

Blueprint Jordan River, A Lake-to-Lake Vision

Coalition for Utah's Future/Project 2020, Total Cost: \$208,000, FHWA Share: \$85,000

Period of Performance: 12 months, Dates: June 9, 2008 – June 9, 2009

AOTR: Frederick Bowers, Grant Project Website: <http://www.blueprintjordanriver.slco.org/index.html>

Project Goals

The goal of the Blueprint Jordan River project was to create a set of principles for protecting and improving the Jordan River corridor. The project focused on environmental goals but also touched upon environmental education, recreation, low-impact development, and access to the river and regional trails.

Project Activities

The project team used a broad public involvement process that engaged government officials, resource agencies, and transportation agencies to form a shared vision for the Jordan River corridor. Envision Utah (a member of the Coalition for Utah's Future) published the report in December 2008 and spent the first few months of 2009 completing the outreach component of its project.

Key Accomplishments

Through Envision Utah's outreach efforts, 15 out of 18 local governments in the project area adopted resolutions supporting the Blueprint report. The report included several designated protection areas, one of which was later proposed as the site of a new commuter rail station. Due to the consensus process involved in creating the Blueprint Jordan River, opponents of the station had sufficient justification to successfully demand that the station be located in a non-sensitive area. Another project success is that the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) used one of the major preservation sites identified in the Blueprint report as a mitigation bank for a light rail line.

As a result of the use of *Eco-Logical* principles in the Blueprint Jordan River, Envision Utah will incorporate *Eco-Logical* into an upcoming transportation planning project for Seven Wasatch Canyon. While Envision Utah believed that its organization's ethos has always been well aligned with the *Eco-Logical* approach, its experience with the *Eco-Logical* grant project is allowing the organization to pursue innovative planning projects across the State using integrated transportation and environmental planning.

Challenges

The Blueprint Jordan River project faced challenges balancing the individual interests of municipalities along the river with the common interest of the river. Historically, some municipalities had been focused on the immediate benefits of an infrastructure project, including enhanced mobility and economic development; and they did not immediately see the benefits of making small, local changes to benefit regional river health.

Future Steps

Since the completion of the *Eco-Logical* grant project, Envision Utah has worked with an Implementation Committee, meeting monthly to work out the governance details of a new Jordan River Commission. The Commission will be charged with implementing the findings and recommendations from the report. Furthermore, the Commission will collect dues from each community in the project area and use these dues to pay a full-time staff to implement the Commission's recommendations.

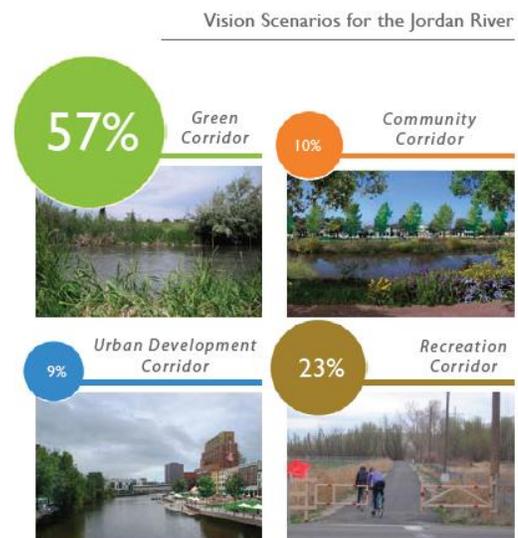


Figure 14: Ranking of four vision scenarios for the Jordan River.