic Partnerships

Finding new land for public use has required creative acquisition strategies and strong partnerships. For example, successfully acquiring

the former Woodrow Wilson Elementary School to create Central Park and Community Center required close cooperation with the Granite School District. Similarly, completing the S-Line Greenway section of Parley’s Trail was made possible through the joint efforts of South Salt Lake, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and UTA.

Accomplishments

New Park Space

One of the most significant accomplishments from the 2015 Plan was the strategic expansion of our park system. The plan’s implementation led to the successful acquisition and construction of Bickley Park, Promise Park, and the Oakland Ave Dog Park. Additional properties have been purchased for future park development, with more transactions underway to further broaden our park supply. Some of these projects are currently awaiting the adoption of this updated plan before moving forward.

Park Improvements

In addition to park openings, the City completed several major park improvement projects, highlighted by the western expansion of Fitts Park and renovations at Kaleidoscope Park (formerly Mill Creek Trailhead Park). Facilities at Central Park were significantly upgraded with the addition of basketball and pickleball courts, new restrooms, and a central pavilion. Across the city, the recreational landscape gained two new fitness courses and three playgrounds.



Concrete forms placed at Bickley Park Fit Lot (2021)

Accompanying these physical builds, the city invested in professional signage and branding to create a cohesive identity. We also shifted our focus toward natural open spaces and healthier ecosystems. Through volunteer projects, trail tours, and events like Get to the River, we have brought renewed activity and attention to the Jordan River corridor.

These efforts were bolstered by work completed by key partners: Salt Lake County completed extensive renovations at Harmony Park, and a collaborative vision transformed James Madison Park into Tracy Aviary’s Nature Center at Pia Okwai.

Evolving Demands

The importance of these spaces became even more evident in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the way residents interact with their environment, leading to a surge in park usage and a heightened demand for high-quality open space. This shift reinforced the necessity of our ongoing investments in public land.

Structural Improvements

Strategic improvements to budgeting, planning, and operations have significantly enhanced our capacity to maintain and expand the parks system. Since 2015, the City has:

- **Adopted Park Impact Fees:** Ensuring consistent funding is directed toward capital improvements.
- **Expanded Staffing:** Added a Parks Project Manager, hired a full-time Mobility Planner, and began developing a comprehensive Urban Forestry program.



- **Improved Infrastructure:** The city’s new Public Works campus will boost the resources and efficiency of park maintenance operations.

Regional partnerships have also played a vital role. Salt Lake County has contributed to local recreation improvements, embarked on new comprehensive planning efforts for the Jordan River, and established a caretaker for riverside trails at the new Pioneer Crossing Park.

Overcoming Challenges

Despite these successes, the City faced notable hurdles. The demolition of Granite High School resulted in a loss of 28 acres of community space and halted plans for a regional recreation center; however, a new county library and small park were established during the campus’s redevelopment. While we have completed master plans for all of our community centers, a significant funding gap remains for the substantial renovations required at Central Park and the Historic Scott School.

Nevertheless, city programming has thrived through the collaborative efforts of Promise SSL, the Arts Council, and the Recreation Department. This surge in community activity, highlighted by flagship events such as Craftoberfest and Mural Fest, has pushed the boundaries of our traditional event spaces. In response to this growth, the City has begun creatively expanding its recreational footprint into city streets, transforming urban corridors into temporary spaces for public gathering and recreation. These programming successes have also led to numerous incremental improvements across our community centers, ensuring they remain vibrant hubs for residents.

How to Use This Plan

The *South Salt Lake Parks Plan* is intended to be a living document, guiding the development of the city’s park system for the next decade. It provides a roadmap of actions related to park policies, programs, and projects.

The plan can be utilized by city staff, elected officials, advisory committees, and the community in the following ways:

Decision-Making

The plan offers a framework for making informed decisions regarding future investments, acquisitions, programming, and resource allocation. Consulting with the contents of this plan over the next decade, allows city officials and staff to ensure that future actions align with the needs and preferences of our residents and stakeholders.

Prioritization

The plan identifies priority strategies to be implemented as soon as feasible. The prioritization of strategies allows us to plan for full implementation of the plan in an organized, responsive, and efficient way. By identifying priority actions, we can establish a step by step course for achieving the objectives of this plan. In other words, this plan helps city officials know where to begin in building a better parks system.

Partnership Development

Having a plan in place for our parks allows us to enhance and pursue new partnerships with community organizations, businesses, partner agencies, the school district, and other stakeholders. The vision illustrated in the plan allows the city to communicate and promote its goals, plans, and objectives for its parks and find common ground with potential partners.

Public Education

The plan can be used to inform the public about the park system and its goals while creating excitement and buy-in from residents to build support for future programs and capital improvements.

Funding

As a master planning document, the Parks Plan will allow us to embark on various revenue-raising efforts to improve our park system. Collecting impact fees, exploring partnerships, and qualifying for grants all require various degrees of planning. Adopting this plan gives the city justification and leverage in assessing fees and declaring our preparedness and eligibility for outside funding sources.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This plan provides a baseline for measuring progress and assessing the effectiveness of future park investments and initiatives. Like we’ve done with the 2015 Plan, we can use this update to track our implementation and hold ourselves accountable to the vision and objectives established in the following chapters.

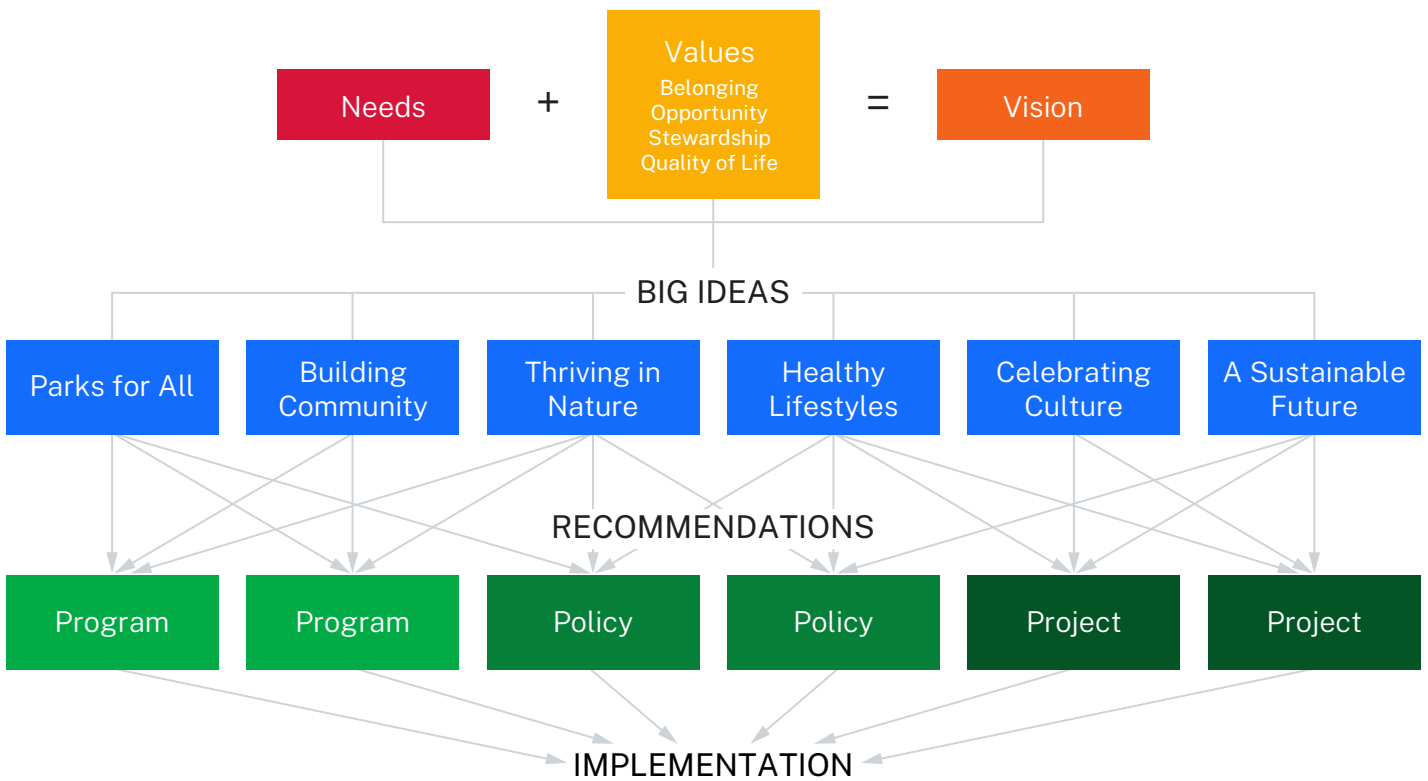


Volunteers from Savage plant a pollinator garden and pergola at Kaleidoscope Park (2021)

Plan Organization

This plan builds as it progresses, beginning with an assessment of the current conditions, inventory, and needs of our parks system. From there, a summary of community engagement leads into a discussion of the vision and values South Salt Lake residents hold for their open spaces. The combination of these ideas fell into six categories, or thematic goals, referred to here as “Big Ideas.” These Big Ideas directly informed the development of the plan’s recommendations and strategies. At the conclusion of the plan, key considerations related to the plan’s implementation are outlined, including themes like funding, progress tracking, future public input processes, and project selection criteria.

Parks Plan Organizational Chart







New play surface, fencing, and net equipment
at Central Park pickleball courts



Our Parks System

CHAPTER 2:

Our Parks System

The City of South Salt Lake owns and operates approximately 25 acres of green space at parks and community centers. City parks are mostly concentrated on the east side of the city, with none found west of State Street. This parkland is supplemented by county parks and facilities, community centers, riparian natural land, Tracy Aviary's Nature Center at Pia Okwai, a golf course, and other outdoor space found at schools, churches, and other institutional sites.

Types of Open Space

Parks

Parks are the most commonly visited recreation sites in South Salt Lake with 85.4% of survey respondents visiting a park at least once a week. The city is home to 12 named parks, with ten city-operated parks and two managed by Salt Lake County.

78.7% of South Salt Lake residents live within a ten-minute walk of one of these parks and 85.4% of survey respondents said they visit a park at least once a week. Fitts Park is by far the most visited park in South Salt Lake with 55% of respondents naming it the park they visit most.

Natural Open Space

Walking, jogging, and biking are among the most popular activities at natural open spaces found along the Jordan River and Mill Creek. The area along the Jordan River Parkway alone contributes over 75 acres of untamed land dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat preservation, recreation, and active transportation.

Community Centers

South Salt Lake operates three community centers that provide recreation opportunities both within the buildings and on their surrounding grounds. At the Central Park and South Salt Lake community centers, indoor sports programs are run by Promise SSL and the Recreation Department. Historic Scott School Community Center offers cultural and art programming hosted by the South Salt Lake Arts Council and Promise SSL. Each community center also provides unprogrammed green space for relaxation and recreation.

Golf Courses

Golf the Round is a low-cost, beginner-friendly golf course and driving range situated on land owned by the Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility (CVW), a regional water treatment facility owned by five service districts and two cities, including South Salt Lake. The long-term future of the golf course is unknown as it is located on land designated for future CVW expansion.

Salt Lake City owns and operates Nibley Park Golf Course, located at its boundary with South Salt Lake. The site operated as Wanadamere Park, an amusement park, from 1864–1921. After closing, it was donated to Salt Lake City on the condition that it always remained open park space, reopening in 1922 as Utah’s first public golf course.

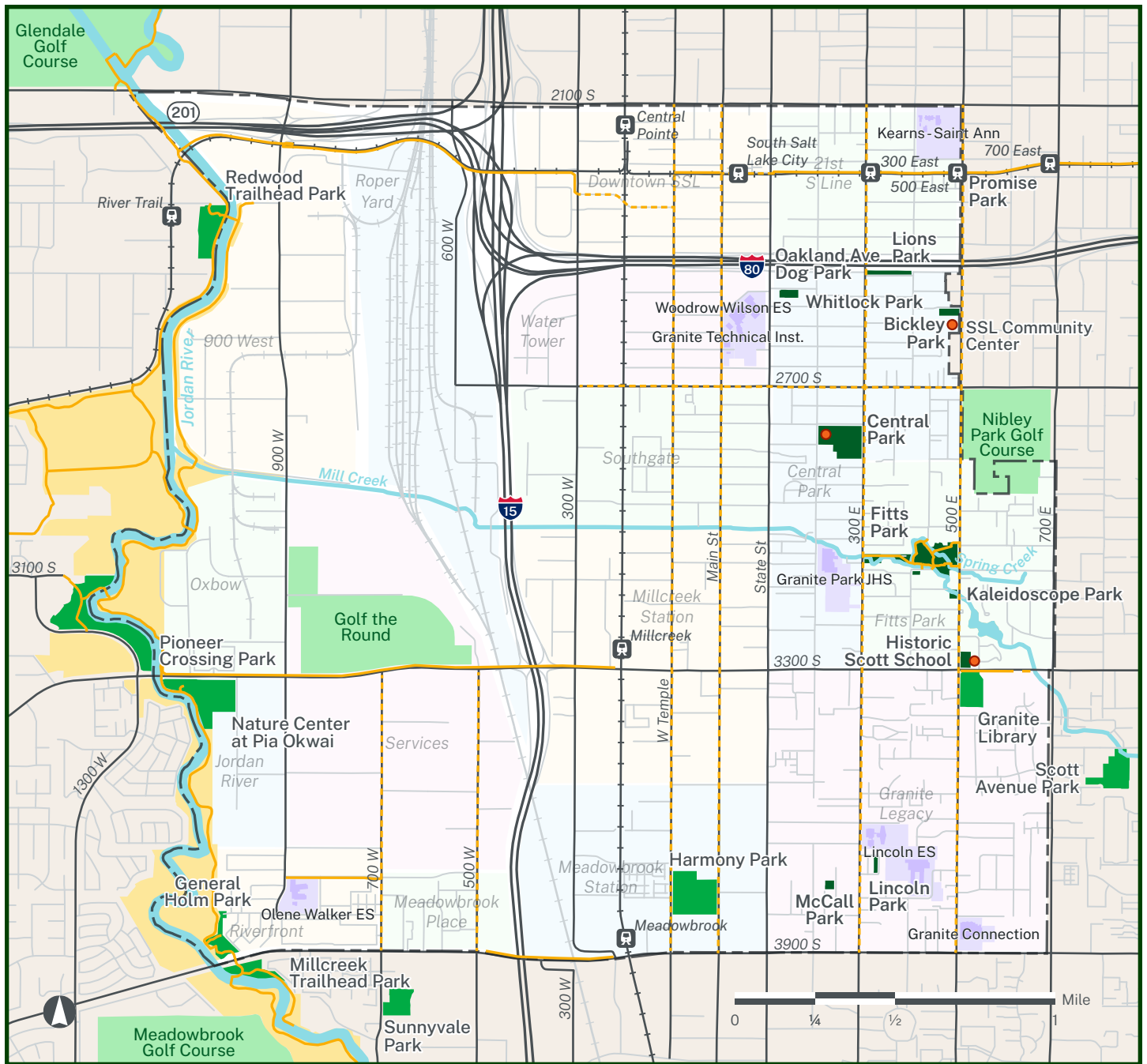
These golf courses provide important environmental and social benefits, including reducing urban heat, providing wildlife habitat, and improving air quality. These benefits are especially valuable in a city with limited green space.

Other Open Space

South Salt Lake residents have access to various other outdoor spaces, including schoolyards, the Nature Center at Pia Okwai, church grounds, detention basins, and undeveloped green areas. However, access to these spaces is often limited by school district policies, operating hours, and property ownership rules.

At some locations, like Olene Walker Elementary, there is no public access as the entire school property is fenced and secured. So while students get to enjoy the school’s fields and playgrounds during the day, there is no recreational benefit to the rest of the community.





Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Park and Recreation Facilities

- South Salt Lake Parks
- Parks and Facilities Provided by Others
- Golf Courses
- Natural Open Space
- Schoolyards
- Community Centers

Trails and Paths

- Trails
- Bike Lanes (Shared and Dedicated)

Base Map Features

- South Salt Lake City Boundary
- Freeway
- Major Streets
- Light Rail Station
- Light Rail
- Railroad
- River or Creek
- Oxbow
- South Salt Lake Neighborhood

Our Parks

Parks and Recreation Facilities in South Salt Lake

Facility	Acreage	Amenities
City Parks	21.36	
Bickley Park	0.87	2 Playgrounds, FitLot, 2 Pickleball Courts, Sports Field
Central Park	6.48	Playground, Community Garden, Basketball Courts, 2 Pickleball Courts, Multipurpose Sports Field, Lawn, Restrooms
Fitts Park	10.40	3 Playgrounds, Nature Playground, 4 Pavilions, Veterans Memorial, Community Garden, Mill Creek, Spring Creek, Kids Bike Course, Fitness Course, Paved Trail, Walking Paths, Lawn, Restrooms
Kaleidoscope Park	0.42	Native/Pollinator Plant Garden, Pergola, Walking Path, Mural
Lincoln Park	0.37	Lawn
Lions Park	1.13	Playground, Swings, 2 Pavilions, Dog Park, Lawn
McCall Park	0.48	Playground, Picnic Table, Lawn
Oakland Avenue Dog Park	0.91	Dog Park
Promise Park	0.18	Fitness Course, Seating and Tables, Tether Ball, Gateway Signage
Whitlock Park	0.12	Path, Lawn, Picnic Table, Mural
Facilities by Others	28.57	
General Holm Park	3.36	Playground, Pavilion, Restrooms, Trailhead, Boat Launch, Lawn, Veterans Memorial
Granite Library	2.20	Playground, Fitness Course, Lawn, Walking Path, Amphitheater, Plaza, EV Charging
Harmony Park	10.59	Soccer Field, Baseball/Softball Diamond, Tennis Courts, Playground, Community Garden, Restrooms
Nature Center at Pia Okwai	12.42	Walking paths, Interpretive Signage, Amphitheater, Event Pavilion, Bird Blind, Viewing Tower, Greenhouse, Classroom, Eco-Lab, Lawn, Restrooms, Tree and Plant Nursery
Community Centers	3.60	
Central Park	1.00	Indoor Multiuse Court, Boxing Gym, Teen Center, Classrooms
Historic Scott School	0.90	Art Studios, Classrooms, Meeting Rooms, Lawn
South Salt Lake	1.70	Indoor Multiuse Court, Auditorium, Senior Center, Teen Tech Center, Community Opportunity Center, Meeting Space, Classrooms, Garden, Plaza, Lawn
Natural Open Space	95.20	
Jordan River Open Space	75.00	Paved Trails, Nature Paths, Interpretive Signage, Bike Repair Stands, Boat Launches, Picnic Tables
Mill Creek Open Space	20.20	Partial Paved Trail
Golf Course	79.30	
Golf the Round	79.30	9-Hole Golf Course, Driving Range

21.4 acres
at city parks

3.6 acres
at community
centers

28.6 acres
provided by others

95.2 acres
of natural open
space

Parks History

Parks have been added to the South Salt Lake parks system in a number of ways. For example, Lincoln Park was preserved through the planning of a planned unit development, while McCall Park was once just a stormwater detention basin. Whitlock Park and Lions Park were once in the public right-of-way before becoming dedicated open space.

Our community centers are all repurposed school facilities with former schoolyards becoming park space, including Central Park which is home to many of our outdoor recreational sports programs. Promise Park, Bickley Park, and the west Fitts Park expansion were strategically targeted, acquired, and developed as park space as property became available. The development of South Salt Lake’s system of paths and trails has been a result of collaborative efforts between the city and county governments along with other community partners. South Salt Lake will continue to act opportunistically when acquiring land, negotiating development, and collaborating with community partners to fulfill its commitment to bringing parks projects to life.



Fit Lot at Bickley Park

How We Compare

Using data from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), we can see how South Salt Lake Parks system compares to our peer cities across the country. The city exceeds service and spending levels in some categories, but falls short in others.

The average park in South Salt Lake is shared by 1,786 residents while the median among peer cities is 2,014 residents per park. South Salt Lake actually provides more parks per capita than its peer cities, but most of our parks are under one acre which leads to the disparity in acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The largest deficiencies are related to park acreage and operations spending. In both cases, the city stands at about half the level of our peer cities. While this plan calls for an expansion of park space in our city, available suitable land for new parks is a substantial obstacle to improving this key data point.

South Salt Lake Metrics vs. 2024 NRPA Median Values

Indicator	South Salt Lake	Peer Cities (20,000-49,000)
Residents per park	1,786	2,062
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (city and county parks and open space)	5.0	11.2
Residents per playground	2,436	3,105
Operating expenditures per capita	\$55.24	\$114.81
Operating expenditures per acre	\$27,254	\$9,013
Five-Year capital improvement spending	\$5.6M	\$6.5M
Miles of trail	8.24	10.0

Source: NRPA 2024 Agency Performance Review

Park Distribution

The value of our parks is directly tied to people’s ability to enjoy them. Currently, the distribution of existing parks prevents South Salt Lake residents from having universal access. Physical barriers, such as freeways, railroads, railyards, utility sites, and government facilities, divide our neighborhoods and challenge access to key city services, which are largely concentrated on the east side.

One common way of assessing park access is to look at which areas of the city are within walking distance from a park. Most people are willing to walk about ten minutes or about half a mile to reach a destination. The area within a 10 minute walk of a park is called the walkshed or service area. When we map the walksheds for all the parks in South Salt Lake, we can see which areas enjoy close proximity to a park and which areas are further away. This helps us identify where we have gaps or holes in our park coverage.

The most substantial disparity in park coverage is seen between the east-west divide caused by State Street, I-15, and railroads. The map on the following page shows that virtually all of the area east of State Street except the far southeast corner of the city is within a 10 minute walk of a park. This differs from what we see in the rest of the city where most of the area west of State Street is not within walking distance of a park.

Infrastructure barriers shaped the way that our city developed with a vast majority of residents living in east side neighborhoods. Because of the concentration of population in these areas, park investments have favored the east side, leaving west side residents with reduced access to park space. Increasing development pressures will continue to spur new construction in areas west of State Street, so the city must make plans to expand park access for current and future west side residents including the thousands that will move into the downtown area over the next decade.

79%
of South Salt Lake residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park

National average: 55%
Source: Trust for Public Land

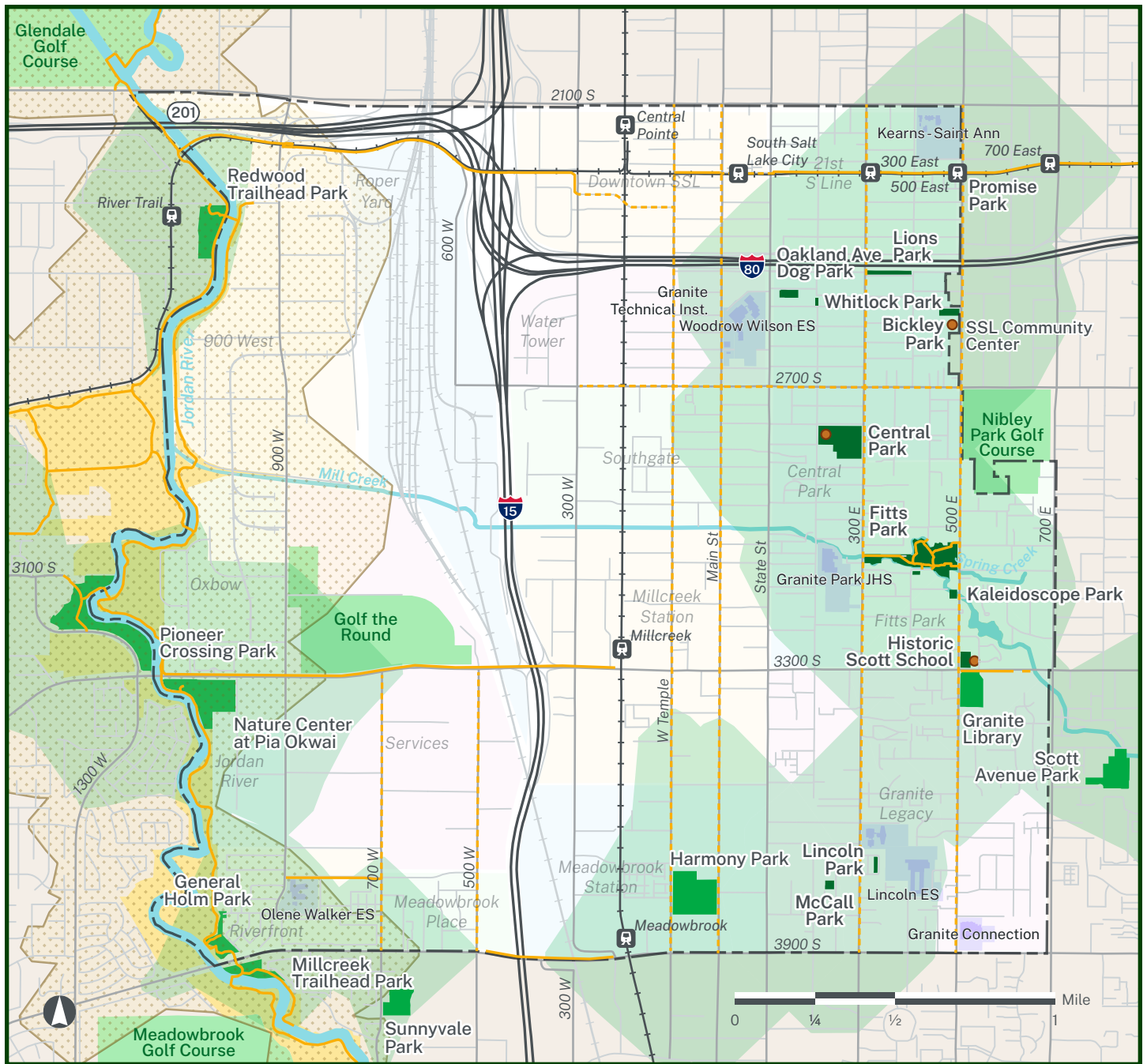
60%
live within a 10-minute walk of a city park

26%
live within a 10-minute walk of natural open space

80%
live within a 10-minute walk of a park or open space



Gardening workshop at Central Park Community Garden.



Parks and Open Space Walkshed

- Parks 10-Minute (1/2 Mile) Walkshed
- Open Space 10-Minute (1/2 Mile) Walkshed
- Park and Recreation Facilities**
- South Salt Lake Parks
- Parks and Facilities Provided by Others
- Golf Courses
- Natural Open Space
- Schoolyards
- Community Centers
- Trails and Paths**
- Trails
- Bike Lanes (Shared and Dedicated)

Base Map Features

- South Salt Lake City Boundary
- Freeway
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- Oxbow
- South Salt Lake Neighborhood

Challenges

South Salt Lake has undergone many substantial and unprecedented changes in the last decade. Like many aspects of life in our community, the way we use and think about parks has been shaped by development pressures, population growth, the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging recreation trends, and the regional challenges of homelessness. The City must adapt to these and other social, environmental, and economic factors to continue to enhance the quality of life of its residents.

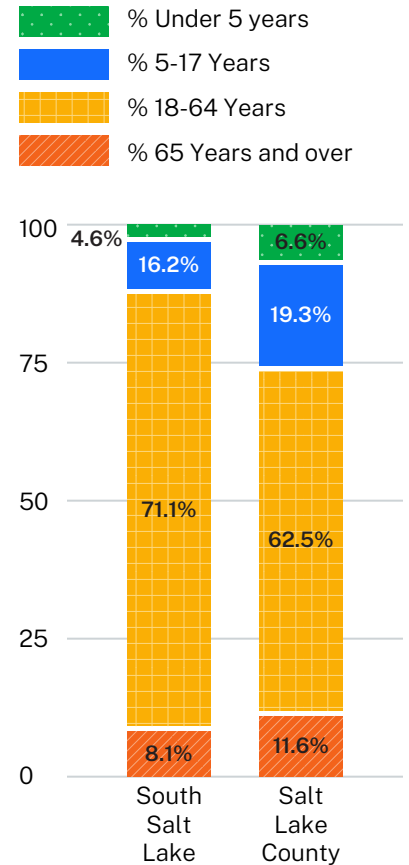
Demographics and Development

South Salt Lake’s demographics have evolved significantly since the last Parks Plan was adopted and will continue to shift as the city grows over the next decade. The loss of affordable housing has displaced numerous families, contributing to a decline in the youth population and shrinking household sizes. This trend has led to declining school enrollments and contributed to the closure of Roosevelt and Millcreek Elementary Schools, jeopardizing associated open spaces. Even as new residents have moved in and shaped our evolving demographics, the city continues to see fewer children, youth, and senior citizens per capita than the rest of Salt Lake County.

The city’s landscape has been dramatically altered by the development of new multifamily housing, increased city revenues, and a thriving food and beverage scene. Thousands of new housing units are expected to be built in the next decade, primarily downtown and west of State Street. The influx of new west side development saw the construction of Olene Walker Elementary and Fire Station 42.

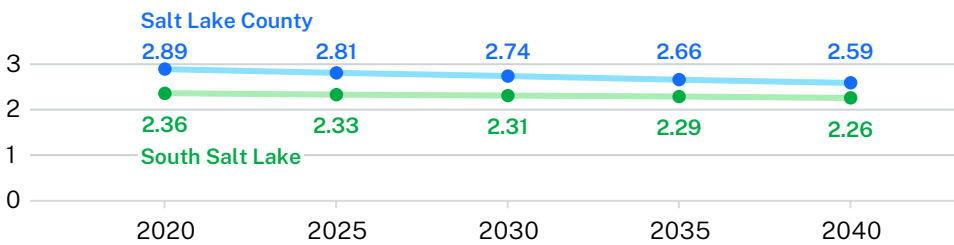
To meet the increasing demand for park space and address changing demographics, South Salt Lake must not only expand its park system but also integrate open spaces into new development areas.

Age Distribution of South Salt Lake and Salt Lake County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Projected Average Household Size



Source: WFRC Household Projections (TAZ) - RTP 2023

Land Availability

Acquiring land for new parks presents challenges due to limited availability and competition from other land uses. Many large vacant parcels have been developed, and existing open spaces like Golf the Round and the Kearns-Saint Ann's sports fields are facing potential development and urbanization.

Government agencies, utility providers, and transportation entities hold large swaths of land on the west side. Expanding parks in these neighborhoods will require collaboration with organizations like Granite Schools, Salt Lake City Schools, Salt Lake County, UTA, Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility, the State of Utah, and Union Pacific. The upcoming Jordan River Regional Park Master Plan will involve many of these stakeholders and its execution can substantially contribute to meeting the recreation needs of South Salt Lake residents.

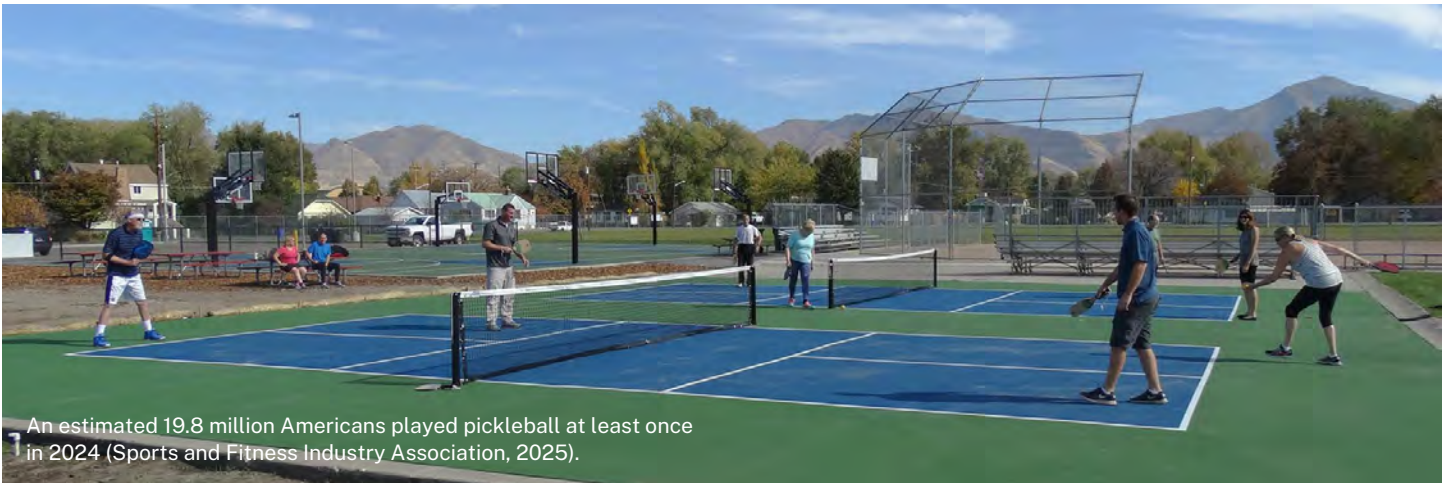
Homelessness

The growing number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the Salt Lake Valley is evident in park spaces. New shelters, including a 300-bed shelter in South Salt Lake, have contributed to an increase in camping and criminal activity along the Jordan River and Parley's Trail. Park bathrooms, pavilions, and parking lots have become attractive to unhoused individuals seeking shelter, sanitation, and social interaction. Vandalism, drug use, and other public safety concerns have risen in South Salt Lake parks, often linked to mental health crises or emotional distress. Camping, waste, and campfires all contribute to environmental degradation and increased wildfire risk.

These issues strain park maintenance resources, disrupt park operations, and challenge the goal of creating welcoming environments for all park visitors. Balancing the needs of all park users while ensuring public safety and maintaining a welcoming atmosphere remains a significant challenge for park systems nationwide.



Golf the Round is a nearly 80-acre golf course owned and managed by the Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility. The course could be closed in the future to expand the facility's wastewater operations.



An estimated 19.8 million Americans played pickleball at least once in 2024 (Sports and Fitness Industry Association, 2025).

Recreation Trends

The landscape of recreation is continually evolving, driven by emerging trends and technological advancements. Sports like pickleball, rugby, and cricket have gained a surge in popularity since our last plan while innovations such as drone shows and e-bikes have become recreational staples.

In South Salt Lake, a growing number of households without children has shifted the focus of recreation towards social and cultural activities. The Parks Plan survey revealed a strong preference for outdoor amenities like trails, greenways, beer gardens, dog parks, and plazas over traditional child-focused features like playgrounds and tot lots. Even as our growing adult population favors activities like social sports, bicycling, walking, and fitness classes, there is still a growing demand for youth recreation facilities and programming.

The city's existing community centers are at capacity throughout the year and are often not suitable for many older youth and adult activities. This limited capacity along with competition from school and competitive sports have led to a drop in recreation program participation as youth age into junior high. As Promise South Salt Lake and the Recreation Department continue to jointly identify ways to increase teen participation, establishing a recreation center that can accommodate a diverse range of year-round activities and serve the needs of all age groups would be invaluable to fulfilling the long term recreation needs of South Salt Lake.

From a facilities perspective, city recreation programs face obstacles like limited community center capacity, the lack of full-sized sports fields,

and competing with competitive sports for teen participation. These hurdles can be overcome through projects that increase capacity like new sports fields and a recreation center as well as through partnerships with school districts, Promise South Salt Lake, and other organizations to maximize involvement and participation.

Creating a Parks Plan requires the city to think about new and future recreation needs. We must meet the spike in demand of emerging activities while continuing to strive to serve traditional park functions. As parts of our city densify, an increasing number of our residents will live in some form of multifamily housing without private yard space. Those living in these urban centers will need to outsource their outdoor activities to public and shared spaces like parks, dog parks, plazas, community gardens, community centers, streets, and trails. Considering how our city will look and how our residents will live in a decade have integrally shaped the strategies and recommendations found in this plan.



Drone shows have emerged as a safer, quieter, and more environmentally-friendly alternative to firework displays.

Climate Change

South Salt Lake’s parks and open spaces play a crucial role in mitigating impacts of climate change, serving as a first line of defense against stormwater runoff and extreme heat. However, these natural assets are also vulnerable to the effects of a warming planet.

Frequent droughts have necessitated a shift towards drought-tolerant plants, native species, non-turf ground covers, and more efficient irrigation systems. Turfgrass should no longer be the default park surface; instead, it should be reserved for areas where specific functional needs require it. More frequent heat waves, dry spells, and windstorms have impacted our urban forest with trees more susceptible to damage, insect infestation, and disease. While parks are adapting to these challenges, the time and funds needed to mitigate climate threats can limit resources available for new parks and amenities.

Operations and Maintenance

Considering all of these challenges, the city’s Parks Maintenance team has had to adapt the way they care for our open spaces. The team has expanded and diversified its workforce, enhancing its expertise in natural area management and arboriculture. In addition to maintaining parks, the team now oversees grounds maintenance for city

buildings, landscape strips, freeway gateways, as well as all the trees found at these properties. As the duties of the parks team have expanded to cover new facilities and new responsibilities, we must continue to keep staff equipped with specialized technical expertise and training.

The team is increasingly involved in managing people and situations, including mental health crises, vandalism, city events, and facility rentals. They are also actively addressing water conservation and landscape conversion projects while accelerating tree planting efforts to help mitigate climate threats and make our parks more resilient for the future.

There is a growing need for increased on-site presence at our parks. Unlike community centers or libraries, parks are not staffed around the clock, making it difficult to monitor behavior, dissuade misuse, and respond quickly to problems and safety concerns that arise. Some cities have established volunteer ambassador or ranger programs to help supplement the presence of park staff.

As the city continues to expand and enhance its parks system, a new project manager and operations manager will help oversee new projects and initiatives. These additional roles will help ensure the efficiency and effective implementation of park operations, improvements, and construction projects.



Members of the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation plant native species at Pitts Park (2023)



3

Community Engagement

CHAPTER 3:

Community Engagement

The public engagement process for the Parks Plan set out to identify and assess the community's needs and preferences for parks and recreation in South Salt Lake. We also sought to understand how our current parks system meets or falls short of these community needs. The plan team engaged with stakeholders in a variety of ways to capture the perspectives of diverse viewpoints within the city.

Parks Plan Advisory Committee

A group of residents, city staff, and representatives from community organizations served on the Parks Plan Advisory Committee which met monthly from February to June 2024. This committee interpreted data and outreach findings, and helped convert this information into the vision, values, big ideas, and recommendations of this plan.

Online Survey

An online survey, available in English and Spanish, was open for responses for five months from October 2023 through February 2024. It was promoted through the city's newsletter, website, and social media, as well as through physical signage at parks and electronic monitors at city facilities. Additionally, cards containing a QR code to the survey were distributed at event booths, city offices, and community centers. 140 people completed the survey, providing feedback about park usage, satisfaction, and preferences. The survey focused on evaluating the existing park system, ranking park priorities, and suggesting development directions for South Salt Lake City's park system. It also included several open-ended comment sections for individualized feedback and concerns.



Pop-Up Events

Nearly 500 residents participated at outreach pop-ups including appearances at recreation program meetings and community events like Mural Fest, Craftoberfest, and Breakfast with Santa. These interactive booths were successful in attracting large crowds, including many residents who typically do not participate in civic decision-making processes. Participants used these opportunities to express their concerns, share their vision for the parks system, and vote on desired amenities and programs. Additionally, attendees were strongly encouraged to complete the online survey to provide more detailed feedback on the Parks Plan.

Community Workshops

Informal open houses were held at Fitts Park and the Olene Walker Elementary Family Engagement Center. During these workshops, city representatives discussed attendees' current experiences and impressions of the parks and presented initial engagement findings. Additionally, a park stroll was conducted along the Jordan River Trail, providing an opportunity to speak with residents about park and open space issues. Participants offered input on the Parks Plan and shared ideas for the future parks system.

Youth Workshops

Engagement activities were conducted at Promise South Salt Lake sites to receive input from young members of our community. Afterschool students at Olene Walker Elementary, Granite Park Junior High, Cottonwood High, and Central Park Community Center participated in visioning exercises to plan for and design their dream park. Older students were given a budget and a list of park amenities to plan their park, which helped them prioritize their wants and needs.

Stakeholder Presentations

Engagement findings were periodically presented to stakeholder groups in the city to interpret, react to, and gain additional insight into what residents were saying. These groups included:

- Parks Plan Advisory Committee
- South Salt Lake City Council
- South Salt Lake Planning Commission
- Mayor's Cabinet
- Neighborhoods Department staff
- Parks Department staff
- Recreation Department staff
- South Salt Lake Economic Development Committee
- South Salt Lake Safety Committee
- South Salt Lake Physical Health Committee
- Jordan River Working Group
- South Salt Lake Business Education Committee

Parks Plan Webpage

A dedicated webpage on the city website was found with other ongoing long range plans under the "How We Grow Matters" tab and served as a central base to host relevant Parks Plan information. Webpage visitors could follow the plan's progress, access the online survey, and learn about upcoming engagement opportunities. Additionally, the findings of the Parks Plan Advisory Committee were available for those who wanted to follow the committee's work. Several reference documents were also uploaded to the page for those wanting to dig into the context and background of the project. These documents included maps, previous plans, and other past reports.



Granite Park Junior High



Olene Walker Elementary



Breakfast with Santa



Park Walk at the Jordan River



Mural Fest 2023

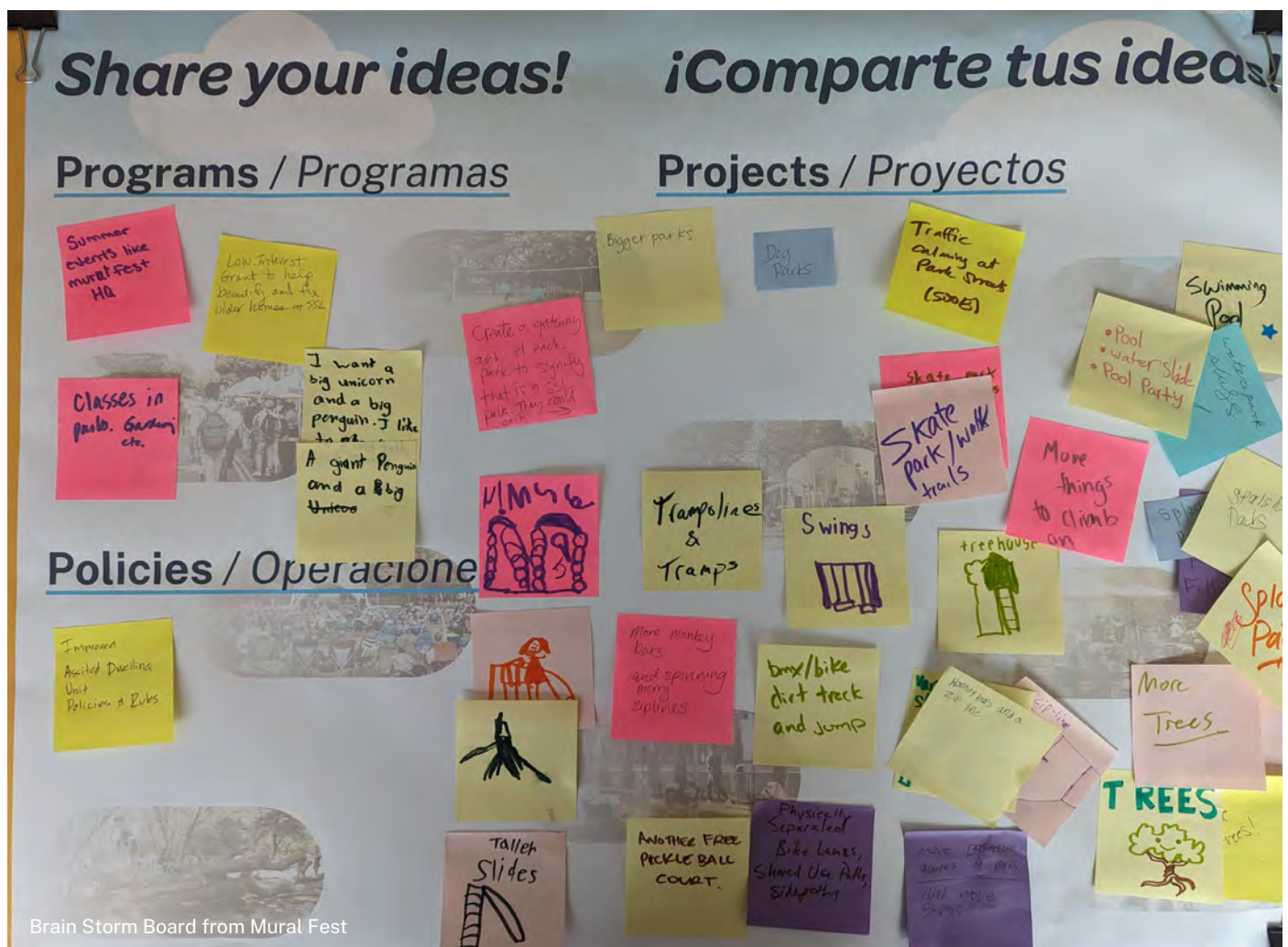


South Salt Lake 85th Celebration

Who We Heard From

The city collected 140 online survey responses (139 in English and one in Spanish), representing 11 of the 13 South Salt Lake neighborhoods. While the respondents reflected the prevalence of small families seen in local census data, the results did not fully capture the city's broader cultural diversity despite targeted engagement efforts. The median age of participants was 39. Most respondents (88%) were city residents, while the remaining 12% worked within South Salt Lake.

While demographic data for pop-up events was not systematically recorded, staff observations indicated a diverse range of participation. Attendance varied by event type: Craftoberfest primarily attracted adults, and Breakfast with Santa was attended mostly by children and their parents. In contrast, larger community gatherings like the 85th Anniversary Celebration and Mural Fest drew a broader demographic, reaching residents of all ages and backgrounds.



Outreach at a Glance

500+

Participants at city events, workshops, and open houses

140

Online survey responses

8

City Events

2

Open Houses

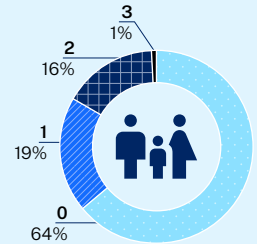
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Youth Workshops

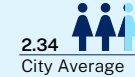
Survey Participants

By the Numbers

Number of children under the age of 18



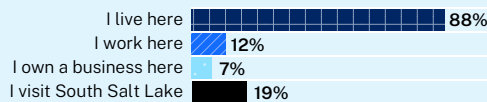
Average household size



Median age



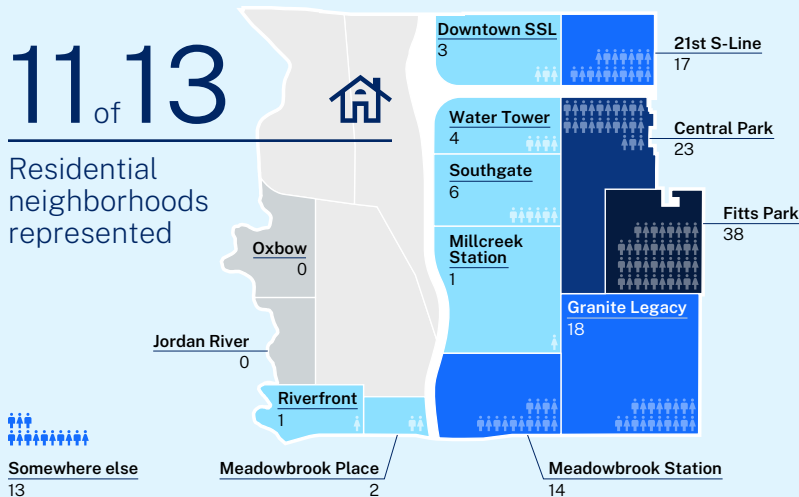
Relationship to South Salt Lake



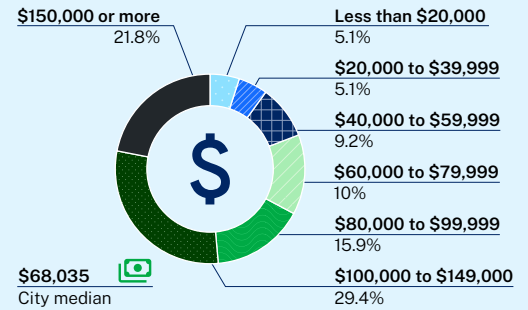
Participants by location

11 of 13

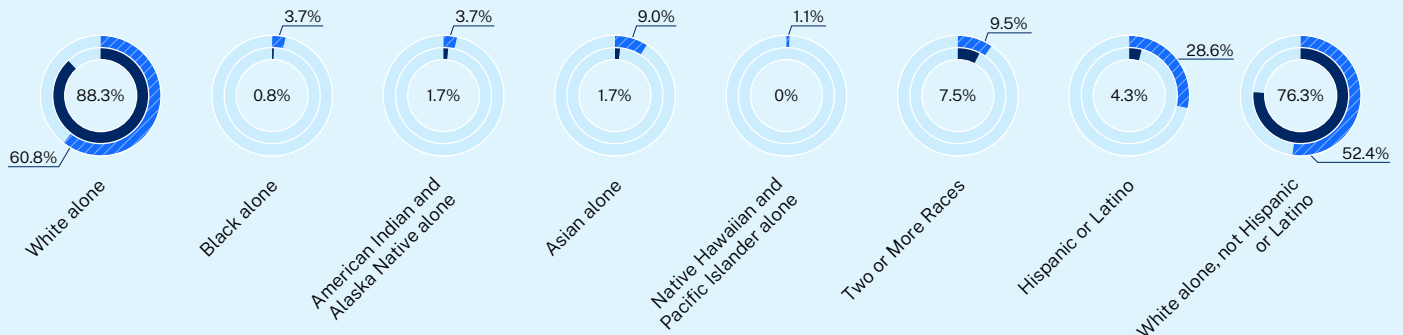
Residential neighborhoods represented



What is your total household income?



Survey participant demographics



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 'American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023'

What We Heard

Park Usage

According to the survey results, 31% of respondents visit a city park daily, and 42% visit a local park multiple times a week. Fitts Park is the most visited South Salt Lake park, while Kaleidoscope Park and Lincoln Park are the least visited in the system. Respondents mainly visit parks for active recreation like walking, biking, and jogging, with visits accompanied by pets being the second most common reason.

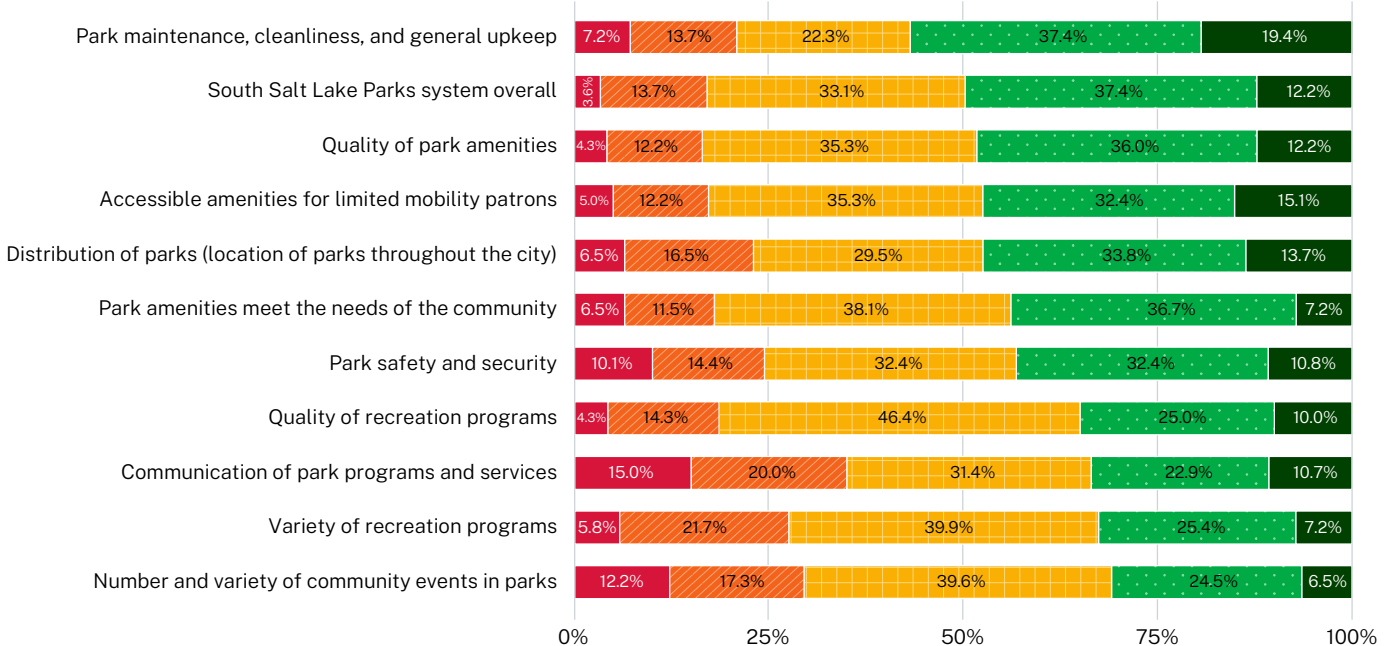
Park Evaluation

The survey respondents graded various aspects of South Salt Lake City’s park system. High-ranking criteria included park maintenance and cleanliness, the overall park system, and the quality of amenities. Conversely, the lowest grades were given to the number and variety of community events, recreation programming, and communication of park programs and services.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the best, how would you rate the following?

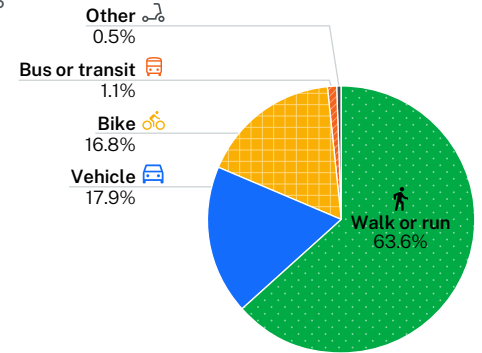
138 responses

1 (Worst) 2 3 4 5 (Best)



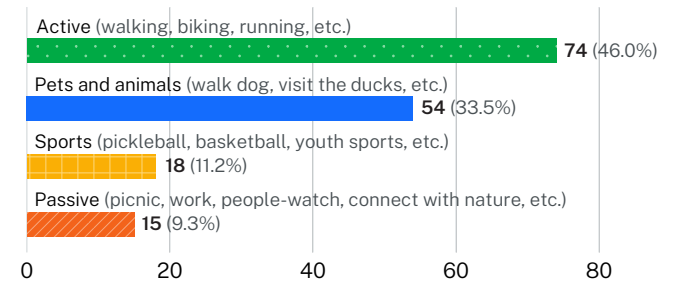
How do you get to the parks or open space you visit most?

138 responses



What activities do you typically do at city parks?

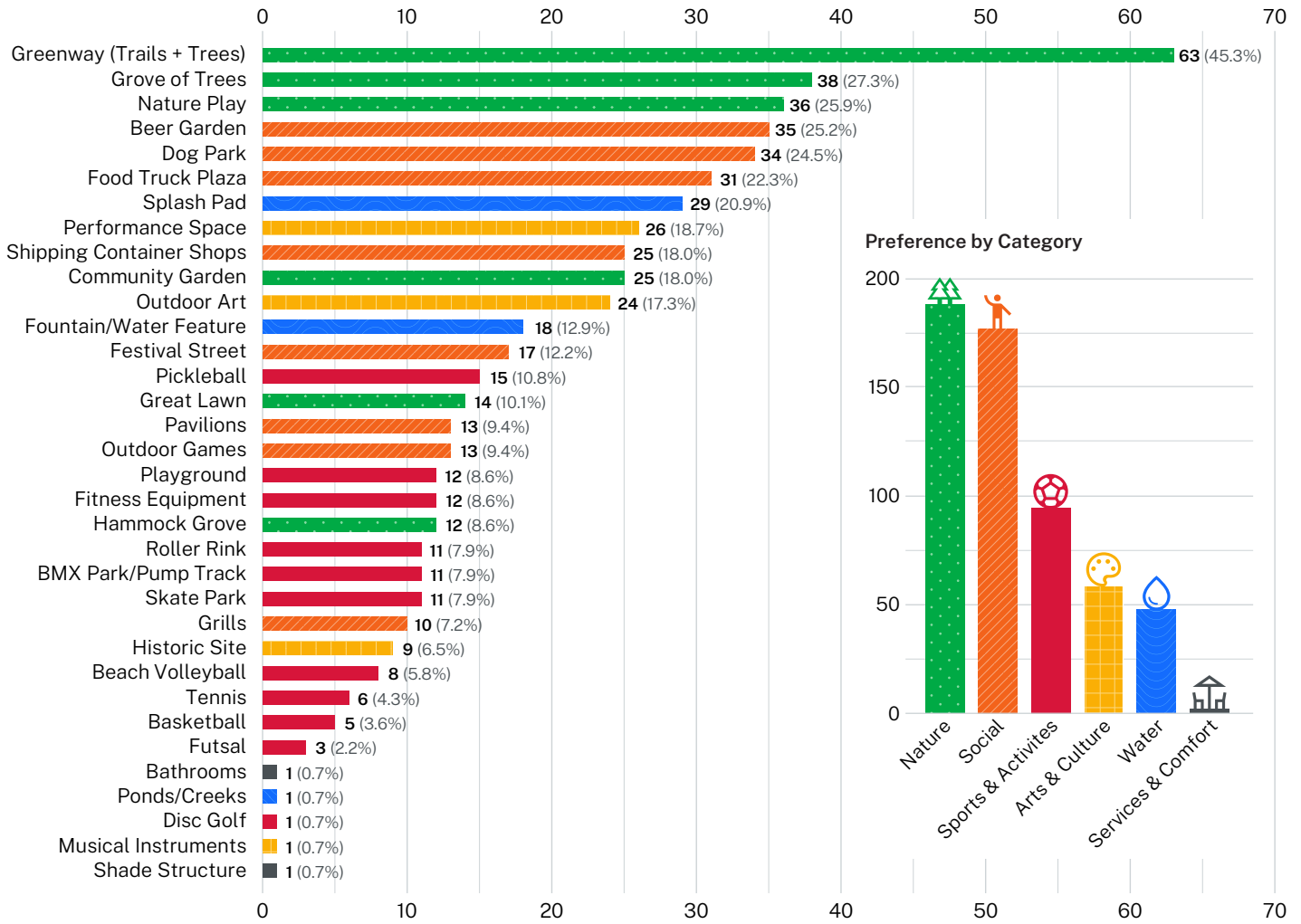
Open Response, 138 responses



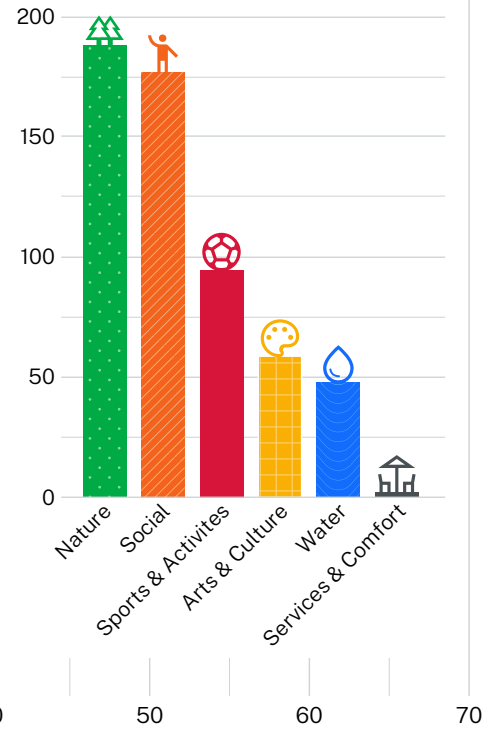
Which features or amenities would you like to see in a new park? (Select up to three.)

139 responses

Number (and percentage) of respondents who selected each feature or amenity



Preference by Category



Preferred Amenities

Residents expressed strong interest in several types of future park amenities. Nature-focused investments were the top priority category, with requests for more trees and trails, diverse plantings, and enhanced natural spaces. Amenities that foster social interaction were also popular, including beer gardens, dog parks, and food truck plazas. Sports facilities received significant interest, with a range of sports and activities being requested.

Feedback from school children indicated that they prioritized water play features, sports facilities, and playgrounds in new park projects.

Key Takeaways

Relevant Needs

Even though the average household size of respondents (2.65) was slightly higher than the citywide average (2.34), 64% of respondents indicated that they had no children in the home. As a result, the respondents' most preferred amenities were related to nature and social interaction, rather than active play and child amenities that would be more popular among households with kids.

Park Patronage

One of the most exciting findings from the survey is the high rate of park visits among local residents. A notable 73% of respondents visit a local park more than once a week. Several comments praised the density of parks, highlighting that in certain areas of the city, parks are easily reachable and have become integral to residents' daily routines. This frequent usage suggests that local parks offer a safe and inviting environment that encourages regular visits.

Access

Most park attendees walk to the parks, indicating that many parks are within a walkable distance and that the city's park density is sufficient. Most of our residents (79%) live within a 10-minute walk of a city or county park. National research shows that those living outside of this walking distance are less likely to visit a park on foot and less likely to regularly visit a park in general (Trust for Public Lands).

Sports and Recreation

A primary weakness of the existing park system is the limited supply of sports facilities, a concern underscored by both the public survey and the Parks Plan Advisory Committee. While sports are vital for healthy social interaction and physical exercise, the current system lacks sufficient space to meet demand — particularly for teens and adults who require full-sized courts and fields. This shortage restricts access to both

informal pickup games and organized programs managed by the Recreation Department. Consequently, residents must often rely on county facilities at Harmony Park or travel outside city limits to participate in athletic activities.

Getting the Word Out

Park programming and community communication received the lowest average grades from survey respondents. The committee also identified a need to improve program awareness, particularly regarding the promotion of sports and recreational offerings. By refining advertising and outreach strategies, the City can empower residents to better utilize and advocate for South Salt Lake's diverse open space resources.

In Summary

While South Salt Lake's park system benefits from high accessibility and strong usage, specific areas for improvement remain. By providing additional sports facilities and improving communication regarding park programming, the City can provide a more comprehensive and satisfying experience for all residents.



85th Celebration at Central Park





Youth Yoga at Historic Scott School

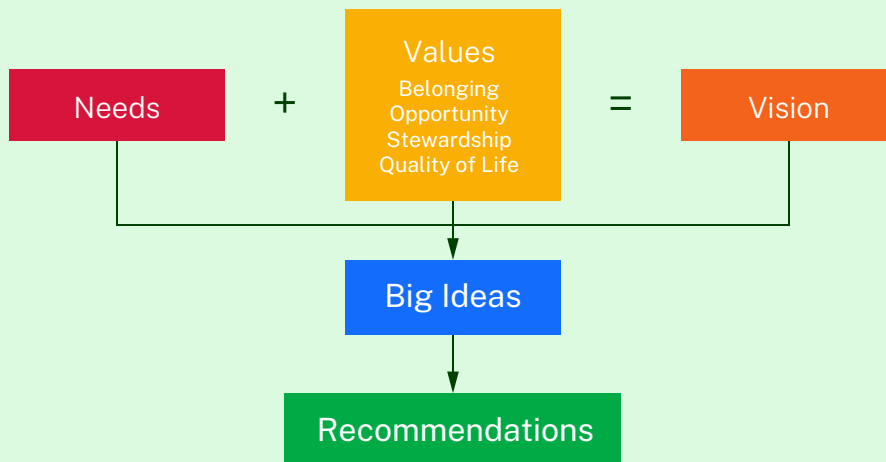
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Values, Vision & Big Ideas

CHAPTER 4:

Values, Vision & Big Ideas

This chapter sets the foundation for the Parks Plan by articulating the guiding principles that will shape the future of our park system. It begins with describing the plan’s core values-Belonging, Opportunity, Stewardship, and Quality of Life-which illuminate the “why” behind the plan’s objectives. The vision statement is grounded in these core values and outlines the city’s aspiration for inclusive, vibrant parks that serve as community hubs and places for environmental stewardship. Finally the chapter introduces six “Big Ideas,” thematic goals that will translate the values and vision into tangible actions. These elements collectively provide a framework for understanding the plan’s recommendations and the community’s aspirations for its parks.



Values

Values are the foundational principles that guide our decisions and define our priorities. By identifying what matters most to the community, we ensure our future actions align with the shared ethics and goals of our neighbors.

Belonging

- Everyone should feel safe and welcome in our parks.
- Our shared spaces should foster community pride and identity.

Parks are truly public spaces where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and important. When individuals visit our parks, they gather and connect with their neighbors, creating important social bonds and a sense of responsibility for one another. This shared duty promotes ownership and care for our parks, creating a vested interest in ensuring they remain valuable community assets that are safe, welcoming, and enjoyable for everyone.

Opportunity

- Our parks should serve residents equally, regardless of where they live or who they are.
- The future of our parks should be shaped by a diverse array of South Salt Lake voices.

While not all residents currently enjoy easy access to green space, our parks system must grow to meet the recreational needs of everyone in our city. As we expand and improve our parks, we must ensure that all perspectives are considered. We acknowledge that traditional engagement processes may not always reach every neighbor; therefore, we commit to proactive outreach to ensure everyone has the chance to advocate for their needs. Our parks should truly have something for everyone.

Stewardship

- We believe in caring for the people and places around us.

- We strive to maintain and preserve our natural assets while improving the health of wildlife and the environment.

Through our parks, we can make our community and planet a better place. We seek to maximize the environmental value of our green spaces as essential assets for sustainability. Healthy landscapes clean our air and water, absorb carbon, replenish groundwater, manage stormwater, and protect wildlife habitats. In a highly urbanized city like South Salt Lake, these natural lands are increasingly vulnerable. Preserving and enhancing them provides access to nature and inspires residents to become active stewards of the local environment.

Quality of Life

- Our parks contribute to South Salt Lake being a pleasant, safe, and healthy place to live and thrive.
- Time spent in nature can foster a focus on health and wellness in our city.

Parks enhance our city in numerous ways. Access to green space offers significant physical, emotional, and mental health benefits. Parks encourage physical activity and facilitate social interaction. In urban environments, parks are the primary gateway to the outdoors and they benefit our city socially and economically by fostering community and creating safer, more liveable neighborhoods.



85th Celebration at Central Park

Vision

A vision statement presents the City and Advisory Committee’s ambition for the future. It clearly describes the long-term goals, dreams, and aspirations for the city and its parks, neighborhoods, and communities. Practically speaking, the vision statement is a short declaration, similar to a mission statement, summarizing what we aim to achieve for our parks system through deliberate planning and implementation.

South Salt Lake Parks Plan Vision Statement

Parks are vital to the quality of life in South Salt Lake.

Our parks are inclusive civic hubs where people of all ages, abilities, identities, and backgrounds can thrive in nature, celebrate culture, and connect with their community.

We are stewards of our environment and our neighbors, committed to ensuring parks are safe, welcoming oases that promote wellness and a sustainable future for generations to come.

Central Park

Big Ideas

A Big Idea is a thematic goal that helps organize and shape our *Parks Plan*. It's a broad theme that inspires specific programs, policies, and projects. These are the Big Ideas that will tie into the recommendations in the next chapter:

- **Parks for All**
- **Building Community**
- **Thriving in Nature**
- **Healthy Lifestyles**
- **Celebrating Culture**
- **A Sustainable Future**



Kayaks at a floating event on the Jordan River

BIG IDEA 1: Parks for All

Inclusive Access

Breaking down barriers to ensure everyone can enjoy our parks no matter their age, background, or abilities.

A Welcoming Oasis

Creating clean, safe, and inclusive spaces for everyone to enjoy.

All Kinds of Fun

Offering a wide range of accessible recreational options that provide enjoyment by promoting lifestyle and activity variety.



Celebrate South Salt Lake at Central Park

BIG IDEA 2: Building Community

Memories in the Making

Making spaces where friends, families, and neighbors gather and bond to create lasting memories.

Belonging and Pride

Promoting social connections that build a strong sense of community and shared ownership.

Actively Engaged

Creating opportunities that promote stewardship, education, volunteerism, and coaching.



Police Department & Fire Department Tug of War during National Night Out Against Crime at Central Park

BIG IDEA 3: Thriving in Nature

Reconnect and Recharge

Providing sanctuary from urban stress, offering opportunities to connect with the natural world.

Learn and Appreciate

Fostering environmental education and appreciation through first-hand experiences with the wonders of our surrounding.

Meaningful Engagement

Creating immersive experiences that cultivate a sense of wonder and respect for nature.



Youth community gardening workshop at Central Park

BIG IDEA 4: Healthy Lifestyles

Bodies on the Move

Encouraging healthy lifestyles through fitness amenities and programs.

Active Connections

Promoting active transportation by developing safe and accessible routes to parks.

Health and Nutrition

Harnessing the power of nature, clean air, and access to healthy foods to nourish the body and mind.



Biking along Mill Creek Trail in Fitts Park

BIG IDEA 5: Celebrating Culture

Diversity on Display

Showcasing the artistic vibrancy and cultural richness of our community within parks through artistic and cultural programming.

Expression Unleashed

Developing spaces and programs that ignite creative expression and celebrate cultural heritage.

Make Your Mark

Installing art and interpretive signage to tell our community's stories.



4th of July Parade performers

BIG IDEA 6: A Sustainable Future

Protectors of Nature

Fostering environmental stewardship by protecting and creating wildlife habitats and promoting biodiversity.

Thrive Together

Maintaining and enhancing water, air, and land quality for a healthy environment for all.

Green Practices

Committing to projects that promote the sustainability, conservation, and resilience of our park system through responsible park management.



Tree Utah planting event in Fitts Park



Community art project during Freedom Fest at Fitts Park



Live music at Promise Park during Mural Fest

5

Programs & Policies

CHAPTER 5:

Programs & Policies

Systemwide programs and policies apply to the overall operations of our parks. These recommendations are not bound by specific sites or locations, but can and should be implemented in varying ways across the entire parks system. Programs and policies are organized by the six Big Ideas:

- **Parks for All**
- **Building Community**
- **Thriving in Nature**
- **Healthy Lifestyles**
- **Celebrating Culture**
- **A Sustainable Future**

Parks for All



Central Park Playground grand opening

1a. Park Accessibility

Implement regular, thorough assessments of all park features, including parking, pathways, restrooms, playgrounds, and furnishings, to ensure ADA compliance and, where possible, exceed those standards. These assessments will identify and recommend universal design elements, accommodating multigenerational groups and individuals with mobility, sensory, allergy, and other specific needs.

1b. Walkability and Bikeability

Evaluate pedestrian safety, accessibility, and overall experience around each park and between parks and key destinations. Assess the condition of connections, sidewalks, and crosswalks and create a capital improvement plan to address deficiencies with Public Works and Mobility staff.

1c. Public Safety

Continue to enhance the sense of comfort and safety by working with residents and the South Salt Lake Police Department to explore targeted environmental and policy strategies. Solutions can include park-

specific CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) recommendations along with optimized foot, bike, and vehicle patrols to increase visibility and foster community trust. A multi-faceted approach will cultivate a demonstrable sense of safety and comfort, ensuring parks are welcoming spaces for all residents.

1d. Extended Park Hours

Explore an ordinance change to extend park hours to 11:00pm. Analyze potential benefits of later recreation and evaluate the policies of neighboring jurisdictions for compatibility and implementation strategies. Address potential concerns regarding noise and security through planning and mitigation measures.

1e. Lifelong Recreation

Enhance and diversify recreational programming to cater to all age groups and interests. Place particular emphasis on underserved demographics, including teens, adults, and seniors. Expand existing sports leagues and introduce new social events to better serve and engage residents of all ages.

1f. Pet-Friendly Parks

Recognize the growing dog population and explore options to expand pet-friendly access within parks. Investigate the feasibility of designating additional off-leash areas or specific times for off-leash play. Consider hosting dog-centric community events like Salt Lake City's Yappy Hour that feature pop-up off-leash play areas along with food vendors, local breweries, and live entertainment.

1g. Parkside Development Regulations

Review and revise land use ordinances to ensure new developments actively complement adjacent parks, trails, and open spaces. Develop clear guidelines for setbacks, buffer zones, and architectural design to create integrated park frontages that facilitate "eyes on the park," a concept that uses building orientation, transparency,

and ground floor activation to provide natural surveillance, fostering a safer and more vibrant neighborhood. Standards for architectural articulation and massing can transform park perimeters into active, engaging interfaces that strengthen community connection.

1h. Civic Space Requirements

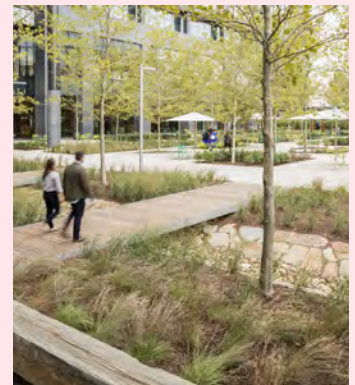
Acquiring sufficient open space to serve our growing population is financially challenging due to rising land costs and limited availability. To meet our future parks needs, the City can capitalize on its growth by enacting development ordinances that require private developers incorporate civic space into new projects. These spaces, whether city-owned or privately maintained, would expand public access to open space, especially in the downtown area, where most new residents will live.

CASE STUDY:

Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) Somerville, Massachusetts

Somerville is a densely populated, four-square-mile city currently working to add 105 acres of open space to address a critical park shortage. Given the city's high land costs, exceeding \$17.4 million per acre in 2024, direct land acquisition was financially unfeasible. Instead, Somerville found a way to engage private developers in providing new open space. The city updated its zoning ordinance to mandate Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) in certain overlays and master-planned developments and adopted an accompanying Civic Space Design Guide that ensures POPS are attractive, accessible, and welcoming. POPS take two forms: city-owned spaces deeded to the city, and developer-owned spaces dedicated for public use in perpetuity.

Within three years, Somerville gained 6.7 acres of open space, with 1.8 acres directly from private development. Through the POPS strategy, Somerville can continue to overcome funding and land constraints through incremental, rapid, and financially sustainable growth of public open space.



Somerville POPS: Top: Boynton Yards. Source: Copley Wolff; Left, Right: Mass General Brigham. Source: OJB

PROGRAMS & POLICIES, BIG IDEA 2: Building Community



Easter Egg Hunt at Central Park

2a. Expand Volunteer Programs

Create new volunteer opportunities at city parks, including improving and empowering the Friends of Fitts community group. Groups and individuals often approach the city hoping to participate in community service activities. Staffing and resources currently limit the number of volunteer events offered throughout the year, meaning that residents have limited opportunities to engage in stewardship and park care. An Adopt-A-Park program and volunteer training program could create new ways for groups to give back to their community and help build technical, handiness, and leadership skills.

2b. Community Partnerships

Seek additional ways to partner with art groups, churches, businesses, youth organizations, Promise South Salt Lake, and the Granite School District to broaden programming, outdoor education, recreation, sponsorship and other programs in city parks. Field trips, planting and gardening activities, and park tours are all potential offerings to our education and civic partners.

2c. Park Ambassadors

Employ friendly staff or volunteers to welcome visitors, provide information, provide assistance, and foster a sense of community within major parks during peak usage. Ambassadors can also help with natural surveillance, such as reporting suspicious behavior and reminding patrons of rules, like leash rules. Assistance like this is also valuable on greenways and trails, which are harder to keep tabs on.

2d. Community Events

Host regular concerts, movie nights, festivals, and family-friendly activities throughout the year to attract residents to our parks and create a vibrant social atmosphere. Adult socials like beer gardens, wine and paint nights, and other kid-free events can round out the City's special event offerings to serve a broader spectrum of residents.

2e. Food and Retail

Update city ordinances and establish policies, procedures, and regulations to allow food trucks, pop-up shops, farmers markets, and other temporary businesses to operate within designated park areas or parking lots. These businesses would enhance the park experience and provide convenient access to food and local goods.

2f. Training and Apprenticeship

Partner with Granite Technical Institute and the district's Career and Technical Education program to develop internship, apprenticeship, job shadowing, and other workforce development opportunities. Work

CASE STUDY:

Youth Forest Council Austin, Texas

The Austin Youth Forest Council (YFC) is a year-long, paid internship program that cultivates environmental stewardship and provides professional development for young people (ages 16-20) who are interested in green careers.

Each year, the program's 12-16 interns work alongside urban forestry staff to gain practical experience through field work (climbing, pruning, species identification), community event planning, educational material development, and neighborhood outreach. Interns conclude the program by developing and leading a Community Action Project focused on education, reforestation, communications, or engagement.

In 2023, Youth Forest Council interns:

- **Engaged with 552 community members**
- **Planted 479 trees** at parks, greenways, and schools
- **Spent 129 hours** performing ecological restoration, environmental education, and community service.

Austin YFC interns lead an environmental education excursion, Source: Austin Youth Forest Council



South Salt Lake Juneteenth Community Festival

with the district to establish a partnership that helps develop the next generation of professionals interested in stewardship, horticulture, forestry, landscape architecture, and outdoor recreation.



Canoe float at the Jordan River

PROGRAMS & POLICIES, BIG IDEA 3: Thriving in Nature

3a. Hiking and Biking Events

Collaborate with the Recreation Department and Mobility staff to organize regular hiking and biking events to explore different neighborhoods and parks, promoting walking, cycling, and rolling for recreation and mobility.

City-sponsored biking events, such as Bike to Work Day or Bike Rides with the Mayor, could highlight the city's existing active transportation network, including Parley's Trail, the Jordan River Trail, Mill Creek Trail, and the upcoming 3900 South Shared Use Path.

3b. Walks and Tours

Offer guided nature walks, historical tours, birdwatching excursions, canoe paddles, and other programs to enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities for learning and exploration. Work with local partners such as Tree Utah, Seven Canyons Trust, and the Jordan River Commission to boost learning and collaboration.



Community Bike Ride on Parley's Trail

3c. Park Prescription

ParkRX programs partner with local organizations, such as schools and health clinics, to connect people with the physical and mental health benefits of parks. Care providers, educators, parents, and other community leaders can “prescribe” park visits, and use City-provided information about walking routes, park events, outdoor fitness activities, and other recreation opportunities.

3d. Park Passport Program

Much like a summer reading program, a park passport initiative could encourage residents of all ages to visit parks and trails in South Salt Lake. Participants could track their progress in a printed passport or guidebook that contains required tasks to complete at each park, like duck counting at Fitts Park or plant identification at Kaleidoscope Park. Completed passports could be returned to the City to receive a reward or be entered into a drawing.

3e. Community Plant and Seed Swap

Organize community events to collect seeds and transplants from native plants found within city parks. These seeds can be stored and distributed to residents who want to plant local species at their homes or could be used for future park landscaping and restoration projects. Community members could also donate offshoots of their own treasured plants to the City or their neighbors.

CASE STUDY:

Come Alive Outside Rutland County, Vermont

Come Alive Outside is a nonprofit dedicated to helping people live better through time spent outside. It sponsors several programs including NatureRX and the Outdoor Passport:

NatureRX: Participants can self enroll or join through community health referral. Healthcare partners provide one-on-one health coaching and tools for setting and tracking goals. The County provides information about outdoor recreation opportunities and helps organize regular outdoor group activities to provide support.

Outdoor Passport: Participants can download an app or receive a booklet with tasks to complete at parks, farmers markets, and community events. Each completed task earns points to win prizes. Kid and adult passports are available for each season.

Since its pilot year in 2017, the passport program has grown in popularity. In 2024:

- **12,400** kids received passports.
- **71%** of participants increased the amount of time spent outside.
- **72%** were more excited about physical activity.
- **80%** of participating families reported an increase in mental wellbeing.
- **75%** of participating families increased their time outdoors.

Passport participants, Source: Come Alive Outside



PROGRAMS & POLICIES, BIG IDEA 4: Healthy Lifestyles



Parachute games at Central Park

4a. Park Fitness

Work with the Recreation Department and other community partners to offer monthly or bimonthly fitness classes and workout sessions in park settings, such as yoga, Zumba, and boot camps. These classes could take advantage of existing fitness course equipment in city parks.

4b. Pickup Sports

Encourage and support the development of informal pickup sports leagues and games in larger parks like Fitts Park and Central Park. The City could establish a sports schedule, provide equipment, and spread the word.

4c. Learn a Sport Night

Organize “Learn a New Sport” nights to offer free introductory lessons in various sports. Participants of all ages and abilities can be exposed to emerging sports like pickleball, futsal, disc golf, and flag football to gain new interests for lifelong recreation.

4d. Community Gardening

Work with Wasatch Community Gardens and other local gardening organizations to offer

a variety of gardening classes and programs. Topics could include vegetable gardening, composting, and native plant selection, to educate residents about sustainable gardening practices and nutrition. Promote community garden signups and explore new locations for community gardens throughout the city.



City Youth Council Gardening Project
at Central Park Community Garden

4e. Trail Signage

To enhance exercise, mobility, and recreation opportunities, the City should implement a strategy to define and label walking loops and exercise routes within parks and along trails. Path signage can include maps, directional posts, wayfinding signs, and cost-effective solutions like stenciling thermoplastic paint on paved surfaces. Wayfinding signs beyond park boundaries should guide users along designated city routes.

For trails with limited access, such as the Jordan River Trail, waypoint markers facilitate accurate location reporting for providing assistance and responding to maintenance needs. The City should explore adding location markers to regional trails like Parley’s Trail and the Jordan River Trail.

CASE STUDY: Safety Trail Markers

Allen, Texas: The Allen Parks Foundation, in collaboration with the City, developed a consistent trail marking system with designated names and colors for routes throughout the city. Signage includes trailhead maps, embedded asphalt buttons, wayfinding posts, and directional signs directing residents to nearby trails and destinations.

Jordan River Trail, Salt Lake City: In 2019, the City installed safety trail markers every 250 feet along the Jordan River Trail to facilitate quicker and more precise emergency responses. To establish a consistent numbering system for the entire trail, the markers are numbered based on their distance in miles from the trail’s origin in Saratoga Springs. The City hopes that this planning will encourage other cities along the trail to adopt similar markers that use this numbering system.

Fremont Park, Playford, Australia: Fremont Park features two designated walking loops that use color-coded asphalt paint and sign posts to define the routes and indicate the distances traveled along the way. Park map signs illustrate the 1 km and 2 km loop layouts, simplifying navigation.

Willamette River Greenway, Oregon: To help visitors navigate the hundreds of miles of greenway trails in a low-cost way, mile markers are applied directly to paved trail surfaces using stencils and thermoplastic roadway paint.



Above: Allen, Texas, Source: Off to the Park DFW; Allen Parks Foundation
Left: Jordan River Trail, Source: ABC4



Above: Fremont Park, Source: Walking SA
Left: Willamette River Greenway, Source: Yves Zsutty



PROGRAMS & POLICIES, BIG IDEA 5: Celebrating Culture



Live entertainment during Freedom Fest at Fitts Park

5a. Arts in the Park

Collaborate with the South Salt Lake Arts Council to organize and promote additional art classes offered within park settings. These classes could even be one-off programs that allow residents to create art and express themselves while spending time in nature.

5b. Performing Arts

Host a variety of community gatherings around concerts and other performing arts events in city parks. Building on the work of the Recreation Department, Arts Council, and Redevelopment Agency, these events would activate our parks, provide cultural enrichment, and showcase local talent.

5c. Cultural Events

Offer culturally diverse programming and events that reflect the rich tapestry of the community, such as cultural festivals, tradition demonstrations, and international food fairs. Additionally, diversifying performance types, styles, and backgrounds at existing city events will broaden their appeal and grow the audience.

5d. History and Culture Walks

Organize guided walks that highlight the historical and cultural significance of natural features and landmarks within the city. Promoting and sharing the ways indigenous inhabitants of the Salt Lake Valley provided stewardship of land and waters would bring new awareness and appreciation for our shared natural resources. Continue to utilize the far west portion of Fitts Park, dubbed the “Goshute Garden,” as a natural space dedicated to preserving this history.

5e. Interpretive Signage

Install interpretive signage throughout the parks to educate visitors about the local environment, history, and ecology. Partnerships with cultural, historical, and environmental organizations, tribes, and agencies could help develop engaging and informative signage.

5f. Public Art Installations

Create spaces and facilities for permanent and rotating art displays, such as a graffiti wall or sculpture display, to showcase the talents of local artists and add visual interest to the park environment. Murals and other public art installations would promote our creative identity and boldly associate our parks with Mural Fest and the artistic spirit of South Salt Lake. Developing a “Percent-for-Art” ordinance or program could ensure that public art is included as part of future city projects and renovations.

5g. Landmark Sculptures

A community landmark sculpture program would use public art to create a cohesive visual identity and celebrate local artistry. The City would select a subject to represent a regional plant or animal, a symbolic object, or an important city landmark like the water tower. Artists would be tasked with creating unique interpretations of this subject by either painting a consistent molded sculptural base, or by creating entirely original sculptures designed and created for each site. In either case, the unifying form or subject would serve as recognizable artistic landmarks that foster a sense of place and guide residents and visitors to our key public spaces.



CASE STUDY:

Cornival Sculptures Altoona, Iowa

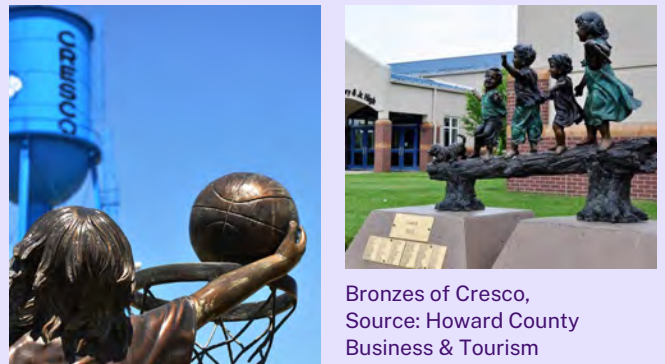
To celebrate the 100th anniversary of hybrid corn, Altoona commissioned twenty corn-shaped sculptures for its Carnival celebration in 2023. Each sculpture was painted by a different local artist and put on permanent display at a civic location around the city at the conclusion of the festival.



Corn Sculptures painted by Ally Frame, Kyle Kirwan, and Nicole James, Source: Visit Altoona

Bronzes of Cresco Cresco, Iowa:

Cresco decided to enhance its civic identity and foster public art appreciation by commissioning bronze sculptures of children to be displayed at parks, schools, and other civic buildings. Over the last five decades, the program has since expanded county-wide, with nearly 60 sculptures currently on display that embody the themes of learning, exploration, and play.



Bronzes of Cresco, Source: Howard County Business & Tourism

PROGRAMS & POLICIES, BIG IDEA 6: A Sustainable Future



Tree planting along Mill Creek in Fitts Park

6a. Jordan River Protections

Support efforts to protect and enhance the Jordan River riparian zone as a vital natural resource. Evaluate land use policies and regulations to minimize the impact of new development near sensitive riparian areas. Continue to collaborate with regional partners on river health initiatives, including the *Central Jordan River Reconnect* planning process led by Salt Lake County.

6b. Creek Restoration Strategies

Prioritize the restoration and protection of local waterways through targeted strategic planning. Efforts would include stream bank stabilization, riparian planting, and invasive species removal to enhance ecological health and water quality. Mill Creek, particularly as it flows through Fitts Park towards the Jordan River, represents a primary opportunity for restoration and requires enhanced protection to safeguard its ecological integrity.

6c. Park Tree Canopy

Develop and implement strategies to expand the tree canopy within city parks. This initiative will provide shade, improve air quality, provide wildlife habitat, and enhance park appearance. Future forestry endeavors will be guided by the data and recommendations found in the *2026 Tree Inventory and Management Plan*.

6d. City Nursery

Establish a city nursery to grow drought-tolerant and native plants for park plantings and restoration projects. This nursery would reduce reliance on external vendors and mitigate availability and delivery constraints. Utilizing gravel bed nurseries — a proven method for producing high-quality stock superior to containerized or balled-and-burlapped products — will allow parks staff to manage inventory efficiently, resulting in significant time and cost savings.

6e. Local Landscapes

To enhance sustainability and reduce operational costs, conduct a comprehensive assessment of park landscapes to identify opportunities to replace non-functional turf with drought-tolerant plants and groundcovers. This initiative will utilize Localscapes landscaping principles, leveraging resources and financial incentives provided by the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District. These practices significantly reduce water and labor expenses while serving as a public educational tool to promote the economic, environmental, and aesthetic advantages of waterwise landscaping.

6f. Water Conservation Plan

In alignment with the city's *Water Conservation Plan*, establish clear conservation targets and implement strategic initiatives to meet them. Efforts should focus on optimizing irrigation efficiency through comprehensive audits, system repairs, drip irrigation conversions, and specialized staff training.

Furthermore, continue to reduce non-essential turf, plant shade trees to achieve net water savings, and adopt sustainable management



Goathead cleanup along the Jordan River

practices that prioritize soil health and water-wise turf varieties over chemical-dependent maintenance.

6g. Sustainable Park Maintenance

Continue to transition maintenance equipment to all-electric or low-emission models to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and lower long-term costs. Further minimize our environmental footprint by reducing reliance on synthetic fertilizers and herbicides in favor of natural soil management practices. Additionally, diversifying plant and tree species across the landscape will increase biodiversity, helping to prevent the spread of disease while ensuring a resilient and healthy urban canopy.

CASE STUDY:

Sensitive Lands Overlay Districts Boise, Idaho

Boise's Sensitive Lands Overlay Districts protect critical environmental features from development impacts by supplementing base zoning regulations. These overlays safeguard vulnerable ecosystems, ensure public health and safety, and preserve natural resources.

The Boise River System Overlay, specifically, aims to prevent flooding, preserve wildlife habitat, manage runoff, limit pollution, and protect the Boise River as a public asset. It mandates continuous public access along the Boise River Greenbelt and promotes preservation-focused design through clear guidelines on setbacks, permitted uses, development standards, hazard

mitigation, and natural space enhancements. This comprehensive approach is meant to balance urban development with the environmental conservation of sensitive riparian areas.



Boise River Greenbelt, Source: This is Boise



6

Projects

CHAPTER 6:

Projects

This chapter outlines the key projects proposed to enhance South Salt Lake’s park system by directly addressing identified access and amenity gaps. Driven by community priorities and goals, these recommendations include the creation of six new neighborhood parks, four trail and greenways enhancements, and three civic plazas. Continuing to work towards a recreation center is also a key recommendation of this plan.

To expand our city’s offering of recreation activities, several park amenities and enhancements are recommended to be added over the next decade. These amenities should be considered for inclusion at both existing and new park locations.

This comprehensive set of recommendations is designed to enhance South Salt Lake parks and improve the experience of those who visit them. These programs, policies, and projects are meant to prioritize accessibility, community building, human health, and environmental sustainability. The successful implementation of these strategies can significantly enhance the park system, making it more vibrant, accessible, and enjoyable for all residents. These improvements will not only promote the physical health and wellbeing of the community, but also foster a stronger sense of pride and belonging.

By prioritizing these projects and working collaboratively with residents, partners, and other stakeholders, we can create a park system that truly serves the needs and aspirations of our entire community.

New Parks & Facilities

As South Salt Lake anticipates welcoming thousands of new residents in the next decade (WFRC Population Projections, 2023), the development of new parks is not only an enhancement to our city, but a necessity in order to maintain and improve our current level of service. Without strategic expansion, the existing park acreage per resident will inevitably decline, leading to increased crowding, reduced access, and a diminished quality of recreational experiences.

Investing in new parks, trails, and recreation facilities ensures that as our city grows, all residents will continue to have equitable access to the vital physical, social, and environmental benefits of open space and outdoor recreation. This will ultimately contribute to a higher quality of life for everyone.

Parks

Not all areas of our city have equal access to park space. To address this, this plan proposes the creation of new parks in six target areas. These target areas do not designate specific sites, but identify zones where the City should look to acquire new park space to improve access. New parks in these opportunity areas will increase the number of residents within a 10-minute walk of a park, extending the benefits of park proximity.

P1: Downtown Parks

This plan estimates that the downtown area will need around six acres of park space to provide sufficient service levels for the thousands of future downtown residents.

The City does not currently own any property downtown, further challenging universal park access. Most large lots downtown are built out or targeted for future redevelopment. With high property values in the downtown area, and limited available land, multiple smaller parks, pocket parks, and plazas may be necessary. Working with downtown developers to incorporate publicly accessed parks and plazas on private property

may help provide some of the desperately needed open space.

P2: Water Tower Neighborhood Park P3: Southgate Neighborhood Park P4: Mill Creek Neighborhood Park

The densification of Downtown South Salt Lake will likely extend development pressures into adjacent underbuilt neighborhoods. As highlighted in the *2023 Water Tower Neighborhood Plan*, expanding access to open space is a top priority for local residents. Because current parks are concentrated east of State Street, westward population growth will exacerbate existing service gaps, creating a critical need for both active and passive recreation spaces on the west side.

Since any new parks in this area would be located within “park deserts,” they must be designed to serve the community to the greatest extent possible. Whether developed individually or as a collective network, these spaces should offer a variety of amenities to accommodate a broad demographic, including children, teens, adults, seniors, and pet owners. Potential park sites include city-owned parcels along Main Street at 2700 South and Claybourne Avenue, as well as properties currently owned by the Granite School District and UTA.



Breakdancers at Mural Fest in the Water Tower Neighborhood



Neighborhood Block Party in the Riverfront Neighborhood

P5: Riverfront-Meadowbrook Neighborhood Park

Park access in the city’s southwest corner is hindered by significant physical and operational barriers. While several recreation sites exist nearby, including Olene Walker Elementary, General Holm Park, the Jordan River Parkway, and Sunnyvale Park (Millcreek City), each presents limitations that restrict community use:

Although the Olene Walker Elementary campus features playgrounds, sports courts, and a field, these facilities are fully fenced and remain closed to the public after school hours. Consequently, local residents are unable to utilize this recreation space during evenings and weekends, a significant departure from the shared-use accessibility found at other city school campuses.

General Holm Park has few amenities and its secluded location at the end of a dead-end street creates safety and visibility concerns. During a Parks Plan open house at Olene Walker Elementary, many neighborhood parents were unaware that both the park and the Jordan River Parkway existed just a block away.

While Sunnyvale Park has received recent upgrades, Meadowbrook Expressway (3900 South) acts as a high-traffic barrier that prevents safe pedestrian access for South Salt Lake residents living on the north side of the thoroughfare.

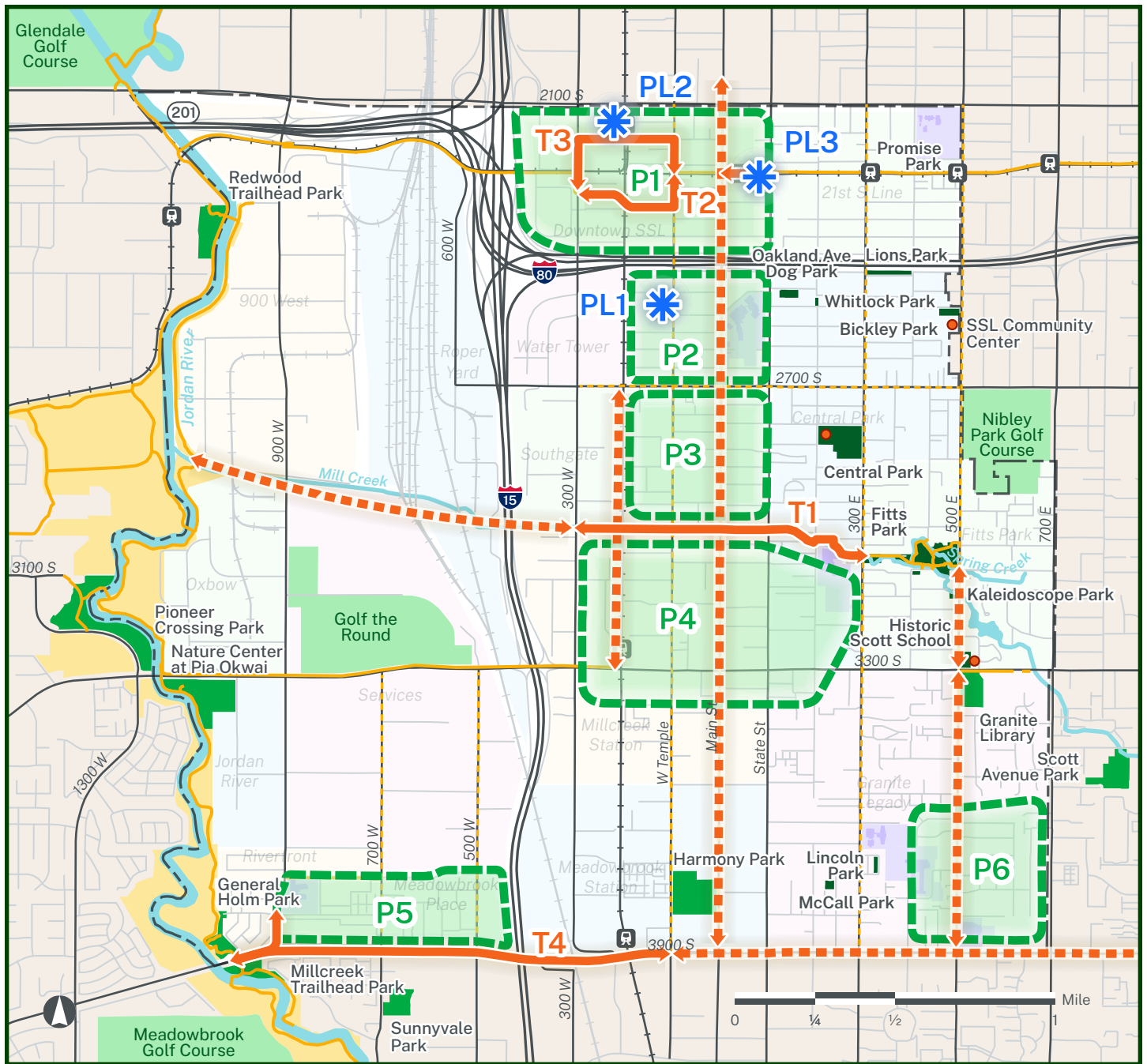
To address these barriers, the City should prioritize

the creation of a highly visible and easily accessible park within the Riverfront or Meadowbrook neighborhoods. Potential opportunities include acquiring open parcels near 700 West or creatively repurposing the vacant 900 West right-of-way into a functional public space.

P6: Granite Legacy Neighborhood Park

As one of the final areas annexed into the city, the southeast corner currently lacks equitable access to essential recreation and mobility amenities — specifically sidewalk connections, street lighting, and park space. This area’s diverse land use encompasses a mix of multifamily and single-family housing alongside retail, office, and service sectors. The local population is further augmented by residents in large apartment complexes just south of 3900 South in Millcreek, as well as newly developed townhouses and condominiums throughout the Granite Legacy neighborhood.

To address this localized amenity gap, the City should explore partnerships or land acquisition with the Granite School District. District properties hold significant potential for public space, including 3 acres of currently unused land at the former Utah International Charter School site and nearly 6.5 acres at Granite Connection High School, which features underutilized open space at the corner of 3900 South and 500 East. By exploring opportunities to add park space at these sites, the City can provide much-needed park service to this underserved area of the city.



- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Parks | P1: Downtown Parks |
| | P2: Water Tower Neighborhood Park |
| | P3: Southgate Neighborhood Park |
| | P4: Mill Creek Neighborhood Park |
| | P5: Riverfront-Meadowbrook Neighborhood Park |
| | P6: Granite Legacy Neighborhood Park |
| Plazas | PL1: Water Tower Plaza |
| | PL2: Central Pointe Station Plaza |
| | PL3: State Street Plaza |
| Trails & Greenways | T1: Mill Creek Greenway |
| | T2: Parley's Trail Improvements |
| | T3: Downtown Green Loop |
| | T4: 3900 South Shared Use Path |

Proposed Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Proposed Park Target Area
- ✳ Proposed Plazas
- Proposed Trails
- Long-Range Trails

- #### Existing Park and Recreation Facilities
- South Salt Lake Parks
 - Parks and Facilities Provided by Others
 - Golf Courses
 - Natural Open Space
 - Schoolyards
 - Community Centers

Existing Trails and Paths

- Trails
- Bike Lanes (Shared and Dedicated)

Base Map Features

- South Salt Lake City Boundary
- Freeway
- Major Streets
- Light Rail Station
- Light Rail
- Railroad
- River or Creek
- Oxbow
- South Salt Lake Neighborhood

Plazas

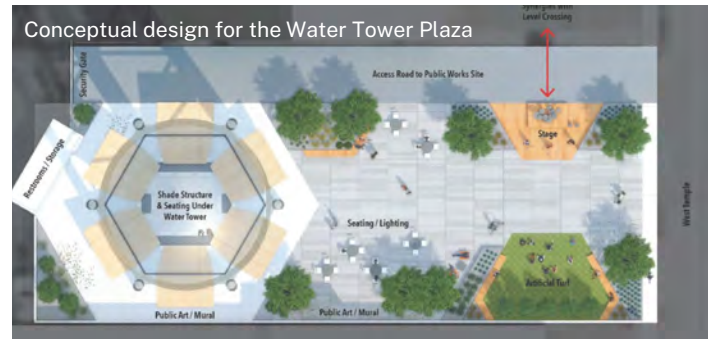
There are three standout opportunities to build or have built signature plaza spaces within the city. Due to the deficit of open spaces and gathering places west of State Street, each plaza is meant to provide a small-scale civic node for passive and programmed recreation and socialization. Each target location was selected to highlight and better define a key gateway or landmark of the city.

PL1: Water Tower Plaza

The iconic Horton Water Tower is the most recognizable landmark in South Salt Lake, yet it remains underutilized as a community asset. The structure is currently fenced off and requires significant seismic, structural, and cosmetic restoration to fully realize its potential as a public gathering space.

As highlighted in the *2023 Water Tower Neighborhood Plan*, there is strong community support for restoring the tower and creating a new civic space at its base. The ongoing development of the new Public Works campus provides a unique opportunity to transform the site into a vibrant landmark plaza, which is scheduled for construction as the final phase of the campus project. Expected

to be complete in 2027, the Water Tower Plaza will serve as a central focal point for the neighborhood, providing a premier venue for small community gatherings and major city celebrations like Craftoberfest.



CASE STUDY:

Water Tower Plaza Gilbert, Arizona

In December 2024, Gilbert reopened its 0.7 acre Water Tower Plaza after a year-long construction project that addressed aging infrastructure and improved the visitor experience.

The project's \$5.9 million budget included:

- Shaded splash pad
- Tree-lined picnic area
- New restrooms
- Grassy lawn for community events
- Food truck spaces and utilities
- Upgraded, programmable tower lighting

Top: "Lighting of the Water Tower" event, Source: Small Giants
Left: Plaza Plan View, Source: City of Gilbert
Right: New shaded splash pad, Source: City of Gilbert



Conceptual rendering of a transit plaza at Central Pointe TRAX Station.
Source: South Salt Lake Downtown Connect, ARCADIS



PL2: Central Pointe Station Plaza

As one of the busiest stations in the UTA system, the Central Pointe Station sees a daily average of 2,144 boardings on TRAX and S-Line routes and 387 boardings on local bus routes (UTA Open Data Portal, 2024).

Currently, the multimodal hub is located within a parking lot of a big box retail complex and offers few amenities beyond shelters and benches.

Connectivity is also an issue at Central Pointe, with none of the station's platforms having access points from the east, cutting off access for the current and future residents living in Downtown SSL.

With investment and collaboration from the transit authority, UDOT, and adjacent property owners, the station could be reimagined as a vibrant hub for not only mobility, but commerce, and urban recreation.

PL3: State Street Plaza

The South Salt Lake City Station at the intersection of State Street, the Parley's Trail, and the S-Line is a key gateway into downtown.

Currently home to a standard streetcar platform, there are many potential ways to improve the experience and sense of place along Central Pointe Place.

Partnering with local developers and landowners

along with public stakeholders like UTA and UDOT will be essential to improving the streetscapes around this intersection and finding ways to activate these downtown blocks.

Curating the perfect blend of land uses and welcoming open space can create impactful places, even if they are privately held, but publicly accessed.

Trails & Greenways

Expanding our urban trail network will provide new opportunities for recreation and physical exercise while also contributing to a better connected mobility and active transportation system. The City can work to overcome barriers imposed by railroads, freeways, and missing street connections by continuing to develop a robust network of sidewalks, paths, and trails.

A greenway commonly consists of linear parks and tree-lined trails that follow natural and built features like rivers, creeks, canals, railroads, and roadways. Greenways provide recreational opportunities, improve water quality, protect riparian habitats, and enhance the beauty of the community.

In an urban setting like South Salt Lake, a greenway can be designed to bring nature through the heart of the city with trees, benches, and high-quality pedestrian and biking amenities.

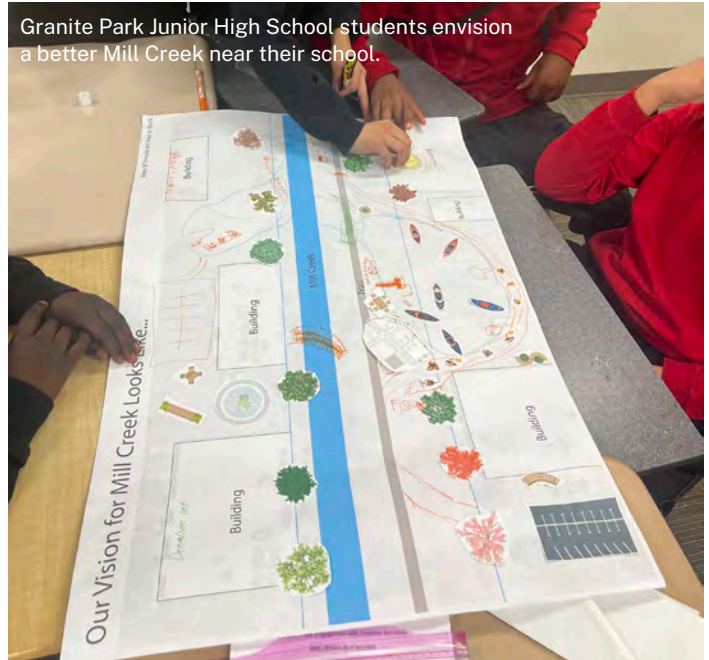
Key considerations:

- **Environmental sensitivity:** Minimize environmental impacts during planning and construction. Preserving existing mature trees and integrating green infrastructure, such as bioswales, can help manage stormwater naturally and enhance the local ecosystem.
- **Community engagement:** Involve the community in the planning and design process to ensure the greenway meets local needs and preferences. This includes identifying key routes and destinations to be served by future trail connections.
- **Land acquisition:** Secure necessary landownership, easements, and development agreements for greenway development.

T1: Mill Creek Greenway

For years, South Salt Lake and regional partners have envisioned a Mill Creek Greenway, a concept supported by past park and trail master plans and the *Seven Greenways Vision Plan*. In January 2025, a ULI Technical Assistance Panel convened experts to develop strategies for this vision, focusing on the creek between 200 East and 200 West. Their recommendations, encompassing improved public access, stream restoration, and sustainable development, included specific policies, ordinances, and funding strategies.

A continuous Mill Creek trail would significantly enhance east-west connectivity, currently hindered by State Street, TRAX rails, and I-15. Notably, a 1.5-mile gap exists between Parley's Trail and



3300 South, lacking safe pedestrian and cycling routes. Currently, the Mill Creek trail alignment forces users to navigate the dangerous I-15 interchange at 3300 South, where they interact with approximately 85,000 vehicles every day (UDOT 2023 data). This section of 3300 South is among the city's most hazardous and deadly thoroughfares.

Beyond enhancing mobility options, the Mill Creek Greenway would protect wildlife habitat, expand recreation opportunities, and provide vital open space. While the long-term vision extends from 700 East to the Jordan River, this plan prioritizes extending the Fitts Park section from 300 East to 300 West, as an initial phase of this transformative project.



Conceptual rendering of a greenway along Mill Creek near Main Street, Source: Seven Greenways Vision, Design Workshop

T2: Parley's Trail Improvements

With the completion of bridges over 900 West and the Jordan River, Parley's Trail is complete from the mouth of Parley's Canyon to the Jordan River Parkway but there are still important improvements needed along the trail, especially within Downtown SSL. In the downtown area, the trail mainly consists of on-street shared and painted bike lanes, aside from sections between Main Street and West Temple and west of 300 West.

It is recommended that the City use off-street paths, protected bike lanes, and other high-comfort pedestrian facilities to fill in the downtown gaps of the trail. An improved trail experience through the downtown will make for safer and more enjoyable active transportation through the urban core of South Salt Lake, benefiting residents, businesses, and visitors.

T3: Downtown Green Loop

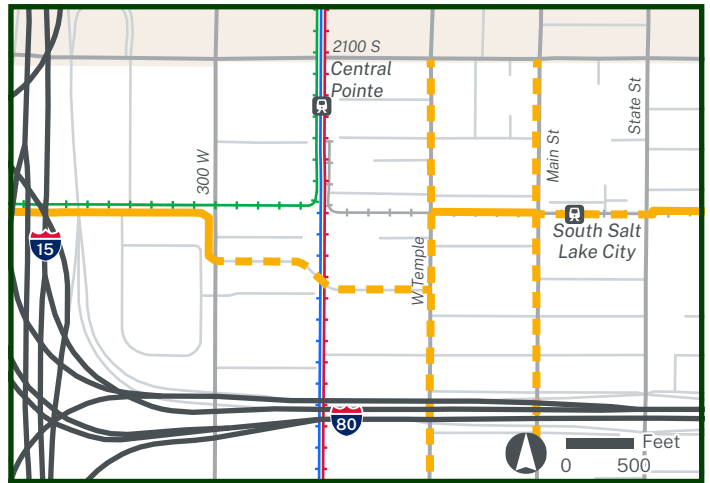
As more residents move into downtown, most will live in multifamily housing without personal yards or open space. Because open and available land downtown is scarce, comfortable and attractive streetscapes and linear parks will be a valuable source of recreation space for residents in the dense downtown area.

While not part of a specific linear trail alignment, the green loop would link several blocks around downtown with generous sidewalks, bike facilities, trees, shade structures, street furnishings, and other urban amenities.



An enhanced walking and biking loop would not only bring new recreation opportunities, but would also improve connections between residents, local businesses, regional trails, transit stations, and Salt Lake City's 300 West bikeway.



Mural Fest patrons bike and walk on 300 West in Downtown SSL



Existing Downtown Trails and Bike Lanes

- Parley's Trail
- - - Bike Lanes (Shared and Dedicated)
-  Light Rail Station
-  TRAX Lines
-  S-Line Streetcar



Rendering of the proposed SLC Green Loop, Source: Wenk



The 3900 South Shared Use Path is planned for the south side of the expressway, Source: Avenue Consultants

T4: 3900 South Shared Use Path

A collaborative project between UDOT, South Salt Lake, Millcreek, and Holladay, this initiative will establish a new shared-use path along 3900 South, stretching from the Jordan River Parkway to 2300 East. In 2024, UDOT announced a \$10 million allocation for the project through the Utah Trail Network program, with construction slated to begin in 2026.

The preliminary design for the first phase features a paved path on the south side of the roadway, extending from the Jordan River to West Temple. This segment will connect destinations like Harmony Park, the Meadowbrook TRAX station, Sunnyvale Park, Olene Walker Elementary, General Holm Park, the Jordan River Trail, and the Meadowbrook Nature Area. A trail spur will be constructed to link General Holm Park to Carlisle Park Lane via the unused 900 West right-of-way.

Recreation Facilities

R1: Recreation Center

South Salt Lake continues to actively pursue a county recreation center to enhance indoor recreation and community-building opportunities

for its residents. Envisioned to include a gymnasium, fitness center, and meeting rooms, the facility is anticipated to be included in the County's long-range *Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan*, expected later in 2026. The City looks to explore partnerships with the County and the Granite School District to identify viable locations and develop a design program that effectively addresses the community's needs.

R2: Sports Fields

The City's current sports field inventory significantly constrains the variety of recreation programming available to residents. At Central Park, the soccer and softball fields share the same footprint, with the diamond's outfield doubling as part of the primary soccer pitch. This overlap prevents simultaneous use and limits drop-in play. To bridge this gap, the City continues to pursue land for regulation-sized fields for teen and adult competition, while also exploring new partnerships with the Granite School District to expand public and league access to campus athletic fields.

Recommended Parks & Facilities

Project	Acres Added	Description	Term			Potential Locations
			Short (1-3 Years)	Mid (4-6 Years)	Long (7-10 Years +)	
Parks	8.5		3	3	2	
P1: Downtown Parks	6.0	Multiple pocket parks, linear parks, and plazas to serve growing downtown population. Work with developers to provide privately-owned public spaces		X	X	Spread across the neighborhood to serve future residents and workers in developments throughout downtown
P2: Water Tower Neighborhood Park	0.5	A park to add much needed green space to this historically industrial neighborhood	X			City-owned property near Main St & 2700 S or property currently owned by Granite School District
P3: Southgate Neighborhood Park	0.5	A park within walking distance of Southgate Neighborhood residents	X			City-owned property near Main St & Claybourne Ave
P4: Mill Creek Neighborhood Park	0.5	A neighborhood park, linear park, or trailhead to serve Millcreek Station Neighborhood which is mostly outside of a park walkshed			X	Near future Mill Creek Greenway corridor or near Millcreek TRAX station
P5: Riverfront-Meadowbrook Neighborhood Park	0.5	Park to complement amenities at General Holm Park and the Jordan River Trail	X	X		Unused 900 West ROW or vacant parcels near 700 West
P6: Granite Legacy Neighborhood Park	0.5	New park space to serve residents in this corner who live outside of a park walkshed		X		Granite School District property at former Utah International Charter School or Granite Connection High School
Plazas	1.5		2	1	0	
PL1: Water Tower Plaza	0.25	Restoration of Horton Water Tower and new civic plaza at its base for events	X			Under the Horton Water Tower (2500 S West Temple) at new Public Works campus
PL2: Central Pointe Station Plaza	0.75	Transform busy transit station into a vibrant hub with better amenities and connectivity		X		Central Pointe TRAX station area with improved connections at 2100 South, Commonwealth Ave, and Utopia Ave
PL3: State Street Plaza	0.5	Enhance the gateway at State Street with improved streetscapes and activated spaces	X			State St & Central Pointe Pl (Parley's Trail), potentially enhancing the S-Line station
Trails & Greenways			3	4	3	
T1: Mill Creek Greenway	-	A trail following Mill Creek, providing a greenway with trees, pedestrian amenities, and access to nature.	X	X	X	Along or near Mill Creek. Short-term: 300 East to 200 West; Long-term: west to the Jordan River Trail
T2: Parley's Trail Improvements	-	High-comfort pedestrian and biking facilities on downtown portion of the Parley's Trail	X	X	X	Central Pointe Pl, West Temple, Haven Ave, and 300 West
T3: Downtown Green Loop	-	Network of green spaces, pathways, linear parks, and enhanced streetscapes to improve walkability, recreation, and connectivity		X	X	Downtown SSL, possibly along portions of Main St, West Temple, Commonwealth Ave, Utopia Ave, or 300 West
T4: 3900 South Shared Use Path	-	Replacing existing sidewalks with new shared-use path, reducing shoulder and lane widths along 3900 South	X	X		Along 3900 South. Short term: Jordan River Trail to West Temple; Long-term: West Temple to 2300 East
Recreation Center			0	0	2	
R1: Recreation Center	-	County facility for fitness, indoor recreation, and community space		X	X	Collaborate with the County to study potential locations
R2: Sports Fields	-	Athletic facility for expanded league and unorganized sports use.			X	Partner with the County and school district to develop new fields or expand public use of current facilities
Grand Totals	10.0		8	9	7	

New Amenities

This list of park amenities and enhancements was developed based on community input. The amenities described in this chapter were prioritized from the complete list of suggestions found in the appendix. These amenities were prioritized by how frequently each amenity was requested and whether they are currently available within the existing park system.

These recommendations are not tied to specific sites or locations and can be considered for multiple new or existing city parks. As this plan is adopted and used to form capital improvement planning, sites can be identified based on community input, site compatibility, and land availability. Design guidelines can be found in the appendix of this plan and include key considerations for each amenity type.

Splash Pad

Install a splash pad or play fountain to provide a fun and refreshing water play for children and families during the summer months. This facility could also be installed on privately-owned but publicly accessible land through development approval processes.

Skate Park

Construct a high-quality skate park with a variety of features to accommodate different skill levels and riding styles. Skate parks provide free, low-barrier recreation and can draw all types of skaters, from beginners to experts. Skate parks give youth a place to exercise, socialize, find mentorship, and build community. Residents currently must travel to Salt Lake City, Taylorsville, or West Valley City to skate.

Playgrounds

Improving playground offerings will likely involve upgrading and replacing existing playgrounds and providing new opportunities for play. Requested play features include: ziplines, swings, slides, monkey bars, tree houses, and climbers.

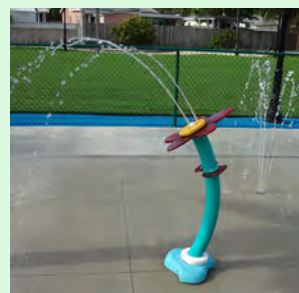
CASE STUDY:

Cozumel Park Splash Pad Key West, Florida

Installed in 2017, this splash pad provides a vibrant and accessible space for children to cool off and play. The responsive water system allows kids to push a button to activate overhead and low sprayers to engage kids of all ages. The splash pad features a 600 sf wet area and uses 70 gallons per minute when in use.

A recirculation system collects water through a central ground drain before it passes through filters, chemical treatment, and ultra-violet light sanitation. The treated water is mixed with fresh water before being pumped back through the water play features. This water recycling process can reuse up to 75% of the used water that would otherwise drain into the municipal wastewater system.

The splash pad reduces water waste through push button activation, low-flow spray features, and a water recirculation system, Source: Landscape Structures



CASE STUDY:

Nature Kids Discovery Zone Lafayette, Colorado

The Discovery Zone playground aims to connect residents of a densely-populated, low-income area with the natural world, providing access to nature experiences to kids and families with limited economic means. The multi-sensory playscape was completed in 2019 adjacent to an international elementary school.

It was constructed with natural materials, including boulders, logs, wetlands, creeks, hidden paths, and a treehouse platform. A mile-long trail links the playground to neighborhoods and the Lafayette business district.



Nature Kids Discovery Zone, Source: Design Concepts

Nature Play

This type of unstructured play encourages children to interact with and in nature. Nature play allows children to develop physical, mental, and social skills by using their imaginations, taking risks, and being curious in an open-ended natural environment.

Nature play can be facilitated by providing and providing ways to interact with logs, rocks, sand, water, and plants. The creeks, trees, and wildlife In Fitts Park have great potential to provide nature play opportunities.

Sport Courts

Provide facilities for diverse sports and activities like basketball, futsal, roller skating, and tennis. Basketball was a popular activity in the outreach survey with community needs including resurfacing existing courts and building new ones throughout the city.

Sport Court and Field Lighting

Install high-quality, energy-efficient lighting on existing and future sports courts and fields (basketball, soccer, pickleball, softball, beach volleyball, etc.) to extend playing hours and improve safety during evening and nighttime use.

Pickleball

Continue to increase capacity to meet growing demand by building additional dedicated pickleball courts with appropriate surfacing and markings.

Currently the city has two courts at Central Park and two at Bickley Park. Advantages of distributing courts throughout the city means that more residents have close access to a court. Building a concentration of courts in a central location allows for more programming opportunities like tournaments and league play. Pickleball 'complexes' also make for more convenient use by allowing players to wait for a free court in one central location.

Volleyball

Volleyball is a popular social sport that can be played by residents of all ages and abilities. As a non-contact team sport, volleyball can provide a platform for youth and adults to meet new people, develop collaborative skills, build friendships, and engage in social activities on and off of the court. Both sand and hard court surfaces are options for future volleyball courts, each having their own benefits.

Walking Paths

Develop and maintain walking paths within parks to provide safe, enjoyable, and accessible routes for residents of all ages and abilities. The integration of shade, lighting, directional signage, and multiple entry points ensures a comfortable environment and promotes a sense of safety for all path users. Encourage active lifestyles, through specialized signage and pavement markings that inform walking, jogging, and running workouts, transforming park paths into exercise amenities.

Crucially, all paths will be designed to exceed accessibility standards, ensuring they are navigable for individuals using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. By strategically connecting interior park paths to the city's broader sidewalk network, the City can provide seamless, continuous routes that integrate parks into the daily mobility of the community.

Benches and Contemplation Spaces

Benches and other site furnishing provide seating for resting, relaxation, and enjoying the scenery. Contemplation features like gardens, water features, shaded groves, and hammocking areas can create spaces for quiet reflection and contemplation. Include benches that are accessible and provide companion seating by keeping adjacent areas clear and level for wheelchairs.

Park Services

Essential infrastructure such as restrooms, drinking fountains, and park furniture makes city parks more functional and inclusive. These amenities allow visitors to stay longer and better accommodate the needs of parents, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. By prioritizing the installation and maintenance of these core services, the City can ensure that parks remain reliable and welcoming hubs for all residents.

Trees

Beyond their ecological value, trees are high-performing park amenities that function as essential "green infrastructure." Unlike static equipment, trees are dynamic assets that increase in value over time, providing services that directly improve the visitor experience. Through transpiration and shade, mature canopies can lower surrounding temperatures, expanding park

usefulness during hot Utah summers. By creating "outdoor rooms," trees offer a sense of enclosure and privacy, providing quiet spaces for reflection and stress reduction that open grass cannot replicate.

In an urban environment, trees also serve as living filters and interactive play features. They act as acoustic buffers against traffic noise and capture particulate matter to purify air within the park. For younger visitors, trees offer a sensory nature play experience, providing shade for playgrounds and natural elements for imaginative exploration. By strategically planting trees to shade benches, paths, and play structures, the City can transform basic open space into a comfortable, healthy, and multi-sensory community space.

Shade and Cooling

As summers become increasingly warm, shade and cooling features are critical for mitigating heat-related health hazards and ensuring parks remain usable during peak temperatures. Shaded areas are consistently the most popular destinations for residents, as evidenced by the high usage of the covered playgrounds at Fitts Park.

To reduce the impact of extreme heat, the City can utilize a strategic mix of cooling tools, including the preservation and planting of natural canopies for long-term air quality benefits, the installation of architectural shade such as pavilions, pergolas, umbrellas, and shade sails for immediate relief, and the incorporation of active cooling elements like misting features and covered seating in high-traffic gathering spaces.



Bench along Mill Creek Trail in Fitts Park

Park Lighting

Aside from deterring crime and increasing overall safety and security, better lighting coverage would also improve usability for park users. More lighting can help more people enjoy our parks during evening hours, especially during winter months where the sun sets before 6:00pm for 25% of the year. New lighting should improve park appearance and promote sustainability by utilizing attractive and energy-efficient light fixtures.

Lighting can also be a tool to help promote park closing hours by dimming before closure to signal that the park is about to close. West Valley City

dims park lighting at 10:45 pm so that people are motivated to leave by closing time at 11:00 pm.

Safety Technology

Invest in safety and security systems to provide additional monitoring and emergency response coverage. These can include camera systems to discourage, monitor, and resolve criminal activity. Emergency call boxes or dedicated phones in strategic locations with parks could allow patrons to quickly contact dispatch and emergency services if needed.



Community gardening meetup at Fitts Park

CASE STUDY:

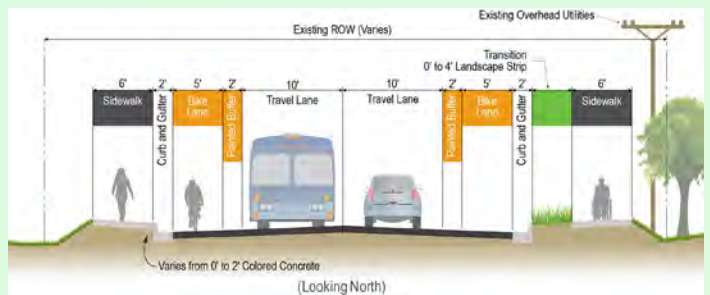
Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan Primos Park, Boulder, Colorado

In 2024, Boulder was selected to participate in the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities Program. The initiative set out to identify and address existing barriers to walking, biking, and rolling to Primos Park, which aims to be the city's first fully accessible park when it opens in 2027.

An assessment of the area pinpointed several key accessibility gaps, including missing sidewalks, unsafe street crossings, and hazardous traffic conditions, which impeded independent and universal access between the park and the adjacent neighborhood.

The community-driven action plan identified key projects to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility. Improvements include adding sidewalks, traffic calming measures, and high-comfort crossings, some of which are already underway in anticipation for the park's opening.

New underpasses and on-street improvements create safer multi-use path and bike trail connections to the Primos Park site,
Source: Icon Engineering and the City of Boulder



Park Connections

Develop a network of safe and accessible pathways connecting parks throughout the community. Focus new pedestrian facilities around and between parks to create safe routes to transit and other community destinations. This network may include midblock crossings, enhanced crosswalks, bike lanes, shared-use paths, and wider sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and skaters.

Accessible Routes

Ensure adequate and accessible parking and circulation routes are available at all parks, including designated spaces for people with disabilities. While the City strives to promote active transportation and alternative mobility methods throughout the city, some residents will require

vehicular access in order to enjoy park space. For parks without dedicated parking lots, the City should use signage and striping to designate on-street accessible parking spaces along with installing ramps, curb cuts, and lighting to provide convenient and safe access.

Park Signage and Wayfinding

Implement a clear and consistent wayfinding system to guide visitors to and around city parks. This wayfinding system may include directional signs, map kiosks, and better online and printed resources. Additionally, integrate educational signage to engage the public with information on local ecology, historical significance, and the park system's ongoing conservation initiatives.



Pickup basketball during National Night Out at Central Park

7

Implementation

CHAPTER 7:

Implementation

This plan establishes a framework for the next decade of improvements and investments in South Salt Lake parks. Successful implementation relies on a strategic investment approach that carefully considers the long-term implications for maintenance, operations, and programming. This chapter outlines the key actions required to prioritize recommendations and understand their fiscal impacts. Furthermore, it establishes specific performance metrics to measure success, ensuring that the City can make the informed decisions necessary for full plan implementation and hold itself accountable to the community's vision.

Progress Metrics

Since South Salt Lake is largely a built-out community, opportunities for land acquisition and new park construction are inherently limited. To address this challenge, the Parks Plan adopts a realistic, prioritized approach to establishing green spaces in the areas of greatest need, particularly in neighborhoods west of State Street that currently lack sufficient access. As this plan is implemented over the next decade, the City will utilize the following performance metrics to measure impact, monitor progress, and ensure the system evolves to meet the community's aspirations.

Metric	Goal	Current
1: Percentage of residents living within a 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk of a park, plaza, or open space	100%	80%
2: Percentage of residents living within a 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk of a city park	80%	60%
3: Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (city and county parks and open space)	6.0	5.0
4: No net loss of park or open space (including at facilities provided by others)		

Capital Improvement Planning

Following the adoption of this plan, the City will initiate critical follow-up planning processes. A primary step is the completion of a formal Impact Fee Analysis and Facilities Plan. This is a vital requirement for securing ongoing funding, as it establishes the legal nexus for developer contributions toward park infrastructure. This analysis complements the *Capital Improvement Plan* (CIP) by helping the City form and deliver on community expectations, ensuring that funding mechanisms are aligned with the pace of growth.

The Parks CIP itself consists of two parts: a prioritized list of recommended projects and a detailed breakdown of assumed timeframes and costs (both upfront and ongoing). This process organizes investments so they can be executed effectively within time, resource, and staffing constraints. Ultimately, the Parks CIP informs the overall City Capital Improvement Plan, which synchronizes park investments with all other departmental capital projects across the City.

Current Funding Landscape

South Salt Lake's current and future park systems require two distinct types of funding:

- **Capital Funding:** One-time investments for land acquisition, planning, design, and construction. This also covers major renovations, repairs, and permanent physical improvements to parks and facilities.
- **Operational Funding:** Ongoing expenses for the services, programming, and maintenance needed to keep parks running. This includes labor, materials, equipment, and utilities, as well as administrative costs for events, communications, and management.

General Fund

The majority of South Salt Lake's park system — including daily operations, staff salaries, and minor repairs — is funded through the General Fund. This fund is composed of citywide revenues derived from property taxes, sales taxes, and various fees. Because the General Fund supports nearly all City departments, park projects must compete annually for these limited resources. Consequently, the General Fund is typically utilized for essential



Refugee Soccer League at Central Park

maintenance and small-scale improvements rather than major new park developments.

Park Impact Fees

This vital funding source is generated through one-time charges imposed on new residential and commercial developments as a condition of their approval.

By state law, impact fees are strictly regulated and may only be used to mitigate the impact of new growth. This means they must be spent on projects that expand the capacity of the park system, such as acquiring new land or building new amenities. Impact fees cannot be used for ongoing operations, maintenance, or the repair of existing facilities.

While the City currently collects these fees, the adoption of this plan will serve as the foundation for updating the *Impact Fee Analysis* (IFA) and *Impact Fee Facilities Plan* (IFFP). This update will incorporate new population projection data and utilize the project lists established in this plan to adjust the current fee schedule. This process ensures that developer contributions accurately reflect the cost of maintaining South Salt Lake's desired level of service as the community grows.

Funding Strategies

To implement priority projects and ensure long-term sustainability, the City embraces a multi-faceted approach to securing financial resources.

Economic Development and Tax Increment Financing

The City can leverage specialized economic development tools to fund infrastructure in high-growth areas, ensuring that as density increases, the public realm remains vibrant and functional.

Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Funds

These funds allow the City to capture property tax increment and reinvest it directly back into designated neighborhoods. By financing high-quality public spaces, the RDA can catalyze private investment and facilitate the revitalization of targeted areas throughout the city.

Housing Transit Reinvestment Zone (HTRZ)

In 2024, South Salt Lake secured HTRZ status for the downtown neighborhood. This designation allows the City to capture a portion of new property tax growth to finance the “civic backbone” infrastructure required for successful urban development. Public amenities like parks, plazas, and trail connections benefit the HTRZ by providing the “breathing room” and connectivity needed for urban livability. By improving pedestrian mobility and providing quality open space, HTRZ investments ensure the urban core remains a healthy environment, maintaining a high quality of life as the city grows vertically.

External Funding

Grants

The City will actively pursue grant opportunities from federal, state, county, and private foundation sources. This effort involves dedicating staff resources to proactively identify relevant programs and develop compelling proposals. Target categories include outdoor recreation, water quality, and flood control, as well as specialized sources like the Zoo, Arts and Parks (ZAP) program and transportation grants for trail connectivity. Recognizing the competitive nature of these funds, the City will prioritize projects with strong community impact and explore strategies to meet match requirements by leveraging external funding sources and in-kind contributions.

Donations and Philanthropy

Implementing a comprehensive donation program will provide accessible pathways for foundations, private donors, and businesses to contribute to park investments. This initiative may include planned giving options and targeted fundraising campaigns. A formal donor recognition program will acknowledge contributions and foster a culture of community support.

Sponsorships

The City will explore a formal sponsorship program to build financial support for specific park projects. This program offers businesses opportunities to support facilities, programs, or events in exchange for recognition and marketing benefits. Tiered sponsorship packages will be established with clear policies regarding naming rights to ensure all sponsorships align with the mission and character of South Salt Lake parks.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Recognizing the power of collaboration, the City will continue to actively seek opportunities to partner with other government agencies, local businesses, non-profit organizations, and community groups. The City has already enjoyed fruitful partnerships with groups such as the Seven Canyons Trust, the Parley's Rails, Trails and Tunnels (PRATT) Coalition, the Jordan River Commission, and neighboring local governments. Working together allows the City to leverage shared resources, expertise, and responsibilities in developing, operating, and programming park facilities. Clear partnership guidelines and mutually beneficial agreements remain essential for successful collaborations, and public-private partnerships for specific facilities will be considered where appropriate.



Tree Utah planting event in Fitts Park

Voter-Approved Investments

For major capital projects and operational needs that exceed the capacity of the annual budget, the City may consider voter-approved funding mechanisms. These tools allow the community to invest directly in large-scale park transformations.

General Obligation (GO) Bonds

Often compared to a home mortgage, GO Bonds allow the City to borrow funds upfront to build major assets like community parks or recreation facilities. These bonds are backed by the “full faith and credit” of the City and are typically repaid over 10–20 years through a dedicated property tax. Because they provide immediate funding, GO Bonds allow the community to enjoy a new facility now while spreading the cost equitably over current and future residents.

Dedicated Operational Levies

While bonds are used for construction, levies are typically used for taking care of what we have. An operational levy provides a steady, multi-year stream of funding to support the daily work of the parks system. This includes hiring additional maintenance staff, purchasing supplies, and updating equipment to ensure that existing facilities remain safe and well-maintained over time.

The City will prioritize thorough public engagement to gauge community support before pursuing these voter-approved options, ensuring that any proposed investment reflects the values of South Salt Lake residents.

Looking Forward

This Parks Plan is the result of a comprehensive and collaborative effort spanning more than a year, bringing together City staff, the Parks Plan Advisory Committee, the Project Leadership Team, City Council, community leaders, and, most importantly, our residents. Together, we have charted a course for investing in and enhancing South Salt Lake’s park system, building upon the lessons learned since our previous Master Plan, adopted ten years ago. This updated plan will shape our investments and priorities through the next decade.

Through extensive community engagement and thoughtful consideration of the projects, programs, and policies most needed and desired by our residents, we have developed a community-supported vision for the future. The City will focus on revitalizing our existing park spaces and developing new facilities to offer a broader spectrum of experiences for everyone across our city.

This forward-looking Plan presents an ambitious vision built upon realistic action. It advocates for significant investments in our parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities, recognizing their crucial role in supporting and enhancing South Salt Lake’s quality of life. The full implementation of this Plan over the next decade will depend on the sustained effort and strong collaboration from residents, businesses, developers, stakeholders, the City Council, and other City leaders, whose ongoing support will be vital for these necessary investments.

The programs, policies, and projects outlined are designed to prioritize accessibility, community building, human health, and environmental stewardship. By successfully implementing these strategies, we can significantly enhance our park system, creating more vibrant, accessible, and enjoyable spaces for all residents, which will, in turn, promote physical and mental wellbeing and foster a stronger sense of community pride and belonging.



Central Park playground

is SOUTH
SALT LAKE
