

# Utah Planner

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## Presidents Message

Looks like a very busy month! League meetings that many of you are participating in, a special lunch on September 11<sup>th</sup> with author Mark Fenton, local primary elections (think Ralph Becker) and our annual conference on September 27<sup>th</sup> will make for a lot of activities. Not to mention a few extracurricular football (or is that futbol?) games thrown in, plus camping anyone? September is a great month and will be over before we know it. Hopefully the 100+ degree days will be gone also.

Our conference promises to be a good one. I think this is the first time that Davis County has sponsored the annual conference and our attendance numbers look pretty good so far. We instituted the potential to use a credit card this time and we have had a very good response to this new service. The conference has a good variety of sessions and if you keep track of your continuing education credits, or if you want to keep your AICP status via the certification maintenance process, we will be trying to assure that all the sessions will be eligible for credit. This does take a little extra effort from the speakers, but that is just a simple addition of a bio and presentation summary. In addition, we will talk about ethics and law which are required elements for AICPers. Keeping your AICP certification requires 32 hours of credit every 2 years and you will need a certain number of hours of law and ethics as part of those. So your easiest way to get those hours will be locally through Utah APA and other "registered" (registered with National) organizations. Sign up for the conference and keep track of your hours!

September gives way to October and National Community Planning Month. You'll remember, I hope, that National APA is pushing the Chapters to take a minute for planning by promoting planning during the month of October. Last year we tried to get each of you to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, about a positive planning experience, person, or project. If your experience was like mine, then yours never showed up in the Trib. So this year we will have a bit of a different tack. Mike Maloy is putting together a traveling exhibit and we are encouraging you to display that for about 2 weeks in your local City Hall, Library, or other favorite gathering place. Obviously that will take a while to get around the State so we are also asking that for at least one week of the month, you put up your own project, plan or ordinance in your lobby (with the APA logo). Public awareness of the good things that planning can do is something we can all help with!

See you at the conference and talk to you next month!

## The FrontRunner: On the Right Track

By: Darren Janes



Communicate

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### Introduction

The Wasatch Front, along with a number of other growing metropolitan regions throughout the country, is increasingly faced with a crisis of many dimensions; mounting traffic congestion, diminishing affordable housing, receding open space, urban sprawl, air pollution and socially isolated communities. Reliance upon typical patterns of low density urban development will perpetuate these problems. However, there are logical options which provide compounding opportunities. In particular, the effort of the Utah Transit Authority, through implementation of the FrontRunner commuter rail, provides a progressive approach to address the ills of conventional development. Indeed, the FrontRunner seeks to address these problems by redirecting urban growth to patterns which reduce automobile dependence and support alternative modes of transportation.

The linkage between land use and transit is designed to result in an efficient pattern of development that supports the transit system and makes significant progress in reducing sprawl, traffic congestion, and air pollution. Common in planning literature, this simple concept is referred to as Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The location, design, configuration, and mix of uses in a TOD provide an alternative to traditional development by emphasizing a pedestrian oriented environment and reinforcing the use of public transportation. The following provides a glimpse into the efforts of UTA, through implementation of commuter rail, to propagate a system which will change circulation along the Wasatch Front, forever.

### Commuter Rail

Employment and population growth places increasing strain on existing highway networks and upon the quality of life in the communities surrounding the region. As population continues to grow in the suburbs, jobs continue to be added in downtown employment centers. Ultimately this increases the number of people commuting to the center of the region. Naturally, this increase in commuters has reciprocal effects upon the amount of time spent commuting. A solution to this problem is the rediscovery of the commuter train running into and through the heart of the region.

Commuter Rail attracts passengers, gives a reliable and anxiety-free ride, eases highway congestion, and improves quality of life. Commuter rail is happening in a growing number of metropolitan areas. Miami, Northern Virginia, San Diego, and Los Angeles have all recently started new commuter rail systems. They've joined Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Boston, and Philadelphia in expanding and improving commuter railroads as an alternative to congested highways. Commuter rail is the transportation system of choice for growing major metropolitan areas, arguably because it links fast growing communities in the suburbs with the employment centers in the heart of the region.





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Commuter rail addresses a system in which transportation officials are struggling to keep up with, growth capacity on roads. Common methodology indicates that when roads are pushed to capacity, it's simply time to build more. However, this is not always the best solution to the problem. (Any disbelievers in this point should take a trip to Southern California (in their car), and respond accordingly about the effectiveness of an elaborate road network). In an age of limited resources (i.e. land, oil), it becomes important to think "outside of the box" in order to craft viable opportunities.

The Wasatch Front is growing rapidly and thousands of people commute daily to Salt Lake City from communities to the north of the city. As options for increasing the capacity of the existing roadway network and adding new roads are limited, and people still need to be able to get from home to work, school, medical and other services, commuter rail provides an important transportation alternative.

### The FrontRunner

To maximize the potential benefits of transit facilities and services, the need to increase the availability and use of public transit along the Wasatch Front arose. In 2000, serious analysis and debate stimulated the passage of a one-quarter cent sales tax earmarked for dramatic circulation improvements in Salt Lake, Davis and Weber Counties. From a financing standpoint commuter rail benefited substantially from this sales tax increase; soon thereafter, UTA proceeded forward with planning efforts of the commuter rail system.

And now, approximately seven years later, we join government and transportation officials marking a milestone on the FrontRunner commuter rail project as crews performed the last rail weld. The \$611 million project is now about 75 percent complete. It is expected to open in April 2008 and is projected to carry 5,900 riders on its opening day. The 44-mile segment of commuter rail line will run from Salt Lake City to northern Weber County (It is expected to eventually be extended from Payson to Brigham City)





Calendar

**September 27-28~ Fall Conference, Davis County**

- October 8, 12:30~ Tailoring Development Codes to Meet Development Needs and Trends
- October 23-26~ ULI Fall Meeting, Las Vegas
- November 12, 12:30~ Carbon and the Culture of City Building
- December 10, 12:30~ Transit Oriented Development on the Wasatch Front
- March 2008~ UAPA Spring Conference, Moab, Utah
- November 6-8 2008~ UAPA Fall Conference, Holladay, Utah
- September 10-12, 2008 ~ ULCT Conference

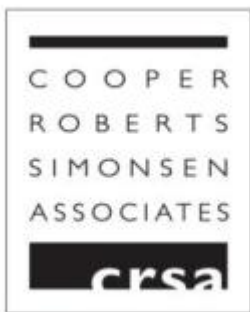
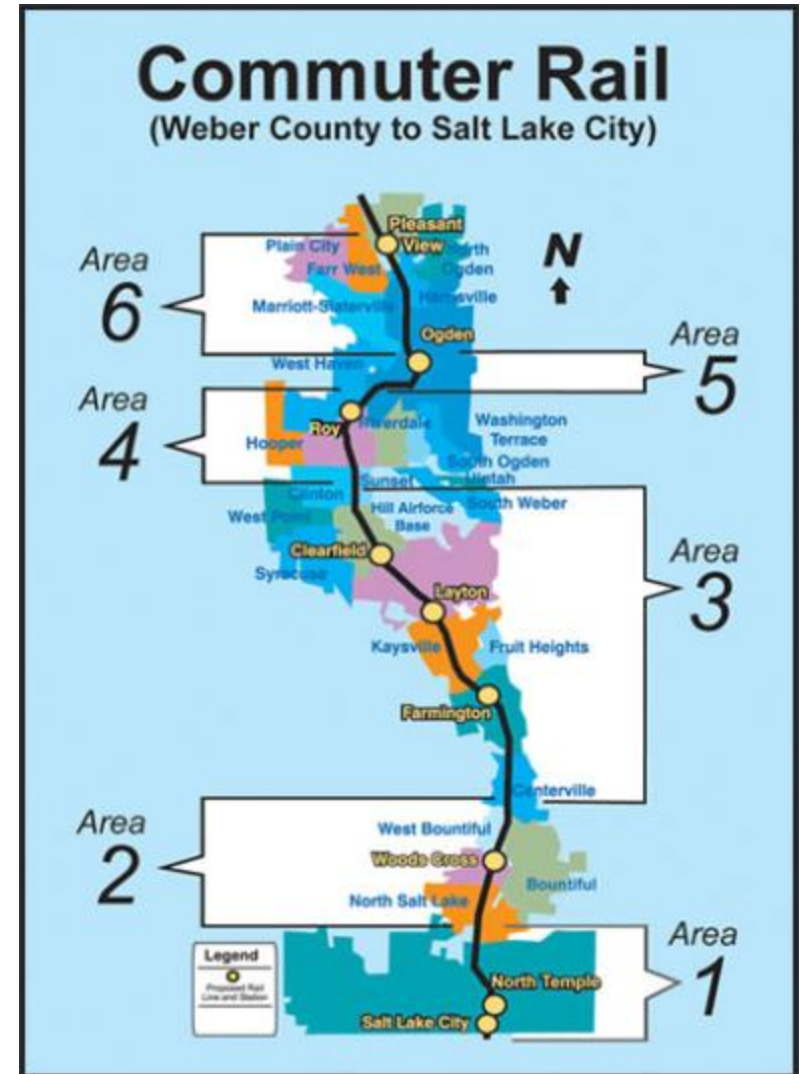
FrontRunner will have profound effects upon Wasatch Front residents who are able to expand their opportunities educationally and economically. Indeed, not only will the FrontRunner provide benefits to downtown Salt Lake City commuters, it will also proliferate opportunities for tourism, education, and employment in Davis and Weber counties. For example, Northern Davis County hosts Hill Air Force Base and its 20,000 employees, the Freeport Center with its 7,000 employees, Weber State University's Davis campus and the new University of Phoenix campus.

The institution of commuter rail will have dramatic effects upon communities privileged to accommodate the commuter rail station. Nine FrontRunner stations are found along the 44-mile commuter rail line. Each station consists of an 850-foot platform to accommodate a 10-car consist, park and ride lots and bus staging. FrontRunner stations include:

- Salt Lake City: 200 South 600 West, at the City's Intermodal hub
- Salt Lake City (future): North Temple and 500 West.
- Woods Cross: 700 South 800 West
- Farmington: east of the new Park Lane bridge
- Layton: south of Gentile on Main Street
- Clearfield: 1250 South State Street
- Roy: 2500 West and south of 4000 South
- Ogden: at Ogden's Intermodal Center at 24th Street and Wall Avenue
- Pleasant View: north of 2700 North at about 1200 West

**Effectiveness of the System**

Effectiveness of transit oriented development is attained through increased density around the transit station. Traditionally, rail stations are located near high-density residential, office or retail uses. An increase in density and activity assures a "built-in" clientele, so to speak. This activity ultimately



provides compounding effects because the area exudes livability and vibrancy which often enables the station and surrounding environs to become a destination.

Development of the area surrounding the FrontRunner stations is vitally important and eventually will guide their overall success. Naturally, this development should be structured around TOD ideals. Conventional zoning generally prohibits a mixture of land uses. With this said, it is imperative for the areas surrounding the stations to include flexible land use regulations. Through research of respective City ordinances for the aforementioned stations, I was pleasantly surprised to find that virtually every municipality has an ordinance in place which will permit the flexibility required to proliferate TOD ideals. Nevertheless, increased vigilance on the parts of private and public planning constituents alike is paramount in order to promulgate the highest and best use for the FrontRunner station sites. This is to say that without continued vigilance, the sites may slip into our all too familiar conventional development site planning.

In addition to site planning efforts, local jurisdictions need to exercise increased vigilance pertaining to efficient vehicular and pedestrian interaction as it relates to the station and its surrounding environs. Increased land use efficiency will be attained through an integrated network of crosswalks and walkways oriented toward the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Further, traffic calming devices and methods such as median landscaping and provision of bike or transit lanes should be used to slow traffic and improve roadway capacity. And finally, roadway improvements and accommodations pertaining to ease of circulation for bus and automobile surrounding the station are critical for overall success.

#### **Conclusion**

Public transportation is a central component of a comprehensive circulation system and offers important opportunities to reduce road congestion and air pollution. Further, an effective and efficient public transportation network is an essential component for a region experiencing immense growth.

The FrontRunner planning efforts mitigate impacts of future development through multi-modal improvements to the Wasatch Front's circulation system. Growth is inevitable, but dumb growth is avoidable. The integration of policies and programs outlined by the Utah Transit Authority represent a conscious decision to grow smartly. The strategic application of TOD principles will greatly help us in our efforts to reduce automobile dependence, improve air quality, and create pedestrian oriented, interactive development.

Darren Janes is currently employed by the Wasatch County Planning Department. He has a genuine, vested interest in the promotion of livable communities attained through progressive thought and implementation.


For more information about FrontRunner visit UTA online at [www.rideuta.com](http://www.rideuta.com). Click on *Projects and Programs* then *Commuter Rail North*.



## Where in the State?

by Peter Matson, AICP

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*"Today's problems cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them." - Albert Einstein*



Answer on page 9



The 2008 APA national conference is going west and in Las Vegas no less! What a wonderful opportunity for planners and planning students in our region to attend a national conference. Though all know Las Vegas as the ultimate tourism destination – it also has the same planning challenges facing the western United States – scarce resources including water, transportation, housing affordability, downtown revitalization, densification & sprawl, and sustainability, to name just a few. There are 70 plus workshops, great program sessions and fun events planned. You won't want to miss it – so start planning now!

## National Community Planning Month

October is National Community Planning Month and we hope you will make plans now to celebrate this year's theme of Great Streets, Great Communities.

This October we will be celebrating examples of great planning with the people of Utah both as a chapter and in your lobby, office or foyer.

The chapter is working on an exhibit to be held in the Urban Room (main entry) of the main Salt Lake City Public Library, during the last half of the month. We are also hoping to display the exhibit at the historic Rio Grande Depot. Please look for details in next month's newsletter and on the list serve. We want everyone to be aware of what a planner does, and this should be a great start. Also listen for radio ads, interviews with our president John Janson, newspaper articles and other publicity.

But this is not just for the volunteers at the chapter level. We hope you will personally get involved. **Please plan now for an exhibit in your workspace**, whether you work for a city or county and its city hall, or you work for a private firm and it is the lobby of your office. We hope every planning office celebrates National Community Planning Month by creating a display of the projects they are proud of. After all if you can't crow a bit during National Planning Month, when can you?

As an extra incentive, **all those who submit a photo or description of your display will be entered into a drawing.** Better than a t-shirt; three books will be given away. The book, which will be reviewed next month, is Great Streets by Allen Jacobs. This is a great book that should be a part of every planner's library. And you could win it just by celebrating in October.

October is only weeks away. Plan your display now, and if you will be in the area, plan to stop by the library.



## September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Layton, Utah



It's not too late to register for the Fall Conference. Join us for interesting and informative sessions, great food, a great setting. See old friends and make new ones. Bring a date to Thursday evening's corn maze, hay ride, Dutch oven dinner, and agritainment event. The corn maze alone is worth \$15.00 and you get in free with your registration, or buy an extra ticket for someone special for an additional \$20.00.

If you are AICP certified, or considering it, you know you need continuing education credits. The Fall Conference will give you a bundle at once.

For questions, or to register with a credit card contact us at [Utah-apa@utah-apa.org](mailto:Utah-apa@utah-apa.org).

The image shows the logo for Fehr &amp; Peers, a company that has been improving communities since 1985. The logo includes the company name and a list of services: Multimodal Analysis &amp; Micro-Simulation, Integrated Land Use &amp; Transportation Planning, Travel Demand Forecasting, Smart Growth Planning, Transit Oriented Development, Traffic Calming, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Bicycle &amp; Pedestrian Planning, and Transportation Impact Analysis. Contact information for the Salt Lake Office is also provided, including the address, phone number, and website.



### Luncheon

Please note: This month's luncheon will be held on Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 and not the second Monday at 12:30 as usual

When: September 11, 2007, 1:30  
Where: West Valley City Hall, Multi Purpose Room  
Who: Mark Fenton

His common sense approach to personal and community health is one that resonates with many. In his former life, Mark was a champion walker, and from 1986 to 1990 he was a member of the U.S. national race walking team and he represented the U.S. in several international competitions. And then Mark turned his passion into a career. With his competitive days behind him, he is now well-known as a persuasive and knowledgeable walking advocate, and one of the nation's foremost experts on its favorite exercise. He's also been the host of the PBS television series America Walking, a contributing editor to Health and Heart Healthy Living magazines, and has written numerous books.

Mark has become a vocal pedestrian advocate and recognized authority on public health issues and the need for community, environmental, and public-policy initiatives to encourage more walking and bicycling. He is the health representative to the four-person executive committee of the Partnership for a Walkable America, and he has addressed a wide range of groups, from regional and national transportation and planning conferences, to professional engineering and safety organizations, to advocacy groups and public health educational symposia.

He's also a public official, currently serving as an elected member of his town's planning board in Massachusetts.

### Pre-disaster Mitigation And Urban Planners Brad Bartholomew

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If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it does it make a sound? Likewise, if a natural hazard occurs and no one is hurt or property destroyed is it a disaster? Only when a natural hazard places lives in danger or causes damage to property does it become a natural disaster. With everything from floods, drought, tornados, wildfires and the ever looming "big one" earthquake, Utah is no stranger to natural disasters. Changing climate, expanding development and a growing population, will likely increase the number of natural disasters that Utah will experience in the future.

Quality growth should be synonymous with safe growth. Throughout Utah and specifically along the Wasatch Front the "safe" areas to develop have been developed. Much of the land



Cedar Hills Landslide 2003

Answer from Page 6:  
Ogden Valley overlooking  
Eden/Liberty area from  
the north Ogden pass.

that is left to develop are lands that have been deemed too “risky” due to their increased likelihood of experiencing a disaster. With population growth, and the price of land and homes steadily increasing, the pressure to develop sensitive areas becomes greater. As more lands susceptible to natural hazards are developed, more people are placed in closer proximity to hazard risks, while increasing the potential economic burden disasters bring.

A city that is not disaster resistant is not sustainable. Disaster resistant land-use planning improves the capability of a city to survive, recover from and thrive after a disaster. Local comprehensive plans can and should reference pre-disaster mitigation plans, and or have a mitigation section with-in the comprehensive plan. Municipalities and ultimately the taxpayers are the ones who pay for poor land-use planning after a disaster strikes. Paying for fire suppression in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), rebuilding after a flood or earthquake and purchasing homes in the way of landslides.

The social cost of disasters is greater than monetary cost. After a disaster homeowners are looking more and more to the municipalities for answers and help. After a recent landslide a homeowner that lost part of his yard said he was surprised that the city and developer had not done more to protect against slides. The Salt Lake Tribune quoted the homeowner as saying, "You buy something, you do a little due diligence, but you figure these houses wouldn't have been built if they weren't safe."

In January 2005, parts of Washington and Kane counties were flooded leading to the issuances of a Presidential Declaration. In St. George, twenty-eight homes were damaged or destroyed causing over \$85 million in private property loss and \$145 million in public infrastructure loss. The event was estimated to be under a 22-year flood event. The loss could have been greater if St. George had not taken mitigation efforts. In 1999, the city incorporated an Erosion Hazard Zone (EHZ) into their Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. The ordinance assures that erosion hazard is mitigated and responsible development takes place. It is estimated that the EHZ ordinance saved more then \$5 million in property damage as well as prevented the destruction of numerous homes and businesses. All homes that were lost were built prior to the EHZ ordinance.

Mitigation efforts provide value to the American people by creating safer communities, and reducing loss of life and property. Mitigation is any activity, which reduces or eliminates risk to hazards. Examples include:

- Complying with or exceeding NFIP floodplain management regulations.
- Enforcing stringent building codes, flood-proofing requirements, seismic design standards and wind-bracing requirements for new construction or repairing existing buildings.
- Adopting zoning ordinances that steer development away from areas subject to flooding, landslides or wildfire.
- Retrofitting public buildings to withstand ground shaking.
- Acquiring homes or businesses in flood-prone areas, relocating the structures, and returning the property to open space, wetlands or recreational uses.
- Full disclosure laws

The Governor’s Geologic Hazards Working Group meets once a month to discuss land use ordinances and building codes in relationship of mitigating natural hazards. The mission statement of the group is to “Improve the land-use-



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regulation process to reduce losses from geologic hazards to an acceptable level.” The group is working on geologic-hazards ordinances for cities and counties to use in their master plans to mitigate geologic hazards.

In 2000 congress passed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). This act required states, local governments and tribes to have a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved Pre-disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). States are required to have an approved State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) in order to qualify for future funding through the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program. With an approved local hazard mitigation plan, communities will be eligible for hazard mitigation planning

Weber County Landslide 2006



and project grants. Approved local mitigation plans also qualify local communities to receive federal disaster assistance following a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

The Utah Division of Homeland Security (HLS) is the state’s designated coordinating agency for disaster preparedness, emergency response and recovery, and hazard mitigation programs. Coordinating with other state agencies, HLS wrote the SHMP and received FEMA approval in November of 2004. The SHMP addresses dam failure, drought, earthquake, flooding, landslides, severe weather and wildfire. To keep in compliance with DMA 2000 the SHMP has to be updated every three years or after a disaster. The state of Utah is currently in the process of updating the SHMP.

The SHMP is intended to direct Utah’s mitigation efforts. HMP’s identify hazards, determine areas vulnerable to natural disasters and determine ways to reduce or eliminate injuries, loss of life, and property damage within these areas. Hazard Mitigation Plans attempt to break the cycle of disaster damage, disaster recovery, and repeated damage, through the mitigation planning initiative. Studies show that for every dollar spent on mitigating disasters, four dollars are saved when disaster strikes. (Multihazard Mitigation Council, NATURAL HAZARD MITIGATION SAVES: An Independent Study to Assess the Future Savings from Mitigation Activities,

[http://www.nibs.org/MMC/MitigationSavingsReport/natural\\_hazard\\_mitigation\\_saves.htm](http://www.nibs.org/MMC/MitigationSavingsReport/natural_hazard_mitigation_saves.htm))

The SHMP is written to provide usefulness in four broad areas. First, the plan should be used to assist state and local agencies in implementing programs and projects which reduce the states overall vulnerability to natural hazards. Second, this plan should aid and facilitate inter-governmental coordination and collaboration related to natural hazard mitigation planning and subsequent plan implementation. Third, the plan serves as a comprehensive strategy for dealing with natural disasters. Fourth, this plan maintains the State’s compliance with DMA 2000 and continues eligibility for federal mitigation and disaster funding.



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For more information on National Community Planning Month, Please visit the National APA website for details, logos, and downloads please visit:

<http://www.planning.org/ncpm/index.htm>



**CELEBRATE**

A more detailed focus on local risk and mitigation can be found in the multi-jurisdictional plans completed through the Associations of Governments (AOG), which encompass all twenty-nine counties and two hundred and sixty-five incorporated municipalities, and five Indian tribes. The use of the AOGs and this regional approach to hazard mitigation planning is intended to ensure coordination with elected officials, emergency managers, planners, public works, and information technology specialists.

DMA 2000 facilitates cooperation between state and local authorities, prompting them to work together. It encourages and rewards local and state pre-disaster planning and promotes sustainability as a strategy for disaster resistance. This planning network will better enable local and state governments in articulating accurate needs for mitigation, resulting in faster allocation of funding and more effective risk reduction projects. All entities wishing to remain in contention for pre and post disaster federal assistance must participate in the planning process and promulgate the completed plan.

Using Pre Disaster Mitigation grant money, the State is currently working with Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) in efforts to update their HMP. The WFRC hazard mitigation plan is in the beginning stages of being updated and should be completed by October of 2008. The State has also received PDM grant money to update the Bear River and Mountainland HMP's and in the next couple of years will apply for PDM planning grants to update the other four AOGs plans. HLS and the AOGs work primarily with the local Emergency Managers on mitigation plans but would like to expand relationships with Planners, Engineers and Public Works, getting them involved with the mitigation planning process.



St. George Flooding 2005

Utah has received just under \$9 million in PDM grants for 15 projects in the last five years. The PDM program is a competitive grant that is awarded to applicants who have demonstrated that their mitigation projects will be beneficial to the residents, save lives and protect property. PDM is a 75/25 match that is appropriated by congress on a year-by-year base and awarded to projects that meet requirements set by FEMA and reviewed by a national board. Some of the projects Utah has been awarded include: University of Utah Marriott Library Retrofit, Fire Fuels Reduction in Emigration Canyon, Fire Station Retrofits, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Retrofit, University of Utah Disaster Resistant University, and the Leonardo Center Retrofit.



The Governors Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB) along with the Utah Quality Growth Commission (QGC) are encouraging “Quality Growth” to protect Utah’s future. Quality growth requires a balance between the protection of critical lands and the requisite development of residential, commercial, and industrial land to accommodate an ever-expanding economy and population. Many communities, however, lack the funds, resources, or staff needed to identify these critical lands, thus leading to an unbalanced system that favors unchecked and costly development. In order to facilitate critical lands planning at the local government level the GOPB and QGC have created the Critical Lands Planning Toolkit.

This toolkit is intended to aid communities in defining, identifying, inventorying, mapping, and prioritizing their critical lands in an effort to achieve a balance between conservation and development. It provides objective data that can be used to cooperate with private landowners to protect property rights and achieve mutual goals in landuse planning. Perhaps the most exciting part of the toolkit is the interactive on-line critical lands mapping tool. The mapping tool, which is a Geographic Information System (GIS) based program, is designed to assist communities in creating maps that not only identify their critical lands, but prioritizes them as well. This toolkit is the first step in creating a critical lands plan for a community. The Critical Lands Planning toolkit can be found online at:

<http://governor.utah.gov/planning/criticallandshome.htm>

A city that is not disaster resistant is not sustainable. Local comprehensive plans can and should reference pre-disaster mitigation plans, and or have a mitigation section with-in the comprehensive plan. HLS and other State agencies have resources and tools available to help local communities in mitigating disasters. With the emergency management community and planning community working together we can plan for the future and make Utah life elevated.

More information regarding PDM grants can be found at the following website:  
<http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pdm/index.shtm>

More information regarding the State of Utah Homeland Security and it's mitigation programs can be found at the following website: *the Help of Others*

<http://homelandsecurity.utah.gov/nathaz>

More information regarding the State and AOG hazard mitigation plans can be found at the following website:

<http://homelandsecurity.utah.gov/nathaz/plans.htm>

For any questions or help contact Nancy Barr, State Hazard Mitigation Officer 538-3721 or Brad Bartholomew, Mitigation Planner 539-3769



Salt Creek Fire 2007