



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ogden Valley is a special place to its residents and visitors. Whether it's the scenic vistas, abundant natural resources, rural atmosphere, recreational opportunities, quiet lifestyle, or a combination of these qualities, Ogden Valley clearly has a lot to offer. Over the last four decades, Ogden Valley has served as the urbanizing Wasatch Front's "great escape" for recreationists interested in a diverse array of activities including hiking, biking, horseback riding, boating, sailing, snowmobiling, skiing, hunting, fishing, and scenic driving. During this same time period, many newcomers and visitors have chosen to move to or invest in Ogden Valley, leading to a tremendous amount of real estate development. Herein lies the predicament facing Ogden Valley today: how can the qualities that make Ogden Valley a desirable place to live, recreate, and visit be protected while allowing for the inevitable growth to assure that the region becomes a world-class resort destination? This document attempts to answer this question.

Ogden Valley is home to four recreational resorts: Nordic Valley, Powder Mountain, Snowbasin, and Wolf Creek. Ogden Valley also has substantial public lands, including National Forest, State of Utah, and Weber County properties, that encompass one-third of its total land base. While the resident population is approximately 5,400 citizens who live in about 3,000 homes (about one-third of these are second homes), over 1.5 million visitors come to Ogden Valley each year to recreate. Based on current zoning and land use ordinances (including adoption of the proposed Sensitive Lands Ordinance), a minimum of 16,000 homes could be constructed in Ogden Valley at full build-out (over five times the number of homes that exist today and about 2.5 times the number anticipated in the OVGP's carrying capacity analysis).

Weber County's Ogden Valley General Plan (OVGP) was adopted by the County Commission in 1998. In the State of Utah, governing bodies (Cities and Counties) are required to prepare a General Plan that acts as an advisory guide for making land use decisions within their jurisdictional boundaries. The OVGP includes elements for Sensitive Lands, Commercial Development, Industrial Development, Carrying Capacity, Policies, Infrastructure, and Land Use. Recreation planning was called for in the OVGP, but no progress on this element was made through the year 2004. This Recreation Element document has been prepared to meet this need and to achieve the OVGP's goal of enhancing quality recreational opportunities and to implement its objectives.

Following adoption of a General Plan, governing bodies must then adopt land use ordinances that require all forms of development to comply with the General Plan. Since adoption of the OVGP, Weber County has prepared and adopted a number of new ordinances to implement the policies included in the OVGP. Preparation of the remaining ordinances in some cases is currently in progress and in other cases is still pending.

This Recreation Element document also identifies what ordinances and investments Weber County will need to make in order to implement this component of the OVGP.

From effective stakeholder input throughout the one-year planning process, a number of recreation growth and development concepts influenced the recommendations found in Chapter 9. These include:

- ★ **“Do Not Kill the Goose that Laid the Golden Egg!”** Open space, and the quality of life, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty that open lands provide, is the most valuable asset to the Ogden Valley. Ogden Valley residents desire open space and Ogden Valley visitors are attracted by open space. It is imperative that Ogden Valley citizens, property owners, developers, and officials recognize the importance of protecting the qualities that residents desire, and that attract visitors, while encouraging quality resort and recreation development. Current zoning is recognized as the greatest threat to preserving the quality of life in Ogden Valley due to the increasing demand for new construction and the low-density pattern of development that the zoning tends to encourage.
  
- ★ **“Protect Private Property Rights and Provide Property Owners with Options.”** None of the recommendations in Chapter 9 take away the rights of property owners in Ogden Valley. In fact, the recommended Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program and the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program provide options for property owners, especially those who are interested in conserving their lands for the benefit of future generations. It could be argued that TDR and PDR programs allow property owners to fully exercise their rights by keeping land open while still obtaining a return on their investment.

★ **“Provide a Level Playing Field for the Real Estate Development Community.”**

Inconsistent re-zoning could favor some developers with additional density while restricting it from others, creating speculation and unpredictability for investors. A reliable development policy would provide assurance to developers that surrounding quality and long term value of the development are sustained. The real estate development community relies on Ogden Valley’s recreational draw, which is defined by quiet hamlets and villages surrounded by rural landscapes and wildlife habitats. It is important to have future development preserve this pattern, which cannot happen without reliable, well-managed development rules and policies. Consistent rules would allow all land owners to profit from the increasing attraction of Ogden Valley while encouraging a balance between land development and preservation of open lands.

★ **“Balance Citizen Desires for No Additional Units with Incentive-Driven Programs.”**

Upon learning that full build-out for Ogden Valley under current zoning could increase the number of homes between four and six times the number today, residents did not want zoning changes that allowed more homes. This desire has to be balanced with the need to offer incentives to property owners and developers to choose TDR, PDR, or cluster subdivision options. Similar programs exist in Utah and across the United States; all have incentives to encourage quality growth.

★ **“Use Development Approaches that Reduce Infrastructure Costs.”** The current development approach in Ogden Valley (single family units spread across the Valley on large 3-acre lots) will increase costs to provide utilities, roads, schools, etc. and will lead to increased levels of air and noise pollution. By encouraging clustered developments, costs to deliver services

are reduced as water lines, sewer lines, and other utilities are shortened. Clustered development also makes public transportation more feasible and cost effective, thereby diminishing the need for expensive roads and reducing the associated air and noise pollution.

- ★ **“Encourage Private Businesses and Entrepreneurs to Meet the Growing Demand for Recreational Facilities.”** Right now, recreational facilities on public lands, such as campgrounds, parking areas, and boating facilities, are over capacity. Any substantial increases in the amount or types of recreation currently occurring on public lands are expected to have measurable negative impacts on the natural environment. It is only through development of future recreational facilities on private lands that recreational demands can be met in Ogden Valley.

The first six chapters of this Recreation Element provide much of the background information that was collected to support the recommended policies and implementation strategies found in Chapter 9. Chapter 7 summarizes the issues and challenges facing Ogden Valley, while Chapter 8 evaluates a number of alternative development scenarios.

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