A NEW VISION FOR SALT LAKE CITY

DOWNTOWN RISING
INSPIRED BY THE SECOND CENTURY PLAN
Dear friends,

Great cities are like a relay race. Each generation has a chance to achieve greatness for its city, before passing the baton on to the next generation of city builders. It is a challenging process, and the work is never done.

The Salt Lake Chamber and our affiliate the Downtown Alliance proudly present today’s baton – a renewed vision for downtown Salt Lake City. We call it “Downtown Rising” and it is inspired by a similar vision, formed nearly 45 years ago, called the Second Century Plan.

Like those in the 1960s who created a blueprint for future growth, the Downtown Rising vision portrays a beautiful and prosperous downtown, built with individuals and families in mind. The vision makes the most of our stunning natural setting and reaffirms downtown Salt Lake City as the undisputed crossroads for business, government, entertainment, culture, education and transportation in the state and Intermountain West.

We invite you to read and contemplate this vision. Our aim has been to provide guidance, not answers — a conceptual blueprint, not a master plan — regional focus, not a limited view of the central business district — a common vision, not a parochial vision focused on personal gain.

Today’s leaders deserve credit for giving generously to sponsor and to contribute their ideas to this visioning effort. They have done so knowing that downtown Salt Lake City has the potential for world-class greatness. We thank them for their contributions and ongoing commitment.

This vision represents today’s best thinking for our lap of the city-building relay. We have a great team and an open lane in front of us. Our future is bright. We commit our collective efforts to make this vision a reality and invite you to join us.

Sincerely,

Lane Beattie
President and CEO, Salt Lake Chamber

Keith Rattie
Chairman and CEO, Questar Corporation
Chair, Salt Lake Chamber Board of Governors

― Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs, Wallace Stegner

“The homesickness was not merely for Salt Lake, a city in a valley under the lee of mountains, with the glint of the lake off westward, but for a whole region, a whole lifetime of acclimatization and expectation.”
Salt Lake City holds a special place in the hearts of millions of people for many different reasons. Some think of Salt Lake City as the guardian of the Greatest Snow on Earth. Two hundred and thirty four of the world's top winter athletes remember the gold, silver and bronze medals they earned here. Thousands of families each year celebrate the best winter vacations they've ever had.

Some look to it as the center of a growing and global religion. Others see the vast genealogical resource and genetics research that are non-denominational outgrowths of that Mormon faith.

Still others see Salt Lake City as a base from which to explore magnificent national parks, or as a place to see the vast and still Great Salt Lake or incredible expanse of the Bingham Copper Mine.

Salt Lake is all of these things.

But to most of us – the million or so who call themselves Salt Lakers and the 180,000 who live in the city proper – Salt Lake is simply home.

Salt Lake is our home because of the plentiful work opportunities that allow us to support our families and lead full lives. Home because of the four-season recreational activities that are close at hand. Home because of unique and varied arts and culture. Home because of top-notch research universities that are exploring the next frontiers of knowledge. And home because of great neighborhoods that are beautiful and welcoming, offering an enviable quality of life.

Keeping Salt Lake a special place takes awareness, thought, dedication and resources. Downtown Rising was created not just to keep Salt Lake City vibrant, but to guide Utah's capital to new heights. Through extraordinary participation by community members from all quarters over six months, this visioning process has resulted in a multitude of ideas – large and small, bold and restrained – for shaping downtown's future.

This vision, this blueprint for tomorrow, details those dreams of a "lifetime of expectation."
Downtown Rising: Why Now?

In 1847, a small band of Mormon pioneers led by Brigham Young came over a mountain pass and found the valley they sought. On July 21, Parley Pratt wrote: “...we could not refrain from a shout of joy, which almost involuntarily escaped from our lips the moment this grand and lovely scenery was within our view.” Within days, they had scouted the land for miles around and selected a place for their new city. Young supervised the preparation of the first plat for the Salt Lake Valley, an adaptation of Joseph Smith’s “City of Zion Plat.”

Since the city’s founding 160 years ago, community leaders have gathered to take stock of downtown’s development at key moments. In the past 50 years, three influential efforts, as well as today’s Downtown Rising, have guided downtown’s development history.

Second Century Plan, 1962

As Salt Lake City entered its second century, a group of visionary community leaders, led by the American Institute of Architects, formed the Downtown Planning Association. Pledging to create a new downtown by 1985, the “Second Century Plan” outlined a vision for downtown as the “business, financial, retail, governmental, entertainment, cultural and religious heart of the Intermountain empire.” The plan had several proposals that are now a reality, including the Salt Palace Convention Center, farmers market, Main Street Plaza, restored City and County Building and the downtown Federal Building.
Recommendations of the 1962 Second Century Plan

“If we envisioned it once and achieved it, we can envision it now and achieve it later. I don’t see why we should limit ourselves in any way”

- Curtis Bennett, VP Retail Operations, O.C. Tanner
Participants in the original Second Century Plan recommended that downtown Salt Lake City become the “heart of the Intermountain empire.” They recommended 10 projects, most of which have been implemented. Three leaders from the original plan have advised the Downtown Rising process: Jack Gallivan, Walker Wallace, and Stan Darger.

Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team, 1988
By the late 1980s, downtown was in need of new energy and focus. A study completed by the American Institute of Architects’ Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) in 1988 called for the community to support a vision for the downtown and pursue it consistently. Among other things, the influential R/UDAT study led to the development of the Delta Center, redevelopment of the Gallivan Center block, placement of the Scott M. Matheson State Courthouse downtown, and establishment of the Downtown Alliance.

Envision Utah Quality Growth Strategy, 1997
The Envision Utah public/private partnership was formed in January 1997 to guide the development of a broadly and publicly supported Quality Growth Strategy – a vision to protect Utah’s environment, economic strength and quality of life for generations to come. Five years of scenario analysis, research and involvement from more than 18,000 citizens culminated in the Quality Growth Strategy. The Quality Growth Strategy details strategies to preserve critical lands, promote water conservation and clean air, improve regionwide transportation systems, and provide housing choices for all residents.

Downtown Rising, 2007
A new age of unprecedented investment in the downtown area prompted business leaders, again with the assistance of the American Institute of Architects and many others, to consider the broader implications of an array of significant, but individual, developments. Downtown Rising was created to be the glue to link those disparate parts together in a visionary whole.
The Vision for Downtown

Salt Lake City, a capital city that belongs to all of Utah. A Western city where rugged individualism meets a caring, family-oriented community. A World City where local entrepreneurship blends with a global perspective. A city close to nature where high, rugged mountains and wide open spaces meet an expanding metropolis. A city of learning that is enlivened with college students and plentiful opportunities for lifelong learning. A city on the cusp of a grand and prosperous future fed by the region’s commitment to an energized urban core. Downtown Rising is this contrasting and harmonious vision.

With extraordinary investment and spirited commitment, the future of downtown Salt Lake City is bright. Downtown Rising will channel that potential by embracing those attributes that distinguish downtown like no place else and by introducing new ideas befitting a city that plays a significant role locally, nationally and globally.

These aspirations or priorities set the tone for downtown’s future.

A bustling and dynamic place to be:
We celebrate downtown as a lively, welcoming, fun and energetic place that includes downtown districts with a distinct character.

A necklace of green:
We take advantage of Salt Lake’s stunning natural setting by developing a Range to River network of parkways and trails that connect the Wasatch Mountains with the Jordan River Parkway via downtown and nearby regional parks.
Diverse, welcoming, affordable and urban:
We establish downtown as the region’s premier urban neighborhood in which to live, work, shop, play and learn. Downtown’s vibrancy is directly linked to its ability to welcome, host and encourage interactions among people from all walks of life.

An Internationally focused World City:
We build on the unique language, cultural, educational and business skills and outdoor recreation opportunities to enhance Salt Lake City’s reputation as a World City.

A model of great urban design:
We re-envision Salt Lake City’s iconic wide streets and spacious 10-acre blocks as public amenities that create an undeniable sense of place with green, pedestrian-oriented promenades, plazas and passageways. We continue to adapt and reuse our historic buildings, while encouraging bold and contemporary architecture.

A transportation hub that connects the region:
We solidify and enhance downtown’s role as the heart of a multimodal transportation network linking the central city with the Salt Lake International Airport, the University of Utah, suburban residential and employment centers, other Utah cities and locations beyond.

The center for arts and entertainment:
We capitalize on and grow downtown’s position as the foremost center for art, entertainment and culture in the state. We provide for a new performing arts center and ensure that existing arts organizations have the resources needed to thrive.

A city of learning; a University City:
We nurture downtown’s potential both as a neighborhood enlivened with college students and as a place with ample opportunities for lifelong learning by people of all ages, backgrounds and interests. We embrace the University of Utah, LDS Business College, the Salt Lake Center of Brigham Young University and the Salt Lake Community College in a learning corridor extending through downtown, and welcome other institutions of learning.

A city that thinks, looks and acts green:
We build on Salt Lake City’s reputation as a place that respects the local and global environment and develops in ways that are healthy, sensitive and sustainable.

The place for business and government decision-making:
We reinforce downtown’s historical role as an anchor location in the Intermountain West for commerce and the state’s principal venue for city, state and federal governmental functions. We recognize that an economically vibrant and growing downtown is not just good in itself, it is vital for a prosperous region.

These aspirations are carried forward in a series of recommendations that start with the vision framework — the structural elements of downtown — including significant connections, the transportation network, green spaces and character districts — and continue with a series of signature projects, both large and small.
Downtown and Its Neighbors

Downtown Salt Lake City is linked to its neighbors within the city and beyond. Strengthening these connections is a key recommendation of Downtown Rising.

University of Utah

The University of Utah’s students, faculty, staff and economic output provide critical lifeblood and energy to downtown Salt Lake. University Boulevard, the light rail corridor also known as 400 South/500 South, connects the Central Business District with the University, Research Park and the Foothill Cultural District. Salt Lake Community College’s downtown location is also on University Boulevard, further strengthening this learning and economic development corridor. The University feels closer as more residents, offices and retail shops congregate along an evolving, walkable University Boulevard. Rail transports faculty and students between and through these two destinations bringing the creative vibrancy of learning to downtown and enabling downtown’s wealth of culture, entertainment, retail, and housing to help the University’s campus spill out and become tied in with a greater University City.

We recommend enhancing University Boulevard as a signature project of Downtown Rising. The boulevard can provide opportunities for housing and office space needed to accommodate startup firms spun off from academic research, business development and workforce training. With more than a quarter of University students being regular transit users – a number that is steadily growing – light-rail-oriented University Boulevard is a prime location to encourage higher-density development. In addition, the link with downtown can be enhanced with the creation of a Global Exchange Place, an internationally focused conference and outreach center that could include a foreign-language institute and other international programming.

State Capitol

Utah’s State Capitol complex is part of downtown. Elected officials and employees from the hill eat in downtown restaurants, meet with business leaders, and enjoy the city’s arts and culture. However, the hill between the Capitol and the core of downtown is just significant enough to create a physical separation between the two. As downtown continues to evolve, the distance between the Capitol and the core should be bridged with improved transit service and changes to the streets that connect it with Capitol Hill and Pioneer Memorial Museum.
As the state capital, Salt Lake City is the home for many state offices – on Capitol Hill, in downtown, and along the North Temple corridor towards the airport. We recommend that state government continue to make downtown and its environs a focal point for state government buildings, thereby strengthening downtown and solidifying it as the seat of government for the state.

**Salt Lake International Airport**

Just like the interstate freeway system connects Utah with other states, the Salt Lake International Airport and “skyways” connect us with the world. As a hub for a major air carrier, Salt Lake City has the potential to become an aerotropolis — a large airport city with a concentration of aviation-related businesses. For this reason, Downtown Rising recognizes our airport as a powerful economic engine for the state and recommends steps to improve its accessibility to the region, including connecting the airport to downtown with TRAX light rail transit service.

**Jordan River Parkway**

As our valleys continue to urbanize, we will increasingly come to value the green corridors through our towns. The Salt Lake Valley’s central green corridor is the Jordan River Parkway. The Parkway is a regional parkway and only one mile from downtown – about the same distance as City Creek Canyon – but feels far away because of the lack of a convenient, walkable connection. Connecting downtown to the Jordan River will enable downtown residents and visitors to use it as one of their playgrounds, and further strengthen its connection with the west edge of the city. The trails and boatways of the Jordan River will suddenly become a downtown amenity, creating a true Range to River recreational network. This “Green Loop” is another signature project of Downtown Rising.

**Communities north, south, east and west**

As the heart of the greater Salt Lake area, downtown depends on the lifeblood that residents of the surrounding cities and towns provide. Downtown and the regions suburbs have a truly symbiotic relationship – it’s unlikely that one will stay healthy for long without the other. Work must continue to ensure that highway and transit links between the two keep up with population growth, that resources are available to keep both healthy and that political and business leaders foster an open and productive dialogue so that the needs of the central city and suburban communities are mutually understood.
Our Transportation Network

This is a dramatic time of change for our region’s transportation network. In the recent past, the city’s main freeway has been rebuilt, a core light rail system has been put in place, spurs connecting that light rail spine are taking shape, commuter rail is being added, and our regional bus network is being adapted to work with all of these changes.

Downtown Rising supports these exciting regional developments, while also endorsing key recommendations of the new Salt Lake City Downtown Transportation Plan process underway concurrently with this effort.

Regional transit

Thousands of employees, students, shoppers and visitors come to downtown Salt Lake City every day from every direction of the compass. These people provide energy and lifeblood to downtown; they are an indispensable audience for the city’s attractions. Downtown thrives with excellent highway connections and, more recently, light rail service. With planned TRAX spurs to western, southwestern and southeastern parts of the valley – combined with commuter rail service to Ogden and eventually to Provo – new ways of getting downtown will strengthen the city’s connection to surrounding areas. What’s more, these connections provide new opportunities for downtown residents to visit suburban areas without having to drive a car.

Downtown Rising supports as a signature project the extension of the TRAX system to the Salt Lake City International Airport, to South Jordan, to West Valley City and to Draper. In addition, commuter rail to the Provo/Orem area is a priority, as is the development of a bus rapid transit or light rail corridor north from downtown into southern Davis County.
Transportation Network

Salt Lake Central Station

State Street Bus Station

Incoming Bus Routes

TRAX (existing)

TRAX (proposed)

Commuter Rail

Potential streetcar

Major Bus Corridor

Map Base Courtesy: Commerce CRG
Salt Lake Central Station
For the past several years, Salt Lake City and the Utah Transit Authority have been working to create a multimodal transit center on 600 West between 200 South and 300 South. This “intermodal hub” is already the home of cross-country coach services, AMTRAK rail service and UTA bus service. TRAX light rail is being extended to the station to provide easy connections to downtown for commuter rail passengers when service to the Ogden area goes on line in 2008.

Downtown Rising encourages UTA and Salt Lake City to proactively develop the surrounding area as a lively mixed-use neighborhood, with a renamed “Salt Lake Central Station” at its heart.

Transit shuttle/circulator
As new routes are added to the TRAX system, it will be necessary to add new tracks in the downtown area to accommodate more trains. This need provides the opportunity over the next five to 10 years to create one or more light rail/streetcar loops downtown. Downtown Rising strongly supports this proposal, which would provide rail service every 3–5 minutes, improving mobility and parking and enhancing regional air quality. In the meantime, UTA plans to simplify downtown bus routes to create shuttle corridors on key streets, such as 200 South and State Street.
Downtown Rising supports the designation of streets as either “boulevards,” “transit corridors,” or “promenades.” Here’s the distinction:

**Boulevard.** Quality design on these key traffic arteries imbues all of downtown with the feeling of vibrancy. These are the main entry and exit points for people traveling by automobile. A pedestrian would feel comfortable on these decidedly urban, landscaped streets.

**Transit Corridor.** Downtown relies on transit. These corridors put priority on the convenient movement of buses and trains, yet cars continue to be welcome. All trips start and end with walking, so these streets must be walkable.

**Promenade.** While cars are still welcome, the pedestrian gets priority on these beautiful walking routes.

**Street character**

Each of downtown’s streets serves a slightly different role—some are key walking routes, others are vital regional traffic arteries and some serve an important role for public transportation. Despite their role for moving traffic, all downtown streets, regardless of their primary function, must be beautiful and convenient for pedestrians.

The following streets are recommended for priority action to improve their beauty and walkability.

**200 EAST** has the potential to be the focus of a revived urban neighborhood. While automobile traffic would still be a primary use of the street, 200 East could spur development by providing active open space in a “Park Avenue” concept similar to the center park blocks on 500 West or 600 East. Turning 200 East into a dynamic urban street is a signature project of Downtown Rising.

**West Temple** plays a key role in moving automobiles through downtown. Nonetheless, West Temple has tremendous opportunity to be transformed into a pedestrian-friendly boulevard, linking together major hotels on the south to the Salt Palace, Symphony Hall, City Creek Center and Temple Square complex to the north. Modifications suggested through the Downtown Rising process include:

- Retail uses that greet the street and feature prominent entrances for pedestrians.
- Changes to the Salt Palace façade to provide purposeful pedestrian destinations along the west side of West Temple. These could include a “City History” walk, a linear sculpture garden, kiosks and food carts, and outdoor dining.
- Plant more shade trees, install more wayfinding signs, repurpose turning lanes to create pedestrian refuges, public art or landscaping, and explore reconfiguring on-street parking to provide more parking opportunities.

**Grand Boulevards (500 South and 600 South).**

These two streets are the principal auto gateways into and out of the city. Both streets should be grand expressions of a capital city; they should provide a more dignified entrance and exit. More-stately and urban boulevards can be accomplished by adding monumental trees and distinctive lighting to form a canopy over the streets, reducing the number of large signs that visually conflict with the concept of a grand gateway, building multi-story structures to the edge of the sidewalk, and preventing visible surface parking lots.

**100 South** east of the Salt Palace Convention Center is a prime opportunity to create a new gathering space. Traffic demands on this section are low. A pedestrian-oriented street could showcase the Salt Palace tower and a growing restaurant scene. First South could thus become a linear park filled with people, but still open to auto movement and on-street parking, not unlike Rio Grande Street in the center of The Gateway.

**200 South** provides a major link for bus and automobile traffic travelling east to west through the city. It also serves as a critical corridor linking the core downtown area with Salt Lake Central Station.
Our Path from Range to River

Downtown is blessed with multiple public spaces, wide streets that create a sense of openness, and an enviable closeness to both the foothills and the Jordan River Parkway. Few cities can claim a downtown as close to a mountain environment as ours is to City Creek Canyon.

A significant recommendation of Downtown Rising is the connection of the Wasatch Range with the Jordan River through downtown. This Range to River link will be accomplished by the creation of Green Loops linking downtown with City Creek Canyon, the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, the Jordan River Parkway and Liberty Park. This “Green Loop” is another Downtown Rising signature project and includes new and revitalized ribbons of green parkland and walking and biking paths through the heart of our city. The connections include:

The City Creek Greenway
A row of parks or natural features extends west from City Creek Park (North Temple and State) through Temple Square, with a continuing presence in the Triad Center, The Gateway and extending as a waterway west to the Jordan River Parkway. While these parks should remind people of the natural feature that once was, they will not necessarily always have water running through them. In some places there will be fountains, in other places they will be lazy places to relax, and at other places they will be a narrow landscaped waterway. As a whole, this new stretch of parks ties together key downtown destinations. As a whole, the Greenway provides the defining recreational amenity for the northern part of downtown.

“Park Avenue” green corridors
200 East and 300 East join South Temple and 600 East as heavily landscaped boulevards – green corridors that connect the city’s parks and recreational amenities. These routes are still fully functioning streets, places with traffic and on-street parking, and yet, they are some of the most preferred places to go for a downtown walk. Their many trees and stronger emphasis on
landscaping soften the adjacent urban environment. As the location of many existing and new mid-rise residential buildings, 200 East holds particular potential for the addition of center park strips to help define this street as the core of an urban neighborhood.

500 West park blocks
The existing park blocks west of The Gateway are extended south to 900 South. These urban oases are the recreation focal points for new urban neighborhoods that emanate out from existing west side lofts.

Gateway Commons
Develop a substantial, meandering and natural path of parks through this reclaimed industrial space in the Gateway neighborhood.

900 South jogging trail
A former rail right-of-way next to 900 South between Interstate 15 and the Jordan River is transformed into a new walking and jogging trail.
The Soul of Our City: Districts with Character

Downtown Rising recommends establishing and nurturing districts with distinctive character and soul. Districts are defined by a multitude of elements, including predominant users, architecture, the scale of buildings and the materials they are made from, the type of landscaping, and the nature of street uses.

It’s important to note that the evolution of districts is an organic process; it will change over time as downtown changes. Also, there are no hard and fast rules about what uses are in a particular district – an art gallery or condos can be in the Skyline District, for instance, or an office tower can be in the Salt Palace District. What’s important is that, over time, each district will “feel” different from its neighbors; each will have a distinct sense of place. Downtown Rising will help further this objective by putting more structure to the idea and raising awareness about its importance.

Six broad downtown district designations are recommended through the Downtown Rising process. This means that attention and resources should be focused on building the identities of these districts for residents and visitors. While it’s necessary to define relatively distinct district boundaries for them to have meaning, districts will overlap around their edges. Likewise, smaller, historically defined areas, such as Japantown, Greektown and Little Italy, will be respected and nourished within the larger district framework.
Skyline District

The Skyline District is, first and foremost, cosmopolitan. It bustles with activity and purpose; it invokes action and prosperity. Home to downtown’s traditional business center along Main Street, the Skyline District is what its name implies – the place for taller buildings, commerce, government activity, entertainment and unique shopping. The Skyline District includes downtown’s largest concentration of office workers and a growing number of residents. It’s where a new corporate headquarters building and high-rise apartment buildings feel at home. The new mixed-use City Creek Center anchors the northern edge of the Skyline District. Mid-rise residential buildings line 200 East in a “Park Avenue” concept featuring green parkways in the center of the street, creating a pleasant, leafy pedestrian-oriented environment.
Temple Square District

The calm and tranquil antithesis of the Skyline District to the south is the Temple Square District. It is green, contemplative and at a slight remove from the material world. Centered on the majestic Salt Lake LDS Temple, built with pioneer determination over 40 years, the Temple Square District is the historical spiritual heart of downtown. It contains not only the important religious buildings on Temple Square itself – the city’s and state’s largest visitor attraction – but also a major employment center at the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints office complex, and a new higher-education center composed of the LDS Business College and Brigham Young University’s Salt Lake City extension. The Temple Square District has promising opportunities for serving as a key link in efforts to connect the Wasatch Range with the Jordan River Parkway by a network of Green Loops.
Broadway District

The Broadway District is one of the places Salt Lake City goes to have fun. It is the lively epicenter for the arts, culture, entertainment and hospitality. It is animated, bold and lively. The Broadway District takes its cue both from the historical name for 300 South – Broadway, which the district is centered on – and from the quintessential home for theater and entertainment in New York. The Broadway District contains the theaters, art galleries, restaurants and bars that make downtown the cultural center of the Intermountain West. The Broadway District is home to growing population of residents living in new condos and converted loft-style flats, and it includes the Downtown Public Market, located in a permanent home in Pioneer Park or elsewhere in this area. The District is enlivened by the creation of interesting places for bars, restaurants and shops in the interior of blocks, connected to the street by pedestrian passageways.
Salt Palace District

The Salt Palace District is all about hosting and caring for our visitors. It feels welcoming, friendly and gracious. With the newly expanded Salt Palace Convention Center at its core, the Salt Palace District is the place for conventions and trade shows and their related hotels and services, the place people temporarily call home while visiting the city. Because of its focus on visitors, the Salt Palace District is closely intertwined with and overlaps the Broadway District, and could serve as home for a large performing arts center to house professional traveling shows and other events. The Salt Palace District will also be the site of a future convention-headquarters hotel featuring up to 1,000 rooms. This district is also one logical home for a future Global Exchange Place, a group of buildings that could include an international mediation center, a language translation facility and educational components – all gathered around a pedestrian-oriented plaza.
Gateway District

The Gateway District is entrepreneurial, lively and inventive. It is an incubator for new enterprises and creativity — the place where artisans, writers, entrepreneurs and others congregate to live, work, shop and converse. It’s warehouse spaces are filled with art galleries, high-tech businesses, unique shops and one-of-a-kind restaurants. The Gateway District encompasses a broad swatch of downtown stretching west to Interstate 15 and including several sub-districts such as the Rio Grande District, Granary District and The Gateway shopping district itself. As the name implies the Gateway District is key to downtown as the entry point for most visitors via automobile, light rail, bus and commuter rail. It is home to the new Salt Lake Central Station, the intermodal transit hub that will grow in importance along with the downtown and regional rail network. Its excellent transit connections, supply of warehouse structures, superb shopping and undeveloped land make the Gateway District a center of focus for Salt Lake City’s growing downtown.
CHARACTER DISTRICTS

Grand Boulevards District

The Grand Boulevards welcome the world to downtown Salt Lake. This district includes the foremost entry corridor from the Salt Lake International Airport and is also home to many of Downtown’s hotels. With many hotels, it is truly a hospitality neighborhood. As such, the Grand Boulevards offer an outstanding first impression. The dominant features of this district are 500 South and 600 South leading to the doorstep of the Grand America Hotel. Buildings here clearly have the strongest presence on the street – creating an urban ambience – while stately landscaping hints at the beauty further within downtown. The urban design is monumental, befitting the width and character of these Grand Boulevards.
Downtown Rising proposes a series of individual projects. Each of these will add immensely to the life and purpose of downtown on their own, and together they will make Salt Lake City one of the most livable and prosperous cities in the nation.

Making our Mark
In keeping with the example set by the Second Century Plan, Downtown Rising recommends eight signature projects. Several of these have been described in the preceding pages — regional rail network, green loop, dynamic urban living and University Boulevard. Read on to learn about other key projects.
Global Exchange Place

As the tsunami of globalization washes over the earth, Utahns must become more globally aware and more globally engaged. For Salt Lake City (and Utah) to reach its full potential it needs to grow as a World City and hub of connectivity. World Cities develop and prosper largely by what flows through them (people, information, knowledge, business, money, culture, professional and academic association, friendship and humanitarian ties) and by the networks they create. In building Salt Lake City into a more powerful and significant hub, we need to define our niche and fully utilize our strengths. Here are the key components of our global strategy.

World Trade Center Utah

The newly created World Trade Center Utah (WTC Utah) will be key to connecting Utah in the globalized world. This public/private partnership will bring together in one place the now-scattered government and nonprofit economic development agencies and
private sector international service providers into a single premier downtown Salt Lake City location. WTC Utah plugs Utah businesses into the global network of some 300 World Trade Centers and more than 750,000 private businesses in 90-plus countries around the globe. It will also help connect businesses to people living all over the world that have ties to, and an interest in, Utah. WTC Utah will be tied closely to local chambers of commerce, universities and colleges.

**Conflict resolution and peace studies center**

“People everywhere feel a profound yearning for the unity of the human race and . . . are greatly disturbed by the brokenness of the human community along religious, cultural, economic and political lines,” observed Dr. Joseph Kitigawa, formerly of the University of Chicago. Utah can do something about that. Building on our Olympic legacy of friendship and goodwill, Downtown Rising recommends that a university-associated conflict resolution, mediation and peace studies center be created in our capital city. By focusing on the good that is shared in common by the world’s great cultures and religions, on increasing understanding and respect between groups and on working together for the common good, the Center could become a significant contributor in bringing people of the world more in harmony with each other, a leader in development of a global ethic, and a great world center for building peace and brotherhood. The Center would also increase appreciation for the beauty of various cultures and for the enrichment that comes through healthy differences. Humanitarian and other outreach efforts of Utah nonprofits should be tied to the Center, as should international cultural preservation activities.

**International Institute**

The vibrancy, international ambience and global engagement of Salt Lake City would be enhanced dramatically by creation of an international university campus downtown and within walking distance of a TRAX station. What’s envisioned is a park-like campus that would occupy at least one to four city blocks and provide a vibrant anchor for the southern or western reaches of downtown.

This campus could house programs like Salt Lake Community College’s Executive Global Marketing Program, the University of Utah’s Institute for Public and International Affairs, the International Studies Program, the Middle East Center, the Asian Studies Center, the Latin American Studies Center, the Tanner Center for Nonviolent Human Rights Advocacy, the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, and other international programming. A foreign language institute would help build, highlight and leverage Utah’s unique advantage in foreign language skills and could help Utah to become known as a language capital of the world. International student housing, a conference center and central commons area are other potential components.
Performing Arts Center
Salt Lake City has always been a center of the arts in the Intermountain West. The Salt Lake Theater was one of the first structures built by the Mormon pioneers after their arrival in 1847. The arts have remained an important social, cultural and economic resource for downtown Salt Lake City since then. A recent national survey concluded the city supports nearly 9,000 jobs and 776 arts-related businesses and non-profit organizations.

The Majestic Theater in San Antonio, Buell Theater in Denver, Milwaukee Theater, Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh and many others have served as artistic and economic catalysts for those communities. There is no reason the same will not prove true in downtown Salt Lake City.
Many of Utah’s major arts and cultural institutions and facilities are located in downtown Salt Lake City, including Abravanel Hall (home of the Utah Symphony), Capitol Theatre (home of the Utah Ballet and operatic performances by Utah Symphony and Opera), Clark Planetarium, the Rose Wagner Performing Arts Center, Discovery Gateway, Salt Lake Arts Center, Salt Lake Film Center, LDS Church Museum of History and Art, Temple Square, the Salt Lake City Library and the Museum of Utah Art and History.

Arts presentations and performances attract more than 800,000 people per year to downtown Salt Lake City. Those attending enjoy free and paid performances, monthly gallery openings and exhibitions, and a lively and ongoing animation of our city by artists and performers living, working and transforming downtown neighborhoods.

Two studies commissioned by the public and private sectors in the past 10 years have identified growth opportunities in our arts and cultural offerings. Perhaps the most impactful of these recommendations is the creation of a new performing arts theater to accommodate as many as 2,500 patrons and be the centerpiece of a new performing arts complex.

A new theater would accommodate professional touring shows, musical and family shows not currently able to schedule in this market, and a small number of larger performances by existing arts groups. Because of scheduling conflicts with existing arts organizations, the limitations of Abravanel Hall as a specialized symphony venue, and the lack of adequate seating and size at the Capitol Theatre, a new performing arts theater would fill a gap in our current performance offerings.

The studies and market analysis have shown that our growing market and population can support a new theater and the performances it can attract, while coordinating with existing arts organizations through careful planning, management and scheduling. Cities around the country have found that integrating a large, new theater into their communities’ performing arts repertoires has increased the excitement of the public for the arts, has become a catalyst for growth and redevelopment downtown, and has brought people downtown to enjoy the full array of cultural offerings.
Imagine a great open pavilion in downtown Salt Lake City filled with hundreds of people shopping at dozens of booths and stalls brimming with fresh flowers, locally grown fruits and vegetables, meats, cheese, specialty food items from around the world, and the freshest baked goods available. The centerpiece of this enclosed pavilion is a massive fireplace, made from granite from the nearby

“A permanent public market will serve as a vital community gathering place for residents and as a unique visitor attraction.”

– Jack Gallivan, emeritus publisher The Salt Lake Tribune
Wasatch Mountains, where people socialize, sample products and listen to local performers strolling among the booths. Residents and visitors mingle among the produce, prepared foods and locally made clothing and artisan wares, enjoying the best of Utah’s natural and hand-crafted offerings.

This type of traditional shopping, socializing and gathering in a public market has been part of human experience from the time cities first formed. From the ancient Greek agoras, to the produce markets in downtown Salt Lake City at the turn of the century, to the successful 15-year-old Downtown Farmers Market, markets are not just a shopping experience, they are community gathering places, civic institutions, and a valuable component in downtown development plans.

Public markets are not a strictly retail shopping experience. A public market provides an inexpensive, enclosed, year-round home for our local growers, chefs, food artisans and others to share their goods. Public Markets complement and work with existing farmers markets to extend the season in which these local entrepreneurs can build year-round businesses, rather than just a weekend sideline. Public Markets are ideal venues to co-locate the best of an area’s ethnic food and produce offerings under one roof.

The popularity of the Salt Lake Downtown Farmers Market and Downtown Arts and Crafts market, one of the largest seasonal markets in the U.S. (it attracts more than 200 vendors each week and 150,000 visitors during the season), demonstrates the public yearning and support for an authentic, down-home food and community experience. Utah produces more than $200 million a year in food products; a year-round public market provides a perfect opportunity to showcase local goods.

Downtown Rising believes the time is right for a Downtown Public Market. A market will be a focal point to educate people about the value of locally grown healthy produce, eating right and well, and how to prepare foods in imaginative and creative ways. A culinary school, cooking demonstrations, educational classes, and special food events will be natural additions to a public market.

Joining the best of Utah’s food, arts, crafts and products in one central downtown location will reinforce downtown living, connect our urban and rural communities, and create a unique one-of-a-kind attraction in downtown Salt Lake City.
“Salt Lakers are already among the healthiest people in the nation. Let’s build upon this reputation by providing residents and visitors with a flagship, and distinctly metropolitan, health and fitness center right in the heart of the capital city.”

- David N. Sundwall, MD, Executive Director, Utah Department of Health

Sports and fitness center

Salt Lake City is one of the healthiest cities in the nation. With a river parkway and towering peaks nearby and a canyon that leads right into downtown, the city has enviable outdoor recreation opportunities. While downtown boasts several private gyms, it lacks a major public community recreation center.

Downtown Rising believes Salt Lake City must invest in staying healthy. A downtown health and fitness center, ideally located along
the Green Loop and near a TRAX line, is a needed facility. It could be a gathering place for the growing number of people living downtown and an amenity for those working and visiting downtown.

This facility should be not only the flagship public gymnasium for our region – complete with swimming pools, tennis courts, basketball courts, running track and weight room – but also a major community center, with support services like meeting rooms, elder center, day care, coffee shop and restaurant. It also might feature a drop-in clinic and sports fitness center in association with a local hospital. Providing sports activities for children, perhaps supporting private, public and charter schools in and near downtown, is also a viable opportunity.

At least part of the fitness center should feature a grand space, befitting an important public building. This could be a reuse of an existing or historic grand space. The idea is to recall, at least on some scale, the great public baths of the classical era.
ACHIEVING THE VISION
Implementation requires meaningful action. And meaningful action requires structure, a sensible order to how we make progress, one step at a time. The leaders of Downtown Rising have adopted a structure similar to the configuration of modern economies – that of global, regional and neighborhood. Unlike the “old” way of doing things – typically federal, state and local – modern economies and societies organize themselves in the categories of global, regional and neighborhood. We live in a global economy, where regions (not a political jurisdiction, but rather an area with a shared labor market, broadcast area, and centers for trade and commerce) compete for economic relevance. Regions are most effective when they have a globally-connected, metropolitan world city at their core. High-quality neighborhoods that attract and keep the talent necessary to be successful in the information age are another component of successful regions. The Downtown Rising vision relates to all three of these categories and will adopt a parallel structure to achieve our vision.

The international components of our vision will be catalyzed and coordinated through local international leaders. Prominent entities like the World Trade Center Utah Board and the Governor’s Global Strategy Council will take a leading role.

The Salt Lake Chamber Board of Governors will direct the regional components of our vision, making steady use of Chamber committees and the broad membership, which includes members from multiple states and all of Utah’s 29 counties.

“A clear vision, crafted by the decisions of a city’s business and government leaders, can meld a multiplicity of wills into a positive, unified action to substantially change the character of a city.”

Edmund Bacon, renowned architect and urban planner whose vision helped shape modern Philadelphia.

“It can be done... by many combinations of easy steps.”

The authors of the Second Century Plan issued these instructions as they set out to achieve their vision to create the Salt Palace Convention Center, Abravanel Hall, City Creek Park, and many other improvements that we enjoy today. We desire to build upon their legacy by leaving behind a superb and significantly improved downtown.

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Similarly, the Downtown Alliance will lead neighborhood implementation efforts, focusing appropriately, and in partnership with Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County, on the Central Business Improvement District. The Alliance will also make use of its existing committee structure to implement the vision.

Successful implementation for all three organizational levels will require the pro-active partnership and leadership of many other public and private entities and organizations.

**Principles**
The Downtown Rising leaders have agreed to follow these guiding principles as we implement the vision:

- **Collaborative** — We will actively seek partnerships that will help to achieve our vision. We view the State of Utah, Salt Lake County and Salt Lake City as key partners. In addition, Utah’s other 28 counties and 241 cities and towns have a stake in downtown’s future; we will seek their support. We will also build alliances with the many other entities and organizations with responsibility and ability to effect positive change downtown.

- **Public leadership/market-led implementation** — We recognize that state and local government leaders will need to provide the community foundation for market-led implementation. We pledge to work with government leaders to identify the most cost-effective public investments. We will seek implementation strategies that are market-based. By combining our spirit of community with our spirit of enterprise, we can realize the future that we have envisioned.

- **Targeted** — We will prioritize how we spend our resources so that we can accomplish this vision effectively.

- **Community-based** — Downtown Salt Lake City is everybody’s downtown. We will continue to involve the public and seek their input.

- **Common information base** — We will work from a common base of information to improve downtown. Where necessary, we will secure the needed studies and research to be certain that decisions are made based on sound information.

- **Sustainability** — We will build on Salt Lake City’s reputation as a place that respects the local and global environment and develops in ways that are healthy, sensitive and sustainable.
Humanitarian — We embrace a vision for our city that is about much more than buildings and places; visions are about people and their ability to live fulfilling and productive lives. Human service issues such as caring for downtown’s homeless population are worthy of further examination and discussion. We commit to work with community leaders to address this and other humanitarian issues.

Vigilance — We view this vision as a “living vision” that will be updated and supplemented over time.

Implementation tools
Downtown Rising leaders will formally request the support of elected officials, form blue-ribbon panels, and proactively share the vision through a speakers’ bureau to build support and make progress. We will continue to seek the input of the public and all of the information generated for this vision will be shared with Salt Lake City to be used in future updates of the downtown master plan.

Envision Utah Quality Growth Strategy — We will also request that Envision Utah, one of the nation’s most enduring and respected quality growth partnerships, formally adopt the Downtown Rising vision into the region’s Quality Growth Strategy. This strategy provides a blueprint for the entire region’s growth and development and the capital city should be at its core. Incorporating the Downtown Rising vision into the region’s growth strategy will further institutionalize the ideas and provide another important catalyst for implementation.

Timeframe
Implementation will occur in three phases: near-term (first three years), mid-term (four to 15 years) and far-term (16+ years). This is intentional, as many of the recommendations can be completed right away, while others will require significantly more discussion, analysis and planning. This immediate and long-term view is consistent with the original Second Century Plan, and more importantly, with the recommendations we have made.

“We have a remarkable capital city, born as a master-planned community, located in a stunning natural setting, and endowed with prime economic and cultural assets. Salt Lake City is on the rise and has the potential for greatness. With spirited commitment and entrepreneurial energy, we commend and commit our collective efforts to make the Downtown Rising vision a reality and invite others to join us.”

These words, spoken by President Gordon B. Hinckley of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, capture the sentiments of business and community leaders of all backgrounds who are making an unprecedented investment in Utah’s capital city.
With good will and talented people, anything is possible.

Louis Zunguze, Salt Lake City Community Development Director

The Process

What became Downtown Rising began as a series of quiet conversations between key members of the downtown community. The idea was to create a collaborative process that would help guide downtown to the next level of advancement by rekindling the kind of forward-thinking spirit that made the Second Century Plan from the early 1960s a legendary accomplishment in the city’s history.

The Salt Lake Chamber and Downtown Alliance took up the charge and formally launched Downtown Rising in May 2006 as a business-led collaborative effort to create a bold and exciting long-range vision for downtown Salt Lake City. The Downtown Rising participants would create, communicate and cultivate a unified vision, provide regional context between the city core and surrounding suburbs and exurbs, ensure everyone is working towards the same goal and assist with construction mitigation.

While purposely led by the business community, the Downtown Rising process has involved a broad cross-section of the community through a variety of methods.

Conveners and Cabinet

A group of Conveners, comprised of prominent leaders from Salt Lake City’s business community, were called upon to lead the Downtown Rising effort. Hands-on policy and technical advice was provided by the Cabinet, which consists of working professionals who are knowledgeable about regional and city issues. Each group met half a dozen times, sometimes separately and sometimes jointly, to hear reports on various aspects of the effort and provide counsel from their diverse perspectives.

A snapshot of downtown

The process began with a high-profile kickoff event in May 2006. Invitations were sent to business and community leaders that included a camera and instructions to capture those elements that help create a vibrant downtown. Hundreds of photos were submitted to Downtown Rising; people included everything from the very small (curbs and gutters) to the very large (plazas and buildings). Some people even sent in images from cities in other states and countries.

Prescott Muir, past chair of the Downtown Alliance Board, presents ideas at the University of Utah, College of Architecture and Planning studio for Downtown Rising.

Downtown Rising Convener meeting at the Salt Lake Chamber.
Design Workshop Internship Charrette
Design Workshop, an urban planning and landscape architecture company with an office in Salt Lake City, focused their 2006 student internship program – an intensive 10-day design exploration – on Downtown Rising. This visioning charrette brought together 15 of the nation’s top students in urban design, planning, landscape architecture, real estate, business and environmental planning to formulate strategies, which were then presented to members of Downtown Rising’s Cabinet and Conveners.

Public Involvement
In August 2006, Downtown Rising reached out to citizens statewide to generate feedback to preliminary ideas to help define the vision for downtown. A 32-page newspaper insert reached more than 250,000 Utahns. Readers responded to the draft vision by mailing in thoughts or commenting via the Downtown Rising website.

Members of the Downtown Rising team made hundreds of presentations to various groups. “Visual preference” surveys were conducted in key locations around the city, allowing 300 residents to react to images of what makes an ideal downtown. More than 150 attendees at workshops for members of the public and downtown businesses used maps and paper models to respond to the draft vision and brainstorm changes.

The public involvement process found there was a high level of support for a healthy downtown and for a visioning process to keep it that way — 85 percent of those who replied to the newspaper questionnaire and online survey said they supported the draft vision and its ideas.
Research Teams

Dozens of technical experts and advisors were organized in Research Teams to provide specific support in key areas, which included World City, Education, Green City, Transportation, Hospitality, Arts and Culture, Main Street, Business-Friendly, and Urban Living. These teams probed, analyzed and made recommendations in the form of reports to the Conveners and Cabinet members.

University of Utah, College of Architecture + Planning

The University of Utah College of Architecture and Planning sponsored a seven-week, architecture studio for the Downtown Rising effort. This concentrated process combined the work of five volunteer professional mentors from the American Institute of Architects, an urban design professor and 10 graduate students to analyze what was developed as part of the Downtown Rising process and assist with urban planning elements, the framework plan, as well as renderings to be used in the final vision. Several of the students’ concepts are included in this vision document.

Key Partners

In addition to the business, technical and community leaders, several entities joined Downtown Rising in a formal partnership to provide professional support:

- Salt Lake City Corporation
  As a full and enthusiastic partner in Downtown Rising, Salt Lake City Corporation has provided technical assistance, resources and staff support. Many city staff members have served on the Cabinet or as Technical Advisors. The City has used the Downtown Rising process as one of the outreach components for the update of the Downtown Master Plan. In addition, all of the technical work and public comment from Downtown Rising will be archived within the Salt Lake City Planning Department.

- American Institute of Architects
  The Utah Chapter of the AIA selected Downtown Rising as their community service program for the AIA’s 150th anniversary. As a result, Downtown Rising will be among other community visions as part of the BLUEPRINT FOR AMERICA – a nationwide community service program sponsored by AIA to create a vision for America’s communities. Members of AIA have served on the Downtown Rising Cabinet and have provided technical assistance. This partnership is in keeping with AIA’s significant contributions to the original Second Century Plan, which included thousands of volunteer hours.

- Envision Utah
  Envision Utah provided technical support for the Downtown Rising process and vision. Envision Utah led many Downtown Rising meetings and was represented at the Convener and Technical Advisor levels. In addition, Envision Utah conducted community visioning workshops and visual preference surveys, as well as provided urban planning support throughout the process.

For more information visit the Downtown Rising web site: www.downtownrising.com
Downtown Rising owes its creation to a group of talented and community-minded people who have given generously of their time and resources. The collaboration includes a broad cross-section of business and community leaders, technical experts, and other publicly engaged people. Many are listed below (sometimes more than once because of their multiple contributions). Others have been silent contributors. Throughout the process, elected officials have served in an ex-officio role advising the collaboration. To all, mentioned or unmentioned, we extend our heartfelt thanks.

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- Scott Anderson
- Kim Angel
- Barry Banks
- Scott Beck
- Bruce Bingham
- Nancy Boschke
- Katherine Brewett
- Vicki Beams
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- Chris Cormos
- Lee Couner
- Mick Credland
- Edward Cusick
- Bill D’Evelyn
- John Dahlstrom
- Doug Dansie
- Jason Davis
- Bill Dowman
- Clint Ensign
- Gayle Eppersen
- Brian Farr
- Bob Farrington
- Robert Forbes
- Art Franks
- Jonathan Gales
- Dan Gates
- Kent Gibson
- Lee Glines
- Natalie Gochman
- Rick Graham
- Robert Grow
- Tim Harpt
- Dennis Haclam
- Ron Holmes
- Margaret Hunt
- Alyse Idefuna
- Phil Jordan
- Christine Kauri
- Rich Kendall
- Bill Kneale
- Ted Knedston
- Leah Ann Lamb
- Antonio Lima
- Dan Luftgren
- Cami Moffatt
- Kelly Matthews
- Allison McFarlane
- Ronda Menlove
- Prescott Muir
- Aaron Nelson
- Diane Nelson
- Layne Palmer
- Rick Phillips
- Gary Porter
- Andrew Pratt
- Valerie Price
- Vassilis Prinos
- Larry Richards
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- Steve Smith
- Alice Steiner
- Valda Tarbet
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