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INTRODUCTION

Context

The contents of this document outlines the existing conditions within the Northpoint area that will shape the considerations of the new Small Area Master Plan.

In 2000, a Northpoint Small Area Plan was adopted with goals to eliminate potential land use conflicts between the Salt Lake International Airport, future development, and the existing agricultural lifestyle. Other notable planning efforts for this area include the 1992 Northwest Plan which addresses the Northpoint project area, the Great Salt Lake wetlands and Jordan River, the Salt Lake Airport, and surrounding land; 2020 Blueprint Jordan River Plan which was created by Envision Utah and associated municipalities as a cohesive vision for the river that stretches through multiple jurisdictions; the 2021 Salt Lake Airport Master Plan; and the 2021 Salt Lake County West General Plan (in draft).

The northwest portion of Salt Lake City is limited by multiple layers of constraints, mostly environmental, but also due to airport activity, connectivity, and social equity issues. It is the largest growth area for the City, but also quite possibly, the most difficult to develop. This document will cover the elements that make up the Northpoint community, including the natural environment, built environment and community attributes. Many factors contribute to constraints facing the area, however many attributes act as opportunities.
Location

The Northpoint area is located just north of Downtown Salt Lake City, near Farmington Bay and the Great Salt Lake. The area is bounded to the east by Highway 215 and is comprised of mainly agricultural, industrial and residential uses.

Northpoint lies within the northwest quadrant of Salt Lake City, adjacent to vital environmental resources including the Jordan River, playas of the Great Salt Lake and wetlands. Over half of the property in Northpoint is under the jurisdiction of Salt Lake County and consists of agricultural uses, business park development, industrial and commercial zoning. This document will expand on the environmental considerations that these areas have on Northpoint in the following chapters as they greatly influence the growth and development of the area.

To the direct south is Salt Lake City International Airport, which provides opportunities and constraints to the future land uses within Northpoint. The airport continues to grow as it has undergone major renovations since 2018 and is currently being guided by the 2021 Airport Master Plan. Its proximity is a defining factor of the area.

Northpoint is also adjacent to several recreational areas including the Wasatch Mountain Range, with its many trails, and the Jordan River OHV State Recreation Area.
Our Natural Environment

Water and Air Quality

Air Quality

Salt Lake City is often faced with some of the worst air quality in the world. Major drops in air quality typically occur during the summer or winter due to the Salt Lake Valley’s unique geographical makeup and position. In the summer, Wildfire smoke often travels east from California, Oregon, and even our own mountain ranges adding to pollution from cars, industry, and other elements leading to harmful ozone levels. In the winter, our close proximity to the Wasatch Mountains leads to temperature inversions in which cold air gets trapped under a layer of warm air, acting like a "lid" keeping pollutants from escaping. During the winter, air pollution sources are transportation sector (roughly 50%); area sources (roughly 35%); and industry (roughly 15%).

The Northpoint area experiences the same conditions, as it is also influenced by close proximity to the surrounding transportation infrastructure which contributes to poor air quality. The airport to the south of the boundary is a major contributor as well as Interstate 215.

While the eastern portion of the area is outside the airport noise contours and influence area, there are still concerns regarding air quality, as well as residual noise from other transportation facilities and roadways. I-215 in itself also creates an additional constraint, limiting connectivity across to residential neighborhoods and services on the east side of I-215 in both Salt Lake City and North Salt Lake City. Even the expanded study area is a desert in terms of access to daily services, such as grocery stores and restaurants, which generates a higher number of multiple-mile trips, and likely exacerbates the air quality issues.
**Water and Wetlands**

The presence of wetland environments adjacent to the Jordan River Delta and at the edge of the Great Salt Lake is the most pertinent environmental issue in the area. Roughly 75% of Utah’s wetlands surround the Great Salt Lake, providing environmental and socioeconomic benefits.

The wetlands surrounding our project area are part of an intricate and diverse ecosystem. Wetlands benefit the environment by acting as “sponges” to capture, store, and slowly release water, storm buffers, groundwater and aquifer recharge, and sediment traps. Wetlands also serve as critical habitat areas by providing food, shelter, and resting places. The benefits of wetlands do not stop at environmental, they can also provide recreational and agricultural opportunities.

A portion of these wetlands are called playas, categorized by their dry hollowed out form that fill with water during rainstorms and by underlying aquifers. The Great Salt Lake is the largest saltwater lake in the Northern Hemisphere, meaning as the playas fill and eventually evaporate, they leave large salt deposits behind. Another category of wetlands found adjacent to the project area include forest or shrub areas which are associated with woods plants such as willow or iodine.

The current historic high water elevation for the Great Salt Lake is 4211 which was last reached in 1986, causing a dramatic flooding. As of November 2021, the lake’s water levels have dropped to the lowest in recorded history at 4,190 feet, likely due to the extreme drought conditions our state is facing. In response to the unpredictability of the Lake, most planning agencies identify contour 4217 as the limit of safe and beneficial development. New development must meet existing regulations to meet a minimum elevation of 4217. These regulations play a role in the future land uses of Northpoint to protect the environmental benefits these areas provide, while also providing additional community assets where appropriate.
Soil Types

The soil types within Northpoint vary and provide considerations for the types of development that can be accommodated in the area. The soil types dominating the area are fine sandy loam, silt loam and silty clay loam. Most of these soils have a water table depth between 0-50 inches and are subject to the effects of frost. These high water table depths affect drainage and compressibility which impact new development potential. In addition, the soil types that dominate the area can cause problems for filter fields of septic tanks, making it harder to maintain water quality.
Hazards

The greater Salt Lake City area faces natural hazards that impact rates and locations of development. As climate change continues to exacerbate extreme weather events, planning with these common hazards in mind can help maintain the safety and comfort of the community.

Clean air and water supply are among the top concerns of Salt Lake residents. In August of 2021, Salt Lake City was ranked the worst air quality of any major city in the world by IQAir.com, prompting residents to take extra precautions. The Salt Lake County Health Department released tips to stay safe during extreme air conditions such as staying indoors with windows shut, avoiding exercise, and wearing masks outdoors.

The area, along with many other parts of the state, is currently under exceptional drought conditions, causing nearby fire restrictions to increase in an effort to mitigate wildfire risk and irrigation water allotments decreases as of October 2021 to preserve available water for the most necessary uses. Salt Lake City also experiences threats of extreme heat, wild fire, debris flows, flooding and earthquakes.

The city of Salt Lake has proposed land use amendments to prevent large water users from being located within the city that may have a significant impact on the city’s water resources. The new limit for industrial and commercial land uses is 300,000 gallons per day (based on an annual average) of City potable/culinary water. The limit applies to all new uses and existing uses on a temporary basis until January 2022.
Native Plants and Animals

The Great Salt Lake and surrounding wetlands are a crucial habitat for many species of plants and animals. With 400,000 acres of wetlands, birds of regional and national importance are drawn to the area as a sanctuary for breeding and eating. Every year, millions of birds from 338 different species stop here to feed during migrations. Among the most common species observed in the Northpoint boundary are the European Starling, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Northern Pintail and Canada Goose.

Although the Farmington Bay area nearest to the project boundary is nearly classified as freshwater, northern-most regions of the Great Salt Lake can be composed of nearly 28% salt. This creates a wide diversity of habitats for many different plants, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and birds.
Organizations

There are many organizations with interest in this project area and the areas surrounding it that range from Duck Clubs to Airport interests. Some of the most notable include the Friends of Great Salt Lake and The Rudy Duck Club. The Friends of Great Salt Lake is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994 to protect the Great Salt Lake ecosystem and increase public awareness and appreciation. The Rudy Duck Club, founded in 1909 and named after the original land owner Frank Rudy, acquired land and associated water rights in the early 1900’s to preserve the ecosystems for private duck hunting.

Agriculture

The top producing crops, according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture County profile, in Salt Lake are wheat for grain, hay, vegetables, pumpkins, and sweet corn. Within the area, current residents also own a variety of livestock types. The majority of the housing stock supports the agricultural uses surrounding them. Within these lots there has been a pattern of subdividing larger lots into small agricultural lots for family members. There is a rich history of the agricultural lifestyle within Northpoint that the community desires to be preserved. According to the State Soil Conservation Service, the Northpoint area contains some prime farmland located north of 2800 North on the eastern side of 2200 West.
Our Built Environment

Airport
The Salt Lake International Airport, located just south of the Northpoint Boundary, is one of the top 25 busiest airports in North America. As the airport inherently produces high noise volumes and air quality issues, it has a significant impact on the surrounding areas and determining appropriate land uses in Northpoint. The airport is also a major hub for Delta airlines and provides approximately 370 flights per day from its location.

The Salt Lake Airport recently underwent a Master Planning process, the first since 1998, to provide guidelines for future airport development and to optimize existing facilities for future aviation demand and increase airport capacity. The resulting Strategic Vision illustrates locations for a third parallel runway and Concourse C which are not anticipated to be built within the next 20 years.

Development Constraints
Existing development of certain uses within the Northpoint area experience consequences from their proximity to the airport and overhead flights. Existing residences face increased risk for airplane crashes and high noise levels from the consistent flights. The Department of Airports recommends limiting the number of new residences allowed in Northpoint to reduce harm for the community in the future. The Federal Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) does not provide any assistance, subsidy or insurance for projects and actions located in Runway Clear Zones, Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones. As a result, the Northpoint Area Master plan will have considerations for alternative uses that benefit Salt Lake City and the environment surrounding it that minimize unnecessary disruption.

The Salt Lake Airport and Salt Lake City own several parcels surrounding the airport that were purchased to preserve as undeveloped. This, along with noise contours and influence zones limits development potential in the project area.

Northpoint lies within the Influence Zone A/B Boundary. In this area, the aircraft noise from overhead flights can interfere with daily living activities including sleep, conversations and listening to media. The Federal Aviation Administration requires that each airport study the noise impacts and create a Noise Compatibility Program associated with alleviating noise issues.
The Salt Lake City Noise Compatibility Program has implemented measures to increase compatibility with surrounding land uses including maximization of flight times between 7am and 10pm. It has also implemented adjusted flight routes in pursuit of reduced disruption.

As residential uses should be limited in the Northpoint area because of these constraints, there are other uses and opportunities for development that are more compatible with the airport. Maintaining the integrity of the sensitive ecosystems adjacent to the Northpoint area is also a consideration moving forward.

### Economic Contribution

The Salt Lake City Airport, due to its utility and national importance is an excellent driver of the local and regional economy. Therefore, in addition to designating appropriate and compatible uses within Northpoint for the sake of community comfort and protection, Northpoint land uses should also protect airport infrastructure. Through protecting airport infrastructure and facilities from adjacent land uses that reduce or eliminate its ability to function at the highest capacity, the Salt Lake City Airport can continue to act as an asset to the greater community.
Land Use

Industrial and Business Uses
Within the Northpoint boundary, there lies existing manufacturing zoning (M-1) that serves as a buffer between the airport and Highway 215. In July 2016, the Salt Lake City Council asked the Planning Division to study and make a recommendation on changing the zoning of the properties located along 2200 West between 2100 North and North Temple Street to the Light Manufacturing zone (M-1). The majority of the properties in that study area were zoned Business Park (BP), with the exception of a few properties at the northern end, which were zoned Agricultural (AG-2, AG-5). The purpose of the zoning change was to implement area master plans and to maximize the economic development potential along the 2200 West corridor.

Light Manufacturing (M-1) zoning allows for light industrial uses that produce little-to-no impact on neighboring properties and result a clean attractive industrial setting. Uses of these kinds are compatible with the adjacent airport zoning and are less impacted by the negative aspects of the nearby highway than residential uses. The M-1 district allows more types of business than the BP district. The more significant differences between the two zoning districts are related to open space and building location requirements. The BP district has a minimum open space requirement of 15% of lot area where the M-1 district has none. Additionally, the M-1 district has fewer and reduced building setbacks requirements.

As previously stated, the majority of the northern part of Northpoint is designated under Business Park zoning. The purpose of the BP business park district is to provide an attractive environment for modern offices, light assembly and warehouse development and to create employment and economic development opportunities within the city in a campus-like setting.
Agricultural and Residential Uses
Additionally, this area contains several agricultural zones in Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County. The Agricultural zones that fall within our project area include Salt Lake City’s AG-5 and AG-2, all land within the County jurisdiction in this project area is zoned A-2. Zone AG-2 in Salt Lake City is used to preserve agricultural uses on lots no less than 2 acres and, similarly, AG-5 is used for agricultural uses on no less than 5 acres. Salt Lake County’s A-2 zone is used for low-density residential with supporting agriculture as a conditional use. The minimum lot size in this zone is 1 acre.

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<th>Zone</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Area</th>
<th>Front Setback</th>
<th>Primary Uses</th>
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<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>10,000 sq.ft.</td>
<td>15 ft</td>
<td>Light manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>20,000 sq.ft.</td>
<td>30 ft</td>
<td>Business/office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2</td>
<td>1 acre</td>
<td>30 ft</td>
<td>Single Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG-2</td>
<td>2 acres.</td>
<td>30 ft</td>
<td>Agriculture/Single Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG-5</td>
<td>5 acres</td>
<td>30 ft</td>
<td>Agriculture/Single Family</td>
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Our Built Environment

Active Building Permits and Recent Development
There are currently a few active building permits within Northpoint that congregate along the 2200 W roadway and fall under the M-1 and BP zoning designations. A new development called Moonlake Farms has an active engineering permit and is among one of ten active permits for growing cannabis in Utah. There is also a new Industrial Building being built just north of the Sherman Williams. Along the 2100N roadway, two new multi-tenant warehouse building have active permits as well.

A key development proposal currently is the Swanner Subdivision, a 343-acre master planned development with about 500 square feet of industrial on the C shaped parcel shown below currently zoned BP. This development would likely be cause for improvements on 2200 West to account for new increase in traffic.

Another major development conversation in this area is the Misty River annexation and proposed development. This proposed 350-acre annexation was initiated from the land owners, who wish to annex their land into North Salt Lake from Salt Lake County in order to preserve 220 acres for Cross E Ranch to continue functioning as a working farm and develop 125 acres into a residential planned community of nearly 1,000 new homes.

Utilities

Broadband
The Northpoint area is serviced by a mix of fixed wireless and wireline (cable, dsl and fiber) broadband internet. Within the census tract that Northpoint occupies, 10.60% of households are without internet access. The companies serving the area are Centurylink for local exchange, Rocky Mountain Power for electric utility territory and Dominion Energy for natural gas. The Utah Broadband Plan adopted in January 2020 set a goal to “Utilize best practices to encourage continued expansion of broadband deployment and increase speeds for everyone to 25 Mbps or better in communities throughout Utah”. The Northpoint area currently has network speeds of 90.47/28.05 Mbps and its max advertised consumer download speeds are 10,000.00 Mbps.
Industrial Wastewater
The Salt Lake City Corporation’s pretreatment program oversees industrial wastewater discharged into the City’s sanitary sewer system. Industrial wastewater treatment, to reduce or eliminate conventional and toxic pollutants, prior to discharge into the POTW (publicly owned treatment works) is required and regulated under the Clean Water Act.

Salt Lake City is also undergoing redevelopment of its Water Reclamation Facility. The wastewater system will address new regulation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Utah’s Department of Water Quality to reduce pollution and transform aging infrastructures. The Water Reclamation Center is located about a mile to the east of Northpoint and is replacing the old structure, which was 55 years old.

Service Areas
The Salt Lake City Public Utilities service area covers most of Northpoint with the exception of a portion to the north, just south of the Jordan River and a portion on the southern boundary. The remaining area is considered unincorporated territory. Though there are few sewer lines to this area, development is encroaching from the southeast and slowly extending utilities with it. Many residential and agricultural properties in this area rely on septic sewer systems.

Street Lighting
Public Utilities within Salt Lake manages and maintains more than 15,000 street lights, including those in Northpoint. The few residences and commercial customers within the area support street lighting through a monthly user fee, included in the bill for drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and sanitation services.

The initial capital improvement program for street lighting in 2012 included a metric of converting the City’s entire inventory to high-energy efficiency LED lamps by the end of 2021. The continuous lighting maps do not extend into the Northpoint area likely due to the lack of development in the area and the irregular Salt Lake City boundary.

Irrigation Canals
There are several irrigation canals running through Northpoint that serve the greater Salt Lake City area. The Rudy Drain runs diagonally across the study area from its connection to the Greater Salt Lake in the upper northwest quadrant to the lower southeast quadrant. Running along the western boundary is the Salt Lake City Canal Sewage. The southern boundary has a Reclamation ditch just north of the international airport.
Transportation

The Northpoint Area Boundary runs along Highway 215 to the east, which acts as the main transportation route for the area. As Northpoint currently has little development beyond a small portion of residential housing to the northwest and light industrial to the south, the transportation routes within the boundary consist mainly of gravel roads with a few thoroughfares. 2200 W divides the area into clear sections which suggest an informal development boundary along the roadway. Recent development in the area has almost exclusively been to the east of 2200 W, between the roadway and Highway 215. Other roads in the project area include 3200 W, a gravel road with minimal traffic that serves as the western boundary of the project area, 3200 N on the northern boundary, 2100 N on the southern boundary, and several gravel and paved residential and commercial driveways.

The main entrance point to this project area is the exit from I-215 to 2100 N from the south and Center Street from the north. With increasing development pressure in the Northpoint Area, it will become increasingly more important to make improvements to these interchanges and make enhancements to 2200 W.

Public Transportation

The public transportation options that connect to the Northpoint area are currently limited. The 454 Green bus line exists to Airport Station on the south side of Salt Lake City International Airport but does not reach the Northpoint boundary. The closest bus line to the area is the F522 Line running north/south on 2200 W. This bus line reaches the southern boundary and its final stop is near the Boeing warehouse. This bus line gives access to the Northpoint light industrial and commercial uses within it. This accessibility suggests that increasing the amount of industrial and commercial centers within the southern half of Northpoint would be supported by public transportation.
There is also an adjacent line, route 200, that extends along Redwood Road to the southeast of Northpoint. However, these adjacent routes are not accessible within a 15 minute walking distance to the current residences in within Northpoint.

**Bike Accessibility**
The major bikeways extending through the area are the Jordan River Trail, Parkway Trail and a bike lane extending along 2200W and 2100N along the northern boundary of Northpoint. The bikeways along 2200W and 2100N are considered by the city “medium comfort” lanes by Bike SLC meaning there is a painted bike land on a moderate-volume road or shared lane with slower travel speeds. The painted bike lane disappears as the surroundings become more rural moving northbound through the Northpoint Boundary. These medium comfort routes do not have high traffic but bikers must share the roads with vehicles in the same lanes.

**Economic Impact of Transportation**
Having limited access to public transportation and with I-215 serving as a barrier to many jobs for alternative modes of commute such as walking and biking, households in our project area have to rely on personal vehicles or rideshare options to commute to and from work, errands, schools, etc. The Center for Neighborhood Technology recommends a household spend no more than 15% of their annual income on transportation. For a regional-typical household in this area, that means no more than $9,329. Households in this census block spend, an average of $16,167 which is 175% higher. This is also higher than the Salt Lake City average of $13,211.
Our Community

Demographics

It’s no secret that Salt Lake City is growing, over the last decade, Salt Lake City has grown by roughly 14,000 new residents. Most of this growth has been concentrated in downtown Salt Lake City, Central City, and Sugarhouse, each of which grew by over 2,000 residents between 2010 and 2020. The Northpoint area falls within the Westpointe Community Council area, which saw a population decrease (-1.6%) over the last decade.

It’s estimated that there are roughly 140 people living within the Northpoint project area in roughly 60 households. City Council District 1, which encompass our project area, is the district in Salt Lake City with the largest share of Hispanic or Latino population at roughly 48%.

Economy

Roughly 105 people are employed within the Northpoint project area but live elsewhere. The daytime population of the project area is about 160 people including those who stay home and those who come to the area for work.

Of the jobs within the project area boundary, Wholesale Trade (30% of the jobs) and Transportation and Warehousing (22% of the jobs) are the most common industries. In 2018, about 54% of those jobs within the project area boundary provided less than $40,000 per year in salary, which is roughly 63% of the median household income for Salt Lake City residents of $63,971.
Within and immediately outside of the project area, major employers include the Salt Lake City International Airport, Amazon, and the Salt Lake Mosquito Abatement Center.

Those who live in the project area have a higher median household income than the City as a whole at $75,791 and tend to work in the services industry, transportation and utilities, or manufacturing.

Housing

There are about 60 housing units in the project area and 1487 housing units in the associated census tract. Housing in this project area is concentrated east of 2200 West due to environmental constraints and airport impacts (see pages 7 and 10). The housing within this area is entirely single-family housing units, some of which are on agricultural properties.

The project area has a high rate of owner-occupied units at 85.4% and an average home value of $438,000. Which is higher than the median price for the zip code as a whole which sits at $346,900. The zip code saw a 24% increase in home prices between 2020 and 2021.

The Center for neighborhood technology estimates that households within the project area are spending, on average, 47% of their income on housing and transportation costs every month. As Salt Lake County grows and expands westward, combining housing and transportation costs into one number offers an expanded view of affordability by showing the impacts of a longer daily commute on the affordability of a community. The Center for Neighborhood Technology sets a housing and transportation spending benchmark of no more than 45% of a household’s income, rather than using the traditional rule of “no more than 30% on housing alone”.

Funding our Future

The City Council approved a 0.5% increase to the City’s portion of sales tax in May 2018. This increase will typically generate about $34 million a year in ongoing funding and is the first part of a funding strategy to address street conditions, affordable housing, public transit, and neighborhood safety. The Northpoint Area lies within two project types related to this tax increase. The first is an affordable housing program, the second is neighborhood safety.
Community Amenities

The project area is bordered by the Jordan River, a river that connects the Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake, crossing through many jurisdictions and 3 counties. Many parts of the Jordan River have access trails running parallel to the river and there are many nearby parks. Although our project area touches the river, the formal trail stops to the east, with I-215 as a barrier. Also directly east of the project area are the Regional Athletic Complex, Jordan River OHV State Recreation Area, Westpointe Park, and North Star Elementary School. Although there is one overpass road connecting the project area to these amenities, I-215 acts as a barrier to those without access to a personal vehicle. The following map shows how infrastructure can disrupt connection within a community and limit access to community resources like schools, religious organizations, recreation and other gathering areas.