

Building The Future We Want

Vision

Challenge and Opportunity

Utah is among the fastest growing states in the nation. Growth brings both benefits and challenges:

- Two-thirds of the buildings that will exist in 2040 have not yet been built.
- Total investment in new development will approach \$700 billion.
- More than 900,000 growth-related residential units will be constructed by 2040. About 180,000 existing dwellings will be replaced, rebuilt or renovated.
- Nearly 1.9 billion square feet of new and rebuilt space will be needed to accommodate the projected 2.9 million jobs we'll have by 2040.
- If we continue current patterns of development, municipalities will soon find that growth-related expenses exceed expected revenues.
- The Wasatch Front has limited land available for development, and building roads to serve widely dispersed populations will become increasingly impractical and expensive.

Source: Arthur C. Nelson, Presidential Professor of City and Metropolitan Planning, University of Utah (2009)

Growth Principles for a Bright Future

When we plan together—understanding the local and regional impacts of our land use and transportation decisions—we create thriving urban environments, friendly neighborhoods, and a prosperous region. Our nine regional growth principles, developed through extensive public input and adopted by elected officials, provide a common framework and regional benefits:

- 1. Efficient Infrastructure**
Maximizing existing infrastructure and building more compactly and contiguously conserves green space, saves taxpayer dollars, and makes high-quality, lower-cost services available to us all.
- 2. Regional Mobility (Transportation Choice)**
With a balanced multi-modal transportation system, more transportation options, and jobs and services closer to home, we reduce the growth in per capita vehicle miles traveled, we spend less time in traffic and have more time for friends, family, and doing what we enjoy.
- 3. Coordinated Planning**
Local land use planning and regional transportation investments impact one another. Coordination makes our communities healthy and connected and our region vibrant.
- 4. Housing Choice**
Encouraging a variety of housing options, especially near transit and job centers, addresses market demand and makes living more affordable for people in all life stages and incomes.

Growth Principles Come to Life



- 5. Health and Safety**
When our streets are walkable, interconnected, and safe, we lead healthier lives by walking and biking more and driving less. These streets also provide efficient access for emergency services. Trails and access to nature provide healthy recreational opportunities.
- 6. Regional Economy**
Strategic transportation investments and land use decisions can encourage business investment and help secure jobs closer to home, so we can provide for our families and keep our dollars in our region.
- 7. Regional Collaboration**
Broad involvement, information sharing, and mutual decision making preserve common values and encourage progress toward shared goals.
- 8. Sense of Community**
Land use and transportation decisions that preserve our local heritage while valuing diversity enrich our community life, keeping our towns and cities beautiful and neighborly.
- 9. Environment**
Protecting and enhancing air and water quality as well as critical and working lands also protects our health, safety, and quality of life for our kids and grand kids. Conserving water, energy, open space, and other resources is good for the environment and our economy. Coordinated trail systems will enhance access to areas of natural beauty and recreation.

Envision Utah's 3% Strategy

What if we respond to market demand and allow one-third of our future homes, jobs, and stores in walkable town centers and villages...and link them with a world-class transportation system?

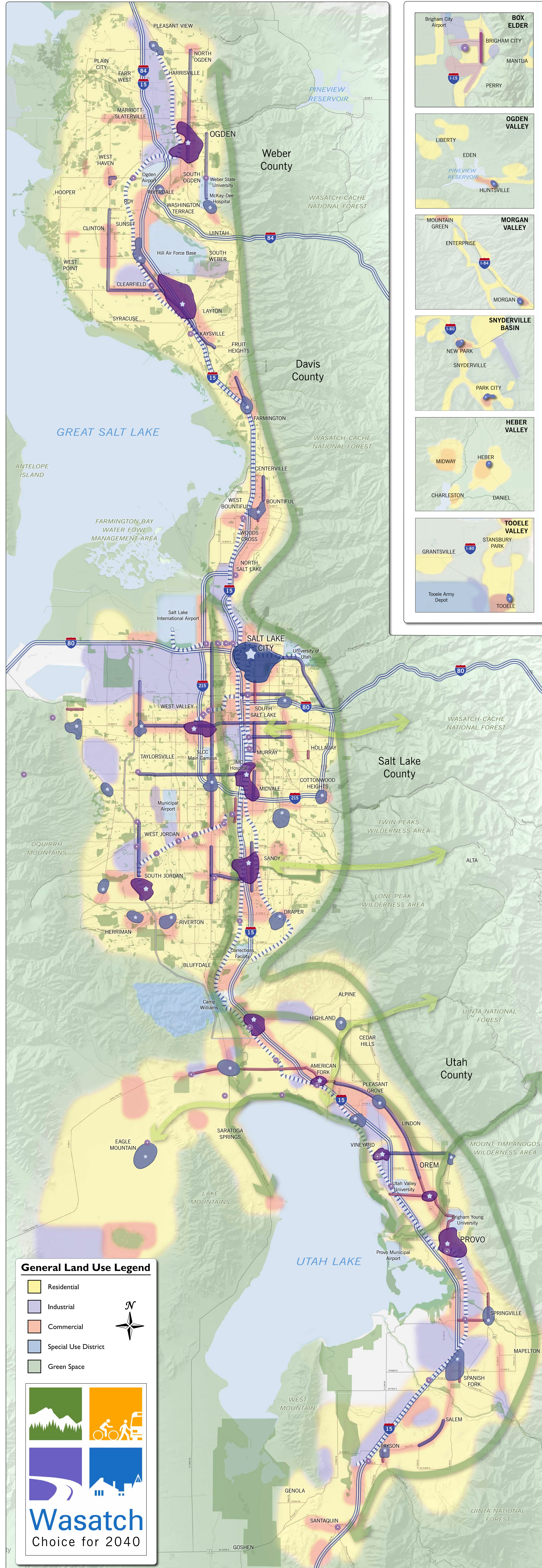
This approach, which would accommodate one-third of projected growth on just 3% of our region's developable land, encourages targeted investment to create exceptional places, maximize efficiency, keep the cost of living in check, and reduce growth pressure on critical lands. Market analysts suggest that one-third of Utahns will want to live in walkable neighborhoods, close to school, church, the grocery store, and other services (Sources: RCLCO Wasatch Front Development Trends, Nov. 2007; Nelson, 2009). Declining household size, increasing housing and energy costs, and a growing desire to trade commute time for family, service, work, and recreation time will drive this demand for walkable living. Currently, the supply of these neighborhoods lags behind demand, increasing their cost and reducing choice. The 3% Strategy responds to this consumer demand, while preserving traditional single-family neighborhoods for the majority who prefer suburban living.

- How?**
- Focus growth in economic centers and along major transportation corridors.
 - Create mixed-use centers throughout the region.
 - Target growth around transit stations.
 - Encourage infill and redevelopment to revitalize declining parts of town.
 - Preserve working farms, recreational areas and critical lands.

NOTE: The Wasatch Choice for 2040 (May 2010) is a vision illustrating how growth could unfold. The map's purpose is to guide the development of our regional transportation plan. The vision map reflects the Regional Growth Principles adopted by the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) and the Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG). The map is not a general plan and has no regulatory authority. WFRC/MAG encourages cities and counties to consider the strategy principles and the vision map as local plans are updated in order to keep people and goods moving, our communities livable, and cities prosperous for generations to come.

The Greater Wasatch Vision for 2040

The Greater Wasatch is one region, stretching from Weber County south to Utah County and from Tooele County east to the Wasatch Back. We compete economically with other regions, comprise one job and housing market, and share the same air and water. Where and how we shape tomorrow's neighborhoods, communities, and economic centers within our region will dramatically affect the quality of our lives, including how much time and money we spend getting around, the quality of the air we breathe, and the choices we have available to live, work, shop, and play.



Wasatch CHOICE for 2040

Highlights

- Vision Choice for 2040:**
The Wasatch Choice for 2040 is a vision for how growth should unfold in our region. When compared with a baseline (a projection of current trends in the future), The Wasatch Choice for 2040 exhibits distinct benefits:
- **Walkable communities:** new homes are about twice as likely as today's homes to have convenient access to places to work, shop, play and learn.
 - **More growing up, less growing out:** 40% more of our growth — compared to recent trends — fills-in existing communities and revitalizes business districts. This enables more biking, shorter commutes, better air quality, and makes the most of existing infrastructure.
 - **Real options for commuters:** Average household transit use in 2040 could be 45% higher than today, making commuting more affordable and providing residents with more ways to get around.
 - **More open land stays open:** Over the next 30 years, 24 fewer square miles convert to buildings and streets enabling us to have more green infrastructure and open land, with benefits ranging from more places for families to play, more local farmer's market food, better water quality, and more wildlife habitat.

Greenspace

Greenspace rings our valleys, connects our cities, and provides space for civic and social functions in our towns and neighborhoods. The Wasatch Choice for 2040 affirms that our natural resources and working lands provide immense benefits. We should safeguard them to preserve our regional food system, protect our water quality, and maintain our recreational opportunities. These lands also provide needed wildlife habitat, help to clean our air, and provide relief from our urban environment. Even closer to home, our parklands and greenways provide critical gathering spaces, recreational amenities, and connection to the natural world.

Regional Shoreways
The Bonneville Shoreline Trail, the Jordan River Parkway, and the Provo River Parkway

Regional Connections
Links between greenways and major population centers

Green Context
The Wasatch Mountains, the Ogish Mountains, the Great Salt Lake, and Utah Lake.

Centers

Centers are historical and emerging regional destinations of economic activity. The vision suggests that these centers should expand to provide ever-broadening choices for residents to live, work, shop, and play; a mix of all of these activities is welcome. Centers should work with the long-term market, helping provide opportunities to residents who want to live close to work, walk or bike to shop, and have both great transit and road access — desperately needed as our population ages, gas prices and congestion increase, and housing prices inch upward.

Metropolitan Center
Downtown Salt Lake City is the metropolitan center, serving as the hub of business and cultural activity in the region. It has the most intensive form of development for both employment and housing, with high-rise development common in the central business district. It will continue to serve as the finance, commerce, government, retail, tourism, arts, and entertainment center for the region. The metropolitan center benefits from pedestrian friendly streetcapes and an urban style grid network. Downtown Salt Lake is the central hub for public transportation in the region. Auto access is prevalent with access to several major highways and thoroughfares.

Urban Center
Urban Centers are the focus of commerce and local government services benefiting a market area of a few hundred thousand people. Urban Centers will be served by high-capacity transit and major streets. They are characterized by two- to four-story employment and housing options.

Town Center
Town centers provide localized services to tens of thousands of people within a two to three mile radius. One- to three-story buildings for employment and housing are characteristic. Town centers have a strong sense of community identity and are well served by transit and streets.

Station Community
Station Communities are geographically small, high-intensity centers surrounding high capacity transit stations. Each helps pedestrians and bicyclists access transit without a car. Station Communities vary in their land use, some feature employment, others focus on housing, and many will include a variety of shops and services.

Main Street Community
Main Streets are a linear town center. Each has a traditional commercial identity but are on a community scale with a strong sense of the immediate neighborhood. Main streets prioritize pedestrian-friendly features, but also benefit from good auto access and often transit.

Boulevard Community
A Boulevard Community is a linear center coupled with a transit route. Unlike a Main Street, a Boulevard Community may not necessarily have a commercial identity, but may vary between housing, employment, and retail along any given stretch. Boulevard Communities create a positive sense of place for adjacent neighborhoods by ensuring that walking and bicycling are safe and comfortable even as traffic flow is maintained.

Corridors

The Wasatch Choice for 2040 is our renewed vision, and it informs our transportation investments. This "Choice" points the way forward, focusing growth in a variety of activity centers across the region, many of which are coordinated with our existing and near-term transportation system: freeways, rail lines, rapid busways and key boulevards. While these centers are coordinated with today's transportation system, tomorrow's transportation investments will enhance service to these centers, including our region's special districts — like the Salt Lake International Airport, the University of Utah, and Brigham Young University.

Commuter Rail / TRAX **Freeways**

Realizing The Wasatch Choice for 2040

Why WFRC and MAG Developed a Vision

Our cities and counties do a terrific job planning for their individual futures, but there are no groups better able to facilitate discussion about the collective future of our metro area than the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) and the Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG)—groups led by mayors and county commissioners. WFRC and MAG have developed the long-range regional transportation plans for our metro area for decades. With a visioning process called Wasatch Choices 2040 (facilitated by Envision Utah), which began with a huge citizen involvement effort, and its renewal, The Wasatch Choice for 2040, WFRC and MAG are also thinking about how growth patterns can help us maintain our quality of life for the coming decades.

Cities Should Explore What's on the Map

WFRC and MAG encourage cities to explore a mix of activities and walkable development to reduce the need for long drives, provide residents with what they want out of life: more time for what matters most, affordable, family, improved health, and the pride of living in a world-class region.

Regional Role **Convergence** **Local Role**

Planning Coordination Implementation Goals

Public Input Collaborative Planning Comprehensive Planning