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Implementation Toolkit

The Cache Valley Toolkit

The Cache Valley Vision could be implemented in a variety of ways to meet both local and valley-wide objectives. Because implementation is voluntary, and opportunities for realizing vision objectives will vary across communities, the creation of a toolkit assumes that specific implementation techniques may also range widely from one jurisdiction to another. A community can pick and choose the tools that best fit its unique situation.

In general, solutions will more likely be found by employing a combination of tools and providing more flexibility and choices than currently available. The toolkit included in the following pages is a starting point. The previous chapter drew on it to outline possible valley-wide, county, and municipal strategies. It is likely to expand as jurisdictions across the region identify or create additional tools that will enable them to meet their goals. The intent of the toolkit is to provide an initial set of resources: a wide range of tools that are successfully used in other communities to achieve goals similar to Cache Valley Vision Principles.

The toolkit currently contains 30 tools. As it grows, additional tools will be located at www.envisioncachevalley.com. Most tool discussions contain a description of the tool, a case study highlighting its use, and a list of sources for model policy or further reading. Online, these lists link directly to source material wherever possible.

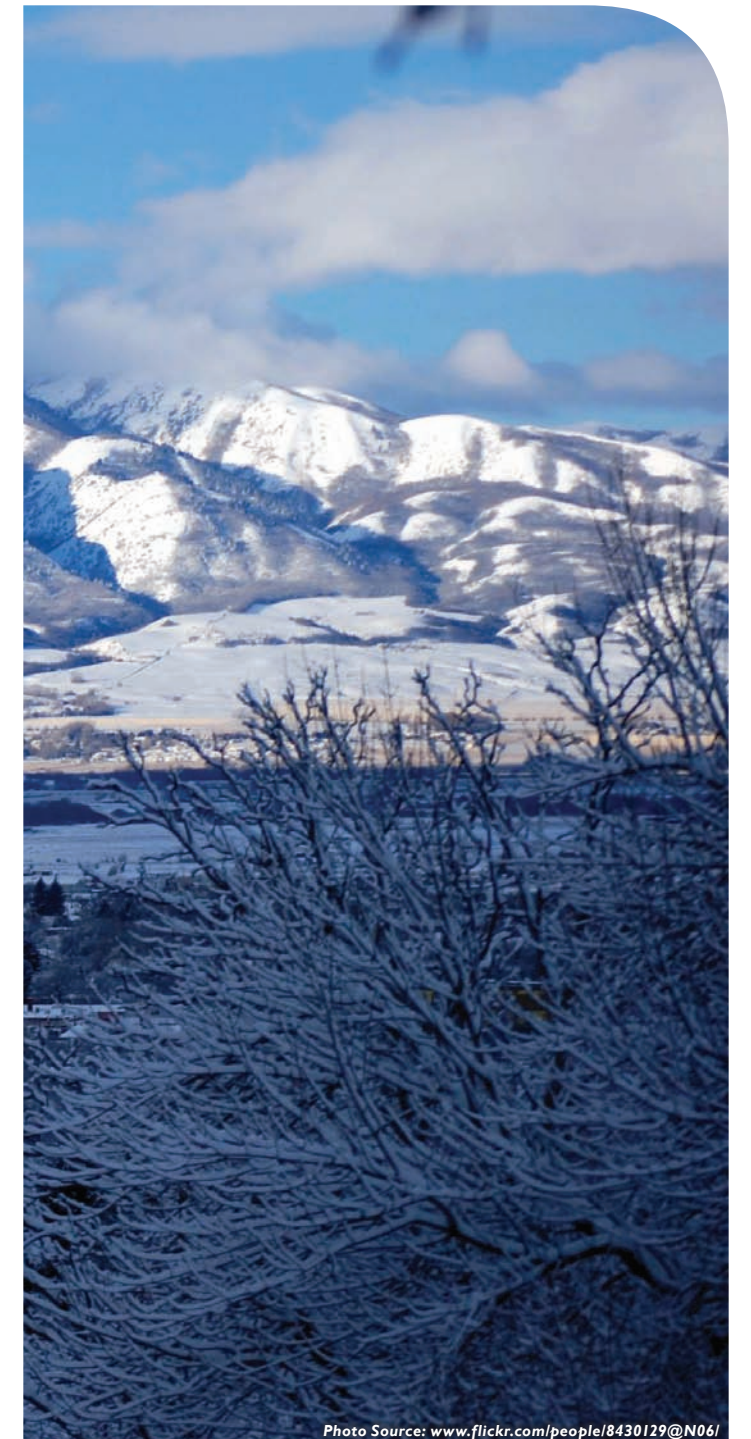


Photo Source: www.flickr.com/people/8430129@N06/

Cache Valley Vision Implementation Toolkit: Tool Matrix

The Toolkit Matrix

The toolkit matrix provides a quick, one-page list of the tools available in this chapter while also indicating issues the tools address. Many tools address multiple vision principles, while others are targeted to more narrow purposes.



Implementation Tools

Vision Principle Category

	Intergovernmental Coordination	Regional	Municipal	Natural Resources, Working Farms, and Recreation	General Growth, Housing, and Employment	Transportation and Infrastructure
Accessory Buildings			●		●	
Affordable Housing			●		●	
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	●	●				●
Clustering		●	●	●	●	
Community Gardens			●	●		
Critical Lands Overlay Zone		●	●	●	●	
Development Standards			●		●	●
Down Zoning			●	●		
Economic Development Plan	●	●	●		●	
Farmland Preservation	●	●	●	●		
Flexible Lot Size Policy			●		●	●
Form-Based Code			●		●	●
Impact Fees			●		●	●
Infill and Redevelopment: Parking Lots, Big Boxes, Dead Malls			●		●	●
Intergovernmental Coordination	●	●	●	●	●	●
Inventory of Critical Lands	●	●	●	●		
Mixed-Use Zoning			●		●	●
Open Space Requirements and Fee-in-Lieu Programs			●	●		
Parking Policy			●		●	●
Public Outreach and Education	●	●	●	●	●	●
Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Bonds, Land Trusts	●	●	●	●		
Recreation Districts	●	●	●	●	●	
Revenue Sharing/Balancing Economic Growth	●	●	●		●	
Street Connectivity	●	●	●		●	●
Street Design Standards			●		●	●
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	●	●	●	●		
Transit Ready and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)	●		●		●	●
Transportation Master Plan	●	●	●		●	●
Urban Containment	●	●	●	●	●	●
Water Efficient Design Guidelines			●	●	●	



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- City of Arlington, Virginia. Zoning Ordinance Elements of Accessory Dwellings
- Research Division of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Accessory Apartments: Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities (1991)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research. Accessory Dwelling Units: Case Study (2008)
- City of Santa Cruz, California. Accessory Dwelling Unit Manual
- City of Portland, Oregon. Accessory Dwelling Unit Program Guide



Accessory Buildings

Accessory buildings in a residential context are separate dwelling spaces within the same lot as the primary dwelling and include a kitchen and bathroom. Accessory dwellings include, but are not limited to, basement apartments, above the garage living spaces, and separate, smaller structures on the same property. The benefits of accessory dwellings, both to the individual and the community, are multiple.

Accessory buildings help accommodate a growing population in neighborhoods without the addition of apartment buildings or other multifamily attached structures. Detached “granny flats” and basement apartments allow multigenerational family living situations. Aging parents or adult children can live nearby while helping to make house payments. Such structures also provide opportunities for the elderly to age in place and live near their children. Young families can help pay the mortgage with additional income from a student renter. Accessory buildings also benefit municipalities. Often they do not require additional water, sewer and electrical connections, allowing a community to grow without additional infrastructure costs.

Nationally, regulations regarding accessory buildings range from strict prohibition to express allowance in residential zones. Rapidly growing municipalities with growth boundaries, such as Santa Cruz, California, and Portland, Oregon, expressly permit accessory dwellings in all residential zones. Many regulations limit the number of people allowed in the accessory unit. Some regulations state that the occupant of an

accessory unit must either be related to, or a caregiver of, the resident of the primary dwelling. In many cases, the owner must occupy the main structure, a measure designed to preserve a neighborhood’s character and stability. A municipality must consider its own character and the sentiments of its citizens when creating an accessory dwelling unit policy.

Like many other programs that increase overall density and provide increased housing options, allowing accessory residential units may raise fears about the character of a neighborhood. More renters have the potential to change quiet, family-oriented neighborhoods. However, a nationwide study conducted in Canada in the 1990s (Research Division of Canada Mortgage and Housing) concluded that more than half of accessory unit occupants were either friends or family of the primary occupant. The study also showed that most residents of accessory units had moved into them because they wanted lower-cost housing in quiet, family-oriented neighborhoods. In Vancouver, where some 30% of lots contain an accessory unit, family-oriented residential neighborhoods remain pervasive.

The Canadian study also demonstrates that as communities age, accessory use increases. Unregulated, illegal accessory uses may pose hazards to their occupants. Legalization helps to ensure the quality and character of accessory buildings and spaces by ensuring code enforcement. Neighborhood character can be further ensured by requiring that the primary dwelling be owner occupied. Tenants are less likely to be problematic when their landlords live next door.

As Cache Valley continues to grow, creative solutions will be needed to incorporate new residents with a range of housing needs, while preserving the character of the valley’s communities. Accessory dwellings provide an additional housing option without greatly increasing the cost of municipal services or altering the character of neighborhoods.



Residential home with a “granny flat” in the rear.



Affordable Housing

The generally accepted definition of affordable housing is living quarters that require less than 30% of median household income. In many instances, it is students, civil servants and teachers who require affordable housing. Sometimes citizens fear that an increase in lower income households will lower property values and increase crime, but often, the availability of affordable housing means that one’s children can grow into adulthood in the same community in which they were raised, or others can downsize as they age without leaving their neighborhood and support structure.

Zone for More Housing Options

Perhaps the easiest way to create more affordable housing is to update the zoning code to include a more diverse set of housing options. By allowing developers to create more housing options in their projects, by being more flexible with accessory structures, and by mixing attached and detached residential units, more diversity is achieved. The townhomes, apartments and accessory dwellings that come from this process are often more affordable than the single family detached units that are the norm. Such action also has the benefit of allowing, rather than prohibiting, a solution that reduces government intervention in the marketplace. Finally, blending various housing types has a stabilizing effect in a community and is a better alternative to creating concentrations of low-income housing in a single area.

Affordable Housing Mandates

A more proactive approach to providing affordable housing is to mandate a percentage of new and redeveloped residential property to be a certain rental or purchase price. This price is usually determined by calculating 30% of the lower end income in the area. One advantage of this type of legislation is that it spreads low-income homes throughout the community instead of isolating them into small areas, thus reducing or eliminating any negative effects.

Affordable Housing Bonus Density

Mandate is not the only means to achieve a higher percentage of affordable housing. Many communities offer density bonuses to developers when they include a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new developments. Such legislation removes the heavy handedness associated with mandates, while still providing more economic diversity. Bonuses, however, are less effective than mandates when it comes to creating sheer numbers of affordable homes.

Demonstration Projects

In some cases, legislation and bonuses do not provide the degree of affordable housing a community is seeking. In this case, demonstration projects are a useful tool in jump-starting a community’s affordable housing program. Demonstration projects are joint ventures between a government and local builders. The organizations work together to find cost cutting measures that result in lower-cost homes. Though there is usually not any federal funding for such projects, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the

National Association of Home Builders have a great deal of advice to offer for affordable housing demonstration projects. Once a demonstration project is complete, the community has not only a vision, but a road map to future affordable housing projects.

Often, young people, empty nesters, and the elderly desire or require different housing options than what is readily available. Our teachers and our firemen are better served by living in the communities they serve. By creating more options for more affordable housing, we can create cohesive communities where individuals can live out the course of their lives.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- City of Lake Forest, Illinois. Affordable Housing Code
- State of Florida. Density Bonus for Affordable Housing (Code)
- State of Utah. Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (Code)
- State of Idaho. Idaho Housing Trust Fund (Code)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research. The Affordable Housing Demonstration: A Case Study



Case Study

In the city of Lacey, Washington, affordable housing needs were not being met according to federal mandate. A joint venture between the city and a local construction company (Phillips Homes) created a demonstration housing project providing almost 200 homes. Construction costs were reduced by \$7,396 (1986 Dollars) per unit as a result of the private-public partnership. With these savings and quick sales, project investments were quickly recouped.

Bus Rapid Transit

Bus rapid transit (BRT) is a higher capacity, lower-cost public transportation option that offers the efficiency and convenience of light rail, but uses buses. Several operational features make BRT successful. A dedicated bus lane, a fixed guideway, and/or signal priority improve trip times, as do scheduled stops (as opposed to user-requested stops). Many BRT systems incorporate elevated stations and specialized buses for a light rail feel and to improve boarding time and convenience. Off-bus fare collection speeds up the process, as the bus is not required to wait for users to pay as they get on. Many BRT systems run along specific, high-use routes and incorporate a system of “feeder” buses that conform to more traditional bus operation policies. The combination of some or all of these elements allows for faster and more reliable bus service than conventional bus routes. Increased efficiency and reliability attracts more riders to the system and helps reduce overall traffic congestion.

While BRT operates in a similar fashion to light rail, BRT capital costs are significantly less than rail because they do not require the purchase of train cars or the installation of rail. Operational costs are also typically less than light rail, though study results have been somewhat mixed. BRT routes can be more flexible than some other transit modes, adjusting as communities change or better planning data becomes available. Some BRT systems are built as a stepping stone to light rail or higher capacity service. In this case, stations, alignments, and rights-of-way can be planned to accommodate both the initial BRT system and the light rail system planned to replace it.



Photo Credit: Lane Transit District (Eugene, Oregon)

Eugene Oregon's EmX BRT service makes boarding easy with level bus loading.

In Eugene and neighboring Springfield, Oregon, a full-service BRT line connects the two cities. The area served is home to about 200,000 residents, a population Cache Valley will reach within the *Envision Cache Valley* 2040 planning horizon. The system uses dedicated busways, signal priority, near-level boarding, and off-bus fare collection. The first line (known as the Green Line) replaced a popular regular bus route between the two cities. Since the conversion, ridership has doubled.

Using a combination of curbside, queue jump and dedicated bus lanes, with the curbside lanes being at grade, the new system did not require purchasing of right-of-way, keeping costs down. Construction of the line, including the purchase of specialized BRT buses, cost about \$25 million, or \$6.25 million per mile, a relative bargain compared to the \$62.5 million per mile light rail cost in nearby Portland, or the \$42.4 million per mile cost of TRAX in Salt Lake City (Urban Transport Fact Book).

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- National BRT Institute. Home Page
- Metro Magazine (reproduced online at the National BRT Institute website). Matrix of BRT cities and characteristics
- Bus Rapid Transit Policy Center. Home Page
- Federal Transit Administration. Bus Rapid Transit Page
- Urban Transport Fact Book. Light Rail Costs Approach \$70 Million per Mile in 2000 (Light Rail Cost Chart)
- Lane Transit District. About EmX BRT
- Bus Rapid Transit Policy Center. Eugene EmX Info Page
- Fort Collins, Colorado. Mason Corridor BRT

Clustering

Cluster development, sometimes referred to as a conservation subdivision, is a practice that preserves critical lands, farmland, or recreational space, usually in conjunction with the residential development of a greenfield (land that has not been previously developed). While gross density on a parcel remains the same, overall lot sizes are reduced in favor of setting aside acreage for conservation. Instead of developing 40, one-acre lots on 40 acres of land, for example, a developer may

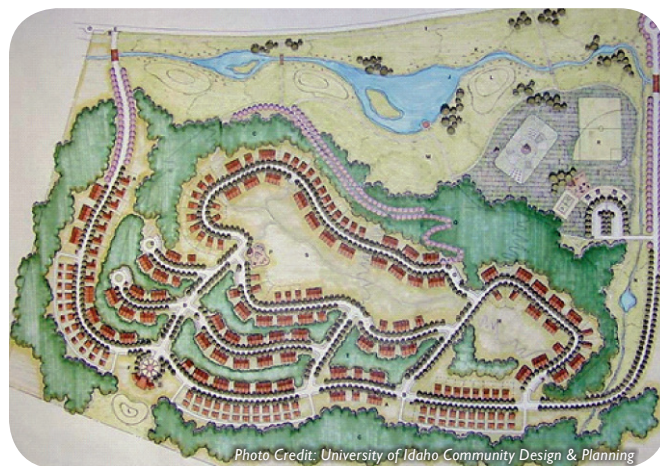


Photo Credit: University of Idaho Community Design & Planning

A clustered plat created by the University of Idaho.

instead conserve 20 acres and develop 40 lots averaging a half-acre in size on the remaining 20 acres of land. Permitting flexible lot sizes and eliminating minimum lot size requirements make clustering possible.

A city or county may wish to provide cluster development as an option or a requirement when accepting subdivision plats. Density bonuses may be used to incentivize cluster development, or the economic benefit to a developer may be so apparent that an incentive isn't necessary. Homes with nearby open space are usually worth more than those without. In many cases, this proximity to open space makes up for the value lost in reducing lot sizes. Clustering also makes service delivery easier and less expensive, as fewer miles of pipes and lines are needed to extend services to a smaller area. On the conservation side, lands set aside for non-development use may be candidates for permanent conservation easements. In every case, the conservation intent of non-developed land should be clear—not simply developmental leftovers.

Clustering is not a panacea for the problems associated with suburban growth. Infill development in existing urbanized areas can be more beneficial in terms of providing efficient municipal services and avoiding greenfield development. However, when greenfield development is occurring, clustering is an option that protects critical lands and provides residents with a stronger connection to the land.

Case Study



Hidden Springs, Idaho, located 20 minutes north of Boise, is a greenfield development based on the cluster model. The site preserves 800 acres of farmland, wildlife habitat, and recreation areas. Developed areas house hundreds of residents and feature a town center with a school, café, shop, and post office.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Mega, Mathew, Barbara Lukermann and Robert Sykes for The University of Minnesota Extension. Residential Cluster Development
- Thurston County, Washington. Rural Cluster Development Code (Links Page)
- University of Illinois Extension: Local Community Resources. Cluster/Conservation Development Fact Sheet
- University of Wisconsin Extension. Model Ordinance for Conservation Subdivision
- Town of Cary, North Carolina. Conservation Subdivision Design
- Walworth County, Wisconsin. Conservation Subdivision Ordinance
- Farmington, Utah. Sample Application for a Conservation Subdivision Permit
- Hidden Springs, Idaho (development near Boise)



Online Resources

- Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com
- City of Portland, Oregon. Community Gardens: About the Program
 - American Community Gardening Association. Starting a Community Garden
 - Wasatch Community Gardens
 - Salt Lake Tribune. Stettler, Jeremiah. 8 August 2009. Salt Lake County Hopes to Sprout More Community Gardens

Community Garden

Community gardens give people the opportunity to grow their own food by offering garden plots to those who may not have their own yards or the space they need to garden. Community garden programs range widely in scale, scope and expense. Gardens can provide a source of fresh local food, build community, create volunteer opportunities, provide youth programs, and teach valuable agricultural skills. When community gardens operate on a volunteer basis or use land temporarily, they can be fairly inexpensive.

Wasatch Community Gardens is a non-profit that operates several community gardens in Salt Lake City and helps other communities develop community garden programs. Always innovative, the group created the Portable People's Garden in 2009. The garden exists entirely in large, raised planter boxes and resides in an urban vacant lot. Once the lot is ready for development, the garden can be moved to a new location with little trouble. A portable garden allows for the practice of community gardening without having to purchase land.

Portable or more permanent community gardens can be a useful tool where land is underutilized or transitioning between uses. Vacant lots within existing neighborhoods could house a garden until the space is desired for infill development. Big box and strip commercial areas with excess parking could accommodate a portable garden, though existing

impermeable surfaces and water availability could pose challenges. Institutions with excess lawn—perhaps in university or business park settings—could repurpose some land for agricultural use.

The degree of investment a government makes in community gardens can vary widely. In Portland, Oregon, a city-funded community garden organization maintains a staff, holds classes, and leases plots. As in Portland, community gardens can be a part of other city open space programs, alongside parks and trails. Cities can also make use of existing, underutilized resources: proposed legislation in Salt Lake County would make it easier for gardening (as well as larger scale agriculture) to occur on vacant, county-owned land. Costs to create and maintain agricultural functions would be the responsibility of interested citizens with winning proposals.

Case Study



The University of Utah recently implemented its first community garden for students, faculty and staff. The garden, along with a farmer's market, provides fresh local food and makes better use of available land than the sod it replaced.



Online Resources

- Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com
- University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point: Center for Land-Use Education. Planning Implementation Tools: Overlay Zoning
 - Midway City, Utah. Sensitive Lands Overlay Zone (Chapter 16.14)
 - Marion County, Oregon. Geologically Hazardous Overlay Zone
 - Walnut City, California, Rural Overlay Zone
 - Salt Lake City, Utah. Central Business District Zone
 - Sandy Spring – Ashton, Maryland. Rural Village Overlay Zone
 - Wasatch County, Utah. Geological Hazard Overlay Zone (Draft)
 - Sandy City, Utah. Flood Plain Overlay Zone
 - Uintah County, Utah. Dry Fork Canyon Overlay Zone
 - United States Geological Survey (USGS) Natural Hazards Gateway
 - Utah Division of Water Quality
 - Utah Watershed Coordinating Council

Critical Lands Overlay Zone

An overlay zone is a zoning area that is placed on top of one or more (or part of) existing zones. The rules of the zones already in place still apply. Overlay zones place special regulations on an area due to special needs, like the creation of an entertainment district or watershed protection. In many cases overlay zones add an extra layer of protection for critical lands.

In the case of Cache Valley, overlay zones may protect sensitive areas by following one of two tracks. First, overlay zones can be used to mitigate the effects of development where it might occur in the sensitive areas themselves. Second, they can limit or restrict development on critical land, perhaps by incentivizing development elsewhere.

When overlay zoning is used directly in the protection of critical lands, it most often takes place in an area where development will likely occur and where sensitive environmental features exist. If this were a residential zone near a floodplain, the overlay zone may dictate extra setbacks, a limitation on the amount of impervious surface created, or a reduced density standard. Overlay zones may be used to protect ridgelines, working farms and ranches, wildlife corridors, riparian areas, groundwater recharge areas and many other environmentally sensitive features.

Overlay zones could be used to create greater allowable density in areas where it makes sense. For example, a public transit corridor overlay (perhaps only one block wide) could allow for greater building height or increased density to encourage ridership along

a transit route. Designating land for more intensive development in such areas can reduce pressure on sensitive sites.

Overlay zones can also communicate and limit potential risks to owners, buyers and developers. Geological hazard or environmental hazard overlay zones may specify inherent dangers of a property due to flooding, landslides, avalanches, wildfire, or other land-based potential dangers. While such zones may decrease property values, they help to inform the public of risk and encourage safe living environments. Overlay zones informing people of potential dangers also help prevent law suits and property disputes.

Overlay zones are adopted just like regular zones. Since zoning likely already exists in the proposed area, overlay zoning may seem like unnecessary government regulation. In creating an overlay zone, it is important to define a clear and specific purpose for the zone. Good data about water quality or wildlife habitat may make the difference between an overlay zone being viewed as a reasonable protection instead of capricious legislation. The zone must be clear to the landowners as well. Specific purpose and clear detail about what is required assist not only in the adoption of the zone, but aid in implementation and reduce the number of requests for variances.

Overlay zoning is a relatively inexpensive method of critical lands preservation. As the areas in question are already zoned, it is unlikely that additional staff is required to administer them. If the zones are clearly defined in their purpose, the public education process

should not be too difficult. Overlay zones may not provide the extent of protection that is desired. If an area really is of a critical nature, stronger preservation measures may be more effective than an overlay zone that allows for limited development.

Case Study

Dry Fork Canyon, an environmentally and culturally sensitive area abutting the rural edge of Vernal, Utah, provides culinary water for the area and contains numerous Native American cultural sites, including petroglyphs. At the canyon's base are a number of working farms and ranches. Uintah County recognized Dry Fork Canyon as a critical resource and created a unique zone to protect it. The Dry Fork Canyon overlay zone protects this unique mixture by creating a specific list of permitted and conditional uses as well as width and setback requirements.

Development Standards

Development standards are regulations ensuring certain needs are met when new development occurs. The standards can range from additions to zoning code to incentives toward adopting green building practices. Whenever an area is zoned it has at least some development standards. Most zoning code sets standards for the type of use allowed as well as the size and layout of the structure. Standard zoning elements like setback requirements hold development to aesthetic standards as well as define use. Traditional zoning, however, does not go much further than identifying use and site standards. A community may wish to expand requirements for development to meet changing needs.

Development standards can be narrow or more far reaching. Standards can apply to specific spaces such as a downtown or a river corridor, or they can encompass an entire community. The purpose of development standards is flexible as well. They can address issues as specific as parking in front of apartment buildings or as broad as building heights or setbacks.

Development standards can apply to plat approval as well as individual structures. For example, standards can put in place requirements for open space and trail networks in a new development.

The U.S. Green Building Council has established preset standards, known as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), to make neighborhoods and individual buildings more environmentally

friendly. Many cities (see list online) have made the adoption of LEED (a requirement, though to varying degrees. Cities like Scottsdale, Arizona, have made LEED a requirement for all new buildings, while Atlanta, Georgia, requires LEED certification only on city-funded projects of a certain size. Incentives for LEED building may be as simple as offering priority permit processing to LEED approved sites. While LEED standards



Development standards can help implement a trail network or preserve open space.

are rigorous and may pose somewhat larger upfront costs, they have been proven to reduce operating costs and to use resources more efficiently.

The most effective way to implement development standards is to enact them as code. This can be done at the municipal level, but can be most effective in a larger area. For example, county-wide retail development standards may reduce the negative effects of competition among cities for retail revenue. Larger area standards also give developers a sense of clarity about the rules to which they must conform.

Good development standards look beyond simple zoning to address specific needs. Without a clear explanation of purpose, development standards can seem arbitrary and are thus not likely to be useful. In creating development standards, it is helpful to have specific problems in mind, as well as a specific reason for addressing them. Development standards are justified when they specifically address the problems identified.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Post Falls, Idaho. Comprehensive Plan (Natural Resources, Parks and Greenspace Standards)
- Sacramento City, California. Zoning Districts and Land-Use Regulations (Residential Mixed-Use Zone Standards)
- U.S. Green Building Council. LEED Online Access Page (Environmental Stewardship Standards)
- Houston Advanced Research Center. List of Cities Requiring LEED
- Pacifica, California. Hillside Preservation District (Code)
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Model Traditional Neighborhoods Development Ordinance
- Dane County, Wisconsin. Model Traditional Neighborhood Design Code

Downzoning

The preservation of both critical lands and working farms and ranches were defined goals in the *Envision Cache Valley* visioning process. As growth in the area is highly likely, *Envision Cache Valley* participants suggested it should be focused in urbanized areas, reducing pressure on undeveloped or agricultural ground. In the current land-use culture, this means modestly increasing allowable density in cities, but also reducing growth pressure outside of urban areas.

Downzoning, usually a voluntary practice, is a process in which a landowner, or group of landowners, opt to have a property's zoning reduced in density. For example, downzoning from one unit per ten acres to one unit per 40 acres would help to preserve rural character and protect working farms and ranches. In combination with tools that increase density within towns, perhaps by the addition of a mixed-use zone in a town center or a modest boost in overall density, downzoning can be a useful tool in maintaining an area's character.

Because downzoning is usually voluntary, it avoids the controversy of a mandate. It cannot be perceived as a "taking," and significant ordinance updates aren't necessary. Like other open space protection measures, however, downzoning is not perfect. For downzoning to occur, the land owners of the area must agree to it. Success depends, then, on land owners willing to give up rights to sub-divide their land for at least the foreseeable

future. This is, in effect, asking an individual or group of individuals to give up potential wealth for the greater good of the community.

The loss, however, is not as dramatic as one might expect. A 1986 study (Nelson 1986) of Salem, Oregon, notes that agricultural land values stabilized while residential land value increased with the adoption of rural protection zoning. By defining what is rural and what is urban, Salem was able to bring stability to its property values.



Without protection measures, critical lands and working farms and ranches may instead accommodate dispersed subdivisions.

On the preservation side, the pitfall of downzoning is its lack of permanence. Zoning can always be changed. For permanent protection of farmland or critical lands, tools that engage a conservation easement or other permanent protection strategy are needed. Downzoning could be viewed as an intermediate step in a move toward permanent protection.

Downzoning is only one tool of many that could be used together to preserve the character of Cache Valley. However, in an area where a majority of farmers value not only the use of their property, but also the lifestyle it brings, downzoning may be a simple and effective tool.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Apel, Mark B. Downzoning—A Land Protection Tool: How it's Been Used in One Arizona County
- Realtor.org. Field Guide to Downzoning
- Utah State Historic Preservation Office. Downzoning and Historic Districts



Printed Resources

- Nelson, Arthur C. 1986. *Using Land Markets to Evaluate Urban Containment Programs*. Journal of the American Planning Association. Volume 52, Issue 2 (June): 156 – 171.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Flynn, Erin. 2005. Thinking and Acting Regionally in the Greater Wasatch Area: Implications for Local Economic Development Practice. Envision Utah
- U.S. Federal Government. Economic Development and Infrastructure Resources Page
- Theising, Andrew and Debra Moore. 2007. Evolving Local Government Purpose through Economic Development
- Association of University Research Parks. Home Page
- International Economic Development Council. Home Page
- National Congress for Community Economic Development. Home Page



Economic Development Plan

A Regional Perspective

When creating an economic development plan, it is important to think at a regional scale, as this scale increasingly reflects the way people live their lives: living in one municipality, working in another, running errands in a third, and meeting friends in a fourth. Businesses work at a regional scale as well, realizing the low-cost economies of scale, and utilizing regional networks that enable information sharing and innovation. Because of these trends and the diverse resources that a region can offer, it is the metropolitan or regional scale that attracts business interest.

Interestingly, there is a disconnect between the regional scale at which business interests compete and the local scale at which municipal governments operate. While existing businesses rely on a regional network and new businesses consider the region when making decisions about relocation, municipal governments compete with their neighbors when seeking to generate revenue.

Economic development plans in Cache Valley should focus first on making the valley as a whole more attractive. Regional coordination on quality-of-life issues, creation and maintenance of regional assets, and economic cooperation create an environment conducive to business interests. For example, the airline manufacturer, Boeing, was drawn to the City of Chicago in large part because of the regional cooperation created by the Chicago Metropolitan Mayor's Conference (Flynn).

Regional cooperation not only makes an area more attractive to business, but it also helps to balance the regional economy. In Utah, the tax structure creates an incentive to attract retail businesses over

other industries. While retail sales provide important services and help support the municipal tax base, retail jobs are often low paying, and retail does little to enhance the economic capacity of the region. Rather, creating "high-skill, high-wage" (Flynn) employment is more beneficial to the region as a whole. Such jobs increase the spending capacity of those they employ and increase a region's export capacity. "High-skill, high-wage" jobs also create more skilled workers, helping to create a culture of educated and skilled people. Such a culture makes a region even more attractive to new business interests.

Creating an Economic Development Plan

While it is important to think and act regionally in terms of overall business expansion and recruitment, it is also very important to think about how to prepare a municipality to be an attractive home for high-skill, high-wage companies. *Thinking and Acting Regionally in the Greater Wasatch Area: Implications for Local Economic Development Practice*, an Envision Utah tool prepared by Erin Flynn, defines a four-step process that enables a city to identify economic development goals and a strategy to implement them.

1. Establish an Economic Development Vision - This step centers on public involvement about the type of community residents want to become. Questions that need to be answered include: What type of businesses do you wish to attract? Where should they be located? Do we simply want to grow, or do we wish to maintain or create a specific business climate? Some cities may find they wish to remain primarily residential. In this case, economic development can be limited to requested services or property tax initiatives.

2. Conduct a Baseline Assessment - A baseline assessment focuses on the current economic development practices in a municipality, the infrastructure requirements of various industries, and municipal strengths and weaknesses in light of industry requirements. Quality of life issues apply generally, but specific industries have specific land, water, power and other requirements. Assets and weaknesses surveyed should include land and buildings, zoning and permitting practice, taxes and regulations, infrastructure and utilities, labor and workforce, education, housing, transportation and quality of life. An inventory across these areas will identify municipal strengths and weaknesses and will highlight areas in which a municipality must coordinate and work with other municipalities across the region to improve services and amenities.

3. Prioritize and Select Implementation Strategies - An implementation strategy should move a municipality from its baseline to its future vision. The strategy may focus on upgrading economic development practices, business development, the workforce, the preparation of land and buildings, and quality of life and community amenities. The strategy should reflect not only the needs of the targeted industries defined in the economic development vision, but also the assets and weaknesses defined in the baseline assessment. A viable implementation strategy will reflect what businesses want as well as what a city and its residents need.

4. Benchmark Progress - Finally, a municipality should follow up on its economic development work by establishing benchmark goals and ensuring they are met. Economic development should certainly praise its successes, but it must also examine and learn from instances where success does not occur.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Utah Agricultural Code (relevant statutes include 4-7,4-8,4-18,4-19,4-21,4-22)
- Utah Criminal Code (Right to Farm Legislation, two locations in Utah Code)
- Idaho Right to Farm Legislation
- American Farmland Trust. Rocky Mountain Agricultural Landowners Guide to Conservation and Sustainability
- Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2003 National Rescoring Inventory: Land-Use
- 2007 Census of Agriculture: County Level Data



Printed Resources



- American Farmland Trust. 1997. *Saving American Farmland: What Works*. Northampton, Massachusetts: American Farmland Trust.

Farmland Preservation

In the visioning process, the protection of working farms and ranches, as well as the preservation of Cache Valley's scenic beauty, are stated goals. Without measures of protection it is very likely that thousands of acres of Cache Valley's farmland will be developed to accommodate a rapidly growing population. This will not only change the valley's character, but it will also limit future local food production, reduce water quality, and reduce wildlife habitat.

Techniques for preserving farmland are numerous and include protective zoning, transfer of development rights, conservation easements, right-to-farm legislation and agricultural districting (downzoning). Several of these tools are reviewed elsewhere in this toolkit, with a few more being discussed below. Successful methods have used both regulatory and incentive-based programs.

Master Planning

By including farmland preservation in a master plan, the basis for farm protection zoning is codified. Including farmland in a master plan also grants the basis for growth management practices that include agriculture.

Mitigation Ordinance

A mitigation ordinance is usually used in conjunction with protective zoning, or some other regulated designation of farmland. A mitigation ordinance usually states that for any loss of designated farmland, a developer must create or protect that much land somewhere else. Mitigation ordinances are quite new, with the first adopted in 1995, in Davis, California. In Davis, developers

must protect one acre of farmland for every acre they convert (American Farmland Trust). A successful mitigation ordinance also exists in King County, Washington (American Farmland Trust).

Green Belts

When development encroaches on farmland and property taxes rise, property owners understandably begin to view their farm in a different light—as a future subdivision location instead of ground for food production. Green belt laws assess property tax based on agricultural use, not on potential developable use, thereby keeping taxes low. In addition to helping preserve the farm by creating a financial incentive to keep the ground in farm use, green belt makes general financial sense. Agricultural land uses fewer services than residential development, and a green belt reflects the expenditures by a municipality or county to provide services.

Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a voluntary, permanent deed restriction placed on a parcel to protect its resources or functions—natural or man-made. An easement precludes future real estate development and identifies permitted and prohibited uses. An easement may protect or preserve environmental conditions like water quality or preserve an economic pursuit like farming or ranching.

Conservation easements are often used in tandem with other growth tools, such as the purchase of development rights or the transfer of development rights to another property. These programs enable a landowner to receive the economic benefit of the development rights associated with the land, while not building them on site. Further, the landowner can continue current use of the land—economically benefitting from farm operations.

Finally, with development rights permanently removed, the land is usually assessed at a lower tax rate, further enhancing the viability of farming.

Soil and Water Grants

By recognizing the value of soil and water that are protected by continued farming, some areas have offered soil and water protection grants. These grants usually guarantee a certain time frame in which the farmer will keep farming, and thus continue to protect ground water and soil stability. While such grants are sometimes seen as an excessive municipal expenditure, they can be less costly than building and maintaining water treatment plants and initiating soil reclamation projects.

Government Measures to Increase Farm Profit

Municipal and county governments often have means to disseminate information favorable to farmers. A county tourism organization may offer maps of pick-your-own farms and roadside stands. Many cities sponsor farmers markets, offering direct sales of agricultural products. "Buy local" campaigns highlight the products of specific farms and help to advertise local products. Local label regulations stipulate what must be contained in a product with a certain name. Individually, these small government measures may seem trivial, but they create needed connections between farmers, their representatives, and their customers. These connections have the most potential for creating successful farm protection measures.

Farmland is not simply a source of scenic beauty for Cache Valley. Farms mitigate air pollution, provide wildlife habitat and can ensure clean groundwater. They provide a stable local food source and a significant economic contribution to the local economy.

Flexible Lot Size Policy

Minimum lot size, as a residential zoning practice, has been primarily an attempt to preserve property values. It makes sense that a one-acre lot will sell for more than a half-acre lot. The theory is extended to suggest that the price of a two-acre lot will be reduced if it is next door to a half-acre lot. Zoning code that enforces minimum lot size addresses potential concerns about the stability of residential property values and neighborhood character. By ensuring that a lot is of a given size, the law also ensures a certain level of home value and thus a certain amount of wealth for any potential home buyer.

Whether or not it is reasonable to dictate through code who can afford to live where is up to debate. Regardless, in requiring a minimum size for a lot, a subdivision developer is forced to use as much of the property as possible to maximize profits, spreading development out across the whole of the subdivision. Protecting critical lands on a parcel doesn't happen alongside the development of land value.

Allowing flexible lot sizes increases the options available, allowing for increased housing diversity and attention to critical lands or recreational amenities. A method growing in popularity is the adoption of an average lot size instead of a minimum. With a one-acre minimum lot size, a new 100-acre subdivision is very likely to contain 100 one-acre lots. However, with an average lot size of one-acre, the property could be subdivided into a mix of lot sizes, accommodating wider range of housing options while also protecting sensitive features like stream beds or valuable vegetation. In this scenario, a 100-acre subdivision

Case Study



In Bedminster, New Jersey, the resource protection goals put forth in the master plan were inconsistent with current zoning code. Specifically, conventional subdivision development did not allow for the desired scale of open space preservation. An average lot size code option was adopted alongside more conventional subdivision requirements in an attempt to maintain more connected open space. The code stipulates that new subdivisions “shall not result in a greater number of lots than would result if a parcel were developed as a fully conforming conventional subdivision,” preserving the same overall density, but allowing for significantly more open space.

may contain 30 preserved acres along a stream corridor encompassing a trail, 50 one-acre lots, 30 half-acre lots, and 20 quarter-acre lots.

Lot size averages allow a developer to maintain overall density (and thus revenue) while providing a mixture of housing options. Townhomes and large single family homes sharing the same subdivision is a departure from conventional residential zoning of the past several decades, but such diversity is a hallmark of many historical neighborhoods built before the strict separation of land uses and housing types. There is also more research on property values, indicating that proximity to open space may be as significant an indicator of property value as lot size (Arendt). A community need not decide between open space preservation and the development of new housing.

Allowing for average lot size is a practice that increases options—for residents, municipalities, and developers. A landowner could create standardized lot sizes, or a landowner could exercise flexibility.

Form-Based Code

Form-based codes encourage a predictable community form and high quality public spaces by using the physical form of a community as the organizing principle rather than the separation of uses. Such codes shape private development to produce good public spaces. Instead of focusing narrowly on land-use and prohibited uses, form-based codes allow communities to prescribe how they want their towns, cities and suburbs to look and feel.

Form-based codes incorporate recent advances in urban design. The ideas, however, are often based on early American towns with careful attention to the relationship of buildings to one another and to the street: buildings are pushed closer to walkways and streets; parking is placed in the rear; blocks are smaller and streets are narrower; architecture is varied; and buildings are used to frame important civic spaces.

Perhaps most importantly, mixed-use development is encouraged in most form-based codes, a departure from Euclidian zoning which has increasingly separated even highly compatible uses from one another. Whereas conventional zoning codes are often heavy tomes, with page after page describing what uses can go where, form-based codes are generally light on land-use proscriptions. The community decides on a basic form for the new development, and the market decides to a reasonable degree on its use.

According to the Form-Based Code Institute, form-based codes generally consist of the following:

- A regulating plan, which is similar to a zoning map in that it defines the geographic boundaries of the code.
- Public space standards, which lay out the dimensions and characteristics of sidewalks, roads and parks.
- Building form standards, which define how buildings respond to the public realm.
- Use of administration guidelines.
- Definitions of uncommon terms.

Beyond these basic characteristics, form-based codes may also include architectural and landscaping standards, environmental regulations, and graphic annotations. Codes vary according to their length, level of detail, and the type of planning issues they address. Some have very detailed descriptions of architectural treatments. Other codes take a minimalist approach, trusting the developer to determine an appropriate architectural style.

A form-based code can either be mandatory, optional, or “floating,” which means a set of regulations without predetermined geographic boundaries. The use of form-based codes is relatively new, but they have been successfully implemented in places around the United States, including Florida, Texas, and California. Their reliance on graphical illustrations has made implementation easier for the development

Did You Know?

Mixed-use development is encouraged in most form-based codes, a departure from Euclidian zoning which has increasingly separated even highly compatible uses.

community as well as local politicians and planning staff. The best-known model is Duany Plater-Zyberk’s “SmartCode,” an open source model code intended for adaptation by local communities.

Hybrid form-based codes are codes that take elements of a form-based code—usually graphical urban design standards—and blend them into a conventional code. These standards improve the conventional code but usually lack the attention to the public realm—how the streets, buildings and open spaces relate to one another. The lack of specificity in this respect tends to reduce the level of predictability, diminishing many of the advantages of form-based codes.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Kopits, Elizabeth et. al. 2009. Lot Size, Zoning and Household Preferences: Impediments to Smart Growth? Resources for the Future
- New Hampshire Department of Environmental Studies. Lot Size Averaging: One Size Does Not Fit All
- Sample Codes from Smart Growth Gateway



Printed Resources

- Arendt, Randall. 1999. *Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances*. Washington D.C.: Island Press.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Form-Based Code Institute
- Smart Code Central
- Ventura, California. Midtown Corridors Development Code (An award-winning form-based code)
- Fort Worth, Texas. Near Southside Development Standards and Guidelines (An award-winning form-based code)
- City of Post Falls, Idaho. SmartCode

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Smith, Craig and Scott Ellsworth. A Brief History of Utah Impact Fee and Exaction Law
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. 2008. Impact Fees & Housing Affordability: A Case Study for Practitioners
- Center for Urban Policy and the Environment at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. An Internet Guide to Financing Stormwater Management: Impact Fees
- State of Washington. Transportation Impact Fee Service Area (Code)
- State of Utah. Impact Fees (Code)
- State of Idaho. Development Impact Fees (Code)



Impact Fees

Impact fees are one-time charges assessed by a local government to offset the additional public-service costs of new development. They are usually applied at the time a building permit is issued and are dedicated to the provision of additional services, such as water and sewer systems, roads, schools, libraries, parks and recreation facilities, made necessary by the new development. Fees must be used for a specific, development-induced expense and not for a city's general budget. For example, an impact fee assessed on a new home may pay for costs associated with providing the development with a sewer connection, but not to pay down a city's debt or boost its general fund.

The amount of the impact fee must be clearly linked to the added service cost. Impact fees may be based on the local government's average cost of providing services, or they may be based on the actual cost of providing services to a specific development. Although impact fees do not alter total service or infrastructure costs, they do affect who pays those costs. Each community must decide whether the cost of new infrastructure is charged directly to the new residents by using impact fees, or shared among all new and current residents through higher taxes. By adopting impact fees, the burden on current residents is eased by shifting the expense of new infrastructure costs onto the new development.

The manner in which impact fees are calculated makes a difference and is specified in state law. When the actual cost to provide services is calculated (rather than simply applying an impact fee based on average cost), some development locations may become more attractive, while others may become less attractive simply because providing

services is more expensive. It may make infill development more appealing because of proximity to existing infrastructure, and it may offset the attraction of reduced land costs outside of urban areas.



Photo Source: ©Regents of the University of Minnesota. Used with the permission of the Metropolitan Design Center.
Impact fees can create and maintain parks, but planners should be wary of them as tools for preserving critical lands.

Because impact fees require an “essential nexus”—a reasonable relationship between the fee assessed and the cost of service provided—the municipalities, as primary service providers, are better suited than the counties in Cache Valley to assess and use impact fees. Provision of service allows the assessing body to justify the essential nexus required when assessing an impact fee.

The legal history of impact fees is written as a litany of developer's challenges to them. If the “essential nexus” is maintained, challenges are not usually sustained. Win or lose, challenges can result in protracted and expensive legal battles. If a municipality can clearly demonstrate that impacts from a new development will generate a specific need, impact fees can help mitigate this expense.

When assessing a fee, it is important to consider that the cost of the fee is usually passed from developer to home buyer. Some cities have chosen to implement a progressive impact fee to protect those requiring affordable housing. Progressive fees make some economic sense, as higher income homes often use more services. A HUD-produced document (*Impact Fees & Housing Affordability*) recommends impact fees based on unit size. In Albuquerque, New Mexico, impact fees can be waved outright if affordable housing standards are met. As impact fees are implemented, it is important to ensure that the fees are not a de facto means of excluding lower income residents.

An impact fee's purpose is to enable communities to mitigate specific costs associated with new development. Other effects to land-use patterns, affordable housing, or other factors should also be considered in implementing an impact fee program.



Infill and Redevelopment: Parking Lots, Big Boxes and Dead Malls

What happens when massive buildings become obsolete? Or when their original tenants move or go out of business? This is a common scenario around the country. Even more common, however, is the scenario in which large buildings are underused. Whether a mall, a big-box retailer like Wal-Mart or Sam's Club, an old factory, or just the parking lots that serve these places, many cities find that they have space for infill development.

Parking Lot Infill

Underutilized parking lots are common features in our communities, and these spaces can be filled in with smaller stores, restaurants, office buildings, or even a mix of uses, including residential. Since lots are often in close proximity to one another, nearby big-box retailers could share their parking lots, when possible, and use the leftover space to develop commercial buildings on a smaller scale. Rethinking parking lots adds variety, makes an existing retail area more vibrant, and allows communities to maximize existing spaces before developing farmland or other greenfield sites.

Parking lot infill can also add character to a nondescript part of a city. When combined with landscaping and other thoughtful urban design measures, parking lots can be transformed from utilitarian space to places where retail and pedestrian activity can flourish. Small-scale retail or office space, combined with sidewalks, planters, benches, and

street lights, can create a sense of useful space surrounding a big box store. Unused parking lots are efficient areas for infill. They are already graded for drainage, are close to existing infrastructure, and, because the new uses are generally more favored than the parking area, there tends to be more public support for this type of infill development.

Big Box Reuse

Communities recently have been examining creative ways to reuse defunct big-boxes, malls and factories. They have reused abandoned structures for churches, libraries, schools, medical centers, courthouses, recreation centers, museums, and even a go-kart track.

In Laramie, Wyoming, an old Wal-Mart, abandoned for a new Wal-Mart Super Center, was turned into a school. While the Snowy Range Academy is still an example of the large building, large parking lot format, it has at least found life in a new use. Improvements include a playground in back. A Staples office store shares the space. Neither the school nor the Staples required new roads, water lines or parking areas, making it an efficient site to occupy.

From Dead Malls to Lifestyle Centers and Town Centers

Another recent trend is for developers to replace underperforming indoor malls with lifestyle centers (mixed-use, outdoor retail areas) or even town centers, complete with housing and office space. Some suburbs, which previously lacked a civic or town center, have created them by rethinking a “dead” mall. Cities can facilitate such transitions by adopting mixed-use zoning, density bonuses, and other mechanisms.

Projects that recycle the space of a warehouse style store, or the parking lot in front, reduce the pressure on working farms and ranches or critical lands in outlying areas. Infill and reuse development uses existing infrastructure, making it efficient for developers to build and municipalities to maintain. If Cache Valley communities want to limit their expansion into undeveloped areas, employing infill development strategies in underused, large-lot spaces is worth consideration.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Christensen, Julia. Big Box Reuse Project (2004)



Printed Resources



- Dunham-Jones, Ellen and Williamson, June. 2009. *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Case Study

Englewood, Colorado, partnered with private developers to transform a dead mall into a new city center, taking advantage of a new transit line running along the property boundary. The former Foley's department store building, which once anchored the mall, has been transformed into a new city hall, which anchors the new civic center. The center includes art-filled public streets, a town green, and lots of affordable housing, all within walking distance of a new light rail station.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Cache Valley includes 25 cities and towns and spans two counties and two states. Realizing a valley-wide vision will require cooperation between the various municipalities, the counties, the state governments, and other agencies that affect Cache Valley. There is little question that what one municipality does affects its neighbors, as the valley shares roads, water, air, critical lands, and an economy.

That said, what benefit does increased regional cooperation bring? The most obvious answer is a reduction in waste. Regionally planned transportation and sewer and water lines are better integrated and more efficient. Infrastructure often benefits from an economy of scale. Connection to sewer and waterlines are cheaper per household in a larger and better integrated system. The system as a whole is more efficient than an agglomeration of smaller, localized systems.

Aside from simply saving money, better regional cooperation can address the related issues of tax-base equality and property values. Property values in a connected region have been shown to rise and fall in relation to one another (Orfield). Economic disparities between cities in a given region can affect the cities' respective property values. Depressed property values in one community can drive down home prices in a neighboring town. Tax-base sharing and other regional equity measures can ensure local market stability and thus greater regional economic stability.

A united region also has the benefit of greater leverage in state and national affairs. While a small Cache Valley town may not have enough influence to secure a state grant, Cache Valley as a whole presents a much more formidable force. The same is true for national funding in air quality attainment, transit, transportation and a host of other issues.

Regional cooperation is usually achieved by one of four methods:

1. Annexation - Affords cooperation at a small scale within a portion of a region. An existing government, usually a city, incorporates

outlying land into city boundaries. Annexation and annexation declarations can cause disagreements between communities whose boundaries are close together or whose annexation declarations overlap. Working through annexation issues with neighboring cities can bring unity of purpose and common understanding.

An Agreement To Watch

An interlocal agreement between Madison County, Idaho, and the City of Rexburg recognizes the development of an ordinance defining the purpose and standards for the renegotiation of areas of city impact. It encourages mutual coordination of land-use and annexation in a planned and orderly manner and recognizes that (1) annexations and the area of city impact expansions can have extra-jurisdictional impacts, and that (2) intergovernmental cooperation is an effective means to deal with impacts and opportunities that transcend jurisdictional boundaries. The local governments agree not to change or modify the Area of City Impact Ordinance as adopted within their city or county code without formal discussion with and agreement of all other local governments. The local governments have formed a joint commission, which includes representation of all bodies engaged in the interlocal agreement, to review proposals for renegotiation.

2. Consolidation - Occurs when a group of municipal governments band together to form a new, larger municipality. This more typically occurs in larger urbanized areas, where municipalities are no longer distinct from one another.

3. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - A local organization designated by the federal government to be responsible for street, highway and air quality planning for a metropolitan region. Federal transportation laws and regulations require the establishment

of an MPO in every urbanized area of the United States with a population over 50,000. MPOs sometimes coordinate other regional projects, from open space plans to affordable housing initiatives.

Strengthening the Cache Valley MPO may benefit regional cooperation. One strategy includes direct election of its members, with representatives apportioned by voting population. Going even further, the recommendations of an MPO can be made mandatory rather than advisory.

As Cache Valley moves toward common regional goals, such as a valley-wide bike or trail system, better street connectivity, or an intercity bus rapid transit system, a strong MPO may work well to coordinate planning and implementation. If desired, the MPO could assume other roles, becoming an arbiter of regional disputes, the instigator of a tax-base sharing agreement, or a facilitator of interlocal agreements.

4. Interlocal Agreements - The most common means of intergovernmental coordination, interlocal agreements enable two or more local governments to work together on shared goals or to provide services. Interlocal agreements can be extremely specific, providing fire, water, police or myriad other municipal services. Interlocal agreements across state lines are also somewhat common, though special consideration is required, as differing state codes can make arbitration difficult if the agreement is broken.

Regional cooperation is not a blanket solution. Greater regional cooperation must be balanced with recognizing local autonomy. Local elected officials have an understanding of the sentiments of those they represent. As regional cooperation is contemplated in future projects, these officials will play key roles.

of a critical lands protection strategy. *Envision Cache Valley* began this process (see the natural resource, working farms, and recreation vision map and associated illustrations), overlaying information in these categories to identify areas with high critical land values and illustrating where they overlap. Percentage goals could be set for priority critical lands: What if 30%, 50% or even 70% of these spaces were protected? It may not be possible to protect them all, but it may be possible to protect enough. Several organizations, including Utah State University and The Nature Conservancy, have developed detailed data sets and associated priorities and strategies for Cache Valley.

Washington County, Utah, created a critical lands resource guide shortly after its regional visioning process known as *Vision Dixie* to support vision principles. The guide identifies three priority categories to be considered for conservation and protection by local jurisdictions. The first includes critical lands tied to public health and safety: geologic hazards, FEMA floodplains, erosion prone soils, and areas of wildfire risk. The second includes areas of public interest or quality of life: agricultural land, viewsheds, ridgelines, riparian areas, and scenic byways. The third category includes habitat for threatened and endangered species and critical habitat for large mammals whose migratory range also includes habitat for many smaller plant and animal species. In addition to identifying critical lands priorities, the resource guide includes policy strategies for local municipalities. Mapped data is available on the county's website.

Other communities in Utah have used the state's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Portal to obtain needed data, or the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget's Critical Lands Planning Toolkit. In Cache Valley, wetland/riparian/floodplain areas, agricultural land, scenic corridors, and wildlife habitat could comprise an inventory and form the basis

Critical Lands Inventory and Protection Strategy

A critical lands inventory is a database of maps and narrative that identify different types of ecological, agricultural, recreational and/or cultural/historical resources that are important to a community or region. Typically, the purpose of the inventory is to compile data at a single source to increase accessibility, enable analysis, and identify critical lands protection priorities. While a critical lands inventory is an effective means of illustrating where priority resources are located, they can become outdated quickly if land uses are in flux. An inventory that is developed for use by multiple jurisdictions or for an extended period of time can help solidify common goals, but it may require significant commitment of staff. Often, significant data already exists, and the inventory simply brings it together, enabling detailed analysis. While a regional visioning process can identify broad critical lands conservation goals, an inventory and associated discussion can answer the following key questions with specificity: *What lands do we want to conserve? How much and where do we want to conserve land?*

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Utah Code. Interlocal Agreements
- Bear River Heritage Area. (An interlocal crossing the Utah/Idaho Boarder)
- City of Rexburg, Idaho. Area of City Impact Inter-local Agreement: Chapter 16.06 Impact Zone:
- City of Rexburg, Idaho. Area of City Impact Inter-local Agreement Zoning: Map with Impact Area:
- Boulder County, Colorado. Transfer of Development Rights Program and Interlocal Agreements



Photo Credit: University of Colorado

EXAMPLE: Intergovernmental agreements between Boulder County, Colorado, and six cities in the county enable the transfer of development rights (TDRs) from the unincorporated portions of the county into the cities. The cities accept development rights from nearby county land because acceptance of TDRs achieves city goals for economic development, community separators, greenbelts, and farmland preservation.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- The Nature Conservancy. Eco-regional Assessments (Note: A plan for the Bear River has been developed.)
- State of Utah. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Portal
- State of Utah. Critical Lands Planning Toolkit



Printed Resources

- Baker, J. B. (2006) *Planning for the Bear River Corridor Through Cache County*. Logan, UT: College of Natural Resources, Utah State University.
- Noss, Wuerthner, Vance-Borland, Carroll. *A Biological Conservation Assessment for the Utah-Wyoming Rocky Mountains Ecoregion*. 2001.
- Toth, R.E., Braddy, K., Guth, J.D., Leydsman, E.I., Price, J.T., Slade, L.M., and Taro, B.S. (2006). *Cache Valley 2030 - The Future Explored. Final Project Report No. 2006-1*, College of Natural Resources, Utah State University, Logan, Utah 84322-5200.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Ogden City, Utah. Mixed-Use Zone (Title 15:39)
- Sandy City, Utah. Mixed-Use Zone
- Cottonwood Heights, Utah. Mixed-Use Zone
- Farmington, Utah. Mixed-Use Zone
- Walker, Philip L. 2009. Downtown Planning for Smaller and Midsized Communities. Chicago: Planners Press.
- Winston, Rodger D. 2007. Achieving Horizontal and Vertical Integration—Challenges of Mixed-Use Development. Probate & Property, March/April



Mixed-Use Zoning

The separation of land uses in the United States, as mandated by local zoning code, was created in response to health and safety concerns coinciding with the industrialization of cities. Initially, codes separated industrial uses from residential uses—no one wants to live next to a slaughter house or a paper mill. Over time, land-use separation became more widespread, until even highly compatible land uses—land uses that historically coexisted in harmony, such as offices, residential and small retail—were separated. The result increased auto dependency and reduced convenient access to day-to-day services.

In response to the strict segregation of land uses, many municipalities are creating special mixed-use zones. These zones allow for compatible mixes (the paper mill is still prohibited) in specific locations. Mixed-use zones can create small town centers, usually mixing residential, retail, office and commercial. Such zones can be used sparingly in already developed areas, or applied broadly, at the discretion of the municipality or its citizens. In most cases, mixed-use zones are added to existing commercial or town centers, and not imposed upon residential communities.

Mixing uses allows for greater density in town centers by attaching residential units to retail or office space. This density increase in already developed areas adds desired vibrancy and allows for the preservation of critical lands and working farms and ranches, as new land is not required for development. Mixed-use development also lowers vehicle miles traveled in a region as vehicle trips are shorter and walking becomes a

viable option for more citizens. Mixed-use, more walkable communities not only lessen pressure on existing roads, but also provide options for the young, the elderly, and others who cannot or do not wish to drive.

Like conventional zoning, mixed-use zoning can prohibit certain uses, limit heights, and define setbacks. Allowing for more freedom of use does not mean giving up control over the shape of a neighborhood or accepting a scale incongruent with nearby development. A



Mixed-use zoning can create an environment that is accessible to everyone.

neighborhood center may be composed of mostly single story buildings housing a school, library, and a mix of offices, shops, and residences. This case demonstrates horizontal mixed-use: a range of uses are conveniently located near one another, but not necessarily on top of one another. Alternatively, a mixed-use town center may assume a more vertical form, including multistory structures that house first floor retail, second floor office space, and residences on upper floors.

Mixed-use zoning is an element of town planning that can create a retail development, allow for greater mobility, and focus density in desired areas. Many communities throughout the West are using mixed-use zones to focus development in desired areas. Ogden is using mixed-use zoning in its downtown to bring more life to its historic core. Such zones can enhance existing main streets without creating an overwhelming urban feel, as well as allow for further development without spilling into the countryside. Mixed-use zoning can be tailored to the needs of the community that adopts it.



Open Space Requirements and Fee-in-Lieu Programs

Communities can maintain open space by adopting open space preservation requirements for subdivision plat approval. Sometimes open space requirements are directed toward a specific purpose, such as a trail network, or they can apply to any new development or redevelopment.

When an open space requirement is a flat percentage of a parcel, regardless of its size or whether ecological, recreational or other values are present on the land, its onsite implementation may or may not make sense. For example, a parcel may contain a small amount of critical lands which ought to be preserved. If critical lands only fall on 10% of a site and the open space requirement is 30%, it may be better to employ a fee-in-lieu option on the remaining 20%. A fee-in-lieu allows a developer to pay a fee instead of preserving open space onsite. The fee is used to preserve higher priority spaces in another location.

In order to maintain the legal “essential nexus” requirement when adopting a fee-in-lieu program, it is helpful to create a designated open space fund. This avoids any appearance that fees collected may be entering the general fund. While a fee-in-lieu is technically separate from an impact fee or exaction, as the ordinance applies to all development uniformly, legal challenges from developers are still possible.

There are instances where open space requirements are not high enough, as existing critical lands may not fit within the fixed open space requirement percentage. For example, more than 90% of a parcel may be on a floodplain, and an open space requirement of 30% would not provide the extent of preservation needed. Particularly where public health and safety issues are involved, a hazard ordinance, sensitive lands overlay, or other tool may be preferred or used in tandem with a percentage open space requirement.



Wellsville City, Utah adopted an open space requirement which can help protect working lands, ecological corridors, and other important spaces.

Wellsville City, Utah, is among many cities in the state with open space requirements. Wellsville adopted an open space requirement ranging from 20% in industrial and commercial zones up to 50% in its larger lot residential zones. Alongside the open space requirement, the city adopted cash-in-lieu, land-in-lieu, and purchase of development rights options, which can be exercised at the city’s discretion. The program helps the city build open space into its developments as well as provides funds for the protection of the river bottoms at the city’s gateway.

Open space requirements can add functionality, attractiveness, and ecological sustainability to an urban or suburban environment. When used in combination with a fee-in-lieu program, these requirements can be an effective means of protecting urban stream corridors, working landscapes, or other priority spaces in the community at large.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Wellsville City, Utah. Ordinance 11-5-4: Open Space and Ordinance 10-1-9: In-Lieu Substitutions for Open Space Requirements
- King County, Washington. Fee-in-Lieu Calculation Sheet
- Michigan Planning Association. Open Space Guidelines
- City of Yakima, Washington. Common Open Space Requirements (Code)
- City of Redwood, California. Open Space Requirements for Multifamily Development (Fact sheet and Regulations)



Parking Policy

The appropriate number and location of parking spaces poses a difficult land-use question, especially for retail establishments. Many malls and big box stores offer parking sufficient for the peak parking day of the year. On a normal shopping day, one may drive past rows and rows of empty parking spaces. Faced with the opposite challenge, street-fronting retail in a main street setting may have trouble providing enough parking spaces given rigid parking restrictions, a situation that can lead to vacant or under-utilized storefronts an area otherwise ripe for economic activity. Both scenarios are a waste of land and money. Tools to combat this problem range from more aggressive (parking caps) to simple and pragmatic (easing requirements) and have been successfully implemented throughout the country.

Relax standards: The simplest way to facilitate more intelligent parking is to relax parking standards. Developers or retailers may opt to provide less parking if they are allowed to do so. Relaxing parking standards will likely not address big box or mall parking. It may, however, make the difference between a main street shop and a vacant storefront.

Peak parking plans: In conjunction with relaxing standards, municipalities can make peak shopping day plans. Many retail chains ensure that they have enough parking for December 24th 365 days a year. By providing overflow parking and shuttle services on heavy shopping days, a municipality can help retail outlets refrain from providing parking that is used only two or three days a year.

Shared parking: Beyond simply relaxing standards, a community can facilitate shared parking. Different land uses have different peak parking hours and can often make use of the same parking lots. For example, a restaurant and an office may share a parking area where the peak use for the office is in the daytime and the restaurant sees the most use in the evening. The same relationship could apply to any reasonable mixture of residential, commercial and retail uses.

Shared public parking: In town or commercial centers, shared parking can be achieved by having developers pay a fee-in-lieu instead of providing their own parking. The fees can then be used to create more efficient off-site parking which benefits a variety of users. The fee-in-lieu strategy requires that a municipality create legislation for its fee-in-lieu program and get into the business of building parking lots or structures. Such a proactive role may be difficult to implement, but it ensures more efficient parking in a higher intensity area. A fee-in-lieu program also frees potential developers from having to create their own parking.

Credits for existing parking: Shared parking can also be achieved by crediting existing parking in parking requirements. For example, a new business that is required to create 20 parking spaces could count existing on-street parking or a nearby garage for some of its requirement. Unlike the creation of municipal parking structures, easing parking requirements to include existing spaces requires only a change in zoning code.

Parking caps: Some communities have a cap on the number of parking spaces in certain areas and for specific types of development. This measure allows a municipality to exert control over future land-use

by ensuring that vibrant centers will not be overrun by large parking areas. Examples of such practice include a total cap for parking spaces in a downtown area (Portland, Oregon), a maximum number of parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space (Seattle, Washington), or a limitation on the percentage of total building space that can be devoted to parking (San Francisco, California). While aggressive, these caps promote both transit use and increased density in a city's core.

Regional parking plan: A more recent idea is the regionalization of parking planning. Planners in Auckland, New Zealand, have begun to address parking not on a block or area basis, but as a regional concern. The plan combines parking maximums, shared parking, and transit- and pedestrian-friendly design. By making parking a regional concern, Auckland is able to plan for where more parking may be needed and facilitate other modes of accessibility. Parking then becomes proactive, rather than reactive to retail development.

By employing creative parking strategies, a city is better able to create pedestrian-friendly environments and realize benefits of walkability in commercial and town centers. Retail chains see that when shoppers leave the car in one area and walk from one destination to the next, they spend more time in the retail center. More time means more dollars spent. In addition to wise use of land and construction resources, creative parking techniques make good retail business sense.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Victoria Transport Policy Institute. TDM Encyclopedia Parking Management, Strategies for More Efficient Use of Parking Resources
- EPA Smart Growth Resources. Parking Spaces / Community Places
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (San Francisco Bay Area). Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth
- Auckland Regional Council (New Zealand). Transport – Strategies and Documents: Regional Parking Strategy



Public Outreach and Education

The *Envision Cache Valley* Steering Committee committed to engaging in a process that provided good information to the public, trusting that the public would make good decisions if provided with good data. Through the process, it became apparent that the residents of Cache Valley are interested in “keeping the city, city and the country, country.” However, public outreach and education will continue to be an important tool. It is crucial to exploring both what the vision means in each municipality and how individual communities can work together to achieve this common goal.

Public Awareness of the *Envision Cache Valley* Process

There are a number of tools available to public officials and others who want to raise awareness of the *Envision Cache Valley* process. The survey results from the process and projected demographics for future growth patterns are powerful tools. They help people to see that the region is growing and to understand the relationship between public process and the vision that was its outcome. The combination makes a convincing case for both the need and will for quality growth in Cache Valley. This information, along with ready-made presentations are available at www.envisioncachevalley.com. The Cache Valley Regional Council and the Countywide Planner are also resources.

Information about *Envision Cache Valley* can be shared at future public meetings and open houses as municipalities think about local implementation of the vision. Letters to the editor and press releases

in the local paper convey messages to a wide audience. Utah State University and Cache Valley Library both have a stake in the process and have the potential to reach a wide audience. Public school newsletters reach young people and their parents, an audience with a particular regard for the future. Elected officials have existing constituencies and networks which can be powerful tools in and of themselves.

Training and Examples Regarding Specific Principles

Some vision principles will be best implemented with tools that have not been used or have not been used well in Cache Valley. In these cases, it will be important to identify examples, especially those with good illustrations, so people can see how new tools are working in other areas. As needs arise across the region, individuals with specialized expertise should provide training for local leaders and the general public to help everyone become familiar with their options.

For example, the vision identifies a need for a more compact housing pattern, but some stigma regarding higher densities exists, and for good reason. A great deal of multifamily attached housing is the victim of poor design. *Envision Utah*, Lincoln Land Institute, American Planning Association, Smartgrowth.org, and many other organizations maintain visual tools and presentations available on the web that demonstrate what more compact development can look like. Strategies such as form-based codes and mixed-use zones can provide for compact housing in an attractive, well designed setting. Training on such tools will be important for those working on vision implementation, just as good illustrations will help the public see what's possible.

Case Study



Photo Credit: GoBostonCard.com

The City of Dennisport, a small coastal town in Massachusetts (a lengthy case study is listed in the online resources) attempted a mixed-use development in its city center in the early 2000s. While Massachusetts is far from Cache Valley, the case provides a few insights into the process. First, responses to changes in development patterns come in two forms. Technical questions about things like sanitation or water lines have hard and fast answers and can be addressed in technical terms. Emotional questions about the neighborhood's character are somewhat harder to address. In the case of Dennisport, emotional fears about the character of the neighborhood were addressed with visual materials using actual photos of the city. Such materials demonstrated concretely that the type of development planned, and the accompanying density increases, were not ugly, nor did they infringe upon what citizens like about their community.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Massachusetts State Government Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit Outreach and Education Page
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Density Tour



Online Resources

- Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com
- Great Outdoors Colorado
 - Land Trust Alliance
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Trust for Public Lands
 - Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust
 - Yampa Valley Land Trust
 - Routt County, Colorado. Open Lands Plan



Purchase of Development Rights

Did You Know?

Since 1988, residents in the Rocky Mountain Region have passed 74% of all open space funding measures placed on the ballot. Funds approved total \$4.4 billion (Source: Trust for Public Land, Land Vote).

Purchase of development rights (PDR) programs usually involve a partnership between the public and private landowners to preserve valued land and uses on a parcel. Through PDR programs, the public provides a cash payment to a landowner for the value of the development rights associated with a parcel. The landowner maintains ownership of the land but is compensated for relinquishing the right to develop it as real estate. Agriculture and other uses of the land continue.

For the public, PDR programs enable land conservation at a much-reduced expense, as the cost of PDR is less than the outright purchase of the land, and costs associated with subsequent management of the land remain the responsibility of the landowner.

PDR transactions are voluntary for landowners. They are undertaken only when a landowner believes it is in his or her best interest. The purpose of a PDR transaction is to help private landowners shield working and other privately-owned landscapes from development pressures through compensatory approaches to conservation.

Tax or Bond for Conservation of Critical and Working Lands

Securing a revenue source for purchasing development rights can be a challenge. Many communities and regions have taxed themselves or approved bonds for conservation purposes. Even a relatively small local financial commitment can enable communities to leverage funds that are available through state, federal, or other agencies. National conservation organizations can help communities explore potential funding strategies.

Land Trusts

A land trust is a private, nonprofit organization that conserves land by undertaking or assisting in land or conservation easement acquisition. Local or national land trusts often hold the conservation easements that result from a purchase of development rights transaction. They may also engage in stewardship of the conserved land or easements.

Just as water rights attached to a parcel of land have long been bought and sold in the West, the right to subdivide and develop a piece of property can be bought and sold. A willing landowner can sell the development rights of a property to a qualified conservation entity, such as a non-profit land trust, public agency, or historic preservation organization. Development rights are sold and extinguished as part of a PDR transaction that places a conservation easement on the parcel. The landowner retains full ownership and use of the property for purposes other than real-estate development (from the Trust for Public Land).

Case Study

Many areas in the West are managing successful PDR programs. Some Colorado initiatives incorporating PDR follow:

Statewide: Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

In 1992, Coloradans voted to create Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO). GOCO receives a portion of the state's lottery proceeds and, since its inception, has committed over \$650 million to more than 3,000 projects in the state, protecting more than 850,000 acres of open space in perpetuity. PDR has been a major tool, conserving land along river corridors and in mountain valleys, land for wildlife habitat, agricultural land, land that separates communities, and land that buffers state and local parks from encroaching development.

Local: Routt County, Colorado

Routt County, Colorado, established a PDR program funded by a property tax assessment in the mid-1990s. To date, the program has conserved about 14,000 acres, primarily farm and ranchland, at a cost of about \$6 million. Most recently, the county approved \$400,000 of taxpayer funds to help place 645 acres of the 3,950-acre Elkhead Ranch under a conservation easement to be held by the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust. The easement is the third phase of an effort to protect the entire ranch. The Yampa Valley Land Trust is also active in the area, holding easements in Routt County.



Recreation Districts

A regional trail system is a part of the Cache Valley Vision. Such a system provides recreational opportunity, a healthy means of transportation, and opportunities to enjoy nearby natural or agricultural lands. However, for many smaller and mid-sized communities, the creation of recreational opportunities like a trail system is a difficult financial burden for a single municipality, and if the system is to connect the region, it should be part of a regional plan. A common way to create such a network is through a recreation district.

A recreation district is an assessment district created by two or more municipalities for the creation or improvement of a recreational area or facility. Such districts can be funded by a tax levy (usually property tax), a bond, or impact fees from development. Often recreation districts are funded by a combination of these elements. In many cases, the creation of such a district is put to ballot, ensuring it is something the citizens want and are willing to pay for. Recreation districts can be motivated by a need to increase recreational options and levels of service, tourism, citizen health, or to increase non-motorized transportation.

Recreation districts can provide a number of recreation services, including trail systems, ball fields, sports complexes and greenways. When creating a recreation district, both the scope of the district and the revenue stream for its creation and maintenance should be clearly defined. For instance, if the district is limited to a trail system, proposed trail routes and the purposes of the system should be outlined before the district is created.

A district whose mission is to simply create more trails in Cache Valley is unlikely to achieve defined success. A district intended to create better non-motorized transportation between River Heights and North Logan, with proposed routes, is more likely to succeed. This is especially true if such a district is defined as a partnership between River Heights, Logan, and North Logan. The partnership is further strengthened if it is defined to include a proposed bond and a tax assessment from all three municipalities. This is not to say a valley-wide recreation district is unfeasible, but its purpose and scope would need to be specific. A valley-wide district would require tremendous cooperation but could yield benefits, especially if a key resource, like the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, were the focus.

The Snyderville Basin Recreation District, in Summit County, Utah, has planned and created numerous trails, parks, and recreation facilities to serve its residents. The district has been successfully funded with a combination of bonds, property tax assessments, and impact fees. Once a district is created, there is some flexibility. Park City was originally included and then removed itself from the district, illustrating the flexibility of a district even after it is created. Because the district had created a system that utilized voter authorized bonds and impact fees, it was able to exist without the municipality. Careful planning of mission and revenue stream in district creation allowed for its continued existence and success despite unforeseen hurdles.

Recreation districts can provide a means of regional cooperation and fund recreation opportunities in Cache Valley. The valley hosts diverse landscapes and scenic beauty, elements that could

be a part of a defined recreation system that includes both active and passive recreational components. A recreation district could help Cache Valley achieve its recreational goals.



Photo Credit: www.pedbikemages.org

Bike paths can link cities and help citizens to lead more healthy lifestyles. Trail networks can also offer transportation options and attract tourism.

Online Resources

- Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Marquette County (Michigan) Creates a Recreational Authority
 - State of Michigan. Township Parks and Places of Recreation Act 157 of 1905
 - Lynch, Joel A. Achieving Success in Trail Related Partnerships: The Michigan State Forest Experience
 - Utah State Code, Special District Creation
 - Idaho State Code, Recreation District Creation
 - Sample New Hampshire Code
 - State of Michigan, District Creation Law
 - Snyderville Basin (Summit County, Utah) Recreation District. History Page



Revenue Sharing/Balancing Economic Growth

A stable tax base, either from property or sales tax, allows a municipality to provide needed services. Sometimes competition among neighboring municipal governments for these dollars can negatively impact an area's overall land-use and economic development goals. To generate more tax revenue with a comparatively small burden on public services, a community might reject needed affordable housing in favor of expensive homes, or forego office buildings with high-paying jobs in favor of big box retail stores with low-wage jobs.

The tax structure creates incentive for municipalities to attract and recruit retail employers over other types of industry, and the desire to secure development that generates sales tax revenue can lead to bidding wars between communities as they compete for a limited share of an existing market. From a regional perspective, providing subsidies for businesses that have already decided to locate in an area is unnecessary and may be harmful. A big box store, for example, may draw sales from existing local businesses and shopping centers and, for the region as a whole, there will be no net gain in economic activity.

Zoning for sales tax revenues can foster undesirable development patterns. Newer communities with extensive new commercial development and relatively affluent homes may have high quality public services with a relatively low tax rate. A central city area may see its commercial center decline and the exodus of its more affluent residents. As it imposes a higher tax rate and delivers poorer quality services, disparities increase and can engender a cycle of disinvestment in a central city area and increasing investment in land even farther away. Alternatively, some new communities may be primarily bedroom communities, and are left with the costs of residential development

that doesn't pay for itself and little sales tax revenue to offset the public service costs of housing.

Regional Tax-Base Sharing

Regional tax-base sharing offers one way to alleviate an unbalanced regional tax structure. Municipalities within an area agree to share tax proceeds from new development. This reduces interregional competition, facilitates other planning goals, such as preserving open space or maintaining a vibrant downtown, encourages communities to cooperate on regional economic development goals, and leads to a more equitable distribution of tax burdens and public services. Because of the level of cooperation required, this strategy can be hard to implement. For example, cities with a large share of retail business relative to others in the region may not want to give up sales tax dollars.

Tax-base sharing has been successfully implemented by the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, in Minnesota, Hackensack Meadowlands, New Jersey, and other regions. The Twin Cities program, known as the Minnesota Fiscal Disparities Act (<https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=473F>), was established in 1971. Under the act every city in the metro area contributes 40% of its commercial-industrial taxes to a regional pool. This pool is then allocated under a formula with regard to the population and fiscal capacity of the various municipalities in the region. The act has withstood a constitutional test and an attempt at repeal.

Communities competing for tax base can miss out on achieving other goals, such as the creation of higher wage jobs.

Interlocal Revenue Sharing Agreements

The other, more common approach is an interlocal revenue sharing agreement. Such an agreement between municipalities or other local or regional governments allows for the sharing of revenue from

development in a manner agreed upon by the participating governments. According to the Utah Attorney General, a revenue agreement of this type is legal, even if not all residents paying into the system receive benefits, as long as the agreement was adopted under a general balloting process.

Such programs free an individual municipality from some of the burden of seeking revenue from retail sales or high-end housing at the expense of regional needs and goals, including the creation of high-quality jobs and a variety of housing options.

Balancing Economic Growth

An economic development plan should focus on balanced growth and a regional perspective. Revenue sharing enables a regional view, as communities can be less concerned with attracting retail development (a larger share of a fixed market) and more concerned with attracting high quality jobs that actually grow the market. Jobs in the retail sector tend to pay lower wages than jobs in knowledge-intensive industries, which strengthen the regional economy in several ways: they bring new wealth into a region by exporting goods and services to customers outside the region; they pay high wages relative to other sectors of the economy; they provide career advancement for employees; and they contribute to the development of a skilled workforce. The location and expansion of business in high-skill, high-wage industry sectors in a region is good for everyone because the job and wealth creation that these businesses bring to the region spills across municipal boundaries. Employees may work and earn their paychecks in one municipality, but they spend them across a region. Revenue sharing can further balance wealth and equalize services across communities.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- American Planning Association. APA Growing Smart Guidebook (Ch 14: Devices and Tax Relief Programs)
- Utah AG Opinion Number 91-031. Millard County Revenue Sharing
- Minnesota Code for Twin Cities Revenue Sharing Program
- Proposed Code for Sacramento, California. Tax Sharing Legislation
- Stuart Meak Testimony to the Joint Legislative committee New Jersey Legislature
- Code of Virginia. 1994. Revenue Sharing Agreements (Code of Va. 15-1-1167.1.2)
- Envision Utah. 2005. Thinking and Acting Regionally in the Greater Wasatch Area: Implications for Local Economic Development Practice (available at Envision Utah)



Street Connectivity

In the last half century, cul-de-sacs have dominated the design of residential developments. Traffic from cul-de-sacs typically feeds onto collector roads. While this street pattern offers some privacy and can be sensitive to existing land features, it has major drawbacks.

Hierarchical street development depends entirely on collector roads for transportation to and from individual cul-de-sac streets. Because there are few ways to get from one place to another, most trips require accessing a collector road, which can become congested at peak driving hours. Over time, former country lanes are converted to major arterials as more lanes, to accommodate increasing traffic loads, are added. Driving becomes increasingly unpleasant, and this pattern makes alternative modes of transportation, such as walking and cycling, much more difficult.

The lack of connection between the dead-end roads in a hierarchical street system can make destinations that are physically very close practically very far away. Unconnected streets may require children who live near a school to be driven. The inability to walk reduces exercise levels and adversely affects health. The collective miles driven negatively impacts air quality, which, in turn, impacts health.

Street connectivity, commonplace in traditional neighborhoods, solves these problems quite simply. If traffic on one street becomes too congested, there are other options. A diversity of routes to the same

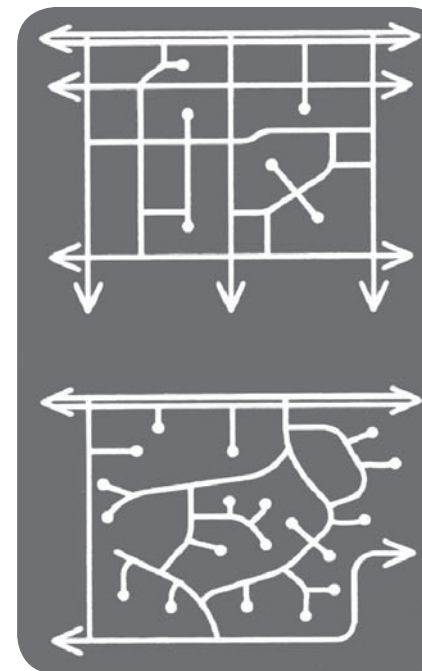
destination reduces congestion and allows for pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly routes. Destinations around the block do not require a trip on a busy collector street. In addition, connectivity allows greater access for emergency service vehicles and makes waste collection more efficient.

Street connectivity is usually associated with a grid system, but a standard grid is not the only means to connect streets. A variety of options exist to create connectivity, including a modified grid system, a system of connected loops, or belts around a grid. Connectivity need not preclude taking the environment into account. Streets can curve to avoid streams or other natural features. Block sizes can change depending on the use.

The State of Virginia recently adopted street connectivity standards whereby new sub-division plats must meet a required "connectivity index." Simply a ratio of roads to intersections, the index requires connectivity but allows for freedom of design.

It is important to remember that while buildings come and go in a relatively short time span, the layout of streets will likely exist for generations. An efficiently designed street network can facilitate land uses that create convenient, safe and accessible communities.

Twaddell, Hannah Making the Connection Planning Commissioners Journal No. 58 Spring 2005 reprinting Local street connectivity patterns compared from diagram by City of Salem, Oregon (based on Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District).



Connectivity need not preclude the benefits of the cul-de-sac.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Virginia State Code. Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements
- Office of the Secretary of Transportation, State of Virginia
- Complete Streets. Complete Streets Policy Elements
- Colombia, Missouri. Model Street Standards – Illustrated Code



Printed Resources

- Hall Kenneth B. and Gerald A. Porterfield. 2001. *Community by Design: New Urbanism for Suburbs and Small Communities*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Twaddell, Hannah. 2005. *Making the Connection*. Planning Commissioners Journal, 58 (Spring).
- Girling, Cynthia and Ronald Kellett. 2005. *Skinny Streets and Green Neighborhoods: Design for Environment and Community*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Calthorpe, Peter, Michael Corbett, Andres Duany, Moule, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Elizabeth and Stefanos Polyzoides. 1998. *The Ahwahnee Principles for Smart Economic Development*. Local Government Commission
- Litman, Todd. 1999. *Evaluating Traffic Calming Benefits, Costs and Equity Impacts*. Victoria Transport Policy Institute
- Local Government Commission. *Community Design Fact Sheet Page*



Printed Resources



- Girling, Cynthia and Ronald Kellett. 2005. *Skinny Streets & Green Neighborhoods: Design for Environment and Community*. Washington D.C.: Island Press.
- Hall, Kenneth B and Gerald A Porterfield. 2001. *Community by Design: New Urbanism for Suburbs and Small Communities*. New York: McGraw-Hill.



Street Design Standards

Streets are our shared community spaces. The way streets look and feel, as well as the modes of transportation they support, define our communities. A balance of different street uses and a range of street designs can help maintain a feeling of community as well as support residential and retail activities.

Main Street in Logan offers several components that are signatures of great street design. It accommodates pedestrians with trees, lighting, and plenty of sidewalk width. The storefronts are uniform along the street, and entrances face the sidewalk, creating the “walls” of the public space that is the street. On-street parking not only allows for quick access to a shop by car, but it also protects pedestrians from auto traffic.

Complete street design is not simply an act of beautification but also one of function. Street design standards can improve mobility choices, with careful planning of networks for pedestrians, cyclists, public transportation, private vehicles, and freight.

Street design need not be complicated, nor preclude some streets from being quick modes of auto transportation. A single street doesn't necessarily accommodate all modes of transportation well, but a network of streets should allow a maximum benefit to pedestrians, cyclists, public transportation, cars and freight. If the system is to

work, all modes should benefit from multiple convenient routes to many destinations, without long detours. Several cities (including the Columbia, Missouri, standards referenced previously) have created model street standards for a network of different types of roads that compose a complete street system. Such design ensures that residents can benefit from many viable transportation options in a community.

Good street design also provides commercial benefit. Pedestrians who linger along a comfortable street, for example, are more likely to stop and spend money in a shop. All over the country, Main Street-like street design, both in new development and in existing downtowns, is beginning to draw retail development and shoppers attracted to the convenience and more traditional neighborhood shopping experience.

Though more recent studies confirm the benefits of street design standards, good street design is not the result of new thinking or scientific study. Our best designed streets are often the main streets of our older communities. These streets were designed not just for cars, but as public spaces for walking, biking and living. They create a sense of community and have served as meaningful public space for generations.

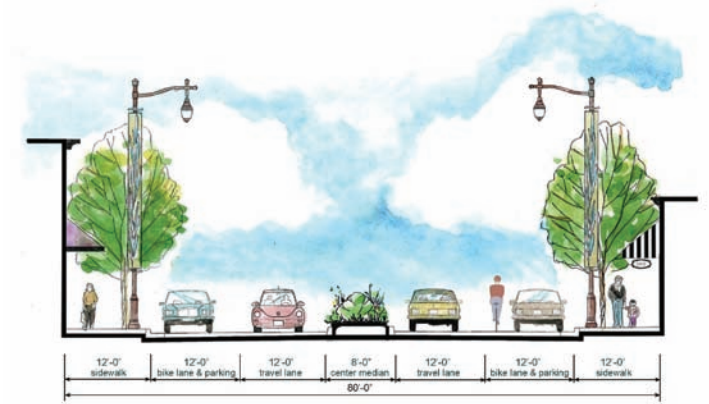


Photo Credit: www.duvallwa.gov

Streets designed only to maximize auto efficiency may overlook a street's potential as valuable public space, for walking, biking, shopping, and gathering.



Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

As with all of the tools discussed, TDR operates on the premise that land owners possess a “bundle of rights” that run with the land. These rights include the rights to sell, mortgage, possess and use, lease, gift, subdivide and develop. When TDR is employed, a willing landowner sells some or all of the right to subdivide and develop to another, who then uses those rights to develop at a greater intensity on another site in a targeted growth area. A conservation easement is placed on lands from which development rights are transferred, permanently prohibiting development, while maintaining the rights that have not been sold. This means that the land remains in its current use (often farming) and can be bought and sold as such in the future, but it also means that development is no longer an option on the property. In Cache Valley, for example, a farmer could sell development rights to a developer wanting to create a mixed-use project in a town center; in this way, development rights are transferred from one property to another. Perhaps the best known example of a TDR program is in Montgomery County, Maryland, where more than 43,000 acres of farmland have been protected.

For a region seeking to preserve its critical lands and working farms and ranches, TDR can be a useful tool. It works with the market to allow the permanent conservation of key resources while enabling more intensive development in areas where it makes sense—where public services are efficient and readily available. TDR projects are privately funded, and the land involved remains in private hands. Once a regional or municipal code for local TDR is created, the process can be largely conducted by private parties (different areas require different levels of government review). The creation of a TDR overlay zone (see the sample Mapleton Code) does not require the transfer of development

rights, but rather enables the exchange should landowners desire it. Established TDR zones also allow municipalities to confine services to specific areas, decreasing costs and potentially lowering taxes.

In Fremont County, Idaho, a TDR program was instituted in 1991 with the purpose of protecting farm and wetlands. Since implementation, 200 acres of sensitive areas have been protected. The Fremont code makes specific the types of areas it wishes to protect (“productive cropland, wetlands, or stream corridors”) and the type of land-use the transferred rights are intended to create (“cluster development”). By specifically outlining what the code intends to achieve, Fremont County uses its code to realize community goals. In general, TDRs work best when clear goals for both sending areas and receiving areas are identified.

Like other tools, TDR will not work everywhere. Where there are landowners willing to use TDR, with its emphasis on private property and market-based trades, it can be a great asset in a region's development toolbox.

Common Components of a TDR Program: Sending Areas and Receiving Areas

Sending Areas: Sending areas may be agricultural land, historic properties or other lands that are important to the community for their current use. In sending areas, landowners could opt to develop per current zoning, or they could use TDR to transfer their development rights to a receiving area, usually selling them to a developer. When the sending sites have non-development, income-producing potential, such as farming or forestry, landowners can continue to receive that income, in addition to the proceeds from the sale of their development rights.

Receiving Areas: Receiving areas are places that a community has designated as appropriate for higher intensity development. Often these areas are selected because they are close to existing development, jobs, shopping, transportation, infrastructure and other urban services. These areas receive the development rights from a sending area. Developers realize economic benefit from the ability to develop at a higher intensity, jurisdictions reduce the cost of public services when development occurs in strategic areas, and a community may realize goals such as the creation of a more vibrant town center or a neighborhood with more housing choices.

Case Study

Mapleton, Utah, established a voluntary TDR program in the 1990s that has since preserved several hundred acres of land on Mapleton's east bench, while compensating bench land owners at fair market value. The program has also allowed development at higher and more profitable densities in the more easily developed valley areas. It has also saved the city the high maintenance costs of servicing infrastructure on the benches. While there are some people who dislike the program—because they want to see development on the bench, they want higher densities in the valley without requiring the use of TDR, or they don't want higher densities anywhere—overall, the program has been very popular and successful in the eyes of the general public and elected and appointed officials.



Transit-Ready and Transit-Oriented Development

Transit-oriented developments are places developed with densities that support an adjacent transit system. Stores, restaurants, offices, recreation, schools and housing are connected by sidewalks to create a walkable urban neighborhood.



A neighborhood bus provides options without changing the character of an area.

As new development occurs, communities must make decisions about how such development will interact with the existing urban fabric. Compact development reduces development impact, and residents can walk to many destinations. New development that is compact, walkable, and located along logical transit routes is “transit ready.” The density to make existing or planned transit systems work is in place. The supporting pedestrian network is also present, an important factor, since all transit journeys begin and end with a walk.

The benefit of building developments that are transit ready is more than simply a reduction in congestion. Both residential and commercial property values rise as access to transit is increased. This correlation, through levy of property tax, may help to pay for transit improvements. Transit also mobilizes the formerly immobile. Those too old, too young, or who simply do not wish to drive have increased options for mobility.

As communities develop and grow, integration with transit can come in phases. Transit-ready communities benefit from walkability even without the addition of a bus line. As they grow, transit service can increase. Regular bus service can be enhanced, and a popular line can be converted to rapid bus service with dedicated lanes. Rapid bus lines can be precursors to future light rail lines. By building upon existing transit routes, the system can expand in areas where ridership is already prevalent and established.

Phased transit development may be ideal in Cache Valley. A phased approach allows for testing routes and frequencies in new and already served areas to develop an efficient and convenient system. The addition of transit routes may induce some degree of ridership. Creating transit-ready neighborhoods encourages more ridership in the future. More transit riders mean fewer cars, less congestion, less pollution and more options.



Every transit journey begins and ends with a walk.

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Reconnecting America for LISC Phoenix. Case Studies for Transit Oriented Development
- El Nasser, Haya. 2007. Builders Create Suburbs with Downtown Appeal. USA Today. 6 June
- Florida Department of Transportation. Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines
- Capitol Metro, Austin Texas. Transit-Ready Development Guide
- Hennepin County (Minnesota), Department of Housing, Community Works and Transit. 2009 Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Program Guidelines
- Salt Lake City. Sample Code: Salt Lake City Gateway District

Transportation Master Plan

Region-wide transportation plans enable multiple jurisdictions to work together to achieve regional mobility goals. The Cache Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Cache Valley Transit Authority are leading the way in providing multimodal transportation planning for large areas of Cache Valley.

The Cache Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization’s 2030 regional transportation plan (RTP) (<http://www.cachempo.org/2007rtp.html>) is comprehensive, multimodal, long range, and is updated regularly. As the valley implements the Cache Valley Vision, an update to the RTP reflecting changing land-use policy will be helpful. Below is a list of issues to consider when revising the Cache Valley RTP.

A Plan for the Entire Valley: The current planning boundary runs from just north of Smithfield to just south of Hyrum. A more effective transportation plan would extend to include the entire valley, including Franklin County. Short of an interstate document, working closely with IDOT and Franklin County when updating the RTP would create a more inclusive document.

Improving Connectivity: While major corridors are a focus in most transportation planning documents, improving roadway connectivity and ensuring multiple routes to destinations is worth regional study. A regional approach to second and third tier streets could improve connections system wide, creating alternatives for cars, bikes, buses and pedestrians.

The Land-Use Connection: The current RTP makes a great case for the connection between land-use and transportation planning. An update may include specific instances of how transportation planning and land-use might interact on the ground. The development of more urban cores as a result of the visioning process may enable greater bus service. Planning for bus rapid transit or other multimodal corridors may require development that locates more potential riders along its route. The selection of specific areas targeted for more intensive land-use and transportation options can strengthen both land-use and transportation planning documents.

Securing Rights of Way: Financial constraints can make any property acquisition difficult, but securing rights-of-way early is usually easier and more cost effective than waiting until development pressures increase. As alignments for BRT, bike and pedestrian paths, or rail are planned, a proactive acquisition strategy can ensure that needed rights-of-way are secured.

Capital Improvement Plan: Though the current RTP has an extensive implementation section, it stops short of a capital improvement plan. This reflects the difficulty in creating a specific improvement budget for a series of projects with multiple sources of funding. However, targeted funding of specific projects helps to ensure that the long-range transportation initiatives set out in the plan are met.

Multimodal Focus: The current RTP does a great job of including alternative transportation modes. Transit maps (including a BRT lines) and bike and pedestrian trails maps provided in the document are extensive. Updates to the RTP should continue this work.

Access for All: Access to transit can be necessary for the livelihood of those of more modest means. Transportation planning that addresses the needs of those who rely on transit helps to create more opportunity for those individuals. Transportation master plans should also include provisions for access to transit by low-income individuals.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Cache Valley Metropolitan Organization. 2030 Regional Transportation Plan
- Sanchez, Thomas W., et al. 2007. The Right to Transportation: Moving to Equity. Chicago: Planners Press
- U.S. Department of Transportation. Transportation Planning Capacity Building Resource Index
- City of Boulder, Colorado. 2008 Transportation Master Plan

Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Jaeger, William K. and Plantinga, Andrew J. 2007. How have land-use regulations affected property values in Oregon? Oregon State University
- State of Oregon. Land-Use Planning Coordination Code (Including Growth Boundary Code)
- Georgia Partnership for Quality Growth Toolkit. Urban Service Area
- Santa Clara County, California. Urban Service Area Policies



Printed Resources



- Nelson, Arthur and Casey Dawkins. *Urban Containment in the United States: History, Models, and Techniques for Regional and Metropolitan Growth Management*. American Planning Association, PAS Report 520.
- Nelson, Arthur C. 1986. *Using Land Markets to Evaluate Urban Containment Programs*. Journal of the American Planning Association. Volume 52, Issue 2 (June): 156 – 171.



Urban Containment: Urban Growth Boundaries and Urban Service Areas

A more intensive technique for “keeping the city the city and the country the country” is the implementation of an urban containment structure. This can take one of two forms.

Urban Growth Boundaries

When a city creates an urban growth boundary, it defines its boundaries and then, through the use of conservation strategies, such as the purchase of development rights or ordinances, creates an area around the city where development cannot occur. Such boundaries exist prominently in Portland, Oregon, and Boulder, Colorado, and many other cities and counties across the country.

The existence of an urban growth boundary typically increases the value of adjacent urban land. If the area used as the buffer is agricultural land, adopting a boundary stabilizes its value as agricultural land but it loses its value for development purposes. Without an urban growth boundary, the quality of farmland adjacent to urban areas loses agricultural value, as fragmentation occurs and farmers are not inclined to invest in farm property that is likely to soon be developed.

Urban growth boundaries have some pitfalls. If the land or development rights surrounding a city are purchased outright, the boundary is less likely to be challenged and is more stable. However, this process is extremely expensive. Other methods, such as downzoning, are less

expensive, but may pose challenges to privately property rights. An urban growth boundary must be both understood and acceptable to the population at large. Such serious restriction of land-use can be perceived as egregious government regulation. For this reason alone, an urban growth boundary may not be an appropriate tool for many communities.

Urban Service Areas

A second, less rigorous form of urban containment is the creation of an urban service area. A service area does not dictate where one can and cannot build, but rather where a municipality will and will not provide services. The idea is that there will be less inclination to develop an area where one must provide their own septic services, haul their own trash, etc.

While the urban service area is easier to implement and less expensive than an urban growth boundary, it is also less effective at containing growth. For some uses (rural residential and industrial), the lack of services may be an acceptable burden. Also, unlike the urban growth boundary, the creation of an urban service area does not have a stabilizing or increasing effect on land value.

On the plus side, an urban service area has financial benefits for a municipality. By limiting the expansion of a service network to a defined and reasonable area, the city ensures that it will not have to create expensive extensions. Planning becomes proactive within the urban service area, rather than reactive to development on the fringe.

With the creation of either an urban service area or an urban growth boundary, allowable density inside the urban area will

likely need to be increased to accommodate growth that would otherwise have occurred in outlying areas. If increased growth is not accepted within the boundary or area, it will leapfrog the containment structure, creating even more dispersed sprawl.

Urban containment can markedly change the development patterns of an area. Though it is difficult and expensive to implement and may reduce housing affordability, containment can ensure lasting definition of what is urban and what is rural. By increasing urban density and stabilizing the value of agricultural land, urban containment can also make long-term financial sense.



Farmers work the urban growth boundary near Portland, Oregon.



Online Resources

Links available at www.envisioncachevalley.com

- Anderson, Kristin M. 2004. An Investigation into What Planning Departments and Water Authorities Can Learn from Eleven Communities' Waterwise Landscaping Ordinances. University of Oregon
- Environmental Protection Agency. 2002. Water Efficient Landscaping: Preventing Pollution and Using Resources Wisely
- Kratsch, Heidi A. Native and Drought Tolerant Plants in the Landscape. Utah State University
- Utah State Univ. Cache County Horticulture Resource Page
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Office of Smart Growth. Water Efficient Landscape Design: Model Ordinance
- Marina Coast Water District, California. Water Wise Landscape Incentive Program Description



Printed Resources



- McKinney, Matthew. 2003. *Linking Growth and Land-Use to Water Supply*. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Water Efficient Design Guidelines

Though the regional water supply is not a limiter of growth in coming decades, water is a precious resource in the arid West and should be used with care. With a growing number of residents and a continued focus on agriculture, Cache Valley's water resources must be carefully managed in the future.

In urban areas, the largest drain on a community's water resources is outdoor use—often residential lawns. Lawns look nice, and parents with small children can attest to their usefulness as play spaces, but when it comes to water use, they are not necessarily the best default choice. Utah State University and other groups offer ideas for local and drought tolerant plants that create a lush and attractive yard setting.

Water efficient design standards are not about telling people what to do with their yards, but rather creating options and incentives. By expanding residential code to encourage a mix of hardscape areas and a variety of plants and shrubs, residents have more freedom to design their yards and enable thirsty lawns to be replaced in whole or in part with low or no water options. Good first steps include amending zoning code to encourage lawn retrofits and to encourage the development of other landscaping options in newly developed areas.

Incentives can provide further motivation to retrofit one's yard. The most obvious incentive is the money people can save on their water bills. In many cases water use can be cut in half. Some cities provide financial incentives for creating a more water efficient yard. These may include subsidies in the form of rebates for water control and irrigation devices and subsidized or bulk purchasing of local and drought tolerant plants.



With a growing population and limited resources, water is only going to become more of a concern both globally and locally.

Many communities and water districts have also created demonstration gardens. These gardens not only show how a water efficient yard can look, but give plant names and care instructions. Nearby demonstration gardens exist in Salt Lake City and Ogden, Utah.

Addressing landscape design is a good step toward addressing a community's water use, but it is not a substitute for addressing water issues in the larger context of land-use policy. Other regions with less water have begun to look carefully at their use of groundwater to ensure that groundwater use does not exceed the rate at which groundwater resources recharge.

In Arizona and other states, so called “prove it” laws are successful in helping communities manage their water resources. “Prove it” laws require that a developer demonstrate viability from a water use standpoint before development is approved. Developers may need to show a groundwater supply for a certain number of years or access to a certain amount of acre feet from an uncontested supply. By ensuring that development does not occur without the necessary water, communities secure a measure of long-term water viability.

This report is available online at



www.envisioncachevalley.com

The logo features the word "envision" in a bold, sans-serif font with a stylized mountain range and a sun behind it. Below "envision" is the phrase "Cache Valley" in a cursive script. The entire logo is set against a light green background with a white border.

