



Northwest Quadrant Master Plan

Community & Economic Development
Office of the Director

To: Planning Commission

From: Tracy Tran, Principal Planner

Date: July 8, 2015

CC: Nora Shepard, City Planning Director; Nick Norris, Project Manager

Re: Planning Commission Input on Northwest Quadrant Master Plan 2015

Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker and the City Council have requested that the Planning Division revise and complete a draft master plan for the Northwest Quadrant by August 2015 and begin an adoption process. Master Plans provide policy guidelines for development, guidance on where the City should expend funds and what regulations should apply to an area. Plans are used by the City, property owners and the general public to help them understand the future vision for development and growth of an area.

The purpose of this memo is to provide general information to the Planning Commission to begin the discussion of ideas, interests, comments and questions that the Board members have relating to the Northwest Quadrant. A final draft plan will be completed by the end of June and Board members will be given copies to review and provide comment.

Study Area: The Northwest Quadrant is generally located west of the Salt Lake City International Airport and Interstate 215 and to the west City limits (approximately 8800 West) between the north city limits (approximately 2300 North) and south city limits (approximately 2100 South).

History: The land in the Northwest Quadrant was annexed into the City in the 1980s. Although there have been a few attempts, no land use policy plan has ever been adopted for this area. The zoning regulations put in place in 1995 have provided the development policy.

In 2005, the City Council allocated funds and consultants were hired to develop a draft plan for the area. At the time, the draft plan envisioned industrial development mainly south of I-80 and a new mixed use type of residential community north of I-80. After a lengthy public engagement process and input from various City Boards and Commissions, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the 2009 draft plan.

Because of the environmentally sensitive lands in the Northwest Quadrant, especially north of I-80, the idea of a residential community so far away from the rest of the City and other similar issues, City Council members questioned whether the proposed plan was the correct land use policy for the area. Around this same time, major land owners changed from the LDS Church to Kennecott Copper. Kennecott was not interested in having residents close to its mining operations which will continue for several decades. Due to these factors, the plan did not get adopted as proposed.

Because there is a lack of infrastructure in this area (north of I-80) and the high cost to build it, there has not been a real strong demand by the private sector to develop in this area. In addition, most of the “developable” land north of I-80 is zoned agriculture which has been seen as a holding zone, until a formal plan and consistent zoning regulations could be adopted for the area.

Timing: In late 2014, the State Department of Corrections announced that land in the Northwest Quadrant was on the list of potential sites for the relocation of the State Prison. As a response, in early 2015, the Mayor and City Council determined that a plan for the Northwest Quadrant should be completed and adopted. If the State decides to locate the prison in this area, the State would fund and build the infrastructure that may then open up the area for more private development. The land use policies and regulations should be adopted to ensure the development is consistent with what the City envisions for this area.

General draft policies of the plan:

- Focus on this area being the City’s major employment center. This area is a major employment center for the City and region. It is located close to transportation networks: the Airport, Heavy Freight Rail and Interstate. The City should protect this area as an economic development asset of the City while ensuring protection of the environmentally sensitive areas.
- Residential in this area is not appropriate for various reasons: sprawl, environmental sensitive lands and impacts to wildlife, land use conflicts between residential uses and existing and future industrial areas.
- Opportunity for sustainable development: serving the area by mass transit, clustering of buildings to allow development where appropriate and protecting environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitats, orienting buildings to take advantage of solar energy opportunities, etc.
- Opportunity for passive recreation use (trails, wildlife viewing, etc) along the edges of protected natural areas.
- Protection of the Investment in the Airport. The Airport is extremely important to the City, State and Region. The plan takes into account current and future needs of the Airport (including expansion).
- Support the continuation of landfill operations at 5600 West and California Avenue.

Timeframe and Steps for Project

1. Input from City Advisory Boards - June and July
2. Public Engagement (stakeholders, property owners, interest groups, general public)- June and July
3. Planning Commission Public Hearing and Recommendation – End of August
4. City Council- Final Adoption Authority- Fall of 2015.
5. Regulations and Design policies: Adopt by end of the year, after plan adopted.

Northwest Quadrant

