



GREATER SALT LAKE
**Municipal Services
District**



STAFF REPORT: DRAFT SANDY HILLS GENERAL PLAN

FILE NUMBER: OAM2022-000778

PUBLIC BODY: Salt Lake County Council

LOCATION: All Areas within the Sandy Hills Community Council Boundaries of Unincorporated Salt Lake County

PLANNER: Kayla Mauldin, Senior Long Range Planner (KMauldin@msd.utah.gov)

MEETING DATE: January 31st, 2023

REQUEST: Adopt the Sandy Hills General Plan as drafted, or with revisions as needed after the public hearing.

SUMMARY

There will be a public hearing on February 7th to consider the drafted Sandy Hills General Plan. This is the second public hearing on the Sandy Hills General Plan; the first was held on January 11th, 2023 and resulted in a positive recommendation from the Planning Commission. The drafted plan represents the first General Plan proposed for the unincorporated area of Sandy Hills and includes state-required land use and transportation elements, as well as a chapter on resilience and infrastructure. The General Plan was initiated by a request from the Sandy Hills Community Council in 2020. Salt Lake County Regional Development agreed to the request and assigned the project to MSD Planning and Development Services.

The planning process kicked off in January of 2021, but the community did not decide to officially pursue a General Plan until May of that year. In the year that followed, planning staff and the Sandy Hills General Plan Steering Committee (GPSC) collected data, facilitated community engagement events, hosted regular meetings, and drafted plan content.

The drafted General Plan has been vetted by County staff and the County's legal team, as well as by the GPSC. MSD Planning Staff is now requesting that the Council adopt the Sandy Hills General Plan, as drafted or with revisions as needed following the public hearing.

EXHIBITS

1. Draft Sandy Hills General Plan and Appendix.
2. Adopting Ordinance for the Sandy Hills General Plan.

BACKGROUND AND PLANNING PROCESS

Sandy Hills is composed of three unincorporated islands, which are completely surrounded by Sandy City. The community is governed by the County's elected Mayor and legislative council. The County Council has the authority to enact laws and ordinances to carry out its responsibilities, including land use and development regulations (zoning), as long as these laws and ordinances are consistent with the Salt Lake County Code and state statutes.

Unincorporated areas of the County are also members of the Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District ("MSD"). The MSD provides Unincorporated Salt Lake County, including Sandy Hills, with planning and development services as part of its membership agreement. The County Mayor appoints a Planning Commission (with the advice and consent of the Council), which works with the MSD on several planning and development projects. A Community Council is also active in the area. The Sandy Hills Community Council ("Sandy Hills CC") does not have land use authority but is consulted by Salt Lake County on planning and development projects that impact the area.

In 2021, the Sandy Hills CC created a volunteer General Plan Steering Committee ("GPSC") to work with MSD Long Range Planners on the development of Sandy Hills' General Plan. Members included Ron Faerber, Phil Gibson, John Tanner, Dave Arnold, and Tim Morris. The Sandy Hills GPSC is not considered a public body, although all GPSC events were open for the public to attend. At their July 2022 meeting, the GPSC voted to move the drafted plan into the adoption phase. Between July and December, the document was reviewed by various Salt Lake County departments and revised accordingly. The drafted Plan was turned over to the Planning Commission at the beginning of January, and the Commission made a recommendation of adoption (with revisions as noted on pg.11) to the Council. Following the public hearing on January 31st, the Council may adopt, reject, or revise the recommended General Plan.

Residents of Sandy Hills had opportunities to provide input throughout the planning process. A timeline of the General Plan process is presented in Figure 1. In total, staff facilitated:

- 11 meetings with the Sandy Hills GPSC;
- 5 community workshops;
- 4 online surveys;
- 3 meetings with the Sandy Hills Community Council;
- 2 discussions at Planning Commission meetings;
- 2 discussions at Council meetings; and
- 2 public hearings.

Staff estimates that twenty (20) different community members engaged in the planning process, approximately one percent (1%) of Sandy Hills’ population. Those who did engage tended to attend multiple events and provide thorough feedback. Obstacles to engagement included lack of awareness of the Sandy Hills Community Council Area and lack of an online presence among residents (this was especially difficult during the height of the pandemic). On multiple occasions, flyers were mailed to residents or distributed door-to-door in an attempt to encourage more engagement.

Figure 1: Sandy Hills General Plan Timeline.



Credit: MSD Long Range Planning.

CONTENT OF THE DRAFT SANDY HILLS GENERAL PLAN

Document Description:

The Sandy Hills General Plan is an advisory guide for future decision-making in the community, holds a long-term perspective, communicates the wants and needs of the Sandy Hills community to elected officials and to prospective residents, includes a land use and transportation element, per Utah State Code 17-27a-401, and is a 'living' document that can be amended as deemed necessary.

Chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction – the first Chapter establishes the purposes of the General Plan and how it should be used by community members and leaders. Chapter 1 also provides a summary of the community, including key demographics and a brief history of Sandy Hills. Finally, the Chapter introduces the community's vision statement and top priorities.

Chapter 2: Land Use – the Land Use Chapter analyzes Sandy Hills' existing development and zoning patterns and resident feedback related to land use, code enforcement, resource management, amenities, and related topics. The Chapter then proposes a vision for future land use, organized by character areas (described later in this report).

Chapter 3: Transportation – this Chapter contains an in-depth analysis of Sandy Hills' roadways, active transportation networks, public transit access, and transportation safety. This Chapter includes the most feedback from residents, as transportation safety was a key concern among members of the steering committee and the public. The transportation vision outlines future goals for Sandy Hills' transportation network and important interventions that could help improve transportation access and safety.

Chapter 4: Resilience and Infrastructure – the final Chapter considers social, digital, and brick-and-mortar infrastructure in Sandy Hills as well as the relationship of these infrastructure systems to overall community resilience. Data in this Chapter comes from a variety of sources and covers everything from community health to digital inclusion to hazard risk. The future vision for the Resilience and Infrastructure Chapter highlights the key messages for each infrastructure system and for community resiliency and outlines some of the highest priority recommendations from the work program (described later in this report).

Appendix - the General Plan Appendix includes references, a glossary of terms, the Sandy Hills Technical Assessment (socioeconomic profile), and important links and resources.

Key Content:

Vision Statement – at their May 2021 meeting, the GPSC formulated the following vision statement:

“Sandy Hills strives to be a community where all residents have a voice in decision-making and an opportunity to improve local quality of life.”

The vision statement echoes the key message from the Plan: that residents have a vision for their future and want to be involved in planning and decision-making.

Priorities – In addition to the vision statement, the GPSC articulated six top priorities for their community.



High Quality Physical Infrastructure



Regional Communication, Collaboration, and Planning



Land Use and Building Codes that Reflect the Community Vision



Resident Engagement in Decision-Making



Addition / Preservation of Community Gathering Places



Fiscal Responsibility and Transparency

The priority statements are re-visited throughout the General Plan, most notably in the work program tables, where actions are symbolized according to the priority that they support.

Character Areas – Character Areas are used in the General Plan to designate future land uses and zoning considerations. Character Areas have unique characteristics which distinguish them and in Sandy Hills, are drawn around major roadways. Seven (7) Character Areas were identified in the General Plan. Figure 2 shows the location of each area.

Figure 2: Sandy Hills Character Area Map.



Credit: MSD Long Range Planning, 2022.

1. Sherwood Park: Sherwood Park should provide a quiet, walkable neighborhood setting, with the added significance of protecting a wellhead with emergency water pressure in the event of an earthquake or other natural disaster.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 4-5 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, parks and open space, government and institutional.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: industrial, commercial (with the exception of small-scale, integrated services).
2. Sandy Hills Central: The Sandy Hills Central Character Area should continue to be the heartbeat of the Sandy Hills Community, with the largest assortment of housing choices and premier access to Flat Iron Mesa Park and nearby elementary schools.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 4-5.5 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, duplexes on corner lots, parks and open space, government and institutional.

3. Sandy Hills View: The Sandy Hills View Character Area should continue to provide quiet, neighborhood living, while expanding non-motorized access to nearby commercial amenities.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 3-4.5 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, parks and open space, government and institutional.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: industrial, large-scale commercial.
4. Sandy Hills Corridor: The Sandy Hills Corridor Character Area should preserve its existing housing options, while working to enhance walkability to nearby amenities, minimize traffic noise and safety issues, and improve overall property maintenance.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 4-6 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, duplexes, government and institutional.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: commercial, industrial, multi-family residential.
5. Pebblebrook: Existing uses in the Pebblebrook Character Area should be preserved, while greater attention is given to infrastructure maintenance, traffic control, and beautification.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 4-5 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, government and institutional, parks and open space.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: large-scale commercial, industrial, multi-family residential.
6. 1300 E Corridor: The 1300 E Corridor Character Area should continue to mix residential living with limited economic opportunities. Properties should be allowed to slowly transition to small-scale commercial uses as certain conditions are met, and at the desire of property owners.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 3.5-5 du/acre.

- iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, home businesses, commercial hosted in retrofitted homes, pocket parks and open space.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: industrial, multi-family residential, high-impact commercial.
- 7. Belmont Park: The historic Belmont Park neighborhood should continue to offer low-density residential development in a walkable neighborhood with recognition of the area's ties to former Alta Air Park. Infrastructure improvements will be needed to ensure the comfort and safety of residents' walking and biking to school, church, and area parks.
 - a. Recommendations for future zoning.
 - i. Building Heights: 1-2 stories.
 - ii. Density: 3.5-4.5 du/acre.
 - iii. Primary Uses: single-family residential, parks and open space.
 - iv. Prohibited Uses: commercial, industrial, multi-family residential.

Goals: – In total, the community established nineteen (19) goals. This includes four land use goals, four transportation goals, and eleven resilience and infrastructure goals.

- LU1: Improve property maintenance and upkeep of community spaces.
- LU2: Advocate for preservation and enhancement of regional parks, open spaces, and community centers.
- LU3: Enhance built-environment design to protect natural systems and amenities.
- LU4: Expand resident access to housing economic opportunities without diminishing the character of Sandy Hills' residential neighborhoods.
- T1: Promote a safe and convenient transportation system for users of all ages and abilities.
- T2: Improve access to local and regional destinations.
- T3: Seek innovation in transportation solutions.
- T4: Engage in regional transportation planning and advocacy efforts.
- RI1: Work to strengthen partnerships with local and regional organizations to bolster infrastructure and resilience initiatives.
- RI2: Help residents find resources related to social services and programs.
- RI3: Help residents feel welcome and included in the Sandy Hills community.
- RI4: Make efforts to innovatively employ emerging technologies to address infrastructure and resilience needs.
- RI5: Make efforts to bolster Sandy Hills' digital infrastructure network.

- RI6: Empower residents to address household infrastructure threats.
- RI7: Promote fiscally-responsible and community-engaged infrastructure planning.
- RI8: Work with partners to attain level of service desired by residents.
- RI9: Help the community prepare for and adequately respond to emergency scenarios and future conditions.
- RI10: Engage and plan for community members who will be most severely impacted by decisions and emergency events.
- RI11: Work to foster a resilient and resourceful citizenry.

Work Programs and Key Recommendations:

At the end of the Land Use, Transportation, and Resilience and Infrastructure Chapters, goals, objectives, and recommended actions are organized into work program tables (see Figure 3 example). For each recommended action, the table lists organizations that could be involved, the priority level (on a scale from 1-5, with 1 being the highest), the anticipated funding source, metrics for measuring success, and resources available to aid in the implementation of that action. In addition, each action is accompanied by the icon of the community priority that it represents. The work program tables represent the actions recommended in order to reach the community’s goals and vision. However, all items in the tables are dependent on funding availability, staff capacity, resident support, and political will.

Figure 3: Example Work Program Table from Sandy Hills General Plan.

Resilience + Infrastructure Goal 2: Help residents find resources related to social services and programs.						
Objective RI2.1: Work to assemble online content related to ageing in place, food security, housing assistance, and medical support.						
Recommended Action	Involved Parties	Priority Level	Funding Source	Metric for Measuring Success	Resources	Priority Addressed
Consider creating a page on the Community Council website connecting residents to needed social services.	Sandy Hills Community Council; MSD Communications Manager	1	Staff Time; Volunteer Time	A web page is added to the existing website, sharing important social resources.	BCCA List of Helpful Resources	
Work to make resources, including dump vouchers and informational packets, available at in-person Community Council meetings and community events.	Sandy Hills Community Council; MSD PDS	3	Volunteer Time; Printing Costs	Meeting participants are rewarded through an exchange in services and/or informational packets.	Pueblo Planning - Example for Improving Community Planning Relationships	

Credit: MSD Long Range Planning, 2022.

A few key recommendations from each Chapter include:

- Land Use:
 - Enhance code enforcement activities by amending ordinances as needed and educating residents on common code violations and how to report issues via the MSD Citizen Problem Reporter.
 - Allow a flexible mix of small-scale commercial and residential uses along 1300 E, as feasible, and in a manner that is compatible in scale and design with surrounding uses.
 - Disseminate General Plan materials to regional partners and advocate for the community vision in regional planning and decision-making.
- Transportation:
 - Improve active transportation safety by completing Sandy Hills' sidewalk network and enhancing existing crossings, such as the one at 1300 E and 8600 S.
 - Advertise existing public transit services to residents via the Community Council website and social media accounts. Work with regional agencies to make first- and last-mile connections from Sandy Hills' neighborhoods to TRAX lines and the 9400 S bus route.
- Resilience and Infrastructure:
 - Resume emergency response and operations plans for Sandy Hills, and work with partners to complete a CERT plan for the community.
 - Expand the Sandy Hills Community Council website to include helpful resources for residents, including social services, digital inclusion programs, and funding sources for emergency home repairs.
 - Consider applying for a grant through AmeriCorps to expand the capacity of the Community Council.
 - Enhance communications between Sandy Hills and service providers by educating residents on the appropriate contacts for various services and concerns.

USING THE SANDY HILLS GENERAL PLAN

The Sandy Hills General Plan is an advisory document intended to guide future planning and decision-making for the Sandy Hills community. Through the planning process, consensus was built around a shared vision which is articulated through the Plan. Decision-makers, residents, and other stakeholders can and should use this General Plan and its vision to coordinate and implement actions related to land use, transportation, infrastructure, recreation, open space, services, housing, and other resources. The Plan can serve as a reference point for several issues related to land use, transportation, and resilience and infrastructure.

As directed by the County Council, MSD Planning Staff will provide support in working through each of the Plan's work program items. Partner entities and the Community Council may also take leadership of certain work program actions.

PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

The drafted Sandy Hills General Plan has been reviewed and revised by MSD Planning Staff, Staff in the County's Office of Regional Development, Public Works Engineering, Emergency Management, the Mayor's Office, and the County's Legal Team. In addition, the Planning Commission recommended adoption (with revisions) of the Plan following their public hearing on January 11th, 2023. Revisions included minor formatting errors, such as correcting a mislabeled figure and adjusting font size or column widths for consistency across the document. All revisions have been incorporated into the drafted Plan presented in Exhibit 1.

Staff has determined the following findings in support of the drafted General Plan:

- The General Plan meets all requirements of State Code 17-27a-Part 4 for General Plan content and creation, including a land use and transportation element.
- The Plan incorporates community feedback given through workshops, surveys, and General Plan Steering Committee Meetings.
- The Plan is data-driven, utilizing reputable sources such as the United States Census Bureau, Esri Community Analyst, data from the Salt Lake County Health Department, and more.
- The drafted Plan is supported by the General Plan Steering Committee, which is composed of several Sandy Hills Community Council members (approved by the GPSC in July 2022).
- The drafted Plan received a recommendation of adoption from the Salt Lake County Planning Commission.
- The Plan includes enough information, explanations, and defined terms that a resident who has never participated in planning processes can adequately understand the content and vision presented.
- The work programs presented provide adequate detail for staff to work toward implementation of recommended actions.
- The Plan is a living document and should be revisited and updated as circumstances necessitate.

Given the above findings, staff recommends that the Council adopt the Sandy Hills General Plan, with or without revisions as applicable following the public hearing.

CONCLUSION

The Sandy Hills General Plan is the result of a community-driven planning process that kicked-off in January 2021. The final product includes four chapters (Introduction, Land Use, Transportation, and Resilience and Infrastructure), as well as a robust Appendix. The Plan has the support of the General Plan Steering Committee, which was composed of several members of the Sandy Hills Community Council. It should be used as an advisory document to guide future planning and decision-making in the Sandy Hills community. Staff recommends adoption of the General Plan as drafted, or with revisions as applicable following the public hearing.