

imagine

West Jordan

Community Strategic Plan

of the City of West Jordan



FEBRUARY 2013



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Message from the Mayor



It is with pleasure I present the City of West Jordan's five-year strategic plan. I acknowledge the citizen members of our Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) and staff who made this plan possible. I also want to thank the many citizens who contributed feedback, perspectives, and vision. The City Council adopted the strategic plan in February 2013. It will serve as a blueprint for our city until 2018.

So why is such a document necessary? Recent economic events have reinforced the need to allocate funds entrusted to us by our citizens in the most effective manner possible. It isn't enough to have good intentions. As elected officials, we are tasked with ensuring every citizen dollar is spent to elevate the quality of life in our community.

How we define quality of life is an interesting exercise. No single bureaucrat or elected official can tell our citizens what it means. The definition needs to come from the citizens being served. This is what the strategic planning process was all about. For more than a year, our SPAC (a collection of citizen volunteers appointed by the City Council) circulated through our community and gathered input from citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders on quality of life factors. The results of this extensive exercise were compiled into this strategic plan, which articulates key citizen directives and priorities. These strategic directives now form the basis of our annual budget.

This approach enables us to better target funding on citizen priorities. The plan also helps guide decision making and provides a framework that encourages Council Members to say no to initiatives and ideas that do not align with what our citizens believe is most important. The plan clearly outlines citizen priorities so the City Council can stay focused on programs, initiatives, and ideas that align with citizen priorities. As a result, we are able to concentrate our citizens' investment on things that matter most to them.

In West Jordan, our mission and reason for existing is to "provide our citizens with the opportunity to live and enjoy an exceptional quality of life." Every city program exists to accomplish this mission. Our strategic plan provides us with the empirical means of evaluating the effectiveness of those programs. I encourage you to become familiar with this strategic plan and become engaged in this process when it is time to revisit it.

We have come a long way as a community. Imagine how far we can go if we are united in achieving a common vision. This document provides a roadmap to help us do just that.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Johnson". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Melissa Johnson – Mayor

Some Interesting Things About West Jordan

In 1850, Archibald and Robert Gardner built a flour mill along the Jordan River for processing grain. Now called Gardner Village and renovated into a themed retail center, the mill remains as one of the City's signature landmarks.



Sugar beet farming dominated the West Jordan area in the 1890s. In 1916, the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company constructed a factory, which employed more than 200 workers during peak production and produced nearly 280,000 bags of sugar annually before closing its doors in the 1970s. West Jordan incorporated as a city in 1941, but remained mostly rural as late as 1970. Since then, however, it's been one of Utah's fastest growing cities, exploding to nearly 50,000 residents in 1990 and doubling to nearly 100,000 residents in 2000. Now, as Utah's fourth-largest city, West Jordan has more than 108,000 residents. More than 30% of West Jordan is still undeveloped. The eventual build-out is in the neighborhood of 170,000 residents.



West Jordan is a city that provides pretty much everything a resident might want or need, from both a services and comfort point of view. Meanwhile, according to national crime statistics, West Jordan is the 89th safest city in America. Residents enjoy dozens of parks, trails, and ball diamonds, the state's largest soccer complex, and Salt Lake County's Mountain View Golf Course.



As part of the Jordan School District, West Jordan plays host to two high schools, four middle schools, 16 elementary schools, a special needs school, and several charter schools. The Jordan School District boasts a graduation rate of 93%. With more than 80% of residents continuing their education at institutions of higher learning, West Jordan is home to a branch of Salt Lake Community College, which awards more associate degrees than any other Utah institution. The West Jordan campus has more than 4,300 of SLCC's 32,000 student body.



Outdoor recreational opportunities abound in and near West Jordan. We're within close proximity to 14 world class ski resorts, 43 state parks, six national monuments, four national historic trails, and five national parks. The area is home to professional basketball, baseball, hockey, and soccer franchises. West Jordan itself has 43 parks, including the 100-acre Veterans Memorial Park, home of the "Wild West Jordan Playground," West Jordan Military Services Monument, five baseball fields, Utah Jazz basketball court, tennis courts, and more. The city is also the site of the West Jordan Arena, the home of the Western Stampede Rodeo, which gallops into town every year for Independence Day.



On the same block as City Hall are Salt Lake County’s 50,000 square-foot Gene Fullmer Fitness and Recreation Center and the West Jordan Viridian Library and Events Center, which serves as the county library headquarters. South Valley Regional Airport, the recently completed Mountain View Corridor and six new stations on the TRAX light rail system are meeting the city’s growing transportation needs. West Jordan enjoys a strong industrial presence, including firms like Boeing, Dannon, Oracle, and Fairchild Semiconductors, which provide more than 4,000 jobs. West Jordan is also home to the headquarters of two financial institutions, Mountain America Credit Union and Cyprus Credit Union. Jordan Landing is, meanwhile, one of the state’s largest outdoor retail centers.

CITY STATISTICS

Population estimate	108,500
Projected population 2040	170,000
Median household income	\$64,889
Average family size	3.93
Average household size	3.45
Median age	28.1
Licensed businesses	3,436
Labor force population	72,037

HOUSING

Median home value	\$225,100
Dwelling units	32,038
Owner occupied percentage	77.1%
Square miles	32.02

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Less than 9 th grade	3.1%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	7.3%
High school graduate	27.8%
Some college, no degree	26.5%
Associate’s degree	9.1%
Bachelor’s degree	18.7%
Graduate or professional degree	7.5%

MAJOR RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT

Education services, healthcare, social	21.2%
Retail	12.6%
Manufacturing	12.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate	9.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation	8.0%
Professional, scientific, management	8.0%
Construction	6.5%
Public administration	5.9%
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	4.9%



West Jordan's Strategic Plan

The central purpose in this undertaking was to provide West Jordan with a tool that can be used by elected officials and city staff to guide goal setting and focus efforts on those things that residents have identified as their highest priorities. In order to truly be effective, this plan needs to become part of how elected officials and city staff operate and think about programs and services. Ultimately, it needs to be incorporated into how we measure success. No matter how comprehensive this plan is, the test of its usefulness will be defined by how effective it is in guiding decisions and creating the future to which citizens aspire.

The Methodologies

The City Council commissioned a group of citizens to serve on the City's Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC). The purpose of this committee was to gather data from the citizenry and synthesize that information into a set of recommended strategic directives. The methodologies utilized by the SPAC included the following:

- stakeholder focus group meetings
- open houses
- citizen surveys
- special events
- business meetings

In all, the committee was able to gather hundreds of pieces of citizen feedback and input and synthesize them into definable citizen priorities. Participants in the process were also able to provide the SPAC with information related to key initiatives and improvements they would like to see implemented.

Format

What follows is an outline of the plan broken down into six strategic focus areas. Each focus area contains the following:

- **What we learned from citizens:** A vision statement that describes, from a citizen perspective, what we want our community to be. This information is presented in italics.
- **Description and key directives:** A descriptive statement with a numbered list of strategic directives or initiatives.
- **Values:** Key values and principles that underlie the strategy.
- **Metrics:** Possible performance metrics or questions to consider.

The Prime Directive of West Jordan

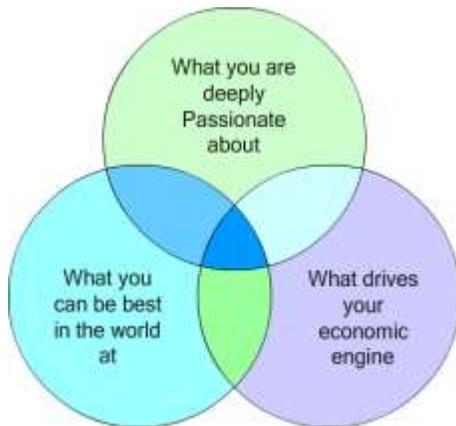
The primary purpose of government is to provide the basis or foundation for civilized living. While this concept may appear elementary and more than intuitive, much debate has swirled around the role of government. It is therefore critical that, before beginning any strategic planning process, the City define its role in the lives of its citizens. We do this by formulating and articulating the Prime Directive of West Jordan.

This is the essence and reason sustaining the existence of West Jordan City. It lies at the intersection of what city leaders and staff have a deep passion for (Why do we come to work every day? What motivates us? Why do we care about what happens in West Jordan?), what we believe the city can do well or even better than any other city (Are we uniquely positioned to do something extraordinary? What are we equipped to accomplish? This is a question of not only what we can do, but what we can do better than our competitors.), and what drives its resource engine. (What is it that needs to happen in order to empower us to realize this prime directive?) In West Jordan City, our Prime Directive is:

“To provide our citizens with the opportunity to live and enjoy an exceptional quality of life.”

What are we deeply passionate about?

In West Jordan, we have a passion for improving our citizens’ quality-of-life. We understand completely the sacred trust that is ours; to maximize our citizens’ investment by supporting those programs, initiatives, and ideas that will translate into an opportunity for them to live a superior quality of life.



What can we be the best in the world at?

Who can ask for a better environment than we have here in Utah? We’re one of the fastest-growing and most prosperous states in the country. West Jordan, meanwhile, sits at the epicenter and has positioned itself (according to *USA Today*) as one of a handful of communities emerging from the shadows of once much more dominant cities to become a hub of employment, economic development, recreation, and cultural events. In West Jordan, we believe that we have many of the resources necessary to provide our residential and business residents with the best environment, possibly in the entire country, to live and do business.

What drives our economic, or in the public sector, our resource engine?

We believe that as we are able to lift our citizens' quality-of-life, we will have demonstrated our competency and trustworthiness. Citizen trust, meanwhile, is generated or created at the intersection of competency and trustworthiness. As our citizens' trust increases, they are more likely to continue to invest in the services that we provide. As they do so, we are empowered to continue lifting our level of service, which results in greater trust, and so the process repeats itself. Public trust drives West Jordan's resource engine.

All programs, initiatives, and energy must therefore be focused on achieving the Prime Directive. All metrics and outcomes should support this Prime Directive. The strategic plan's role in fulfilling the Prime Directive begins by defining what citizens believe is essential to quality of life. As a precursor to developing the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee was able to identify six factors that citizens believe define quality of life in West Jordan. These are:

- A sustainable future
- A strong sense of community
- Safety
- A clean and tidy community
- Sound infrastructure
- Economic development

The Strategic Plan

Citizen Directive Number One

“I want to know that the community I leave to my children will be better than the one I found when I came.”



This strategic directive speaks to the need to create a sustainable future for our community that does not place undue financial or other burdens on future generations. Key initiatives include:

- Maintain sufficient fund balances to support contingencies and debt service planning.
- Plan ways to fund capital improvements to support future growth within the city.
- Manage city assets to optimize services while reducing long and short-term costs. This will likely include an asset management program, as well as capital repair and replacement plans.
- Develop sustainable revenue models for funding city services. This will likely include engaging state legislators in a discussion regarding the revenue model for municipal government in Utah.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, we leave things better than we found them. We have an orientation toward the future and are willing to make sacrifices today to secure that future. We will build a modern city that preserves elements of our rural past as we move toward a more urban future. We maintain a healthy balance between supporting growth and maintaining open space and lower density development. We plan ahead and consider future maintenance and other costs before adding more amenities or programs.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- Are we funding maintenance and replacement for roads and other infrastructure at a sustainable level? Are we “holding even” or are things deteriorating year over year?
- Do we have an effective asset management program?
- Are we comfortable that fund balances are sufficient to cover contingencies?
- Are we performing all “no-brainer” maintenance activities (i.e. anything where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure)?
- Are we cost sharing when possible and cost effective with other cities and other government agencies?

Citizen Directive Number Two

“I want to live in a place with a strong sense of community.”

This strategic directive speaks to the need to promote a strong sense of community that honors the legacy of our past, nurtures an environment where we can work, live, play, and serve together, and encourages a sense of ownership for creating our future together. Key initiatives include:



- Encourage celebrations and events that recognize the contributions of diverse groups.
- Encourage and support interfaith cooperation.
- Promote service projects and activities that bring people together, working toward common goals.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, we foster mutual respect. We value civility and celebrate our differences. We are active and engaged in providing community service to each other.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- How do the quality of events and celebrations in our community compare with others in the area?
- Do residents feel that there are ample community activities in West Jordan?
- How much participation do we have in community events?

Citizen Directive Number Three

“I want to live in a place where my family feels safe.”

This strategic directive speaks to the need to foster a safe environment where neighborhoods are walkable at all hours, quiet, and clean, and where there is a sense of shared ownership and personal responsibility for the safety and appearance of our city.



- Emphasize emergency services with rapid response times.
- Maintain a positive police presence.
- Promote community-oriented policing, neighborhood watch, etc.
- Plan and build for pedestrian safety.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, each member of the community shares the responsibility of keeping our community safe and friendly.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- Emergency service response times.
- Citizen satisfaction.
- Neighborhood Watch participation rates.
- Auto/pedestrian accidents.
- Auto accidents.
- Crime rates.

Citizen Directive Number Four

“I want to live in a place that looks and feels like home.”

This strategic directive speaks to the need to promote, develop, and maintain a visually appealing community.



- Provide funding for sustainable maintenance of parks, trails, and open space.
- Focus on the appearance of all major arterials that connect and serve the business community. This will likely include significant partnering with the Chamber and other business groups to clean up storefront areas.
- Encourage responsible maintenance of private property through an efficient and positive Code Enforcement program.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, good aesthetics promote safety and a sense of community. Each member of the community shares a responsibility for keeping our community comfortable, clean, and tidy.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- Regular visual inspection of city-maintained property. Are we keeping up?
- How often do we receive complaints about code enforcement issues?
- How are our property values faring relative to surrounding communities?

Citizen Directive Number Five

“I want to live in a city where our leaders develop and maintain infrastructure that supports growth and stability well into the future.”

This strategic directive speaks to the need to foster wise use of resources for planning, building, and maintaining roads and other infrastructure throughout the community.



- Continuously study and improve traffic flow east and west, as well as north and south.
- Promote adequate long-term planning of all water, sewer, storm, utility, and transportation facilities.
- Communicate plans and progress with residents and other stakeholders.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, we don't cut corners today. We plan and prepare for the future.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- How is traffic flow in the city?
- Are impact and other development fees covering the necessary infrastructure improvements for new development?
- Is the city adequately coordinating its efforts with UDOT, public utilities, businesses, and other stakeholders?
- Is the city communicating plans and progress of projects with residents and other affected parties?

Citizen Directive Number Six

“I want to live in a place where commercial establishments are modern, convenient, and always improving, and where good jobs are plentiful.”

This strategic directive speaks to the need to build and leverage strategic alliances that encourage and promote balanced and diversified creation and recruitment of businesses that reflect our city’s values.



- Rebrand the city’s image to show that it is business friendly and willing to work professionally and positively with developers.
- Recruit into the city businesses that will allow residents to find everything they need conveniently within the city limits (auto dealers, shopping centers, etc.).
- Recruit businesses that will provide strong and reliable employment for our residents.
- Strengthen the city’s partnership with the school district and other educational institutions.

Associated Values and Principles:

In West Jordan, economic growth and job creation are a local phenomenon. Healthy businesses strengthen our community. Education is a vital component of sustainable economic development.

Metrics/Key Questions:

- What are developers, commercial real estate professionals, and others in the development community saying about West Jordan?
- What amenities do we have in our city? What do we lack?
- What is our ratio of households to jobs? What is the trend for median household income?
- Is business growing and thriving in West Jordan?
- Are there adequate opportunities for education? How well prepared are our children and youth to step into the workplace and meet the needs of employers in our area?

The Tool Box

The Tool Box contains a number of ideas that emerged in surveys and focus groups as the strategic planning process progressed. None of these ideas were considered deserving of a separate strategic focus area, and it could be that some might fit within one of the six strategic directive areas identified. The ideas were repeated often enough, nevertheless, or were sufficiently novel, that they have been listed separately for city consideration.



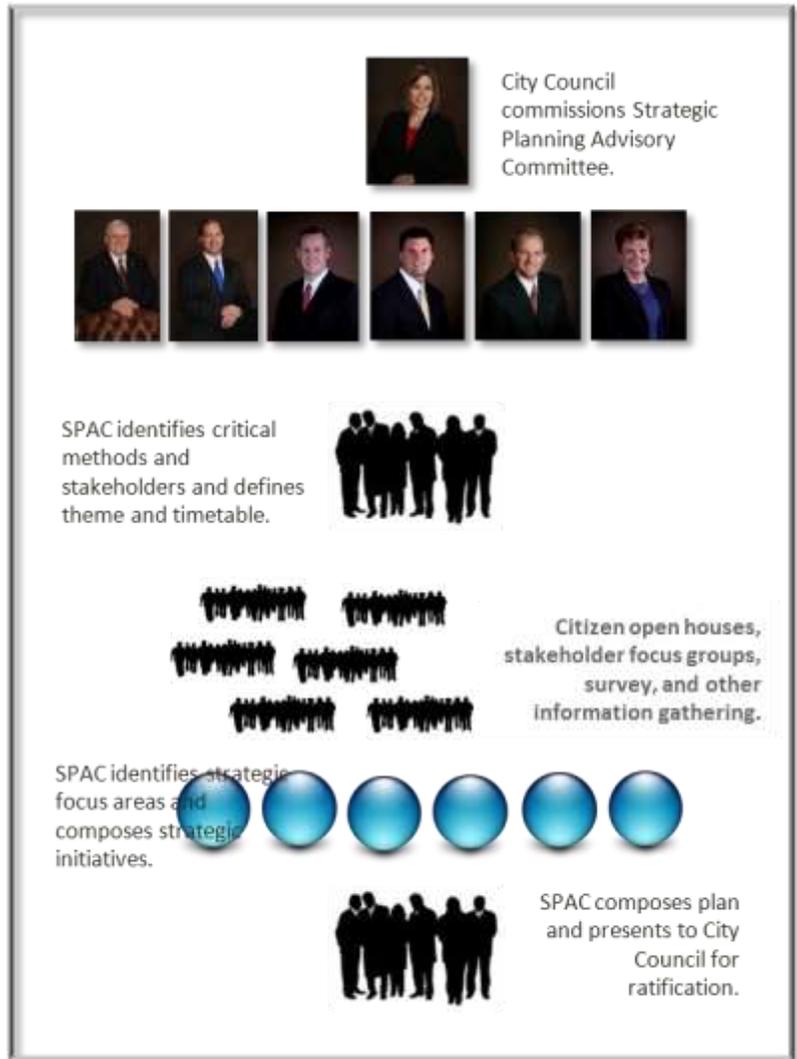
- Adult Recreation Programs – Our community provides a number of youth recreation programs, but currently provides limited offerings to adults.
- City Recreation Center – This emerged as a priority in a few of the focus groups, as well as some of the surveys.
- Cultural Arts Building – While this did not emerge consistently, there were a few participants who were very passionate about this perceived need.
- Activities and Programs for Senior Citizens – This feedback paralleled the feedback our team received regarding adult recreation programs.
- Neighborhood Watch Program – This initiative was mentioned frequently and fits well within the safe neighborhoods focus area. This is a current program of the city.
- Community Calendar – Some citizens were interested in creating one place where all community events could be accessed.
- Walking/Biking Trails – This feedback emerged clearly from citizen surveys.
- Multi-Cultural Awareness Day – The suggestion here is to create an event celebrating the various cultural contributions to our community. Surrounding communities such as Midvale and West Valley City have more multi-cultural events than West Jordan. These events draw West Jordan residents.
- West Side City Services Facility – Given the significant distance between U-111 and City Hall, many residents on the western side of the City suggested the creation of a municipal services facility to serve that growing population.

The Strategic Planning Process

The West Jordan City Council determined the need to bring focus to spending priorities. Key to this endeavor was the creation of a community strategic plan. The Council determined that such an initiative, if it were to survive and become truly useful to the community, would need to become a community initiative driven by citizens. The Mayor and Council therefore commissioned a committee of citizen volunteers, known as the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) to drive the strategic planning process.

The strategic planning process began with SPAC meetings with the City Council in order to define expectations and council member understanding or perception regarding community priorities. These meetings also assisted the committee in identifying critical stakeholder groups that would need to be engaged during the strategic planning process. Stakeholder meetings were then held with business groups, service clubs, faith-based organizations, educational/parent groups, ethnic groups, and a host of others. Open houses were held, and the public was invited to participate in generating both community priorities and ideas that would eventually form the basis for these strategic directives communicated in this plan. Finally, surveys were administered on the city website as well as distributed to city email groups, volunteers, and community event attendees.

The process of gathering stakeholder input spanned more than six months. At the end of this process, the SPAC began to synthesize the hundreds of pieces of information they had gathered from citizens into more specific focus areas, more commonly referred to as “strategic directives.” Ultimately, six strategic directives were produced. The committee, utilizing these community priorities, then produced specific strategic initiatives associated with each focus area. The strategic plan was presented in its entirety to the City Council at its January 2013 planning retreat and adopted by the Council in February of the same year. It will stand as the planning blueprint for the city until 2018.



Implementation of the Plan

It is recognized that simply having a plan does not ensure its implementation. The city should take specific measures in order to implement this strategic plan and measure its progress toward its realization. Specifically, the city should:

- Utilize this plan as the basis for annual strategic planning and goal setting.
- Annually establish and review outcome measures associated with strategic plan directives. Make adjustments as necessary to ensure close correlation between outcome measures and plan directives.
- Create a community scorecard for city and citizen use. This should be in a highly illustrative format, accessible electronically via the city's website. The site should provide data associated with previously identified outcome measures. It is critical that this information is kept as current as possible.
- Annually provide the City Council and departmental decision-makers with a city business plan, which ties Council goals to strategic directives, identifying critical outcomes, measures, objectives, and expected budget impacts.
- Report semi-annually strategic plan implementation progress and impacts.

Special Thanks

The strategic planning process and composition is a broad-based community endeavor. Generally speaking, the broader community participation is in strategic planning, the greater the survivability of the plan. In West Jordan, this was certainly and fortunately the case. Nevertheless, the city expresses its appreciation to specific individuals and groups that made this initiative possible. Special thanks go to:

- Dan Griffiths – Tanner Business Advisors and Certified Public Accountants, for the facilitation of the strategic planning process and the production of the strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (Sarah Hintze, Don Porter, Lyle Summers, and Sarah Morrow).
- The West Jordan Exchange Club, for its assistance in facilitating focus group discussions.
- The Citizens of West Jordan, without whose participation this plan would not be possible.