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Realizing Our Vision

Creating a Locally Relevant and Regionally Significant Strategy

Introduction

The *Envision Cache Valley* process provides local leaders with a summary of public preferences in regard to future growth. These preferences are incorporated into the Cache Valley Vision Principles, which provide a bridge between the public visioning process and local action: each principle could be implemented locally in a variety of ways, to address both local challenges and valley-wide objectives. The Cache Valley Vision is realized to the extent that it is embraced locally.

The *Envision Cache Valley* process also enables leaders to gauge the impact of embracing the vision versus continuing current growth trends. The vision:

- Focuses most growth within existing towns.
- Reduces the acres of farmland converted to urban use.
- Keeps most communities from growing into one another.
- Reduces the miles traveled and the time spent in the car.
- Increases housing and transportation options.
- Reduces the cost of public services for taxpayers.

The valley and its municipalities can achieve these benefits as they implement priority strategies.

Because implementation strategies are voluntary, and each jurisdiction will have varied opportunities for realizing vision objectives, the suggestions in this chapter are intended more to generate conversation and the development of specific strategies by local leaders than to prescribe a specific set of implementation steps. Each jurisdiction will, in fact, need to create its own unique strategy.

This chapter highlights some options for valley-wide action and county-level initiatives, as well as a potential municipal approach. Actual strategies will, of course, vary among municipalities, depending on specific priorities, existing codes, policies that are working well, policies that need improvement, and resources available.

The recommendations that follow briefly reference many tools. For further description of these tools, see the toolkit in the following chapter.

General Valley-wide Recommendations (Engaging All Jurisdictions)

Increase awareness of the Cache Valley Vision and Envision Cache Valley Process. Continued awareness efforts through presentations, newsletters and other media will keep the vision top of mind and remind the public and local officials what the process was and what the results were.

Provide toolkit education and training. Some tools are already being successfully used in Cache Valley. Those using these tools should provide training to others who want to explore them. Other tools are not in current use or have not been used successfully in Cache Valley. Plan training sessions with outside speakers or field trips to better understand unfamiliar tools. The toolkit is provided in the following chapter.

Meet regularly. All Cache Valley local officials should meet regularly to identify mutual goals and timelines; share ideas, solutions, and challenges; and set measurable indicators for successful vision implementation.

Develop valley-wide plans for systems that impact everyone.

Transportation Master Plan. To clean our air and save money and time for what matters most, we can: improve roadway connections and reduce congestion; expand multimodal transportation options; plan for needed capital improvements, right-of-way acquisitions, etc.; and tie in with EPA-driven air quality attainment plans.

Economic Development Plan. A plan to advance regional prosperity can: retain and attract high-quality jobs for valley-wide economic health; reduce municipal competition for sales tax revenue and encourage focus on providing needed services and higher-wage jobs; reduce economic development pressure on outlying lands; and create business-ready sites that build on existing synergy and strategic improvements to existing infrastructure.

Critical Lands Inventory and Protection Strategy. To use our valuable and limited land most appropriately, we can: amass critical lands data at a single, accessible source; identify specific valley-wide priorities for critical lands protection (i.e., farmland with high LESA values, 100-year FEMA floodplain, slopes with grades exceeding 25%, etc.); and work together to employ a combination of tools to meet critical lands protection goals.

Regional Recreation and Trails Plan. We can enjoy our beautiful valley by pursuing strategies to plan and fund: desired regional recreation facilities; a trail network that includes the Bonneville Shoreline Trail and, perhaps, a water trail; and connections between local networks and the regional system. The formation of a recreation district could be a part of this process.

Develop model tools. Identify needs for model policies and codes. Work from codes referenced in the toolkit (next chapter), from well-performing local policy, or other sources to create models that are widely adaptable to local municipalities.

County-Level Recommendations

Adopt the vision principles. Principles could be adopted as an addendum to a county's general plan, or as a checklist by which proposed developments are evaluated.

Update the general plan. The update ensures that the general plan and the Cache Valley Vision are in alignment.

Work with the cities and towns to explore and adopt shared land-use agreements. The agreement should provide a framework that enables the county and a municipality to successfully work through development proposals for county lands that are within a city's area of influence, keeping in mind the goal of keeping the city, city and the country, country. Such conversations may include agreement regarding infrastructure extensions, annexation lines, transportation network connectivity, or other issues that impact the county and one or more municipalities.

Adopt a clustering incentive or requirement. Clustering enables a landowner to realize the real estate development value of the land while preserving large tracts of it for existing uses, whether agricultural, recreational, or ecological. Clustering also reduces infrastructure costs.

Work with municipalities to adopt TDR sending areas. Transferring a limited number of development rights from county lands to a nearby city would permanently protect outlying working landscapes while encouraging vibrancy in town.

Use conservation easements. When land conservation strategies are employed, use conservation easements where possible to preserve land and associated uses in perpetuity.

Sample Municipal Strategy

This sample strategy outlines a range of options a community could consider adopting, as appropriate for its particular needs.

Assumptions:

The sample strategy below assumes a mid-sized town in Cache Valley with a population projected to double in the next few decades.

Sample community existing conditions:

- Zoning that separates land uses and lot sizes
- Newer streets with limited connections to the overall street network
- Surrounded by agricultural land, with other communities nearby
- A town center that has experienced some disinvestment
- Location along a major regional transportation route
- Housing prices that may prevent people who have grown up in town from settling there

Sample community priorities:

- Keeping taxes low and quality of services high
- Providing more housing options and housing within walking distance of services, employment, recreation, and schools
- Attracting good paying jobs close to home, as well as providers of goods and services to meet day-to-day needs
- Improving the street grid and connections within the city and beyond
- Focusing growth inward and not growing into adjacent communities

General Growth Patterns

Adopt the vision principles. Principles could be adopted as an addendum to a city's general plan, or as a checklist by which proposed developments are evaluated.

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Work with the county to explore and adopt a shared land-use agreement. The agreement should provide a framework that enables the city and the county to successfully work through development proposals for county lands that are within the city's area of influence, keeping in mind the goal of keeping the city, city and the country, country. Such conversations may include agreement regarding infrastructure extensions, annexation lines, transportation network connectivity, or other issues that impact the county and one or more municipalities.

Housing and Employment

Designate a town center. This mixed-use area will provide: goods and services needed by residents on a daily basis; a good location for smaller businesses and offices and an expanded range of housing choices.

Adopt code to promote and implement a town center.

A form-based code would offer flexibility to respond to market demand (which would influence use) while addressing the form of buildings, how buildings relate to one another, street design, and public spaces in a cohesive way. (A similar code could be used for larger new developments to create neighborhoods with neighborhood centers, or along public transportation lines to encourage developments that support efficient public transportation.)

Adopt code to allow accessory buildings in existing neighborhoods.

Accessory buildings expand housing options while preserving the overall feel of residential neighborhoods. This action enables the city to accommodate more of its future population within existing urban fabric, reducing development pressure on outlying undeveloped land and reducing per capita municipal infrastructure costs.

Adopt a cluster ordinance. This ordinance would accommodate development in outlying areas while conserving existing agricultural land uses and avoiding growing into neighboring communities.

Participate in a regional revenue sharing program. This enables a more equalized tax base across the region and allows the city to focus on attracting high-quality jobs and providing services that residents need on a daily basis.

Create a local economic development plan. The process enables communities to identify needs and goals, to prepare business-ready locations, and to pursue business development

that strengthens the local and regional economy.

Create the right environment for infill and redevelopment.

Remove barriers to infill and redevelopment of existing urban land, and provide incentives to engage in infill and redevelopment projects.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Participate in a regional transportation master planning process.

The process can improve connections across the regional road network, identify long-term public transportation improvements, and identify biking and pedestrian routes.

Adopt street connectivity standards. Connected streets improve transportation network efficiency and reduce congestion.

- Participate in securing needed rights-of-way for planned regional networks
- Consider encouraging nodes of transit-ready development along major public transportation corridors

Adopt street design standards. Appropriate standards can provide safe routes for walking and biking and create long-term value for adjacent property owners.

Relax parking standards. Enable market innovation to accommodate parking needs. Solutions may include shared parking or increasing on-street parking.

Adopt a carefully crafted, fair impact fee program. The program could charge the actual cost of extending public services to a development, shifting costs to the developer and new homeowners rather than making existing taxpayers responsible for assuming the cost of new infrastructure.



Photo Series Source: drusilla.hsrc.unc.edu/imagelib/largeimages/lasheville055.jpg



Organizational Resources

Cache Valley Regional Council:

This group of elected officials from Cache and Franklin Counties initiated the *Envision Cache Valley* process and can help coordinate implementation efforts ranging from identifying and addressing educational needs to initiating the development of valley-wide plans for systems that affect everyone.

County-wide Planner:

The county-wide planner (housed with the Cache County Department of Development Service) is charged by the regional council with assisting local communities with planning efforts. The county-wide planner is a source for training, model policy, and assistance with local policy preparation.

Other organizations that regularly provide education, model policy, and/or planning assistance:

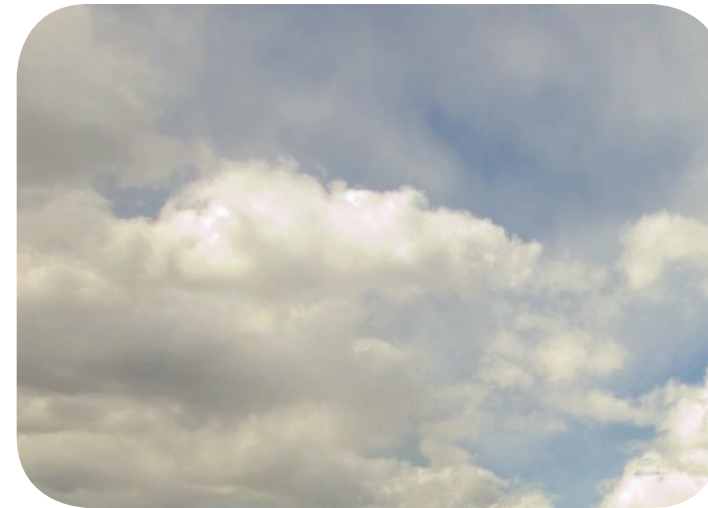
- Bear River Association of Governments
- Cache Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Cache Valley Transit District
- Utah State University and USU Extension
- Utah League of Cities and Towns
- Envision Utah
- Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Natural Resources, Working Farms and Ranches, and Recreation

Participate in developing a valley-wide critical lands inventory and protection strategy. Identify specific priorities and tools to accomplish goals.

Adopt a critical lands overlay. The overlay restricts development on lands that could pose a threat to public health and safety. It may include steep slopes, fire-prone areas, wetlands, floodplains, or other geologic hazards or water quality areas. Often, the costs to develop such areas are prohibitive anyway.

Adopt an open space requirement and fee-in-lieu policy. An open space requirement enables communities to protect lands with cultural, ecological, or recreational significance. When development is proposed on lands without features in need of protection, a developer could bypass the open space requirement, build out the site, and fee-in-lieu funds could



fund the protection of high-priority sites such as areas of cultural significance or identity, community "gateways," or lands between communities along transportation corridors (to keep communities from growing into one another).

Adopt efficient land-use patterns (see above). Efficient land-use patterns in existing communities reduce development pressure on outlying lands, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and improve air quality.

Work with the county to adopt TDR receiving areas. Transferring a limited number of development rights from county lands nearby the city would permanently protect outlying working landscapes while encouraging vibrancy in town.

Participate in a regional recreation district. The district could plan for and fund regional recreation amenities including a regional trail network and regional recreation centers.

Create a local recreation plan. The plan could focus on providing neighborhood and town-scale recreational facilities as well as identify trails to connect recreational facilities to one another and to the regional recreation network.

Use conservation easements. When land conservation strategies are employed, use conservation easements where possible to preserve land and associated uses in perpetuity.



Intergovernmental Coordination

Participate in and support the Cache Valley Regional Council in identifying and meeting regional goals.

Participate in valley-wide initiatives that improve the quality of life for everyone: Initiatives may include a transportation master plan, an economic development plan, a recreation plan, and a critical lands inventory and protection strategy.



Share available resources. Post tools, especially educational materials or model policy, to www.envisioncachevalley.com to help other communities meet mutual goals.

Use available resources. Seek assistance and tools from other communities which are working toward similar goals. Take advantage of available assistance and training offered through: the Cache County county-wide planner, Cache Valley Regional Council, Cache Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, Bear River Association of Governments, Utah State University, Utah League of Cities and Towns, Envision Utah, and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.



What's Your Strategy?

Developing a local strategy will take some time. Some communities set up joint work sessions for city councils and planning commissions to identify priorities, determine action items, and identify measures of progress. The materials that follow—some questions, a strategy worksheet, population projections, and some local analysis—provide a starting point.

Some questions to consider:

1. Take a look at the projected new households that your community is likely to accommodate by 2040. (Note that we tend to grow faster than projected, and that most growth is internal—our children and grandchildren.) ***If your community accommodates its projected population with current zoning/plans in place, what will it be like?*** What impacts will there be, both positive and negative, on your community and on the region? What challenges will your community face?
2. ***Which vision principles should become priorities*** for your community to help address growth and create a desirable future?
3. Thinking in terms of the priority principles you have identified, ***what's working well*** in your community? ***What's not working well*** your community?
4. ***What actions need to be taken*** to further current successes and address emerging challenges? These actions may relate to education, policy, coordination, etc., and they may be local or regional in nature.



Population

Population projections can be informative. If your community accommodates its projected population with current zoning/plans in place, what will it be like? What impacts will there be, both positive and negative, on your community and on the region? What challenges will your community face?

Cache Valley Population and Dwelling Units Projection, 2010 and 2040

City/County	2010 Population Projection	2010 Dwelling Units Projection*	2040 Population Projection	2040 Dwelling Units Projection*	New Dwelling Units: 2010-2040
Cache County (unincorporated)	6,357	2,038	7,856	2,857	819
Franklin County (unincorporated)	5,564	1,783	6,816	2,479	695
Amalga	509	163	620	225	62
Clarkston	772	247	890	324	76
Clifton	289	93	354	129	36
Cornish	289	93	331	120	28
Dayton	492	158	603	219	62
Franklin	718	230	880	320	90
Hyde Park	3,992	1,279	8,665	3,151	1,871
Hyrum	8,342	2,674	16,895	6,144	3,470
Lewiston	2,228	714	4,226	1,537	823
Logan	52,776	16,915	101,238	36,814	19,898
Mendon	1,030	330	1,954	711	380
Millville	2,027	650	4,877	1,773	1,124
Newton	817	262	1,017	370	108
Nibley	4,224	1,354	9,075	3,300	1,946
North Logan	8,432	2,703	17,054	6,201	3,499
Oxford	54	17	66	24	7
Paradise	982	315	1,864	678	363
Preston	5,778	1,852	7,078	2,574	722
Providence	6,795	2,178	11,947	4,344	2,166
Richmond	2,576	826	4,893	1,779	954
River Heights	1,705	546	1,837	668	122
Smithfield	9,808	3,144	19,652	7,146	4,003
Trenton	522	167	711	259	91
Wellsville	3,575	1,146	7,840	2,851	1,705
Weston	471	151	577	210	59
TOTAL	131,124	42,027	239,816	87,206	45,179

Cache County Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB), <http://governor.utah.gov/deal/popprojections.html>, accessed 10/23/2009

Franklin County Source: Idaho Department of Health

* Includes group quarters population (in Cache County, that's 1,923 in 2010 and 3,999 in 2040)

The 2010 dwelling unit projection is based on a household size of 3.12 persons/household. The 2040 dwelling unit projection is based on a household size of 2.75 persons/household. Both are rates projected by the Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB).

Adopt Vision Principles

West Valley City, Utah evaluates development proposals according to growth principles and objectives identified in a broad regional study. The principles, formally adopted by the city's planning commission and city council, guided the city's general plan update and are used along with other general plan elements to guide future land-use decisions.

View West Valley's Principles at:

www.wvc-ut.gov/index.aspx?NID=456



Local Analysis: Comparing the Baseline with the Vision in Selected Cities

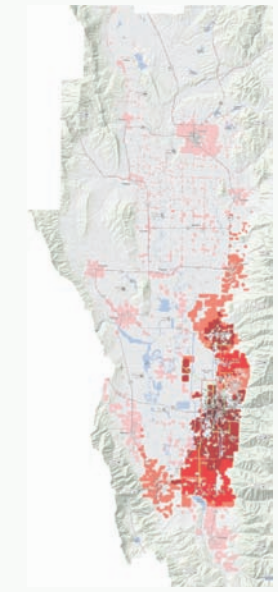
The charts below illustrate some of the differences between the baseline map and the vision map in specific communities. (Remember that the baseline scenario projects recent trends regarding lot sizes and specific growth locations into the future. The vision scenario illustrates one way the vision principles could be implemented and reflects the preferences expressed at public workshops.)

Average Density Per Acre (gross density of areas impacted by new development)

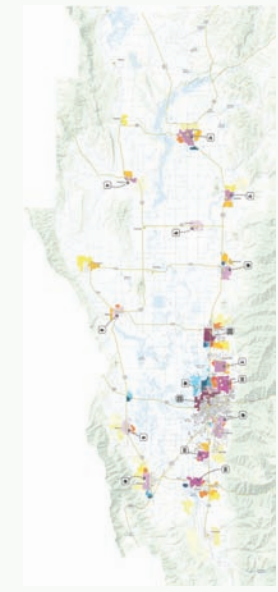
	Baseline Scenario	Vision
North Logan	1.6	6.8
Logan	3.7	8.4
Nibley	2.1	6.1
Hyde Park	1.7	5.2
Providence	3.8	5.6
Lewiston	0.7	2.4
Smithfield	1.5	3.1
Wellsville	0.9	1.7

Analysis of Average Density

This chart reflects the average density of areas impacted by new development in eight different cities in both the baseline scenario and the vision scenario. One approach to implement land-use aspects of the vision could be to increase overall density across all of a city's zones. Remember that the baseline reflects recent trends and doesn't capture older development patterns in a city. Lot sizes in recent developments are generally larger than those of earlier decades. The vision may not be a significant departure from a city's overall development pattern.



Baseline Scenario Land-Use



Vision Land-Use



Analysis of the Ability of Town Centers to Absorb Future Growth

What if your city wants to preserve its existing zoning in most parts of town? Perhaps it makes more sense to focus a large share of new growth into a town center. The chart below depicts how a town center, either one square mile or one-half square mile in size, can absorb growth and create a vibrant place for working, shopping and living.

Town Centers and Growth Comparison (Analysis assumes average baseline density for new growth outside the town center)

	Town Center One-Half Square Mile in Size		Town Center One Square Mile in Size	
	Dwelling Units	Average Density	Dwelling Units	Average Density
North Logan	6,856	21.4	7,357	11.5
Logan	5,832	18.2	7,024	11.0
Nibley	2,762	8.6	3,426	5.4
Hyde Park	2,559	8.0	3,116	4.9
Providence	1,645	5.1	2,866	4.5
Lewiston	977	3.1	1,194	1.9
Smithfield	2,806	8.8	3,278	5.1
Wellsville	1,673	5.2	1,970	3.1



Worksheets

Strategy worksheet can provide a framework for discussion. The strategy worksheet below was used at the November 2009 forum for local officials and can continue to be helpful as jurisdictions create their own implementation strategies.

Online Resources

Download your own worksheet at
www.envisioncachevalley.com



It's About Local Innovation

The vision highlights growth preferences expressed at numerous public events held throughout 2009. The implementation ideas expressed in this chapter are intended to spark conversation and creative solutions that are best identified locally and through the cooperative efforts of local jurisdictions. The vision is derived from the public exploration of growth issues and is an innovative means of accommodating growth and preserving a high quality of life in Cache Valley. Continuing to tap the ideas, values and dreams of citizens and local leaders and officials will lead to implementation initiatives that will ensure the quality of life contemplated by the vision.



This report is available online at

www.envisioncachevalley.com

