



EMIGRATION CANYON
METRO TOWNSHIP

Request: Recommendation of Approval

Planning and Development Services

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2022 General Plan Summary and Recommendation

Public Body: Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council

Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council Meeting Date: March 22, 2022

Location: All locations within Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council

Request: Approval and Adoption of General Plan

Applicant Name: Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council Plan Steering Committee

Planner: Matthew Starley

Planning Staff Recommendation: Approve General Plan with Revisions as Outlined

1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is requesting a recommendation of approval to the Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council of the Emigration Canyon General Plan 2022. This General Plan is Emigration Canyon's first comprehensive plan since the community incorporated as a metro township in 2017. The Plan synthesizes data and public feedback to describe current conditions, establish a vision for Emigration Canyon's future, and guide Emigration Canyon from its present conditions toward its desired vision. This General Plan meets the required State laws for general planning, including elements on Land Use and Transportation. It also includes the following supplemental elements: Introduction, Economic Development Considerations, Environment, and Resilience and Infrastructure. The General Plan and its Appendix can be found here: <http://bit.ly/lrp-ec>



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2 SUMMARY

2.1 BACKGROUND

Emigration Canyon became an independent municipality with its own governing authority in 2017 after a vote of Emigration Canyon residents in 2015. Emigration Canyon is governed by an elected legislative council. The Council has the authority to enact laws and ordinances to carry out its responsibilities such as land use and development regulations (zoning), as long as these laws and ordinances are consistent with the Utah Municipal Code and other state statutes.

Emigration Canyon is a member of the Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District (MSD), a special local district established in 2015. The MSD provides Emigration Canyon with planning and development, business license, building inspection, and code enforcement services as part of its membership agreement. The Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council appoints a Planning Commission, working with MSD Planners, to make recommendations regarding land use decisions to the Council. The Council also appoints a General Plan Steering Committee to work with MSD Long Range Planners on the development of Emigration Canyon's General Plan.

The General Plan Steering Committee and Planning Commission make recommendations to the Council regarding the adoption and amendment of the General Plan. The Council can adopt, reject, or revise a recommended General Plan. To support the development of this Plan, the Emigration Canyon Metro Township Council appointed the following members of the Emigration Canyon Planning Commission and residents from the community to serve on the Steering Committee: Robert Pinon (Chair), Andrew Wallace (Vice Chair), Dale Berreth, Steve Borst, Paul Brown, Tim Harpst, Willy Stokeman, and Bill Tobey.

2.2 DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION

Emigration Canyon's General Plan 2022 is a guide for the Municipality's development decisions; holds a long-term perspective; communicates the wants and needs of the community to elected officials and to prospective residents; includes a transportation element and a land use element, per Utah State Code 10-9a-401; and is a "living" document that can be updated and altered as deemed necessary.

2.3 KEY CONTENT WITHIN THE PLAN

2.3.1 Vision Statement

- *Emigration Canyon is a progressive, family-oriented community with many opportunities for its residents to enjoy active, healthy, and modern lifestyles.*
- *Emigration Canyon is comprised of distinct neighborhoods with residents who are dedicated to fostering a sense of community and are actively involved in public activities.*



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- *Emigration Canyon is a nationally recognized historic landmark, and its residents embrace that heritage.*
- *Emigration Canyon residents enjoy and value the Canyon's many excellent, cherished, well-maintained recreational amenities.*
- *Emigration Canyon residents are committed to maintaining and protecting the Canyon's important ecosystems and resources.*

2.3.2 Land Use

Emigration Canyon's current zoning designations largely reflect land use desires expressed in General Plan Steering Committee meetings and public surveys. The Future Land Use and Character Area Map generated for this Plan (see page 39 of the General Plan) conveys the land use patterns envisioned for Emigration Canyon's future. Expressed desires include preservation of the existing character of the built environment, the cultural heritage of the area, and the ecological features of the area including viewsheds, wildlife corridors, and open space. Support for preserving and enhancing existing commercial areas, and carefully considering how to enhance commercial activities that could encourage community connectedness, sense of place, and sustainability, is also expressed in the Plan. It is recommended that careful management of new developments and visitation to Emigration Canyon is needed to protect the natural environment and limit noise and nuisance factors. See pages 133-137 of the General Plan for the Land Use Work Program.

2.3.2.1 The community's goals for Land Use are as follows

- *Goal 2.1: Preserve the culture, identity, and character of Emigration Canyon's built environment.*
- *Goal 2.2: Enhance community connectedness and sense of place.*
- *Goal 2.3: Preserve and enhance ecological features, viewsheds, wildlife corridors, and open space.*
- *Goal 2.4: Preserve and enhance existing commercial activities.*

2.3.3 Character Areas

The Land Use element of Emigration Canyon's General Plan includes several character areas: these are specific geographic areas that have unique or special characteristics that should be preserved; have potential to evolve into a unique area when provided specific guidance; or require attention suitable to their uniqueness. Four distinct character areas have been identified in this Plan with input from the General Plan Steering Committee and the Planning Commission. Specific assets, opportunities, and challenges are associated with each character area, and the Plan establishes vision statements and future zoning considerations for each. See page 49 of the General Plan for the Future Land Use and Character Area Map.



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2.3.4 Transportation

The transportation vision included in Emigration Canyon's General Plan aligns closely with the expressed land use desires. Participants in public meetings and surveys expressed a desire to plan for and better manage projected increased use of both roads and trails by visitors in the years to come, and to improve road safety for all types of users (especially bicycles). Mitigating the effects of high volumes of visitor usage on Emigration Canyon's roads, residents, and natural environment through the management of light, noise, and air pollution, and by increasing trailhead parking and other related infrastructure improvements, are considered a high priority. See pages 138-140 of the General Plan for the Transportation Work Program.

2.3.4.1 The community's goals for Transportation are as follows:

- *Goal 3.1: Enhance the existing character, integrity, and environmental management of the Canyon roads.*
- *Goal 3.2: Provide a safe, efficient transportation network for all users.*

2.3.5 Economic Development Considerations

Although not required by State Code, economic development is a critical component of Emigration Canyon's General Plan. This element does not intrinsically support economic development, but instead examines options that could support responsible, equitable, and sustainable economic activities in the area, especially as part of a wider regional context. It also clarifies the kinds of economic development that would not be appropriate for Emigration Canyon. Market data, community input, and related planning initiatives helped to inform the content of this element. The vision for economic development in Emigration Canyon follows the vision for land use, in that enhancing economic activity within Emigration Canyon should only be undertaken in keeping with the existing character and values of the area. Any expansion or enhancement of economic activity should therefore support community connectedness and sustainability goals, preserve the culture and identity of the Canyon, and enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors. Improvements to digital infrastructure and consideration of economic activities that do not require brick and mortar developments are highlighted as priorities for future work. See page 141 of the General Plan for the Economic Development Considerations Work Program.

2.3.5.1 The community's goals for Economic Development are as follows:

- *Goal 4.1: Foster responsible, equitable, and sustainable economic development in keeping with the character and values of Emigration Canyon.*

2.3.6 Environment

The environment element is not required by the State Code, but it is an essential element for Emigration Canyon to include in its General Plan due to the close relationship that exists between the residents of the area, their built environments, and the natural environment that surrounds and sustains them. The



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vision for the environment outlined in this element aligns closely with the land use desires expressed by Emigration Canyon residents, particularly in terms of the desire to preserve ecological features and enhance community connections and sense of place. Participants in public meetings and surveys expressed a desire to consider current and future environmental impacts and prevent significant adverse effects on the valuable natural resources of Emigration Canyon when making land use decisions. See pages 142-146 of the General Plan for the Environment Work Program.

2.3.6.1 The community's goals for the Environment are as follows:

- *Goal 5.1: Protect and enhance clean, clear air quality.*
- *Goal 5.2: Preserve and enhance the health of the watershed to ensure that it has adequate quality and capacity to fulfill the needs of all those who depend upon it for life and well-being, both human and non-human.*
- *Goal 5.3: Preserve and enhance natural areas and ensure that landscapes are functional and diverse.*
- *Goal 5.4: Foster healthy, balanced relationships between humans and nature.*

2.3.7 Resilience and Infrastructure

The resilience and infrastructure element is not required by the State Code, but it is an essential element for Emigration Canyon to include in its General Plan as it encourages the community to plan for the management of hazards and risks associated with a range of infrastructure types (i.e. physical, digital, and social). The element draws from relevant literature and strategy documents, as well as community input to develop a vision that aligns with the land use vision and supports improving infrastructure and resilience in Emigration Canyon. The element highlights the importance of preparing for, mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, natural disaster risk, and other hazards by maintaining and improving existing infrastructure; enhancing digital infrastructure and associated connectivity; and by supporting and enhancing social cohesion. See pages 147-152 of the General Plan for the Resilience and Infrastructure Work Program.

2.3.7.1 The community's goals for Resilience and Infrastructure are as follows:

- *Goal 6.1: Practice fiscal responsibility and sustainability in all decision-making.*
- *Goal 6.2: Maintain the infrastructure system in good working condition and ensure that it meets the needs of current and future residents and visitors.*
- *Goal 6.3: Mitigate the effects of climate change, natural disaster risk, and other hazards.*
- *Goal 6.4: Adapt to climate change, natural disaster risk, and other hazards.*
- *Goal 6.5: Ensure that all community members enjoy a sense of belonging and high levels of social connectedness and trust.*



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2.3.8 Key Recommendations from the Work Programs

Seven key recommendations arose from this planning process. These recommendations address major challenges identified for Emigration Canyon, and propose opportunities for mitigating, adapting to, or otherwise improving upon, those challenges. Key challenges associated with progressing the Emigration Canyon community vision and upholding the community values include; managing the use of the Canyon's roads and trails by visitors, managing development pressures, managing pressures that effect water quality and quantity, and managing wildfire risk and other hazards.

- *Recommendation 1: Preserve and enhance the ecological features, viewsheds, wildlife corridors, and open space of Emigration Canyon for future generations.*
- *Recommendation 2: In land management decision making, protect watershed quality and ensure sustainable use of all water resources.*
- *Recommendation 3: Improve the safety, sustainability, and resilience of the built environment, including trails and other outdoor recreation infrastructure.*
- *Recommendation 4: Provide a safe, efficient transportation network for all users.*
- *Recommendation 5: Enhance community connectedness, engagement, and sense of place.*
- *Recommendation 6: Prepare for, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, natural disaster risk, and other hazards.*
- *Recommendation 7: Foster responsible, equitable, and sustainable economic development in keeping with the character and values of Emigration Canyon.*

The Work Programs associated with each chapter of the Plan expand upon these recommendations.

3 SITE & VICINITY DESCRIPTION

All properties and lands within Emigration Canyon Metro Township's boundaries are considered in and affected by this Plan.

4 PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS

The MSD Planning Staff and the Emigration Canyon Planning Commission recommend approval and adoption of the Emigration Canyon General Plan 2022, with the revisions outlined on *Emigration Canyon_General Plan Update* ConceptBoard.com site; (Link: <https://app.conceptboard.com/board/54a9-uy77-bq8a-ym0c-fhox>).

Staff has determined that the following findings are in support of the application.

1. The document follows Utah State Code Requirements for General Plans.



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2. The document is data-driven, utilizing reputable sources such as the United States Census Bureau, ESRI Business Analyst, and others.
3. The document is community-driven, reflecting communicated desires of residents. It follows extensive public engagement from July 2019 through November 2020. See page 18 of the General Plan for details on the General Planning Process timeline.
4. The document is a living document and should be revisited and updated as circumstances necessitate.