

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Environmental Guidelines

This report acknowledges and supports the recommendations made in previous planning efforts. The Jordan River Natural Areas Forum (JRNAF) developed a plan for Salt Lake County titled “Jordan River Parkway Trail Completion Prioritization—Salt Lake County Area,” which was completed in February 3, 2005. Some of the projects recommended in the JRNAF Prioritization Plan have been completed since the document was adopted, and others are currently in the negotiation or design stage. However, the Environmental Guidelines set forth in that document are still relevant, well-thought-out guidelines that should be adhered to as recommendations in this plan are implemented.

“In designing the trail, consideration should be given to environmentally sensitive areas and resources, particularly wetlands, the riparian zone, the Jordan River (including banks and floodplain), steep slopes, viewsheds, mature native trees, and lands that provide unique habitats for wildlife. There has been some discussion as to whether or not the trail should be allowed on both sides of the river. There are multiple trails in some areas already. Each new trail section should be carefully evaluated, including discussion among stakeholders, to determine appropriate trail routing, design, and construction, in compliance with all laws and regulations. (See “A guide to State, Federal, and Local Government Permitting Along the Jordan River Corridor” <http://www.governor.utah.gov/planning/jrnaf.htm>). In addition, we recommend following these guidelines:

1. Wetlands

- a. Avoid wetlands:
 - i. Align trail around them.
 - ii. Create natural buffers between wetlands and the trail.
- b. If the trail must go through wetlands, then use a bridge or boardwalk.
- c. If wetlands are affected, mitigation may be required by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

2. Riparian Zone

- a. Create a buffer between the trail and the river where possible. Consider that the river may meander and change position and that flooding is likely to occur at some future point. The buffer will protect the trail infrastructure as well as the natural river process and vegetation.
- b. Allow views of the river, but discourage off-trail travel through natural buffers such as vegetative screens (e.g. willow, rose). Buffers should be characterized as adequate or sufficient and functional to mitigate the impacts of the trail to wildlife, views, vegetative communities, etc.
- c. Unnecessary bridges should not be encouraged or permitted.
- d. Post signs to encourage people to appreciate and respect the trail and nature.
- e. Provide areas where people can have some access to the river

or views, but the majority of the trail length should be moved away from the river:

- i. Consider opportunities (e.g. kiosks) to educate the public about natural processes, hazards, wildlife, and the benefits of the environment.
- ii. These should be designed to avoid damage to the riparian zone, avoid cut banks, avoid the need to rip-rap, etc.

3. Jordan River, Banks, and Floodplain

- a. Create a buffer between the river and trail where possible. If possible, place the trail away from the river.
- b. Strive to create a diversity of experiences. Basically, this means that the trail does not need to be the same 10 feet from the river for the entire length of the river. Let the trail meander away from the river, perhaps around a wetland, around a parcel of open space, through a woodland (responsibly), or up on a ridgeline.
- c. Avoid the need to rip-rap the banks of the river.
- d. Protect natural vegetation.
- e. Let the river meander.
- f. When the Jordan floods, have alternative routes or have means of closing the trail.

4. Viewsheds

- a. Take advantage of views that allow people to see the Wasatch, the Oquirrh, or other natural areas. This might mean a rise in the trail, a ridgeline, or even protection of a parcel as open space so that a large building (or complex) is not built.
- b. Coordinate with adjacent land owners in development.
- c. It is unacceptable for the trail to diverge in some areas from the narrow confines of the river corridor.

5. Steep Slopes

- a. Steep slopes along the river’s edge should be avoided, because of erosion and for public safety.
- b. If trail must go through or over slopes, allow drainage and passage of water.

6. Mature Trees (Native Species) and Natural Areas

- a. Where stands of native trees (e.g. cottonwoods, willows) exist, align the trail around or design so that minimum number of trees are cut or damaged.
- b. Areas protected or set aside as open space or wildlife habitat are not automatically trail material. Some parcels have conservation easements or other deed restrictions which might prohibit trails, buildings, and other facilities.
- c. It is also important to recognize and respect the use of the land, and to coordinate with the landowner.

7. Additional Considerations

- a. Wherever natural areas and/or habitat will be impacted, mitigation should be included.
- b. Lighting: Recommend not light the trail to avoid disturbance to wildlife. It may be acceptable to light trailhead and parking areas, but have lights on low light poles, directed down rather than up or laterally, and use minimum amount needed.
- c. Trash: Encourage people not to litter and place receptacles at trailheads, not along the trail. This will make it easier to collect,

and will be a lesser enticement for raccoons, skunks, and such residing by the river. Many people like raccoons and skunks, however, they can create health concerns, can be a nuisance, and are predators on birds, bird nests, and other wildlife.

- d. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) projects need to be coordinated with agencies and other groups interested in the river, especially with regard to vegetation removal and lighting.
- e. Establish and maintain natural landscapes as part of the trail design, funding and construction, including invasive weed control. (See Utah Noxious Weed List http://ag.utah.gov/plantind/nox_utah.html):
 - i. Adopt ways to keep weeds from spreading.
 - ii. Adopt weed control methods.
 - iii. Assure wetlands remain viable, especially where they were established for mitigation.
 - iv. Plant native vegetation.
- f. Dogs:
 - i. Keep dogs on-leash; do not allow them to run free for the safety of people, pets, wildlife, and the river.
 - ii. Encourage people to pick up after their pets".

6.2 Rights-of-Way and Development

The following information and guidelines on rights-of-way and development along the Jordan River Corridor were developed by JRNAF in the “Jordan River Parkway Trail Completion Prioritization—Salt Lake County Area” plan.

“There is not a public right-of-way for a trail along the entire river—only where it has been acquired. There are regulatory controls over development, including trail development, within the river corridor. Controls include:

- County Flood Control—Twenty-five feet along the banks
- State of Utah Parks and Recreation—One hundred and fifty feet from the banks of the river (or as far as the flood plain)
- State of Utah Sovereign Lands—the riverbed
- State of Utah Water Rights—Stream modifications
- State of Utah Department of Transportation—Where roads exist or are developed
- Local Government Zoning—All areas
- US Army Corps of Engineers—Wetlands and riparian areas

Although these controls exist, residential and commercial development occurs within the floodplain—there is no absolute prohibition. The trail group received comments regarding the issue, but considers them outside the scope of this report except as follows:

1. Any new road or bridge construction projects should include underpasses to provide for the trail.
2. When new residential or commercial development is proposed, developers should provide rights-of-way for the trail.
3. New development should always follow the environmental guidelines above.”

6.3 Potential Funding Sources

Funding trails projects is one of the most challenging aspects of the plan. Public funding is increasingly competitive, and many programs are either not being funded or have been substantially reduced. Money from foundations and other philanthropic organizations and groups is also difficult to acquire, in part because available funds are highly sought-after. Nevertheless, all potential sources should be explored to the fullest, and **collaboration between city, county, and state agencies and organizations will help maximize the potential of scarce funds.** Having a good trails master plan is the first step toward securing implementation funding.

City and County Funding Sources

City and County General Funds

Salt Lake County general funds are regularly allocated for the implementation of trails projects, and several Jordan River Parkway trail projects have been implemented using those funds. The same is true with general fund allocations by cities located along the river. However, available funds are limited, and competition is extremely tight between the various on-going county trails projects, as well as increasing demands to use general funds for other projects and purposes. City general fund accounts are also in high demand for a broad variety of projects. Projects which can leverage general fund allocations to secure additional matching funds are able to stretch the dollars farther and accomplish more with limited resources.

Bonding

Cities and Salt Lake County can bond for trail development and spread the cost over many years. Bonding is a common approach, where repayment of the bonds comes from general revenue sources such as property and sales tax, or other earmarked tax revenue. However, unless it is a very large project that benefits many people, bonding is not likely to be a primary source.

ZAP Tax

The **Zoos, Arts, and Parks (ZAP)** Tax has been used to fund many trails throughout Salt Lake County. These funds are administered by the County and can be used to fund county projects within the boundaries of local communities. ZAP Tax funds have been used for trails development in the past, and continue to be a community-supported source of recreation funds. The program was recently extended to 2016 as a result of a countywide vote.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) can be used for trail development in areas of Cities and the County that qualify as low and moderate-income areas. CDBG funds may be used to upgrade trails and improve accessibility to meet requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

Development Dedications, Exactions, or Contributions

Development contributions are a means for requiring, as a condition of development approval, a builder or developer to give something to the

City or County for the development of public facilities. Contributions can range from impact fees to land dedications for public trail facilities. In the southern part of Salt Lake County, where growth pressures are the highest, development dedications or exactions that are negotiated through the development review process are an excellent means of acquiring rights-of-way, easement, and actual trails development.

State Funding Sources

State funding programs receive allocations from the state legislature, and in some years funds may be very limited or non-existent, even though the program is still in place. It is important to check annually with each agency to determine if funds are currently available.

Centennial Non-Motorized Paths and Trails Crossings

The Utah Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Division administers this program. The funds are to be allocated towards the provision of safe and continuous pedestrian, bicyclist, and other human-powered and equestrian transportation paths and trails, and to provide access across highways and other impediments. A local match is required.

River Enhancement Programs

The Division of Utah Parks and Recreation administers these funds which provide funds to cities and counties for property acquisition and/or development for recreation (trails), conservation, and wildlife habitat along streams and rivers in highly populated areas. A local match is required by the sponsoring jurisdiction.

Non-motorized Recreation Trails Program

The Division of Utah Parks and Recreation also administers funds for the Non-motorized Trails program, which provides funds for signing, trails, and right-of-way. A local match by the sponsoring jurisdiction is required.

LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund

The fund is administered by the Utah Quality Growth Commission and provides funds each year to preserve or restore critical open or agricultural lands in Utah. Money from the fund could be used to purchase land or easements to complete gaps in the existing trail system. Applicants must provide matching funds equal to or greater than the amounts of money received from the fund. Funds must be spent within one year from the date of the grant award. The size of parcels for a purchase is limited to 20 acres or less. Purchases of conservation easements or restoration projects are exempt from this restriction. In recent years, the LeRay McAllister fund provided close to \$2 million each year for conservation projects, however, in recent years fund allocations have varied significantly.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

This Federal fund is available to States, and in Utah is administered by the Utah State Division of Parks and Recreation. Funds are matched with local funds for the acquisition and development of trails, redevelopment of trails and facilities, improvements to accessibility,

and other trail programs and facilities that provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for youth, adults, senior citizens, and persons with physical and mental disabilities.

Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (URMCC)
URMCC has previously funded Jordan River projects used specifically to improve fish and wildlife habitat, and to protect lands adjacent to the river from development through conservation easements or acquisition. While not specifically a trails-development organization, improving access to the river for recreational purposes and public education does fit into their mission. URMCC is actually an agent of the federal government, established in Utah to design, fund, and implement projects that offset impacts to fish, wildlife, and recreational resources caused by the Central Utah Project.

Federal Funding Sources

Transportation Efficiency Act-21 (TEA- 21) Reauthorization Bill/ SAFETEA-LU

The Transportation Efficiency Act-21 (TEA-21) was recently reauthorized by Congress as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The bill authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009, providing \$286 billion for a wide variety of transportation and roads projects throughout the nation. These funds are also valid on projects that enhance the ability for children to walk and bike to school.

Although specific project details are still being formulated, these funds are a potential source for funding portions of the Jordan River Trails system. In the past, TEA –21 funded several Salt Lake County trails projects, including portions of the Bonneville Shoreline, Jordan River Parkway and Dimple Dell trail systems. Assuming that funding will follow previous TEA-21 processes, funds will likely be made available to Salt Lake County directly through the Utah Department of Transportation or Wasatch Front Regional Council.

Private and Public Partnerships

Private Fundraising and Corporate Sponsorships

While not addressed as a specific strategy for trails and trail facilities, it is not uncommon that public monies are leveraged with private donations. Examples in the Salt Lake Valley include the Sorenson Recreation Center in Glendale and the Steiner Aquatic Center in Salt Lake City, where private foundations and organizations contributed funds for public recreation facilities. Corporate sponsors, particularly those located adjacent to the river where employees have access to the river for lunch-time walks are also likely partners. The partnerships may either fund trail development, or participate as volunteer organizations in the maintenance of trail sections.

Joint Development

Joint development opportunities can occur between Salt Lake County and other agencies or jurisdictions. In the case of the Jordan River Corridor Trails, trails and related facilities might be developed in

cooperation with the cities along the corridor, State agencies, local wildlife organizations, or other groups and organizations with similar interests. In order to make these kinds of opportunities happen, there must be on-going and constant communication between people, governments, business interests, and others.

Voluntary Efforts, Contributions and Miscellaneous Funding Sources

Service Organizations

Many service organizations and corporations have funds available for trail facilities. Recently, Salt Lake City and local and international Rotary Clubs combined resources to develop a universally accessible playground located in Liberty Park, which was dedicated at the opening of the 2002 Paralympic Winter Games. Other organizations such as Home Depot and Lowes are often willing to partner with local communities in the development of trails, as well as other park and recreation facilities.

In-Kind and Donated Services or Funds

Several options for local initiatives are possible to further the implementation of the trails plan. These kinds of programs would require a proactive recruiting initiative to generate interest and sponsorship, and may include:

- Adopt-a-trail, whereby a service organization or group either raises funds or constructs a given facility with in-kind services;
- Corporate sponsorships, whereby businesses or large corporations provide funding for a particular facility, similar to adopt-a-trail;
- Public trail construction programs, in which local citizens donate their time and effort to trail facility construction and/or maintenance; and
- Organizations such as the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), which have provided funds and leadership in similar situations.