

**Minutes**  
Regional Growth Committee  
Meeting of May 15, 2008

A meeting of the Regional Growth Committee was held on Thursday, May 15, 2008 in the offices of the Wasatch Front Regional Council, 295 North Jimmy Doolittle Road, Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Mayor Bruce Burrows**, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Mayor Burrows welcomed committee members and guests. He urged members and representatives to be prompt so the meetings could begin and end in a timely manner. The following were in attendance:

**Members, Representatives & Alternates Present:**

Michael Allegra	UTA
Ralph Becker	Mayor, Salt Lake City
Bruce Burrows	Mayor, Riverdale City
Mick Crandall	UTA
Louenda Downs	Davis County Commission
Russell Fox	Kennecott Land Company
Joe Gertge	Mayor, South Weber City
Jim Horrocks	Department of Air Quality
Alan Matheson	Envision Utah
Joseph Moore	West Valley City
JoAnn B. Seghini	Mayor, Midvale City
Dan Snarr	Mayor, Murray City
Jan Zogmaister	Commissioner, Weber County

**Non-Members Present:**

James Beers	UDOT Region 1
John Bennett	Quality Growth Commission
Roger Borgenicht	Future Moves
Gabe Epperson	Envision Utah
Tyler Garcia	UTA
Ben McAdams	Salt Lake City
Mark Nord	Envision Utah
Christie Oosteman	Envision Utah
Lynn Vinzant	Clinton City
Russell Weeks	Salt Lake City
Wayne Bennion	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Chuck Chappell	Wasatch Front Regional Council
LaNiece Dustman	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Ned Hacker	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Val John Halford	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Jory Johner	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Pam Jorgensen	Wasatch Front Regional Council
Barbara Thomas	Wasatch Front Regional Council

**Members / Representatives excused:** Justin Allen, Steve Call, Mayor Peter Corroon, Commissioner Meghan Holbrook, Mayor Joe Johnson and Wilf Sommerkorn

## **1. Approval of Minutes**

**Commissioner Louenda Downs** moved that the minutes of the Regional Growth Committee meeting held March 20, 2008 be approved but amended to list Mayor Joe Gertge among the members excused. **Jim Horrocks** seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

## **2. Opportunity for Public Comment**

There were no comments

## **3. INFORMATION on Quality Growth Commission, Local Government Planning Needs Assistance**

**John Bennett**, Executive Director, Quality Growth Commission, informed members that when the Utah Quality Growth Commission was created in 1999 it was given three major responsibilities. They were to:

1. Recommend and advise the Legislature on growth issues.
2. Assist local governments with Quality Growth planning.
3. Promote land conservation by administering the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund.

Mr. Bennett said the Commission's report to the Legislature this year expresses its desire to focus on local government planning needs and better identifying how the State can specifically support local governments. Mr. Bennett commented that satellite imagery from the mid-1990's held by Utah State University had been compared with imagery taken in 2006 at the same locations (including the Draper Bench areas). He said the growth indicated by comparing photos is remarkable and reflective of what is happening in many communities. He then used a PowerPoint presentation featuring Draper, Herriman and Eagle Mountain (in Utah county) to further illustrate the impact of growth. The State recognizes the need to help communities in both the urban and rural areas cope with growth. He asked for comments from the RGC on what they feel the Regions major planning needs are. He noted that the Quality Growth Commission is planning to visit all 29 counties in the state to obtain input for the Legislature on specific planning needs. The report will be presented to an interim committee in September or October.

Mr. Bennett encouraged members and others to use the land use library the Quality Growth Commission has created with information gathered from communities around the state. The library can be accessed at [www.planning.utah.gov](http://www.planning.utah.gov). The land use ordinance information might especially be of interest.

In response to a comment from Mayor Seghini, Mr. Bennett said his office interfaces with the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) on a regular basis. One joint project is a program to train assistant planners. They are also using on-line training videos to assist planning commission members in understanding and performing their functions. The question is what more can be done if additional resources are provided either through the ULCT or to the communities directly. In response to a question from Mayor Seghini, Mr. Bennett said his office has had as much as \$200,000 to distribute in small grants; typically \$10,000 to \$15,000. In response to questions from Commissioner Downs, Mr. Bennett said the planning paid for with the grants tends to focus on economic development. It is felt that planning for economic development and overall land use planning are integrally related and need to be part of the same planning process. The role of the State is to encourage interaction between local government land use planners and people involved in economic development (both in the public and private sector).

He added that the smaller communities even in the Wasatch Front Region, seem the most in need of this help and have been the focus of attention in the past few years. What is really needed everywhere is advanced planning. (If communities wait until they have the resources through the generation of new taxes from an expanded tax base, it may be too late for effective planning!) Mr. Bennett added that he thought the State should “help” on some of the region-wide planning efforts and ought to play some type of role in the process. However, its emphasis is on the smaller communities.

**Christie Oostema** of Envision Utah commented on her planning work with small communities and said these entities find the State aid invaluable. She added that resources needed for implementing plans would also be helpful so that the processes can move forward.

**Mayor Becker** said the work of the Growth Commission has been very helpful and then asked Mr. Bennett if it had ever given the Legislature specific recommendations on what it can and should do as it relates to regional planning. Mr. Bennett replied that there has been difficulty in reaching a consensus on area-wide recommendations. However, it has given legislators the “Quality Growth Principles” that guide WFRC planning efforts in the form of recommendations and has dealt with the issue of the loss of privately owned property within the State. Mayor Becker said that, as a legislator, he was involved with the passage of the Quality Growth Act. Legislators were hoping the Growth Commission would forward very specific recommendations about how the regions can deal with growth. He added that now he is wondering if the Regional Council itself should address questions of growth with specific recommendations of its own to forward directly to the Growth Commission and Legislature. When the bill was passed eleven years ago, legislators anticipated recommendations would be forwarded to them. He said very little has come forward that is meaningful.

**Ned Hacker**, WFRC staff, said the Regional Council could certainly recommend what it feels are good policies and practices to the Growth Commission. The WFRC staff has helped prepare land use plans for some of the communities (possibly in conjunction with assistance from the grants referred to by Mr. Bennett) and have used the growth principles and other good planning guidelines in its work. Experience does exist on which to base recommendations to forward to the State.

Mayor Becker commented further on the need for specificity in recommendations. The Quality Growth Act includes planning principles. What are needed are very specific recommendations.

Mr. Bennett reminded members that a few years ago, the Quality Growth Commission tried to implement the Quality Growth Community Program to recognize and encourage communities to conduct good planning programs. This action was probably anticipated in the original legislation. One idea was to encourage State sources of funding for infrastructure to recognize good planning in distributing projects. The program included a set of requirements for designation. There was some concern at the State level about whether or not the program was a “step over the bounds” in creating it without specific legislative approval. However, the point is that efforts have been made to move the planning effort forward and to target funding where good plans exist. He added that the program technically still exists, but no communities have recently sought designation. He said the WFRC staff was very interested in the program and with its work to implement the Growth Principles and to assist with community planning efforts, has probably taken it further than any other such organization.

**Mayor Seghini** cautioned Mr. Bennett that the Quality Growth Commission should not only be concerned about growing communities but “built out” communities as well. There is a great deal of resistance to change among residents who do not seem to realize that accommodating new growth in highly urbanized communities may require constructing two or three story buildings and adding density in other ways.

**Mayor Snarr** thanked the Quality Growth Commission, Envision Utah and other groups for their efforts in promoting good planning, providing funds for plans and open space and the information needed to educate participants in the planning process.

Mr. Bennett said that, in response to Mayor Seghini and Mayor Snarr, the work of Envision Utah and other organizations is very important in educating the public and trying to help communities cope with growth. In response to a question from Mayor Burrows, Mr. Bennett provided contact information for the Growth Commission ([www.qualitygrowth.utah.gov](http://www.qualitygrowth.utah.gov)). The "ordinance library is located on the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget website ([www.planning.utah.gov](http://www.planning.utah.gov)). Comments and recommendations would be welcome.

**Joseph L. Moore**, West Valley City, said that if the Legislature has, in some fashion, adopted the Growth Principles and understands them, they ought to be doing more to assist local governments with implementation. He said an ongoing education program may be in order to connect the principles with the reality of community development. He said local governments do not seem to have the trust of legislators to do creative things and experiment. The range of possibilities seems to be narrowing and funding is disappearing. He suggested to Mr. Bennett that the Legislature could perhaps be asked to just "leave them alone".

Mr. Bennett conceded that planning innovations that have emerged in recent years have been at the local government level, although many state agencies are progressive of what they are requiring of their local counterparts. He said he is unsure if most legislators are really aware of planning needs or at least focused on planning. He said he would report the sentiments he heard today to the Quality Growth Commission and especially the need to move aside if they cannot support the proactive efforts of local governments.

**Mayor Becker** suggested that the WFRC prepare recommendations, based on their research in preparing the regional planning documents and their work with local governments that could be shared with the Regional Council and forwarded to the Quality Growth Commission when approved. It is anticipated that they would be forwarded to the legislature. Mr. Bennett said the recommendations would be greatly appreciated.

**Chuck Chappell** commented that the WFRC includes adherence to the Growth Principles adopted by the Regional Council in calculating the spending priorities for the transportation funding it controls. However, there is "absolutely no consideration" of the Growth Principles by the Legislature and UDOT in weighing funding for the major state projects within the Wasatch Front Region. He said UDOT should be encouraged to add consideration of the Growth Principles and other quality growth principles to the scientific process used by legislators and UDOT to prioritize projects. That would be a big step in the right direction. Mr. Bennett said he would like to see that recommendation documented.

**Mayor Becker** formally requested that the staff prepare recommendations to the Quality Growth Commission consistent with the sentiments of members (as noted above). Mayor Burrows agreed with the request.

**Mike Allegra**, Utah Transit Authority, reminded members and guests of the Transit Oriented Development seminar to be held June 9<sup>th</sup> in Salt Lake City. He said the speakers at the seminar would be addressing, in a general sense, the topics implied in Mr. Bennett's presentation.

#### **4. ACTION on Potential Amendments to the Regional Transportation Plan**

**Ned Hacker**, WFRC, stated that the Wasatch Front Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2007-2013 was adopted by the Regional Council in May 2007. He informed as recently as March 27, 2008 the WFRC added by amendment several projects into the RTP. Mr. Hacker said there are

now additional projects that are being proposed for inclusion in the RTP. The following projects were reviewed, discussed and modified as follows:

#### **Weber County**

**SR-108 (West Haven) – extend Midland Drive (from Hinckley Drive intersection-3650 South/2600 West to 1900 West/SR-126)** – The SR-108 Environmental Impact Statement includes a recommendation to move the terminus of the project from the intersection of SR-108 and the Hinckley Drive extension to the intersection of SR-108 and 1900 West/SR-126.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add to Phase 1 of the RTP SR-108 from the intersection of the Hinckley Drive extension to 1900 West/SR-126.

#### **Davis County**

**700 South (Layton) – Main Street to Flint Street** – The South Layton Interchange Environmental Impact Statement includes a recommendation for the interchange connection to the west from Main Street to Flint Street. This project spans the railroad corridor, including UTA's FrontRunner line and provides a connection to the overflow park and ride lot on the west side of the railroad tracks to help decrease traffic on Gentile Street.

**Proposed Amendment:** Move from Phase 2 to Phase 1 of the RTP the section of 700 South from Main Street to Flint Street.

**Legacy Connector (Farmington) – North Legacy to Legacy Parkway and I-15** – The City of Farmington and UDOT recommend including a project connecting North Legacy and the Legacy Parkway.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add to Phase 2 of the RTP a project connecting North Legacy and the Legacy Parkway. This project would include potential north-south alignments from I-15 on the west side of Farmington City.

**Designate the Denver and Rio-Grande Western Corridor (D&RGW) as a Transit and Trails Corridor – 400 North in West Bountiful to 3300 South and Midland Drive in West Haven** – The Utah Transit Authority (UTA) requested that the portion of the D&RGW corridor they own be designated as a future transit corridor so the right-of-way can be protected and preserved. The corridor is currently designated in the Rails to Trails program and is in use as a trail.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add to the RTP designate the D&RGW corridor as a transit and trails corridor.

#### **Salt Lake County**

**11400 South (South Jordan) – Redwood Road to Bangerter Highway** – The 11400 South Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision have cleared this section of the project corridor. UDOT recommends extending the terminus of the project from Redwood Road to Bangerter Highway.

**Proposed Amendment:** Move from Phase 2 to Phase 1 of the RTP the section of 11400 South from Redwood Road to Bangerter Highway.

**5600 West (Herriman) – Herriman Parkway/12600 South to Main Street/13000 South** – The City of Herriman recommends the construction of 5600 West (from Herriman Parkway/12600 South to Main Street/13000 South) in Phase 1. The project on 5600 West would facilitate traffic generated from a new high school and junior high in Herriman.

**Proposed Amendment:** Move from Phase 3 to Phase 1 of the RTP the section of 15600 West from Herriman Parkway/12600 South to Main Street/13000 South.

**Frontage Road west of I-215 (West Valley City) 3500 South to 4100 South** – West Valley City received funding from the state legislature to construct a north-south frontage road just on the west side of I-215 from 3500 South Interchange to 4100 South.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add to Phase 1 of the RTP the frontage road west of I-215 from 3500 South interchange to 4100 South.

**7800 South (West Jordan) – New Bingham Highway to Airport Road/4350 West –** UDOT and West Jordan City recommend reconstruction of 7800 South between the New Bingham Highway and Airport Road/4350 West.

**Proposed Amendment:** Move from Phase 2 to Phase 1 of the RTP, the section of 7800 South from the intersection of New Bingham Highway to Airport Road/4350 West.

**I-215 (Taylorsville) – Grade Separated Interchange at 5400 South –** UDOT and Taylorsville City recommend a grade separated interchange at I-215 and 5400 South in Phase 1 of the RTP. With preliminary information from the Salt Lake County East-West Corridors Study this interchange would potentially improve east-west travel on both 6200 South and 4700 South.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add to Phase 1 of the RTP a grade separated interchange at I-215 and 5400 South.

**ACTION:** Mayor JoAnn B. Seghini moved that the RGC recommend to the Regional Council that it release for public comment the proposed amendments to the RTP. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Louenda Downs and passed unanimously.

## 5. INFORMATION on Green Infrastructure Workshop

LaNiece Dustman, WFRC, reported on the Green Infrastructure Workshop held May 5 – 9 at the Radisson Hotel in Salt Lake City. This workshop was co-sponsored by the Wasatch Front Regional Council, the Utah Department of Natural Resources and the USDA Forest Service. The workshop was attended by 47 people from six western states and involved hands-on projects, lectures and case studies. Local field trips allowed participants to experience firsthand how the Green Infrastructure planning approach has been developed and refined.

Ms. Dustman commented that Green Infrastructure includes strategic thinking and integrated actions to plan, protect and manage remaining open space, sensitive sites and restored lands. It is a nationally recognized collaborative approach for land use planning designed to meet the needs of all interests. It calls for an interconnected network of open spaces and natural area (greenways, wetlands, parks, trails, wildlife habitats, forest preserves and native plant vegetation). She quoted a statement from literature distributed at the workshop noting that: "Green infrastructure, just as gray infrastructure, is a necessity, not an amenity".

Ms. Dustman noted the following as benefits of Green Infrastructure:

- Builds consensus among diverse interests
- Land use decisions are based on goals
- Provides recreational opportunities
- Naturally channels storm water and reduces flood risk
- Preserves agricultural areas
- Improves water quality
- Preserves historic sites

She added that making provisions for an adequate Green Infrastructure is important not only for residents but attracting visitors. The workshop gave participants tools for fulfilling this need. She said there are four steps in designing a Green Infrastructure Network. **Step 1:** Create a leadership group with representation from development interests as well as planners and preservationists. **Step 2:** Identify the network features (i.e. natural areas and features, watersheds, waterways, wildlife, nature trail, etc.). **Step 3:** Connect components; and **Step 4:** Work for real implementation.

At this point Ms. Dustman asked members for comments and indication if they would like the WFRC staff to move forward in creating the framework for a green infrastructure network.

**Commissioner Downs** said she was very much aware of the need to preserve corridors for trails and property for the amenities needed for “walkable communities” before it is too late. Agricultural lands, a part of the ambience for Davis County residents, continues to disappear, as do other open spaces. The Economic Development Council in Davis County recognizes the importance of the green infrastructure component in its planning efforts. People need to step up and do what is necessary before it is too late.

**Mayor Gertge** said there is probably no decision-maker who doesn't wish they could “go back and re-plan” their communities to provide for more open space. Ms. Dustman said one of the concepts taught at the workshop is that it is possible to restore some amenities like stream channels that may have been put underground in the past and other factors.

**Commissioner Zogmaister** said Weber County is updating its planning and zoning ordinances for the upper Ogden Valley. She asked how this work would fit in with the Green Infrastructure proposals presented by Ms. Dustman. She replied that the WFRC hopes to create an advisory group consisting of local and state government officials and planners to provide an area-wide perspective and which is capable of assisting individual communities. The WFRC would also gather information, ordinances, etc. that interested communities can utilize. In response to a question, Ms. Dustman said the advisory group should be separate from other technical committees and would oversee a new process.

**John Bennett**, State Quality Growth Commission, commented that the WFRC has, in a sense, been involved in Green Infrastructure planning for quite a while. The Open Space Inventory Plan prepared by the WFRC several year's ago is one example, (as are some of the growth principles). Davis County's work on aspects of the Legacy Highway (shoreline planning) and local government efforts to preserve and plan for trail systems are others. He said it is important to remember the economic benefits of incorporating green infrastructure into master plans, even if it is in the form of not having to clean up watersheds and purchasing expensive properties so that parks can be retrofitted into urban areas. He also made suggestions for organizing the Ogden Valley planning process and discussed how to tie multi-county trail systems and other amenities together throughout the region. He reminded members that planning for trails and other features that can be linked together must be an integral part of local planning – especially to show how the individual green projects fit into the area-wide system. He said some groups feel that planning for Green Infrastructure should be carried out before other planning elements are considered.

At this point Commissioner Downs suggested that the RGC adopt a “sense of the group” (to be forwarded to the Regional Council) that an advisory council, as suggested by Ms. Dustman, be created and charged initially with determining what should be done, who should be involved, and addressing the other organizational issues raised in the discussion. Members expressed support for the proposal noting that it would be important to move ahead as a group. Some communities are already carrying out this type of planning but communication links need to be better established.

**Lynn Vinzant** commented that many communities lack the technical staff necessary to consider the issues raised in the discussion. The process could be an excellent educational tool for all of the communities and perhaps legislators as well. Commissioner Downs said the private sector should be heavily involved in the process, especially to show how they can benefit. Ms. Dustman commented that workshop participants were reminded that development is not a bad thing. However, comprehensive planning needs to include the Green Infrastructure component.

At this point Mayor Burrows said he would communicate to the Regional Council the strong interest of RGC members in the Green Infrastructure recommendations as presented above.

## **6. INFORMATION on Growth Principles Outreach**

**Val John Halford**, WFRC, reported that in February of this year the WFRC contracted with representatives from Envision Utah to assist with an outreach effort designed to educate local city and county planners on the benefits of utilizing the Vision and Growth Principles found in Wasatch Choices 2040 study. Mr. Halford stated that the next step in the outreach effort would be to make a formal presentation to the planning commission that will be tailored to the individual needs of each city or county. The issues and concerns expressed by local planners will be addressed by this presentation. Finally, a presentation will be made to city and county councils with the recommendation that they adopt the Growth Principles and Vision by Resolution.

**Gabe Epperson**, Envision Utah, presented the PowerPoint slide show that will be used in the outreach effort to educate the planning commissions. The presentation includes information relating to the value of the Vision and Growth Principles, strategies for implementing such, the coordination of mixed-use centers with transportation, photographs of current land uses and the superimposition of possible mixed-use developments, suggested locations within the community where higher density makes sense, the location of possible transit oriented developments, ideal community centers and attributes, and an ideal community land use map.

Mr. Epperson commented briefly on the series of 13 public workshops held over the past few years. The workshops included over 1,000 participants who expressed their opinions on how to best accommodate anticipated growth. The results of these workshops, and other input, were reflected in the scenarios considered by the Regional Council in preparing the Regional Transportation Plan update. The work with the individual communities to encourage adoption of the growth principles as part of local planning efforts is a continuing aspect of the process.

## **7. Other Business**

**Mayor Bruce Burrows**, said he would asked the staff to communicate with committee members by e-mail to try and determine if there is a better time to schedule meetings. He would also like to determine the preferred length of meetings. He again encouraged members and guests to “be on time” to meetings, thanked staff for the e-mail reminders and expressed appreciation for the staff support.

## **8. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Regional Growth Committee will be held at **9:30 a.m. on THURSDAY, August 21, 2008** in the offices of the Wasatch Front Regional Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.