

CITY OF NORTH SALT LAKE
CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION-JOINT WORK SESSION
ANCHOR LOCATION: CITY HALL
10 EAST CENTER STREET, NORTH SALT LAKE
DECEMBER 3, 2024

FINAL

Mayor Horrocks welcomed those present at 6:08 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Brian Horrocks
Councilmember Lisa Watts Baskin
Councilmember Tammy Clayton
Councilmember Suzette Jackson
Councilmember Ted Knowlton
Councilmember Alisa Van Langeveld

PRESENT: Commission Chair BreAnna Larson
Commissioner Ryan Holbrook
Commissioner Ron Jorgensen
Commissioner Johnathan Marsh
Commissioner Brandon Tucker
Commissioner William Ward

EXCUSED: Commissioner Irene Stone

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Leetham, City Manager; David Frandsen, Assistant City Manager; Jon Rueckert, Public Works Director; Craig Black, Police Chief; Karyn Baxter, City Engineer; Todd Godfrey, City Attorney; Sherrie Pace, Community Development Director; Heidi Voordeckers, Finance Director; Wendy Page, City Recorder; Mackenzie Johnson, Planner; Ali Avery, Long Range Planner; Caden Baines, Planning Intern.

OTHERS PRESENT: Dee Lalliss, Emily Carr, Valeria Olivera, residents; Sam Taylor, Lisa Benson, Landmark Design; Suzie Becker, Zions Public Finance.

1. DISCUSSION WITH CONSULTANTS ON THE PROGRESS OF THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Sherrie Pace introduced Sam Taylor and Lisa Benson with Landmark Design to review the progress on the General Plan update.

Lisa Benson, Landmark Design, reported that they had been working with an advisory board, soliciting public input (via project website, neighborhood meetings, workshops), and meeting

with business owners and stakeholders. She said once the draft plan was developed it would then go to the advisory board, staff, and public for review. She reviewed the key community engagement takeaways:

- Neighborhood disconnection in City
- Missing key amenities (library, gathering places)
- Poor air quality
- Lack of transportation options
- Appreciation and value of parks/trails/open place

She shared the stakeholders and business owner takeaways:

- Pointed out the key areas of access for industry
- Mentioned the odors in the area
- Reported on good tenancy in industrial park
- Continued focus on existing draws (outdoor recreation, restaurants, proximity to airport)
- Need for infusion of nightlife activities
- Desire for the right development on Redwood and Center
- Support for business incubation

Ms. Benson spoke on guiding principles for the draft General Plan which were:

- 1) Community character- establish a distinct framework of activity centers and gateways that define the City's neighborhoods and create community destinations.
- 2) Healthy living- create an interconnected community centered on active mobility and lifestyles.
- 3) Mobility and access- transform key corridors to absorb growth, connect neighborhoods, and provide a full range of transportation modes.
- 4) Economic opportunity- shape the City's industrial area into a modern center of commerce and innovation.
- 5) Environment- reconnect the City to the natural environment and strengthen it as a sustainable and resilient community.
- 6) Balanced growth- preserve the unique features of existing neighborhoods while adding new housing options to meet the diverse needs of residents.
- 7) Community life- enhance community life through the provision of public facilities, services, and programming.

Lisa Benson reported on the pizza and planning public workshop where residents and stakeholders connected with staff to discuss the three General Plan concepts: shaping distinctive neighborhoods, embracing industry and innovation, and expanding the green network. She shared a map of the City which included designations for the gateway area, community corridor,

activity center, etc. She explained that shaping distinctive neighborhoods included creating unique names, finding community gateways. She noted that embracing industry and innovation reviewed ways to change permitted uses along Redwood, 1100 North, and Center Street. She said that expanding the green network was looking at a mountain to river corridor focused along Center Street with community centers and interconnected trails. She reviewed the top five takeaways from the public meeting:

- 1) Expanding the green network identity resonated the most.
- 2) Participants were very interested in a beautified Center Street.
- 3) Residents want to see more small businesses and community amenities (library, rec center).
- 4) Residents are eager for Hatch Park improvements and demonstrated interest in a potential mixed-use development as part of the Town Center development.
- 5) Participants like the pedestrian and bike improvements/connections presented.

Lisa Benson explained that Zions Public Finance (ZPS) ran a financial analysis model to determine the feasibility of the Town Center area and an activity center on the west side of the City.

Suzie Becker, Zions Public Finance, said there was feasibility in the market for the Redwood Road/Foxboro area for revenues in that area to help development in the City center. She shared that there was more in-migration of daily workers than those leaving the City. She also reviewed graphs showing diversity of housing in the City and industrial/retail/office square feet per capita compared to Utah County and Salt Lake County.

Sam Taylor, Landmark Design, spoke on establishing a counterpart to the Town Center on the west side of the City and reviewed the west end of Center Street. He mentioned linking Foxboro and the east side together with active transportation options/Green Network. He said modeling showed that land acquisition costs were prohibitive or revenue from a certain land use type could not counteract acquisition cost. He explained that mixed use was cost prohibitive but retail, office, lodging, and residential would be better performers. He shared ideas for the Foxboro area including a community center, new retail experiences, and services such as recreation, education, etc. Mr. Taylor reviewed the east end including the Town Center, establishing identity, and the addition of more residential which would help to draw more retail.

Suzie Becker shared a graph detailing land acquisition costs for the Town Center and Foxboro areas. She explained that land and acquisition costs were much higher in the Town Center area versus in the Foxboro area. She then reviewed profit on cost metrics for analyzing project feasibility for new development/redevelopment. She noted that hotels near I-15 and Redwood Road could generate significant profits. She presented graphs detailing capacity to absorb new development versus existing development, new assessed value unlocks additional fiscal tools (tax increment) with approximately \$85 million in bonding capacity over a 20 year term.

Ms. Becker suggested a large project area on the west side and taking an increment to spend on the east side for the City. She then reviewed feasibility in Foxboro for retail, hotels, and other moderately feasible uses.

Sam Taylor spoke on new economic opportunity and meeting the vision of City leadership. He mentioned the Redwood corridor was a prime opportunity and public input showed interest in establishing a new revitalized approach to that area. He reviewed the Lee's Marketplace area and said the land in that area has been recently established and felt there were more underutilized sites further down Redwood and on the west end of Center Street.

Councilmember Jackson spoke on the I-15 and I-215 interchange area and opportunities on that corridor. Sam Taylor replied that there would be increased land values and decent opportunities for retail performance along that corridor.

Suzie Becker reported on the feasibility in the Town Center area and said only strong and moderately feasible uses were included in the financial market due to current market conditions. She said current land and mixed use construction costs were too high relative to revenue opportunity. She reviewed approaches the City could take to facilitate the vision to incentivize growth in the proposed areas including utilizing existing resources and bonding against future tax increment (high risk), provide fee reductions or waivers to developments and authorize public infrastructure districts in exchange for public benefits (moderate risk), or rezone key areas only and otherwise allow market to operate (low risk). She explained that the low risk option would not utilize existing financial resources and the development pattern would be the most disjointed and slowest option.

Sam Taylor spoke on the proposed framework and presented reasoning for implementing a focused plan. He shared that many general plans included every potential project or policy which resulted in a plan that lacked direction and was difficult to implement. He noted that a plan could be comprehensive and focused if there was a focus on priority items while leaving supporting details in the background and by leaving flexibility for future interpretation after priority items were completed. He reviewed the priority goals for the plan:

- Network of regional and neighborhood linking trails (focus on Center Street, Orchard Drive, US-89, Redwood Road, and BST)
- Development of the Town Center
- Development of a west side activity center/innovation district
- Strengthening the identity of the City (gateways, branding)
- Supplying existing parks and trails with quality amenities
- Tackling air quality issues (electrification/emissions, active transportation, Great Salt Lake conservation, sewer district)

Mr. Taylor shared a future land use concept map and reviewed areas for mixed use, office/hotel, retail, multifamily, civic, and future land uses. He reviewed a Town Center concept map with a focus on Center Street and a Foxboro Center concept along Center Street/Redwood Road. He requested feedback from those present on the proposed direction, any items that were missing, and commitment to the vision (proactive approach).

Councilmember Knowlton expressed support for the concept of Center Street serving as a strong east-west organizing axis, with two counterbalancing town centers positioned on either side.

Councilmember Jackson expressed enthusiasm for the plan, noting its potential to guide the City's development over the next decade. She inquired if analysis had been done of US-89 as a potential development area, questioning whether it had significant growth potential. Sam Taylor responded that as the area moves further north along US-89, the parcels become shallow and small, complicating redevelopment efforts. He noted that acquiring multiple parcels for redevelopment would be a challenging task. He suggested that residential development would likely be the most suitable use for this area if it were to transition.

Councilmember Van Langeveld raised concerns regarding the introduction of residential development without height limitations, noting that this was a new concept or at least she had not been included in any such conversations. She emphasized that removing height restrictions as an option in the proposed plan would significantly impact the viability of various parcels. She suggested that the Council should address whether the City anticipates adopting Code changes that would allow for no height restrictions on residential development over the next 20 years. She felt this issue needed further consideration for the proposed plan to align with the City's future vision.

Sam Taylor clarified that the only area in the proposed plan considered for development without height restrictions was the retail zone, where there was anticipation for potential hotels and office spaces. He acknowledged that this topic would benefit from further Council discussion, given North Salt Lake's proximity to Salt Lake City. He noted that fewer regulations would provide more market opportunities, but there is also the consideration of preserving the character of existing neighborhoods. He emphasized that this balance, particularly regarding building height, would depend on the location and community preferences. He stated that for residential development, the plan currently envisioned buildings of three to four stories, with some mixed-use developments reaching up to five stories, but no developments beyond the height that would allow for surface parking.

Commissioner Jorgensen shared his personal perspective, stating that while North Salt Lake is geographically close to Salt Lake City, residents feel a stronger identity with South Davis County and Bountiful. He noted public concerns about high-rise developments and emphasized that multi-story housing near residential areas often raises questions about compatibility and abrupt

changes in scale. He acknowledged that such developments could be successful if properly transitioned, and expressed support for the concepts presented in the plan.

Commissioner Jorgensen also highlighted the need for significant improvements to Center Street, noting that it is currently in poor condition and requires visionary planning. He stressed the importance of refining the City's land use code to remove undesirable uses while promoting those that align with the community's needs. He pointed out the City's limited commercial shopping districts and emphasized the need for more neighborhood centers that are useful to residents, such as restaurants or laundromats. He expressed support for the proposed plan's focus on Center Street but stressed that broader work on the City's overall land use and zoning code is needed to ensure the plan reflects the community's priorities and needs.

Councilmember Clayton spoke on the need for amenities and resources that would keep residents in the City. She was in favor of a hotel especially with the proximity to the airport.

Councilmember Van Langeveld followed up on comments regarding amenities and retail, specifically referencing the land use concept for Foxboro. She indicated that the area is predominantly residential, with limited retail spaces included. She said while there is some mixed-use development, she was concerned about whether the area, which would house a significant population, had enough retail options such as laundromats, restaurants, and other amenities to meet the needs of residents. She pointed out that many of the buildings in the plan are six stories or taller, which could result in a high density of people, yet there seemed to be a lack of open space to accommodate them. Councilmember Van Langeveld suggested that more open space should be incorporated into the plan to better support the projected population.

Councilmember Knowlton raised the question of whether the group believed it made sense to establish another center on the west side in the proposed location, noting that this is a new idea not currently included in the City's General Plan. He felt it would be helpful to gauge opinions on this concept.

Mayor Horrocks raised the question of whether height restrictions are necessary south of Center Street on Redwood Road, suggesting that while height may be a significant factor when heading north, it might not be as important in the southern direction. He noted that the primary concern for development in this area would likely be the increasing population.

Councilmember Jackson noted that while much of the discussion had focused on the details, the broader question was whether there was a need for a second town center to support more retail and amenities. She pointed out that the current opportunities for such development are limited along US-89 and on the east side of Center Street. She mentioned that a second town center in the south, particularly in the southeast and southwest areas, could be a viable solution. She further observed that the northern part of the City, bordering Bountiful and Woods Cross, already

had a vibrant restaurant scene, but there was a noticeable lack of amenities and retail in the southern parts of the City.

Sam Taylor agreed with the previous assessment, emphasizing that the opportunity zone on the west side could generate the necessary resources to support development on the east side. He referenced earlier points from the Zions' analysis, noting that the growth and revenue generated from the west could help spur improvements and development on the east side, which currently is struggling to gain momentum.

Commissioner Marsh expressed support for the idea that density is necessary to build a thriving community with the amenities, open spaces, trails, bikeability, and walkability that residents desire. He acknowledged that the discussion around density could include considerations of how to remove regulatory barriers, such as the need for a Planned District (P-District) for certain developments. He provided the example of a movie theater, noting that with sufficient density, such amenities could be more feasible, making the community more vibrant and enjoyable for families. He appreciated the work done to recognize the need for creative solutions, such as potentially lifting height restrictions for certain developments. He emphasized that while market forces would likely prevent overly tall buildings, it is important to consider how to shape the community in a way that reflects its desires, and what level of involvement the City should have in that process. He expressed interest in receiving feedback on these issues in future discussions, particularly in relation to the different levels of City involvement presented on slide 28.

Ken Leetham mentioned that it was difficult to engage in the high risk level vision and determine what the City's participation should be to achieve the desired results. He said leaving the future land use to the market only would not achieve the progress the City would want. In the past, the City has made investments through its redevelopment agency and has not achieved its objectives due to decisions made by others like private property owners, developers and others who have chosen not to invest private capital into our desired areas. He stated there should be a discussion on tools, investments, and on what incentives the City should participate in financially (RDA). He said that without City participation, it is likely that the market will not produce a great deal of change or meet the City's goals related to economic development or the creation of activity centers. He said the staff and City Council should have additional discussions about the City's level of participation and what land uses the City incentivize and where those land uses should be located.

Councilmember Jackson reflected on the City's development, noting that North Salt Lake has already contributed its share of high-density residential and apartment buildings. Despite this, she expressed confusion about why the City has not seen more retail growth, given the density of its population. She pointed out that neighboring cities like Centerville and West Bountiful attracted major retailers like Walmart and Costco by offering incentives, such as land donations and tax allowances, which helped stimulate further development. She acknowledged that while the City desires a free market approach and does not want to resort to authoritarian control, she

also questioned how aggressive the City should be in securing anchor businesses that could attract additional amenities like movie theaters and Trader Joe's. She expressed her opinion that a second town center on the west side would eventually happen.

Commissioner Tucker emphasized that transportation infrastructure drives development, rather than the other way around. He pointed out that the upcoming I-215 interchange will significantly increase accessibility at the south end of the City, particularly around Redwood Road, creating a highly attractive opportunity for developers. He felt similar effects were expected along US-89, where improved access to major north-south arterials would further encourage development. He stated that the enhanced transportation infrastructure would naturally lead to increased developer interest and activity in those areas.

Sherrie Pace expressed support for the concept of an activity center around Redwood Road and Center Street, noting its potential for creating synergistic growth. She pointed to the success of Lee's Market as an example, where its establishment spurred additional development in the surrounding area. She emphasized the importance of leveraging this opportunity by planning the desired developments and creating strong connections, such as the greenway, to link the activity center to the Town Center. She mentioned connectivity could encourage mutual growth and movement between the areas, allowing them to complement and support each other.

Ms. Pace highlighted the abundance of underutilized property and noted that developers are already holding these properties in anticipation of favorable market conditions, which seemed imminent. She stressed the need for the City to prepare now to capitalize on these opportunities when they arise. She suggested that prioritizing improvements to the Center Street corridor could align with these goals, though it was recognized as a policy decision requiring further input from the City Council and Planning Commission.

Commissioner Larson expressed enthusiasm for the concept of Center Street serving as a corridor that seamlessly connects the Town Center and the activity center near Redwood Road. However, she emphasized that any discussion about improving this corridor must address the significant challenge posed by the train tracks that currently disrupted connectivity. She stated that the train acts as a barrier between the two parts of the City, discouraging residents from using the road due to frequent delays and unpredictability. She highlighted the impact on daily life, citing examples such as school buses rerouting to avoid delays and the general frustration of west side residents. She stressed that beautifying and expanding Center Street alone would be insufficient if the train issue remained unresolved. She called for an exploration of engineering solutions, such as constructing a bridge, to mitigate the train's impact and create true connectivity. She concluded that addressing this challenge should be a major focus of long-term planning efforts to ensure the two parts of the City can thrive together.

Sam Taylor acknowledged the significant challenge posed by the train tracks as a barrier on Center Street, particularly for vehicular traffic. He explained that achieving grade separation,

such as constructing a vehicular flyover, would be extremely cost-prohibitive and complex due to the number of tracks involved. He noted consolidating the tracks could potentially improve feasibility, but without such changes, large-scale solutions like those seen in the Salt Lake railroads would be required. He pointed to the upcoming I-215 project as a potential shift in the City's traffic dynamics. He explained that I-215 is expected to provide a more viable route for vehicles traveling between the west and east ends of the community, reducing the reliance on Center Street for vehicular traffic. He acknowledged that the train tracks would remain a barrier for those who still choose or need to use Center Street.

Mr. Taylor suggested that bridging active transportation, pedestrians and cyclists, over the train tracks could be a feasible solution as part of the greenway concept. He noted this would not resolve vehicular traffic issues, but it could significantly enhance connectivity for non-motorized transportation. He concluded by reiterating that the train remains a key issue and that viable options for vehicular grade separation were limited in the foreseeable future.

Mayor Horrocks summarized the longstanding discussions about implementing a grade separation at Center Street, noting that the project is currently not feasible.

Commissioner Holbrook expressed support for establishing a town center on the west side, particularly at the proposed location, highlighting its potential to bridge the east and west parts of the City. He suggested that transforming the area into a Green Way with pedestrian access over the train tracks could encourage the use of electric scooters and reduce car dependency. He mentioned that, for quick errands, he often traveled over Center Street to Lee's, indicating that this area already functions as a town center for residents. He proposed that expanding the core at Redwood and Center could alleviate concerns from Foxboro residents about train delays, as it would reduce the need to cross train tracks for essential services.

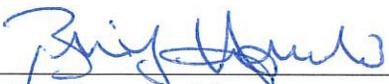
Councilmember Baskin commended the General Plan's approach and the seven guiding principles presented, recognizing the thoughtful work put into its development. She indicated the need to prioritize among the guiding principles due to inherent trade-offs. She advocated for increased building heights to accommodate population growth, referencing studies suggesting vertical development is necessary in Davis County. She supported the idea of adding one or two hotels in the southwest location, noting that such developments typically do not require incentives. She expressed skepticism about the current viability of commercial developments, citing challenges faced by restaurants and the broader commercial sector. She raised concerns about legislative influences dominated by developers, emphasizing the City's responsibility to protect community interests against potential external pressures. She criticized public infrastructure districts, describing them as detrimental and potentially problematic for the City. She found the idea of introducing nightlife in the industrial area intriguing, suggesting that the City could enhance its offerings beyond existing establishments.

Sam Taylor acknowledged there was general support for the direction outlined in the planning discussions, and the next steps would involve translating these concepts into a more detailed draft plan which would be reviewed again in the new year.

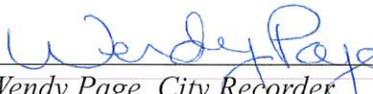
2. ADJOURN

Mayor Horrocks adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

The foregoing was approved by the City Council of the City of North Salt Lake on Tuesday January 7, 2024 by unanimous vote of all members present.



Brian Horrocks, Mayor



Wendy Page, City Recorder

