Jordan River Commission
Technical Advisory Committee

January 15, 2026 | 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Location

The meeting was conducted virtually online via Zoom, with an anchor location at the Jordan River Commission office.

Meeting Attendees

Technical Advisory Committee Members

Marian Rice, Chair, Peak Water & Sustainability Engine Director – University of Utah
Gina Grandpre, Vice Chair, Senior Planner – Saratoga Springs
Tom Beesley, Stormwater Manager – Riverton
Benn Buys, Executive Director - Utah Fairpark Area Investment & Restoration (UFAIR) District
Angelo Calacino, Park Development Project Manager – Salt Lake County
Kiani Ellingson, Environment HSES Water Quality Advisor – Kennecott Rio Tinto
Jason Erekson, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director – West Valley City
Cory Fralick, Director of Public Services – West Jordan
Laura Haskell, Jordan River Basin Area Specialist – Utah Division of Water Resources
Sharen Hauri, Director of Neighborhoods – South Salt Lake
Bruce Holyoak, Park Superintendent – Murray
Shauna Mecham, Active Transportation Planner – Mountainland Association of Governments
Eric McCulley, Riparian Restoration Expert – McCulley Watershed Consulting Services
Todd Munger, Sustainability Director – Lehi
Nathan Page, Grant Administrator – Riverton
Ronnie Pessetto, Executive Director – Seven Canyons Trust
Dan Potts, Aquatic Ecologist – Salt Lake Fish & Game Foundation
Hugh Van Wagenen, Active Transportation Planner – Wasatch Front Regional Council
Mike West, Planning Division Manager – Lehi
Sandy Wingert, Environmental Scientist – Utah Division of Water Quality

Commission Staff

Jens Ammon, Jordan River Restoration Coordinator
Macall Clapman, Communications & Outreach Intern
Ren Griffeth, Administration, Grant & Research Specialist
Caroline Johnston, Event & Volunteer Coordinator
Rachel Lyn, Communications & Outreach Manager
Soren Simonsen, Executive Director & Secretary

Visitors and Guests

Anthony Baimont – South Salt Lake
Katie Bussell – Lehi
Rob Craig, Volunteer Coordinator – Lehi

Meeting Minutes

Marian Rice, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

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1. Welcome & Introductions

a) Committee Roll Call & Other Introductions

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Presentations & Discussion – Community Development

a. Commission Website Review and Input

Rachel Lyn, Communications & Outreach Manager, and Jenn Blum, a website development consultant with Minduct, reviewed progress on the Commission website update and solicited feedback from the Committee. Rachel explained that previously buried materials, including major planning documents, had been reorganized and surfaced to improve accessibility, usability, and public understanding of Commission work.

A central focus of the update was the integration of the Blueprint Jordan River, which is central to the Commission's mission and purpose, more thoroughly into the website as interactive content rather than solely as a downloadable document. All seven Blueprint chapters are now presented as individual web pages, clearly framed as components of a unified plan. Each chapter includes goals drawn directly from the printed Blueprint and is linked to completed or ongoing projects that demonstrate implementation of those goals. This structure is intended to preserve context for users who may enter the site through search results on individual pages.

The homepage was described as a flexible platform that can highlight Commission priorities such as initiatives and projects, upcoming events, or seasonal campaigns. It includes a Commission overview video, rotating news content, and adaptable sections that can be reconfigured as organizational focus shifts. Navigation enhancements allow users to move easily between Blueprint chapters, projects, and supporting information without excessive reliance on menus or backtracking.

The project pages were presented as a key organizational feature. Each project page can include a customizable overview, background information, links to external partner websites, geotagged maps, and associations with relevant Blueprint chapters. Projects are also connected to lead organizations, with organizational profile pages displaying contact information, affiliated representatives, and related projects. Committee members discussed the potential to feature timely or high-profile projects on a rotating basis.

A substantial portion of the presentation addressed the new "Visit and Recreate" section, which was identified by the website advisory group as a significant expansion of the site. This section is designed to serve recreation-focused audiences and organizes activities into categories related to the trail, the river, and the parkway. Individual activity pages include introductory content, safety and etiquette guidance, frequently asked questions, and links to relevant locations. Activities such as walking, biking, paddling, fishing, birding, and nature viewing are connected to mapped points of interest, allowing users to explore amenities and opportunities in specific locations.

The locations and points of interest framework was explained as a way to interlink activities, facilities, and governing jurisdictions. Location pages display associated activities, available amenities, and managing organizations, with plans to add photos as the content library is completed. The structure is intended to support continuous navigation through related content and reduce friction for users seeking information. Maps, trail guides, and water trail content are being expanded, with filtering functionality under development to refine displayed information by activity type.

Committee members provided feedback and suggestions throughout the discussion. Ideas included expanding activity categorization to allow certain uses, such as fishing or birdwatching, to appear in multiple contexts, and developing a standalone safety page to address growing public concern about safety and security along the parkway. Staff noted that safety content is currently embedded across activities and within the Blueprint but agreed that a dedicated page or featured project tied to the safety working group could be valuable.

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The "Volunteer and Get Involved" sections were reviewed as another major component of the site. These pages highlight year-round and seasonal volunteer programs, provide sign-up options, and link volunteer activities to the events calendar. Individual volunteer initiatives display tagged events relevant to that program, allowing users to see all related opportunities in one place. Discussion included adding clearer donation pathways, potentially through existing partner organizations, and using QR codes or custom landing pages to simplify participation and giving at events.

The events calendar was presented as a comprehensive listing for public meetings, volunteer opportunities, and community events, with multiple viewing formats. Members discussed listing Commission and advisory meetings under both informational and engagement sections to emphasize attendance as a form of involvement. Additional suggestions included improving mobile usability by elevating key action buttons and exploring a moderated event submission form to streamline content management.

The meeting concluded with an invitation for Committee members to review the site when it is shared soon for feedback, and provide feedback on missing content, contribute photos or suggest additional resources. The website was emphasized as a structured platform, but designed as a "living site" to evolve over time and to present Commission work clearly and accessibly to a wide range of users.

b. Homeless Campus and Related Homeless Services Discussion

The chair thanked staff for the update and formally transitioned the meeting to a discussion on the proposed Homeless Resources and Services Campus and related regional homeless services issues. The discussion focused on the proposed campus location near 2500 North and 2200 West in Salt Lake City, the role of local governments across the region, and the need to address housing and social services as part of broader solutions for individuals experiencing homelessness, including mitigating impacts on surrounding communities and natural resources.

Soren Simonsen provided general background about the campus proposal, noting that the site was identified after extensive due diligence and is located in the North Point area of Salt Lake City, a rapidly transitioning area situated between near the Salt Lake International Airport and the Jordan River. The approximately 30-acre, city-owned property is described as being modeled after similar facilities in other major cities like San Antonio, Texas, and Reno, Nevada, and is intended to provide emergency shelter alongside social services, with potential inclusion of mental and behavioral health treatment. However, many programmatic details remain undefined, and the project is currently underfunded for both construction and operations, with previously allocated state funding covering only a minor portion of estimated costs.

A key challenge highlighted was the decentralized nature of local government along the Wasatch Front compared to other regions where similar campus models have been successful. Unlike cities with a large, centralized municipal government, Salt Lake City represents less than 10% of the regional population and cannot independently provide the range of housing and services needed for individuals exiting the campus. Soren emphasized the importance of regional cooperation to support exit strategies such as affordable housing, supportive housing, and employment-based transitions, and noted ongoing conversations with state homelessness leadership about these issues.

Soren highlighted the success of the Commission in bring together partners across the region, and suggested that a regional coordinating body could improve collaboration among cities, counties, state agencies, and service providers. It was noted that existing homeless councils operate with limited coordination across the three Wasatch Front counties, creating gaps in service delivery, particularly in mental health and social services.

Committee members discussed examples of regional cooperation and local strategies that could support shorter stays in emergency shelters and more effective transitions to long-term solutions.

Committee members raised concerns about community impacts, particularly in west-side neighborhoods that have historically hosted a disproportionate share of regional facilities. Concerns were also expressed about whether the proposed campus would be adequately sized to meet current and projected demand. Staff noted

that existing shelters have reached capacity quickly and that recent winter overflow populations exceeded the proposed campus bed estimates, raising concerns that the facility may be insufficient upon opening.

Environmental and safety considerations were also discussed, including potential impacts on water quality in the Jordan River, the need for adequate waste management, and the importance of thoughtful lighting design that balances public safety with protection of wildlife habitat. Proximity to recreational facilities and public lands was discussed, with concerns raised about spillover effects on nearby parks and the need to ensure that recreational spaces remain safe and accessible for the broader community.

Questions were raised about how individuals would navigate services while transitioning out of homelessness, including access to transportation and long-term resources. Soren explained that the intended model would colocate a wide range of services on-site, such as employment assistance, health care, and access to vital records, though full implementation depends on securing sufficient operational funding. Legislative uncertainty around funding levels was noted as a significant risk to realizing the full campus concept.

Representatives from several cities shared local perspectives on homelessness. Some communities reported relatively limited impacts to date, while others described established task forces, police coordination, and partnerships with health departments and service providers to address homelessness through humanitarian approaches. Coordination with state agencies for Jordan River Parkway patrols and camp cleanups was also noted.

The Chair concluded the discussion by thanking participants and noting that homelessness is an ongoing regional issue that may require continued attention in future meetings. Staff reaffirmed their commitment to supporting collaborative solutions that balance humanitarian needs with community and environmental considerations.

c. Jordan River Parkway Design Guidelines Updates (as time permits)

Item 3d was postponed due to time constraints.

4. Committee Business **~ 3:10 PM**

a. **[Action Item]** Adopt the December 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Item 4a was postponed to the February meeting to allow for additional review time, as requested by Marian Rice, Chair.

b. **[Action Item]** Accept Nominations and Appoint Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Per the Committee Bylaws, the Vice Chair is automatically nominated as Chair, though the nominating process is open to any Committee member to serve as Chair. There were no additional nominations.

Eric McCulley moved to accept the nomination and appoint Gina Grandpre as Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee. Cory Fralick seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved by Committee members present.

Cory Fralick was nominated as Vice Chair and indicated his interest and willingness to serve. There were no additional nominations.

Gina Grandpre moved to accept the nomination and appoint Cory Fralick as Vice Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee. Dan Potts seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

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The motion was unanimously approved by Committee members present.

c. Upcoming Committee Meetings

The next regular Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 2:00 PM. This meeting will focus on water, river and watershed matters.

d. Committee Member Announcements & Updates

There were no Committee announcements or updates.

5. Commission Staff Reports

Soren Simonsen noted that several outdoor recreation-related grant programs including the Utah Outdoor Recreation, Recreation Restoration Initiative, and Recreational Trails Program, would be opening in the coming week, with applications generally due in mid to late March. Committee members were encouraged to contact staff for assistance with project scoping or letters of support, and examples of ongoing coordination with local jurisdictions were shared.

Soren also provided a legislative update regarding Senate Bill 130, sponsored by Senator Lincoln Fillmore, which proposes significant changes to the Jordan River Recreation Area Program. The bill would restructure the program by eliminating the designated "Recreation Zone" between 5400 South and Highway 201, and creating a single river-wide funding program, and expanding all existing eligible uses across the entire Jordan River. It also proposes dedicating an ongoing appropriation for projects that provide increased river access and public safety-related projects. Soren noted that the bill had passed unanimously in committee, and was a priority bill being fast-tracked through the legislative process, and could substantially increase annual funding for river-related recreation and safety efforts. Members were invited to provide feedback so it could be communicated to the bill sponsor.

An additional update was provided on the Central Jordan River Master Plan, which is currently in a public comment phase. Soren reported that outreach had been conducted through multiple channels and encouraged members to submit comments before the comment period closes later in the month. The plan is expected to be finalized in late March or early April and will then proceed through formal adoption processes with the five participating jurisdictions. Appreciation was expressed to Salt Lake County and the consulting team for the ongoing work on the plan and for continued collaboration.

6. Adjourn

Laura Haskell moved to adjourn the meeting. Eric McCulley seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 PM.

A meeting recording, presentation, handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/1049157.html.

Meeting minutes were prepared by Ren Griffeth, and Soren Simonsen, Commission Secretary.

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