



# Staff Report

PLANNING DIVISION  
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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To: Salt Lake City Planning Commission  
CC: Nora Shepard, Planning Director; Nick Norris, Planning Manager  
From: Tracy Tran, Principal Planner  
Date: September 3, 2015  
Re: Northwest Quadrant Master Plan

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The purpose of this Staff Report is to discuss recommended changes to the Draft Northwest Quadrant Master Plan with the Planning Commission.

## **REQUEST:**

The Mayor and the City Council have requested that the Planning Division revise and complete a draft Northwest Quadrant Master Plan that can be adopted by the end of the year. Currently, there is not a master plan for the Northwest Quadrant. 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 Northwest Quadrant is generally located West of the Salt Lake International Airport and Interstate-215 and North of SR-201 or 2100 South to the western and northern boundaries of the City.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Planning Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider the recommended changes and forward a positive recommendation to the City Council to adopt the plan. This recommendation is based on the information in the staff report, the process, input and outcomes involved in updating the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan, and consideration of adopted citywide plans related to the Northwest Quadrant area.

**“I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the Downtown Community Plan based on the information presented in the staff report, the public involvement process associated with creating the plan, and the testimony and discussion provided during the Planning Commission briefings and public hearings.”**

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Draft Northwest Quadrant Master Plan (dated: 9/3/2015)
- B. List of Public Comments and Plan Response
- C. Compilation of Department and Public Comments

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan is a long-range vision and plan that will guide future development in this area of Salt Lake City. The Northwest Quadrant contains a large amount of undeveloped land and the Plan balances the need to protect the environmentally-sensitive lands adjacent to the shorelands of the Great Salt Lake and to provide a major job center for the City and the region.

### *Why are we making changes?*

The most recent revisions to the draft plan were made to:

- Reflect City Department comments and public comments
- Provide clarity and refinement in the plan language

### *Summary of Comments*

Many of the comments received in response to the first draft of the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan focuses on concerns regarding airport expansion into the eastern edge of the Northwest Quadrant and current city plans that reference trails with the “Natural Areas” of the plan.

Most of the remaining concerns involved reducing the impact development may have on the environmentally-sensitive areas and on the significant number of birds in the area. A few comments were directed at the importance of bikeways and trails within the Northwest Quadrant that connect to other areas of the City and region.

### *Summary of Draft Changes (Draft dated 9/3/15)*

The most recent changes were made to the draft plan dated September 2, 2015. These will be discussed during the Planning Commission meeting on September 9, 2015. A complete list of changes is included in Attachment B.

In reviewing the following changes, we ask that the Planning Commission please consider:

- Do you agree or disagree with the change?
- Does this change reflect the input from the public process?
- Does this change follow other adopted citywide master plans?

Changes:

1. Airport references
  - a. Removed map reference of airport expansion
  - b. Changed Salt Lake International Airport language in Existing Conditions section
  - c. Removed language regarding future runway expansion in associated goals and policies.
2. Trails/Bikeways
  - a. Clarified trails, bikeways, and other public access areas are not allowed within the “Natural Areas” of the plan, but are allowed in the “Greenways and Open Space” areas.
  - b. Clarified the importance of the existing bicycle route along the I-80 frontage road and the need to maintain a segregated version of the route as traffic increases.
3. Additions related to development impacts on environment
  - a. Buffer along ISSR at the western boundary of the city, low water landscaping, water should return to the same flows as they currently exist, noise reductions, no public road along 8800 West.
4. Other changes to provide greater clarity or reflect public interest

## **CONFLICTS WITH OTHER CITY PLANS:**

Based on the information heard throughout the public process, staff is recommending that trails or other public access areas should not be located within the “Natural Areas” of the plan. The idea is to accommodate trails within the “Greenways and Open Space” areas of the plan. The draft plan reflects these concepts.

However, there are two existing City Plans –Open Space Master Plan (1992) and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2004 with a pending draft plan update) – that discuss trail areas within these Natural Areas of the Northwest Quadrant. The Parks and Open Space Master Plan discusses a trail around Bailey’s Lake and the Bicycle and the Pedestrian Master Plan discusses a trail along the west edge of the airport. Both of these plans are adopted master plans, though there is currently an update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian master plan in process.

Due to the conflict between this plan and the plans listed above, the Planning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation on which plans should take precedent. If it is determined that the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan takes precedent, the Planning Division will notify the Transportation Division (managers of the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan) and Parks and Public Lands about the conflict and discuss how to approach this with the City Council. If the other plans are determined to take precedent, than the Northwest Quadrant Plan will be modified to reflect the other plans. Ultimately, it will be up to the City Council to make the final decision. The Planning Division recommends that the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan take precedence because it has specific input on the subject and takes into account the area specific issues at a more comprehensive level than the other plans.

## **BACKGROUND ON THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT MASTER PLAN:**

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 Northwest Quadrant contains most of the City’s current industrial jobs as well as a large amount of undeveloped land that is adjacent to environmentally-sensitive lands. The City will use this plan to guide decision-makers on land use matters in the Northwest Quadrant.

### *Highlights of the Plan*

The plan envisions the Northwest Quadrant to be a new, sustainable area of Salt Lake City that:

- Respects the unique nature of the Great Salt Lake and the surrounding environment for current generations and preserves sensitive natural environments for future generations
- Is an ecologically-oriented industrial park that helps drive the City’s Economic and natural resource protection goals
- Is an economic engine for the City, region, and State

### *Response to Other Plans and Policies*

Throughout the planning process, Planning Staff has used a number of adopted policy documents, citywide master plans and planning efforts done by other groups to provide some insight into policies that may impact the Northwest Quadrant. These documents and how they relate to the Northwest Quadrant Plan are listed below.

### Mayor’s Livability Agenda

The Mayor's Livability Agenda is a document created by the Mayor's Office that is intended to help frame priorities as they relate to making Salt Lake City "one of the greenest, most accessible, most inclusive and most economically viable municipalities in the country." The document contains 6 sections:

1. The Resilient Economy
2. Salt lake City in Motion
3. A Wise Energy Future and Quality Environment
4. Innovation and Celebration of Education
5. A Commitment to Equality and Opportunity
6. Enhancing the Artistic and Cultural Life

Section 3 of the Agenda – A Wise Energy Future and Quality Environment highlights the need to "Protect our Natural Assets" and lists "Completing the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan" as an action item. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan balances the protection of the natural environment and wildlife habitat with the area serving as an economic engine for the City and the region.

### City Council Philosophy Statements

In 2012, the City Council adopted a series of philosophy statements on several subjects pertaining to the City. The document states "It is the Council's intent that this collection of philosophy statement will provide direction and communicate vision that can be used and built upon by City residents, business owners, developers and City employees." Below are the philosophy statements applicable to the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan:

- Economic Health of the City
- Transportation and Mobility
- Sustainability
- Parks and Open Space

The philosophy statement on Economic Health of the City identifies the importance that the City plays in local, regional and State economies. There are a number of value statements about supporting businesses of various sizes, attracting both local and non-local businesses. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan includes many of these values through the vision and policies in the plan that establishes the Northwest Quadrant as an economic engine for the City, region, and State.

The Transportation and Mobility philosophy statement encourages a variety of transportation mode choices. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan highlights the importance of transportation options for the jobs center within the plan.

The Sustainability philosophy statement discusses minimizing the use of resources that are available and includes value statements that discuss reducing the ecological footprint in the City, creating new sources of energy, preservation of natural resources, and using tools that increase the use of sustainable practices. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan is focused on creating a sustainable community by protecting the wildlife and biodiversity and by promoting environmentally- and ecologically-friendly uses in the Northwest Quadrant.

The vision adopted by the City Council related to Parks and Open Space focuses on both programmed and non-programmed recreational opportunities. The philosophy statement mentions several values that are related to items found in the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan,

including protecting wildlife, habitats, and ecological systems of the Great Salt Lake and its tributaries, and the preservation of natural areas.

#### Plan Salt Lake

Plan Salt Lake is not yet an adopted plan of the City. The intent of Plan Salt Lake is to be an overarching vision plan for the City that guides future community master plans and provides some insight into what each community plan should consider as they are updated and implemented. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan policies highlight how Plan Salt Lake has influenced the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan.

#### Transportation Master Plan

The Transportation Master Plan is an adopted plan of the City. The Plan encourages multi-modal transportation, growth in the Northwest Quadrant along existing and planned transportation corridors, enhancing the City's master planned network of bikeways, and supporting the western relocation of the railroad mainlines of the existing residential and commercial areas. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan has incorporated many of these principals and goals within the plan.

#### Open Space Master Plan

The Open Space Master Plan is an adopted plan of the City and includes the following goals: conserve the natural environment, enhance open space amenities to all citizens, and connect various part of the City to natural environments. The Northwest Quadrant Master Plan considered these goals within the goals and policies of the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan.

### **DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

All department and public comments received are documented in ATTACHMENT B. This lists all of the comments received and a response. In many cases, comments resulted in a change to the draft plan. In a few cases, no change was made and an explanation was provided.

A compilation of all written public comments received since August 11, 2015 through September 2, 2015 is included in ATTACHMENT C.

*Other public comments received after September 2, 2015 will be provided to the Planning Commission as they are received.*

### **NEXT STEPS:**

The Planning Commission is a recommending body for all master plan amendments. The Planning Commission can choose to forward the Northwest Quadrant Master Plan with a recommendation to adopt the plan, adopt the plan with specific changes, or to not adopt the plan.

Once a recommendation is made by the Planning Commission on the Draft Plan, it will be forwarded to the City Council for its consideration and decision. The Council can adopt the plan as recommended, make modifications to the plan or deny the plan.

### **PREVIOUS DRAFT:**

The previous Draft Plan that was reviewed the Planning Commission on August 26, 2015 can be found [here](#). The most recent draft plan can be found in Attachment A.

*Please note that page numbers may not be consistent between the most recent draft and the earlier version.*



**ATTACHMENT A: Draft Northwest Quadrant Master Plan**  
**(dated: 9/3/2015)**

## **ATTACHMENT B: Complete List of Changes**



# **ATTACHMENT C: Department and Public Comments**