



Jordan River Parkway Trail Completion Prioritization – Salt Lake County



SPONSORS

GOAL:
To complete
The trail from Utah
Lake to the Great Salt Lake

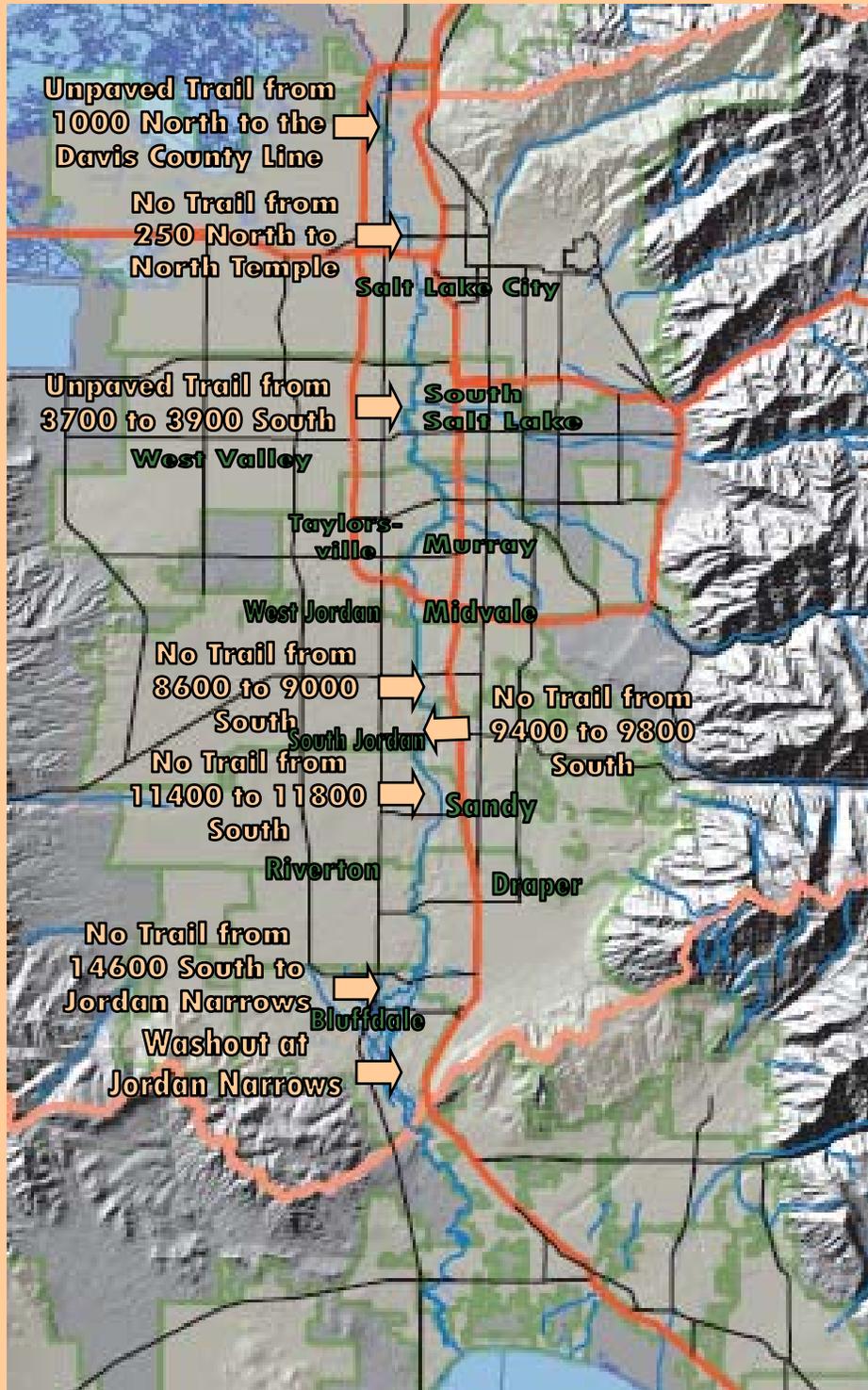
DRAFT: December 29, 2004

MAPS FROM "HIKE TRAILS IN THE SALT LAKE VALLEY"
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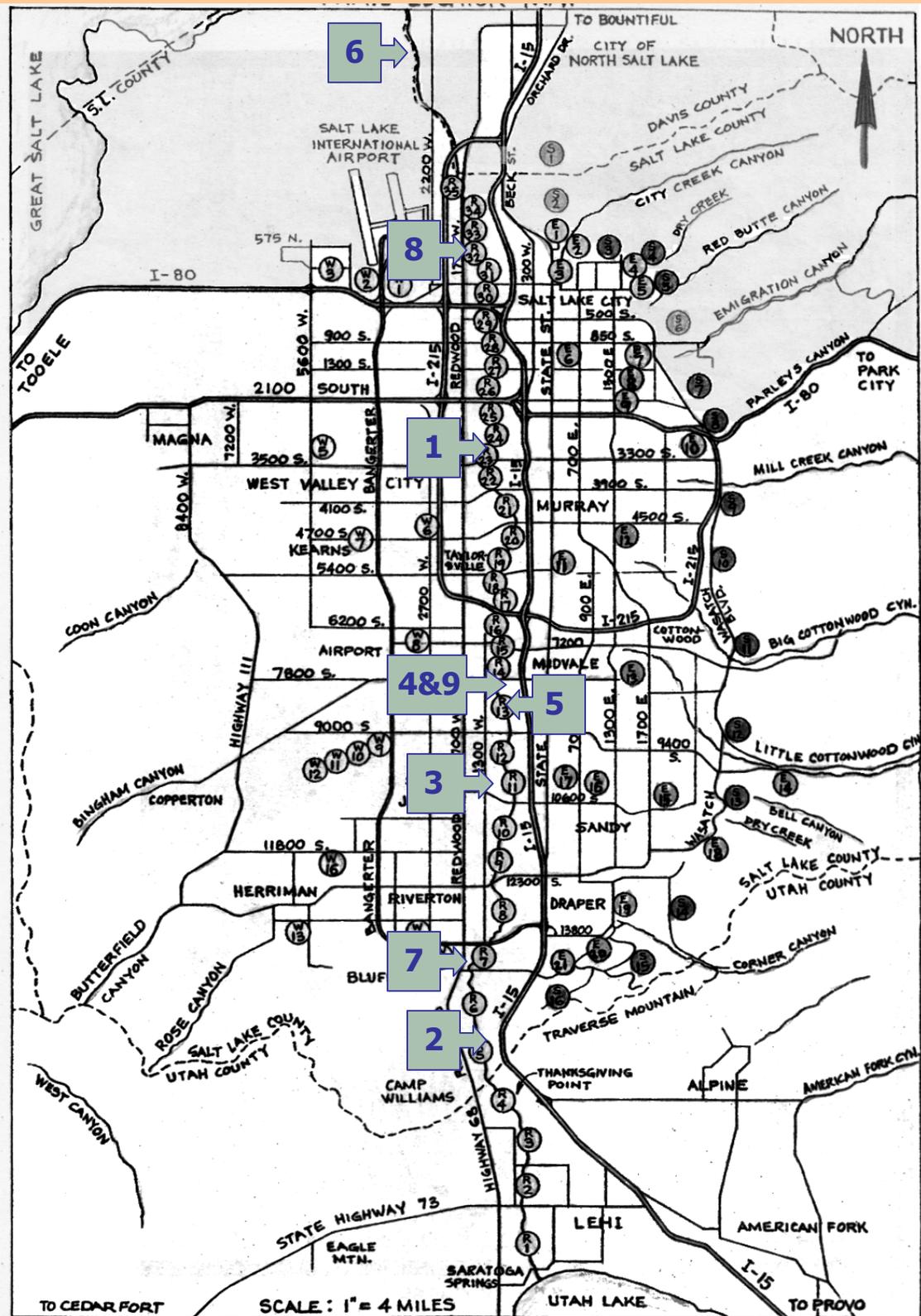
ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

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**Salt Lake Valley, Showing Jordan River in the Center,
Unfinished Trail Sections and
Municipal Boundaries**



Salt Lake Valley, Showing Jordan River Parkway Trail in the Center
Unfinished Trail Sections are Numbered in Priority Order
— See detailed section descriptions in report



BACKGROUND

The Jordan River Parkway trail has a number of incomplete sections or sections needing work. The purpose of this project was to create a prioritized list of for completing the trail within Salt Lake County. The report also includes a discussion of issues and recommendations.

The Jordan River Natural Areas Forum (JRNAF) is a voluntary coalition of local municipalities, county, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, local businesses, and individual citizens dedicated to promoting awareness, acquisition, management and restoration of natural areas along the Jordan River — balanced with the human use of the river corridor.

The trail completion prioritization process was conducted by the “Trail Group” — an ad hoc subcommittee of JRNAF — in response to a request from the Salt Lake County Mayor’s Office and a resolution passed by JRNAF on July 7 2004. The process included gathering of data, public open houses and a web-based comment sheet.

Open Houses to collect public input were held —

- October 26th: South Jordan Community Center 10778 S. Redwood Rd.
- October 27th: Murray NRCS 1030 West 5370 South
- October 28th: Day Riverside Library 1575 West 1000 North

Comment sheets were available for the public to prioritize the unfinished trail sections and to provide other information. The comment sheets were also available on the JRNAF web site.

After gathering information and public input, the Trail Group prepared a draft report. The draft will be posted on the web site and additional comment taken. The final report will be revised and presented to the Salt Lake County Council of Governments for review and action.

DISCUSSION

Expanding the popular Jordan River trail in Utah, Salt Lake, and Davis counties will enhance the recreational opportunities of residents throughout the Salt Lake Valley. In so doing, the county and municipalities should strive to create a user-friendly trail, preserve open space, and protect the environment, especially sensitive areas and those of ecological importance. In addition to a wonderful recreational destination, the trail can provide a connection with nature, including a sense of awe and an appreciation of natural beauty as well as a place where the public can see natural processes. The various benefits of the trail include enhancement of the quality of life of Utah, Salt Lake, Utah and Davis county residents, protection of environmental resources, recreation, preservation of scenic views (viewsheds), public access to the river, educational opportunities, and protection of the watershed both directly and indirectly.

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

In designing the trail, consideration should be given to environmentally sensitive areas and resources, particularly wetlands, the riparian zone, the Jordan River (including the banks and floodplain) steep slopes, viewsheds, mature native trees, and lands that provides unique habitats for wildlife. There has been some discussion as to whether or not the trail should be allowed on both sides of the river. However, this shouldn't be a concern as long as the following guidelines, which have been adopted by JRNAF, are respected:

1. Wetlands

- a. Avoid wetlands:
 - i. Align trail around them.
 - ii. Create natural buffers between wetlands and the trail.
- b. If the trail must go through wetlands, then use a bridge.

2. Riparian Zone

- a. Create a buffer between the trail and the river. Consider that the river may meander and change position and that flooding is likely to occur at some future point. The buffer will protect the trail infrastructure as well as the natural river processes and vegetation.
- b. Allow views of the river, but discourage off-trail travel through natural buffers such as hedgerows (willow, rose).
- c. Post signs to encourage people to appreciate and respect the trail and nature.
- d. Provide areas where people can have access to the river or views:
 - i. Consider opportunities (e.g., kiosks) to educate the public about natural processes, hazards, wildlife, and benefits of the environment.
 - ii. These should be designed to avoid damage to the riparian zone, avoid cut banks, avoid the need to rip-rap, etc.

3. Jordan River, Banks and Floodplain

- a. Create a buffer between the river and trail. If possible, place the trail away from the river as much as possible.
- b. Strive to create a diversity of experiences. Basically, this means that the trail does not need to be the same 10 feet from the river for the entire length of the river. Let the trail meander away from the river, perhaps around a wetland, around a parcel of open space, through a woodland (responsibly), or up on a ridgeline.
- c. Avoid the need to rip-rap the banks of the river.
- d. Protect natural vegetation.
- e. Let the river meander.
- f. When the Jordan floods, have alternative routes or have means of closing the trail.

4. Viewsheds

- a. Create views that allow people to see the Wasatch, the Oquirrhis or other natural areas. This might mean a rise in the trail, a ridgeline, or even protection of a parcel as open space so that a large building (or complex) is not built.
- b. Coordinate with adjacent landowners in development.
- c. Do not simply build the trail within the narrow confines of the river corridor.

5. Steep Slopes

- a. Generally this should not be a concern, but avoid steep slopes because of erosion.
- b. If trail must do through or over slopes, allow drainage and passage of water.

6. Mature Trees (Native Species) and Natural Areas

- a. Where stands of native trees (e.g., cottonwoods, willows) exist, align the trail around or design so that minimum number of trees are cut or damaged.
- b. Areas protected or set aside as open space or as wildlife habitat are not automatically trail material. Some parcels have conservation easements or other deed restrictions which might prohibit trails, buildings and other facilities.
- c. It is also important to recognize and respect the use of the land, and to coordinate with the landowner.

7. Additional Considerations

- a. Lighting: Recommend not lighting the trail to avoid light disturbance to wildlife. It may be acceptable to light trailhead and parking areas, but have lights directed down rather than up or laterally and use minimum amount needed.
- b. Trash Receptacles: Place at trailheads, not along the trail. This will make it easier to collect, and will be a lesser enticement for raccoons, skunks, and such from residing near the river. Many people may like raccoons and skunks, however, they can create health concerns, can be a nuisance, and are predators on birds, bird nests, and other wildlife.
- c. Noxious Weeds:
 - i. Adopt ways to keep them from spreading.
 - ii. Adopt control methods.

- d. Dogs:
 - i. Keep dogs on-leash; do not allow them to run free for the safety of people, pets, wildlife and the river.
 - ii. Encourage people to pick up after their pets.

RIGHTS-OF-WAY & DEVELOPMENT

There is not a public right-of-way for a trail along the entire river – only where it has been acquired. There are regulatory controls over development, including trail development, within the river corridor. Controls include:

- County Flood Control – Twenty-five feet along the banks.
- State of Utah Parks and Recreation – One-hundred and fifty feet from the banks of the river (or as far as the flood-plain)
- State of Utah Sovereign Lands – The riverbed
- State of Utah Water Rights – Stream modifications
- State of Utah Department of Transportation – Where roads exist or are developed
- Local government zoning – All areas
- US Army Corps of Engineers – Wetlands and riparian areas

Although these controls exist, residential and commercial development occurs within the flood plain – there is no absolute prohibition. The trail group received comments regarding this issue, but considers them outside the scope of this report except as follows:

1. Any new road or bridge construction projects should include underpasses to provide for the trail.
2. When new residential and commercial development is proposed, developers should provide rights-of-way for the trail.
3. New development should always follow the environmental guidelines above.

COST & FUNDING

Except as noted in the part of this report that describes the specific trail sections to be completed, cost estimates for completion of the trail are not available. However, some information from trails that have recently been done is helpful. For example:

Paved 10' wide pedestrian/bicycle trail	\$25/linear foot ¹
Graded 6' wide equestrian trail	\$ 8/lineatr foot ²
Trailhead (no restroom)	\$100,00 - 200,000
Restroom facility	\$85,000 - 170,000
Bridge across river 10' wide	\$140,000 – 180,000

¹ One mile = 5288 feet. Construction and paving cost \cong \$132,200

² Construction for one mile \cong \$42,300

The crossing underneath 6400 South (photos below) was completed last year at a cost of over \$500,000.



Funding recommendations are outside the scope of this report. It is hoped that this report will provide information to assist with funding efforts – both for the trail and other needs of the Jordan River corridor.

VOLUNTEERS

There are many opportunities for volunteers to help with projects, especially river and trail clean-up.

MAINTENANCE

Trails need to be maintained. In unpaved areas, there are a lot of puncture weeds and tree roots that make biking/blading difficult. Also, overgrown shrubbery near Oxbow Jail becomes a safety issue.

The suggestion was made to remove exotic plants and maintain the natives.

Thought needs to be given to clearing the river of hazards for canoeing.

SAFETY

There is a concern for women on the trail north of 48th South. Apparently, north of 39th South there are a lot of homeless persons and illegal activity.

Public comment was received concerning horses on the paved trail presenting health and safety issues.

There is a concern among respondents about redundant and unnecessary access. One respondent suggested that “vandalism, polluting, dumping, and other illegal activities are bound to escalate if we create too much access.” However, residents in Murray had the same concerns before the trail was made, yet the exact opposite happened. Since the trail was completed problems have diminished in the area.

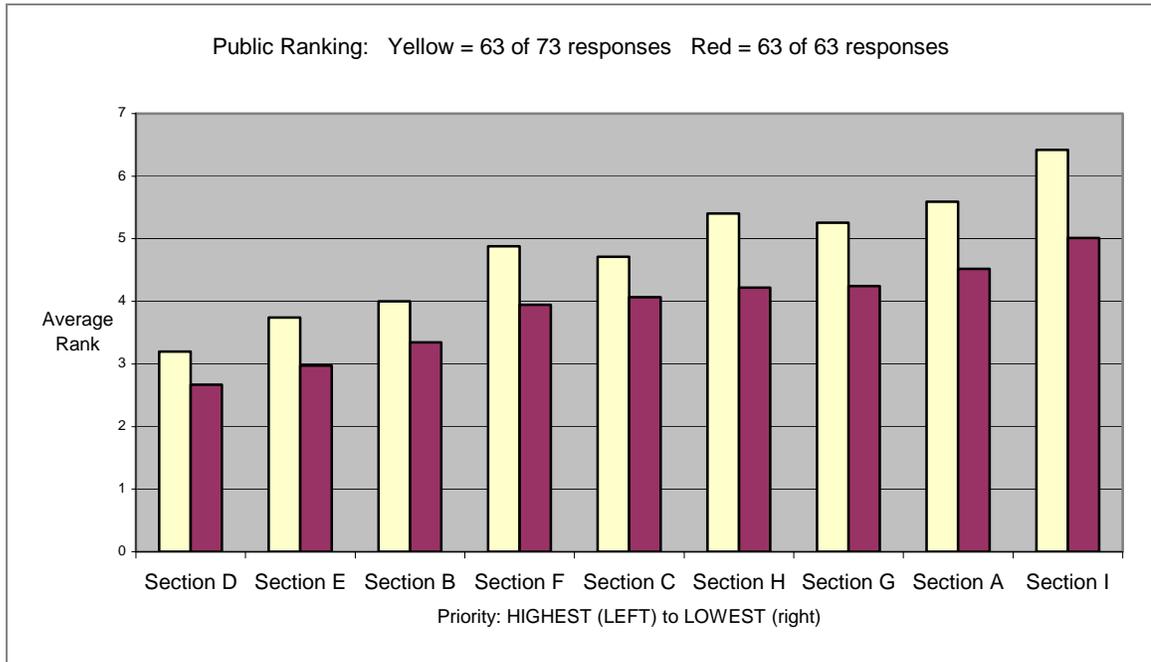
A report commissioned in 2002 found:

In summary, the Jordan River Parkway Trail is an amenity to the majority of Salt Lake City residents who live along its border. The perception among residents is that the trail has increased the value of their homes and it has not compromised their safety. Trail public safety is an important issue to residents and police. In general, the trail is not dangerous and the crimes committed on the trail are by illegitimate trail users. The police believe that these problems can be solved through CPTED and a bicycle patrol. Realtors have found that selling homes along the Jordan River Parkway is easier because of the trail, or that the trail does not affect the selling of homes. The Jordan River Parkway Trail is perceived as a wonderful open space and valuable asset to this community.³

³ “The Jordan River Parkway Trail: Property Values and Public Safety” Sponsored by Salt Lake City Corporation, The Foundation for the Provo-Jordan River Parkway, and Helen M. Peters, Chair of the Sugar House Community Council

PRIORITIZED LIST

Three open houses were held and a web site was set up to receive public input. The public was asked to rank the priority for completion of the trail sections. A total of 73 responses were received and only 63 actually prioritized the trail sections. This small number is not considered significant and the trail group did not give this information much weight in the final analysis. However, the results were averaged to show the general sentiment of the respondents. The chart below is presented here for informational purposes only.



The Trail Group Discussed and analyzed the data they received. They then created a matrix (page 10) showing when each trail section is likely to be completed, relatively. The time line is not tied to the calendar, because the actions are dependant on so many different parties. However, the Trail Group wants to emphasize the idea that multiple activities can be taking place on multiple sections (indeed many already are) to achieve the goal of completing the trail, rather than focusing on one section at time.

After reviewing the matrix, further analysis and discussion of the relative realities, the trail group came up with the prioritized list, below.

PRIORITIZED LIST
JORDAN RIVER TRAIL SECTIONS NEEDING COMPLETION
WITHIN SALT LAKE COUNTY

These sections with their priority numbers are shown on the map at the beginning of this report.

- 1 { 1. Section C – Unpaved Trail from 37th to 39th South: Easy to complete quickly
- 2 { 2. Section I – Washout at the Jordan Narrows: Easy to complete relatively quickly
- 3 { 3. Sections F & G – 114th to 118th South (Previously listed as two sections on either side of the river – route needs to be prioritized): Bridge to be funded and constructed by UDOT within 2 years. Other work underway.
4. Section D – 86th to 90th South (Temporary route): Will take a lot of work to complete
5. Section E – 94th to 98th South: Will take quite a while to complete
6. Section A – 10th North to the Davis County Line: Relatively easy to complete, but route contingent on sports complex plans with funding
7. Section H – 146th South to the Jordan Narrows Trailhead: Will take a lot of time and work to complete
8. Section B – North Temple to 250 South: The most difficult to complete
9. Section D – 86th to 90th South (Long-term route): May take a long time to complete

¹ There is very little distinction between priority 1 and 2. They should be worked on simultaneously.

² There is very little distinction among priorities 3, 4, and 5. They should be worked on simultaneously.

³ Priorities 4 and 9 are the same section of trail. Priority 4 is a temporary solution and priority 9 is the long-term solution, which is very uncertain.

Jordan River Parkway Trail Completion: Salt Lake County Portion					
TRAIL SECTION/ACTIVITY	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
SECTION A - 10th North to the Davis County Line					
Planning	█				
Funding		█			
Paving		█			
Build Trail Heads			█		
SECTION B - North Temple to 250 South					
Planning & Design	█				
Negotiations		█			
Funding			█		
Construction				█	
SECTION C - Unpaved Trail from 37th to 39th South					
Funding	█				
Paving		█			
SECTION D - 86th to 90th South (temp. route on 700 S)					
Negotiations	█				
Planning & Design	█				
Funding		█			
Construction		█			
(Long-term route)					█
SECTION E - 94th to 98th South					
Negotiations	█				
Planning & Design		█			
Funding			█		
Construction				█	
SECTIONS F & G - 114th to 118th South					
Negotiations (prioritize rte.)	█				
Planning & Design		█			
Funding	█				
Construction		█			
SECTION H - 146th to the Jordan Narrows Trailhead					
Negotiations	█				
Planning & Design	█				
Funding	█				
Construction			█		
SECTION I - Washout at the Jordan Narrows					
Planning & Design	█				
Funding	█				
Construction		█			

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

General

- Follow environmental guidelines for all trail development
- Coordinate with all responsible jurisdictions for:
 - Rights-of-way acquisition
 - Design
 - Funding
 - Other issues
- Involve public – especially volunteers
- Provide adequate trail maintenance
- Assure trail safety
- Work with communities in Davis and Utah Counties to address their trail needs

Section A — 10th North to the Davis County

Priority #6

- The section from 1000 North to Redwood Road should be paved.
- The section from Redwood Road to Davis County should be planned as the Sports Park concept develops.

Section B — North Temple to 250 South

Priority #8

- Salt Lake City should move forward with funding for design work.
- In the mean time, discuss options with land owners.
- Completion of the trail will be a few years from now.

Section C — Unpaved Trail from 37th to 39th South

Priority #1

- Salt Lake County should move forward with funding for the work.

Section D — 86th to 90th South

Priority #4 (temporary route) Priority #9 (long-term route)

- It is impossible to estimate when the land north of 9000 South will become available for the long-term trail route.
- In the mean time, the temporary solution along 700 West should be built.
- Sandy City can work with UDOT to improve 700 West and 9000 South and plan the 9000 South crossing.
- Sandy City can complete the gap in the trail on the south side of 9000 South.
- The County and Cities can work on the design and cost estimates for the trail.

Section E — 94th to 98th South

Priority #5

- It is impossible to estimate when the land north of 9000 South will become available for the trail.
- In the mean time, Sandy City, West Jordan City and South Jordan City can work with the canal company to improve the crossing.
- The cities can work on design and cost estimates for the trail.

Sections F & G — 114th to 118th South

Priority #3

- The bridge at 11400 South needs to be put in as soon as possible.
- Set up stakeholder process to determine priority trail route(s).

Section H — 146th to the Jordan Narrows Trailhead

Priority #7

- Bluffdale should be supported in its efforts to complete this section. It will take a lot of time, negotiations and funding to complete.

Section I — Washout at the Jordan Narrows

Priority #2

- This is a repair/maintenance job, although some re-design is advisable. Salt Lake County will begin construction next year on a trailhead on Sunrise Dr. (north of Camp Williams and the Veterans Memorial Cemetery, approximately 170th South and 12th West.) It makes sense to repair the trail and have this relatively cheap and easy section in tact.