

SOUTH JORDAN CITY COUNCIL STAFF MEMO

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 7, 2025

FILE OVERVIEW

Item Name	Water Element, General Plan Amendment
Address	1600 West Towne Center Dr.
File Number	Resolution R2025-49
Applicant	City of South Jordan
Staff Author	Joe Moss, Long Range Planner

ITEM SUMMARY

Utah Code [§ 10-9a-403](#) requires cities to have a water element as an integrated part of a General Plan. South Jordan's General Plan was adopted in 2020 prior to the creation of this requirement which was created in 2022. This legislation requires municipalities include this element before 2026.

South Jordan has planned for water related issues in more detail in the Drinking Water System Master Plan which utilizes the General Plan's land use designations as a basis for projecting future needs. The City also has a Water Conservation Plan, which details how consumption can be reduced to meet regional water targets. In order to meet legislative requirements, some information from these plans is now required to be included in the General Plan's water element. Staff has drafted an amendment to Chapter 7 of the General Plan to include the following:

- Update statistical information
- Identify effect of permitted development on water demand and infrastructure as per the Drinking Water Supply Master Plan
- Note methods for reducing water demand and per capita consumption for future and existing development as per the Water Conservation Plan
- Note opportunities to modify operations to eliminate or reduce conditions that waste water as per the Water Conservation Plan

Following the Planning Commission meeting, Staff received additional comments from the Utah Division of Natural Resources Water Division, which resulted in some minor modifications to the draft to include additional information from other existing plans in order to ensure legislative compliance.

Staff requests that the Planning Commission provide a positive recommendation of the item for the City Council to ensure that the City is in compliance with legislative requirements.



TIMELINE

- **September 5, 2025** City Staff discussed recommended modifications to the General Plan to include the required water element with the City Council at a study session.
- **September 9, 2025** The Planning Commission recommended approval of the item in a 6-0 vote.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

Required Action:

Final Decision

Scope of Decision:

This is a legislative item that will be decided by the City Council.

Standard of Approval:

Utah Code [§ 10-9a-403](#) requires the Planning Commission to make a recommendation for City Council. In reviewing a water element for the General Plan, the Planning Commission considered the requirements as described in [§ 10-9a-403 \(2\)\(f.\)](#)

Motion Ready:

I move that the City Council approve:

1. Resolution R2025-49, General Plan Amendment—Water Element

Alternatives:

1. Approve with conditions.
2. Denial.
3. Schedule the item for a recommendation at some future date.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

1. Resolution R2025-49
 - a. Exhibit A, General Plan Chapter 7 How We Grow



RESOLUTION R2025 - 49

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH, AMENDING CHAPTER 7 OF THE SOUTH JORDAN GENERAL PLAN TO COMPLY WITH NEW REQUIREMENTS OF STATE LAW.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Utah Code § 10-9a-403, before the end of the year 2025 the City of South Jordan (the “City”) is required to review and approve a water element as an integrated part of the City’s General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the required water element must include specific recommendations for future water conservation; and

WHEREAS, to comply with the State Code City Staff has prepared a proposed amendment to Chapter 7 (How We Grow) of the General Plan including specific recommendations for future water conservation; and

WHEREAS, the South Jordan Planning Commission conducted a public hearing and reviewed the proposed amendment and thereafter made a recommendation to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council conducted a public hearing and reviewed the proposed amendment and finds that adopting the amended Chapter 7 of the General Plan will enhance the public health, safety and general welfare, and promote the goals of the General Plan and meet the requirements of Utah Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH:

SECTION 1. Adoption. The City Council hereby adopts this amendment to Chapter 7 of the General Plan attached as Exhibit A, as the new Chapter 7 of the City’s General Plan.

SECTION 2. Severability. If any section, clause or portion of this Resolution is declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder shall not be affected thereby and shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]

**APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH,
ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025 BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Patrick Harris	_____	_____	_____	_____
Kathie L. Johnson	_____	_____	_____	_____
Donald Shelton	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tamara Zander	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jason McGuire	_____	_____	_____	_____

Mayor: _____

Dawn R. Ramsey

Attest: _____

City Recorder

Approved as to form:

Gregory Simonsen
Gregory Simonsen (Sep 3, 2025 10:25:01 MDT)

Office of the City Attorney

Chapter 7 How We Grow

OUR VISION:

“South Jordan is a healthy and safe community that provides a variety of high-quality community services and amenities to all residents, encourages water and resource conservation, and strengthens community resiliency and fiscal sustainability with each new development through open communication and cohesive development patterns.”





GROWTH IN SOUTH JORDAN

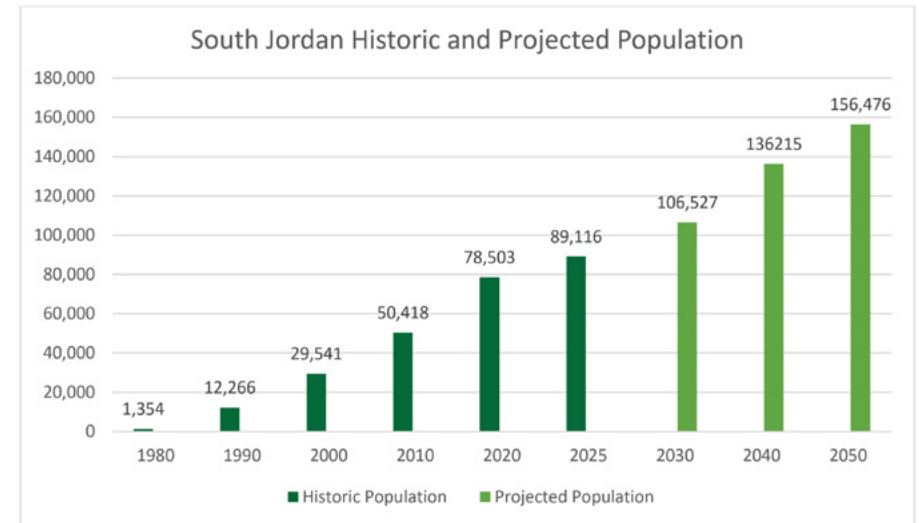
THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING AHEAD

As South Jordan grows and adds residents, the community needs to decide how it can accommodate and capitalize on that growth. In general, land uses and community design should be efficient and sustainable; support a multi-modal transportation network; provide housing choices conveniently located near jobs, schools, shops, and parks; minimize conflicts between incompatible uses; and integrate development with existing and planned infrastructure. A general plan and future land use map are the primary tools the City uses to influence community growth. This update makes sure that those tools reflect how the community desires to grow in the future.

HOW WE'VE GROWN

South Jordan's population was 50,418 in 2010, according to the United States 2010 Census. In 2025, the City has a population of 89,116, marking a 77% increase over that 15 year period. This population makes up nearly 28,000 households living as of 2025. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget baseline projections did not originally anticipate South Jordan's population to be this high until almost 2030. While Utah too has had remarkable population growth statewide, the State's 27% population growth over the same time period is relatively much lower compared to South Jordan's growth rate. This fast-paced growth rate has led to several quality-of-life concerns such as the over-crowding of public schools and traffic congestion.

Using data from WFRC, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, and from a historical analysis of previous growth patterns within the City



performed by South Jordan City staff, it is projected that South Jordan's population will continue to grow at roughly 2.9% annually. This trend will lead to a population of 106,527 by 2030 and 156,476 by 2050. In order to compensate for this growth, the City will need to plan ahead to ensure proper infrastructure is in place in order to preserve the high quality of life that South Jordan residents are used to. Although the number of children and families has remained high as the City has grown, the greatest change in age distribution has been with residents older than 60 years. The median age from 2010 to 2025 increased from 28 to 32 years old. This indicates that South Jordan is increasing in popularity with baby boomers and retirees, but still remains overall an attractive community for young families.

LAND USE

Roughly 34% of the land in South Jordan is zoned for Low Density Single Family Residential or Rural Residential uses. The Daybreak Planned Community comprises 26% and the newly annexed area anticipated to develop as the Midas Planned Community occupies an additional 14%. This leaves 26% of the land in the City for other uses. The remaining land available for growth and redevelopment will need to be carefully planned to create a sustainable balance of commercial and residential uses.

Current national trends show that our retail and commercial experiences are changing. Since 1950, there has been a decrease in personal consumption of goods and an increase in personal consumption of services such as restaurants, entertainment, and other service/experience oriented businesses which cannot be experienced or consumed through online retailers. These services now account for about two thirds of personal consumption.

Along with residential and commercial land use, open space is extremely important to residents. South Jordan is unique in the Salt Lake Valley, it's a City with strong ties to its agricultural heritage. There are several historic and agricultural properties in South Jordan, which are highly valued by the community as open space and a key element in the "rural" or "small-town" feel that residents love. As the City works to balance future land uses with new development, these properties should be carefully considered and preserved.

THOUGHTFUL GROWTH

Water Use and Preservation

When considering the future growth of South Jordan, it is important to remember that Utah is considered a desert state. The State of Utah requires cities to include a water element into their General Plans. South Jordan has been planning for water conservation in the past through a variety of plans. These plans have been formed at a local, regional, and state levels. This Plan summarizes these efforts at a high level as required by the State of Utah. This section incorporates recommendations and best practices as recommended by the following plans:

South Jordan Plans:

- Drinking Water System Master Plan (2025)
- Water Conservation Plan (2025)

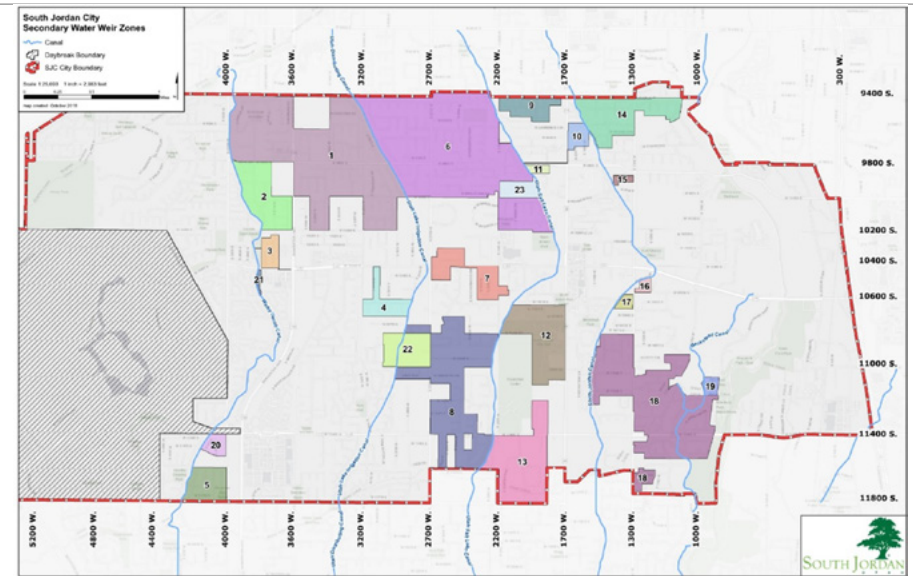
Regional and State Plans:

- [Utah Regional Water Conservation Goals Report \(2019\)](#)
- [Utah Water Resources Plan \(2021\)](#)
- [Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Water Conservation Plan \(2024\)](#)
- [Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Drought Contingency Plan \(2021\)](#)

Water Source

Drinking Water: South Jordan operates a public water utility that purchases 100% of its drinking water from Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD). It then stores and distributes this water throughout the City. JVWCD obtains its water from a variety of sources including upper Provo River reservoirs, Jordanelle Reservoir, Deer Creek Reservoir and a variety of wells in the Salt Lake Valley including several wells within South Jordan. The city maintains a drinking water source protection zones to minimize the risk of contamination to these water sources.

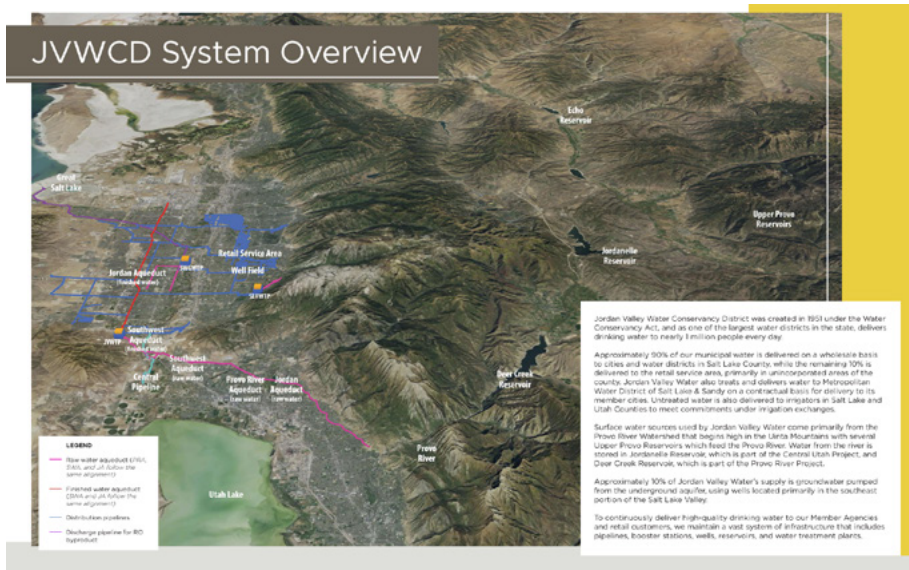
To meet future demands and not be reliant on one source of water, the City is exploring options for an alternative source of water. The City is working on a “Water Source Portfolio & Alternative Source Plan”, this plan will evaluate options of drinking water sources for the City. This includes developing a feasibility study for a direct potable reuse 3MGD plant, evaluating current City owned water sources, and options for the City sources. This water recycling would result in a reduction of future demand of water supply which would leave more water available for other customers of JVWCD or be returned to the Great Salt Lake.



Secondary Water: South Jordan owns shares in five different private canal companies including:

- Utah Lake Distributing
- Utah Salt Lake Water Users
- Welby Jacob Canal
- South Jordan Canal
- Beckstead Canal
- Daybreak Secondary Water Company

The City of South Jordan provides secondary water to a portion of the city through gravity fed and a pressurized piped system. The water is made available through four main canals that run through the city. In addition, the city also owns and maintains the Beckstead Canal which provides water to irrigate the Mulligans Golf Course. The main source of water that feeds the four canals comes from Utah Lake. The quality and availability of secondary water fluctuates with weather or other factors controlled by each respective canal company. Generally the startup/shutdown of the canals is typically April 15 to October 15.



Water and Land Use

Slower growth and redevelopment are anticipated to happen the eastern half of South Jordan since it is largely built out with stable neighborhoods. The majority of current and anticipated growth is occurring in large planned communities in the western portion of the City. The Drinking Water System Master Plan does look at how these land uses and where this growth is occurring will impact water needs in the future. For safety of the drinking water system, this plan is not publicly available; however, key data about future water needs from this plan is summarized below.

In the Drinking Water Master Plan, the future drinking water demands are shown as equivalent residential connections (ERCs). One ERC is defined as the demand a typical single family residence places on the system. Nonresidential connections are typically converted to ERCs for planning purposes. It is expected that at build out, South Jordan will have 28,868 additional ERCs for a total of 60,556 ERCs. Future demand has been calculated by applying the future land use patterns of this Plan to the typical demand for various development types. The following chart shows the anticipated unit densities and unit demands for each land use classification. With these calculations, it is projected that the total future water demand is 38,308 acre feet in an average year upon buildout.

Planned Land Use Densities and Water Demand		
Land Use Class	Unit Density ¹ (ERC/Acre)	Unit Demand ¹ (gpm/Acre)
Agricultural Preservation	3	4.17
Economic Center	3.3-5.5	4.6
Economic Infill Opportunity	3.3-5.5	4.6
Historic	4	5.6
Industrial	3.3-5.5	4.6
Mixed Use Opportunity	3.2-5.4	4.5
Mixed Use TOD	6.5-10.8	9
Natural Area	0	0
Open Space	1.9-3.2	2.67
Public	3.3-5.5	4.6
Residential Development Opportunity	4	3.3-5.6
Stable Neighborhood	No additional growth ²	No additional growth ²
Midas Planned Community	5	4.1

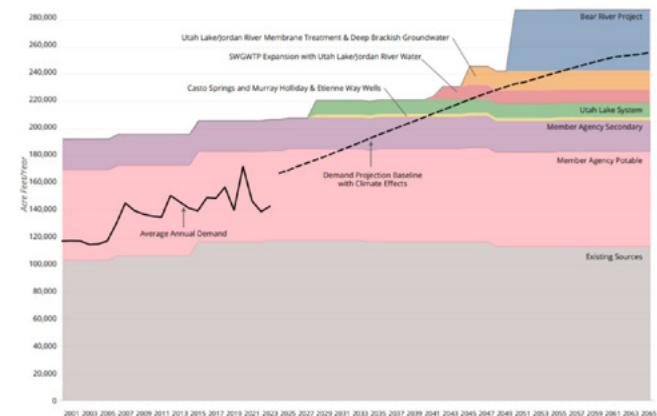
1- Due to varying levels of service requirements across the City, a range of unit densities and unit demands were used to estimate demand requirements in land use classifications

2- The General Plan dictates that Stable Neighborhood areas are mostly built out and are not likely to change or redevelop.

The City currently contracts water as needed with JVWCD. Continued partnership with JVWCD and Rio Tinto (who currently owns the future Midas planned community development) will ensure that projected future needs will be met. JVWCD in particular has plans to increase access to additional supply via the Bear River and anticipates it will be able to meet projected demand.

The majority of new demand is in the western part of the city, which will require significant infrastructure improvements to service the new development and its anticipated densities. South Jordan's Water Plan estimates that storage capacity will need to be increased by approximately 32% to accommodate the planned densities and land uses at buildout. Additional improvements in supply lines will also be required, but will primarily be constructed as development occurs. Planned capital improvements focus on upgrading aging water lines in older parts of the City and increasing storage capacity. The Drinking Water System Master Plan identifies projected costs and a number of possible funding strategies for such improvements including general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, state and federal grants, as well as impact fees. Improvements will generally take a combination of funding sources to be fully funded. Additionally the Drinking Water System Master Plan recommends that water use fees be evaluated periodically to ensure that rates cover the cost of regular water delivery and maintenance so additional revenue sources are not needed in the future.

JVWCD Projected Water Sources and Demand





Water Conservation

The City maintains a water conservation plan that is regularly updated. It discusses current and future water conservation practices, goals, and implementation. South Jordan has made significant changes and efforts to conserve water in the last decade, however even with these improvements, future water needs will require additional water conservation. Conservation efforts identified in the Water Conservation Plan include the following strategies:

- **Water Loss Control:** Updating and maintaining infrastructure to reduce leaks, an FTE to monitor leak activity through analytics & notify residents of leaks, and unaccounted water tracking.
- **Reducing water use:** Meeting regional reduction goals of usage of 187 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) by 2030. (2024 had an average of 251.07 gpcd)
- **Continued changeover of unused grass areas on City owned landscaped areas to more water efficient landscaping.**
- **Continued conservation education and programs:** Educating water users about effective conservation strategies and incentivizing conservation by making changes to landscaping, fixtures, and other water wasting infrastructure.
- **Encouraging water re-use.**

Water Ordinances

South Jordan has made significant progress in recent years to help development conserve water and align the City's ordinances with JVWCD's recommended standards. These changes include the following:

- Prohibiting the use of turf in areas less than 8' wide such as park strips
- Limiting residential uses to a maximum turf area of 35% in front yards
- Prohibiting commercial development from installing turf unless it is an active recreation area
- Regulations for drip irrigation
- Promotion of "localscapes" which encourage healthy, drought tolerant trees, and water efficient features.

As water conservation best practices continue to evolve, additional changes to the development code could be needed to remain in conformance with JVWCD recommended standards, however, the City is currently up to date on recommended ordinances. Additional improvements could be considered in the future to limit water evaporative features such as pools and ponds, reduce yard waste, address artificial turf, and encourage planting of drought tolerant tree species.

Air Quality

Alongside water-usage, air quality is among the top concerns related to sustainable and thoughtful growth in the Salt Lake Valley. Salt Lake County essentially exists in a geographic bowl, surrounded by mountains with development in the valley. This causes natural winter weather conditions to "trap" pollution in the valley until a rain or snow storm comes through. This unavoidable phenomenon is a primary factor of the valley's seasonal air quality, which is often deemed hazardous to breathe and can even lead to "indoor recess days" in local schools. Summer weather also can bring bad air quality with risk of high ozone levels, wild fire smoke, or dust storms after prolonged periods of seasonal dryness.

Although we cannot control many of these external factors in air quality, we can take steps to reduce emissions such as offering public transportation options, educating the public of the benefits of shorter and fewer vehicular trips, and taking steps to reduce traffic congestion.



Localscape Sample Design
FULL YARD



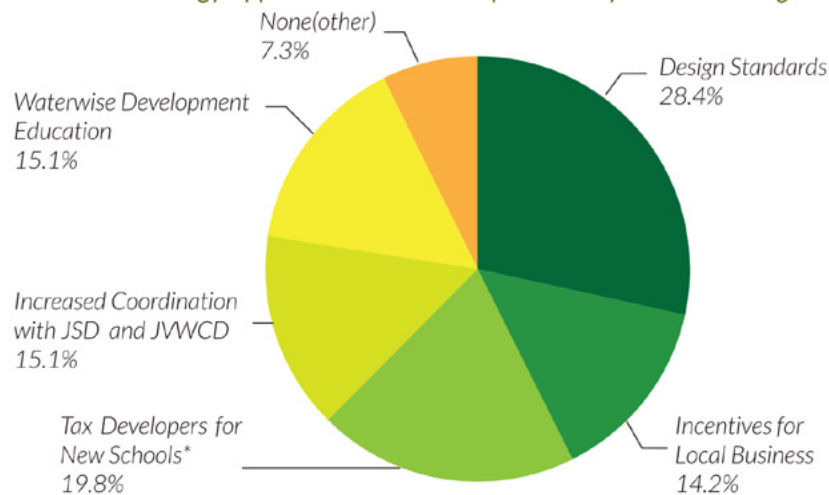
Park Strip - All Season Color
PARK STRIP

THE FUTURE OF GROWTH

During public outreach, it became apparent that residents want new development to be well thought out, cohesive, and sustainable for the local desert climate. Some of the most common ideas and themes that came out of public engagement were design standards to promote cohesive development, incentives to local businesses, a tax for new developers to go towards funding new schools, increased coordination with Jordan School District (JSD) and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD), and Water-wise development standards and “localscapes” education.

When asked which of these growth strategies were most important to residents, answers were split fairly evenly, though the most popular was the creation of development standards for cohesive development. This is a perceived problem in many parts of the valley, many people are worried that new development is taking place without consideration for the design or uses surrounding. The creation of development standards for a City as large as South Jordan would likely focus on major areas for development such as the City Center, SoDa Row, the District, and others. While this was the most popular answer, many of these opportunities received support and will be addressed in this plan.

Which of these strategy opportunities is most important to you for how we grow:



*Not currently allowed in the State of Utah

Looking to the future...

***How can we pro-actively address the needs of our changing population?
Where and how should we grow?***

Accommodating as many as 67,000 new residents by 2050 will require careful consideration and planning about where and how future growth occurs. Future growth will likely continue to occur on the west side of the City primarily in planned communities that are still being built out or have yet to be constructed. That said, there are pockets of undeveloped land and redevelopment opportunities throughout the rest of the City as identified in the framework map to follow.

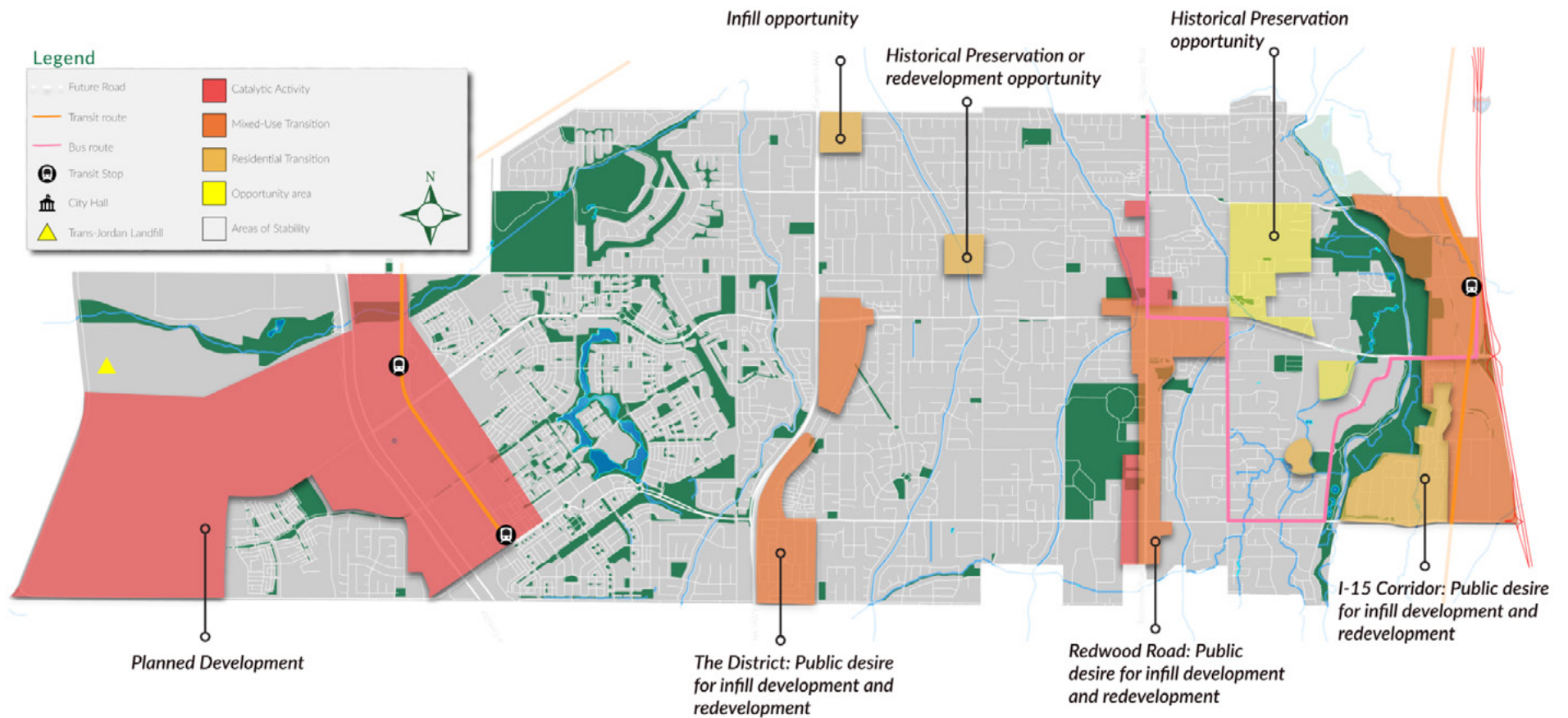
Moving forward, South Jordan should consider the following questions:

- Are there properties that are currently underutilized that can be reused (e.g., large parking lots, strip malls, aging buildings) in the City?
- Are there areas where a broader mix of land uses should be encouraged?
- What types of services will be required to meet the needs of our population over time?
- How can future investments in transportation and other infrastructure help improve connectivity and access for all segments of the population?

FRAMEWORK FOR HOW WE GROW

As South Jordan grows, there are certain areas that are more likely to change than others. In fact, it's anticipated that a large portion of the City will remain the same, with little change.

The Map below depicts areas that are likely to change. Catalytic activity indicates an area that will change entirely, Mixed Use Transition areas will likely have a mix of additional land uses and existing, Residential Transition Areas are anticipated to change slightly in character, but not use, and Opportunity areas are not likely to change in character, but there is an opportunity to enhance the way the area is used.



HOW WE GROW: GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The goals and strategies support and advance the City's vision and reflect the opportunities of the Plan. They articulate a desired ideal and a value to pursue. The strategy statements under each goal are outcome based and guide decision making. The supporting strategies are the most specific and are intended to provide examples of action-based implementation of the vision.

The Vision For How We Grow *"A healthy and safe community that provides a variety of high-quality community services and amenities to all residents, encourages water and resource conservation, and strengthens community resiliency and fiscal sustainability with each new development through open communication and cohesive development patterns."*



GROW GOAL 1: Encourage redevelopment and expansion of well-designed commercial spaces to meet the service needs of the projected growth in population

- GrG1.1. Review the City's zoning map alongside the Future Land Use Map to ensure the accommodation of appropriate commercial development that is compatible with surrounding uses
- GrG1.2. Update commercial design standards in the zoning and subdivision code to align with development trends

GROW GOAL 2: Increase coordination with Jordan School District and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy

- District GrG2.1. Strengthen existing relationship with Jordan School District (JSD) by formalizing regular coordination meetings to discuss future housing development and access to education for new residents
- GrG2.2. Strengthen existing relationship with the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD) by formalizing regular coordination meetings to ensure adequate infrastructure for future growth
- GrG2.3. Develop a program to host annual public open houses with surrounding municipalities, JVWCD, and JSD to allow residents to learn about the process and plans for new development



GROW GOAL 3: Promote energy efficient elements in new and existing development

- GrG3.1. Encourage residential and commercial energy efficiency, (i.e., energy star appliances and energy systems, programmable thermostats, energy saving lighting, insulation techniques)
- GrG3.2. Promote and incentivize energy efficient building construction and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certifications for commercial, industrial, and major residential projects, i.e. additional building height for green roofs, building permit and/or impact fee reductions
- GrG3.3. Set the example for implementation of “green” building methods and LEED certification by considering such elements in new City buildings and in retrofitting existing buildings and facilities
- GrG3.4. Help minimize the urban heat island effect by encouraging lighter color building materials for roof-tops, parking lots, roadways, pathways, planting trees that provide shade, etc.
- GrG3.5. Encourage mixed-use zoning districts in appropriate areas of the City, designed with a mix of goods and services to reduce vehicle trips and to improve air quality, walkability and resident convenience
- GrG3.6. Encourage new and infill development sites to include electric vehicle charging stations

GROW GOAL 4: Develop and maintain a pattern of residential land uses that provides for a variety of densities and types and maintains the high standards of existing development

- GrG4.1. Continue to maintain a land use category system that provides for the location, type and density of development and redevelopment
- GrG4.2. Ensure that development is compatible with surrounding land uses established within the Future Land Use Map and existing surrounding land uses

GROW GOAL 5: Reduce waste and excessive water use within the City

- GrG5.1. Explore the possibility of supplying and promoting recycle stations throughout the City to allow for the opportunity to recycle materials that are no longer accepted through private services
- GrG5.2. Encourage water saving techniques (drip irrigation, rain water harvesting, water recycling, installing low-flow fixtures)
- GrG5.3. Implement rain gardens and other storm water collection and retention systems
- GrG5.4. Continue to develop and implement Low Impact Development (LID) standards to improve soil permeability and to avoid costly storm drainage systems
- GrG5.5. Develop and implement a water meter replacement initiative for both commercial and residential
- GrG5.6. Maintain an updated storm water infrastructure management plan
- GrG5.7. Maintain and implement the Drinking Water Master Plan and the Water Conservation Plan to help meet regional conservation goals including:
 - Support development in accordance with planed land uses and expected water demand
 - Continue water conservations programs including leak detection and mitigation, Pure Sojo, and rebate/incentives to make water conservation changes to existing development
 - Assess and modify ordinances as needed to meet regional water conservation goals for new development
 - Continue landscape changeovers on City owned properties to conserve water

GROW GOAL 6: Preserve desirable open space and natural open space areas within the City

- GrG6.1. Continue efforts to maintain and enhance Jordan River wetland habitats through public ownership, private donation and dedication, federal regulation, and conservation easements
- GrG6.2. Coordinate efforts with Salt Lake County and adjoining communities to implement Plan Elements of the Blue Print Jordan River Plan and to protect the corridor as natural open space
- GrG6.3. Discourage development in the Jordan River corridor, except for a limited recreational/commercial focus south of 10600 South that is compatible with the goals of the Blue Print Jordan River Plan and that provides needed services for the Jordan River Parkway trail users
- GrG6.4. Investigate possible areas within the City where existing farmland, or other significant open space, can be protected in order to help preserve rural lifestyle, promote a “historic village” look, and/or protect historic properties
- GrG6.5. Create and adopt a Rural Open Space Conservation Development (ROCD) floating zone for possible preservation of rural and/or historic properties
- GrG6.6. Continue to identify priority properties to preserve for natural open space and existing habitat protection
- GrG6.7. Include a provision for a high percentage of open space by clustering residential

GROW GOAL 7: Address natural hazards in land use and development plans

- GrG7.1. Continue to limit development along known fault lines, high liquefaction areas, flood plains, and other natural hazard areas, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented and require adequate review and mitigation of natural hazards as part of the development review process
- GrG7.2. Require proper site and building construction mitigation in natural hazard areas
- GrG7.3. Require adequate notice of hazards to public, i.e. public notification, document recordation, subdivision plat and site plan notations

GROW GOAL 8: Preserve South Jordan’s historical and agricultural properties

- GrG8.1. Pursue grant funding for preservation of agricultural and historical properties including conservation easements
- GrG8.2. Consider agricultural and open space preservation techniques such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs