



**SARATOGA
SPRINGS**

Life's just better here

Saratoga Springs



**COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026
FOR THE CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS, UTAH**

FEBRUARY 2021

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A Message from the Mayor



We take great pleasure in presenting our city's 5-year community-based vision and strategic plan. Many hours have been invested in its creation, most of which were offered by volunteer citizens with a desire to contribute to the future of our community.

In creating this plan, we were careful to set up a process that would be driven by citizens rather than elected officials or city staff. We'd like to personally thank the members of our strategic planning advisory committee. They gathered citizen surveys and planned meetings where residents could share their thoughts about the future of our community and where to best focus our efforts as a city. Citizens from all areas of the city collectively contributed thousands of hours to the creation of this plan.

We have been truly overwhelmed by the response. The committee reviewed information from over a thousand written survey responses and evaluated feedback from hundreds of residents that participated directly in community dialogue sessions. Thank you to those that took this opportunity to share your thoughts!

This plan will serve as a guide for city staff and elected officials over the coming years as we consider how to best allocate the resources entrusted to us by our citizens. While many elements identified in the plan reflect long-standing efforts and do not represent a drastic shift in the city's overall strategy, this plan will guide us in focusing our efforts as a city and will form the basis of our annual budgeting process.

We are committed to using the resources entrusted to us to advance the priorities identified in the document that follows. Imagine the future we can create if we unite our efforts in advancing those things that our citizens have identified as most important! We look forward to joining with you in building that future.

Mayor Jim Miller



Some Interesting Things About Saratoga Springs

Saratoga Springs boasts a high quality of life that includes beautiful lakeshore living, a quiet and rural atmosphere, great air quality, superb views and an excellent central location midway between the Provo/ Orem and Salt Lake City metro areas. There is good access to I-15 for both north and south travel and to the Bangerter Highway via Redwood Road for quick travel to Salt Lake International Airport (30-40 minutes by car) or other critical locations north of the City. Provo/Orem is located approximately 20- 25 minutes by car via I-15.

The City has required that large donations of property for parks, open spaces and trails be set aside as a part of its normal and standard development requirements. The City offers outstanding lake access for skiers and boaters with an 8-acre public City Marina. An 18-hole golf course along the lakeside opened in the spring of 2003. There are office and retail areas planned in and around the views available from the foothills and within close proximity of the golf course.

The City provides full urban services including water, sewer, police, and fire and emergency medical response. There is a fully functioning administrative office with staff providing city management, building permitting and inspections, development services, public works, utility billing and records management.



The Strategic Planning Process

The central purpose in this undertaking was to provide Saratoga Springs with a tool that can be used by elected officials and City staff to guide goal-setting and to focus efforts on those things that residents and visitors have identified as their highest priorities. To truly be effective, this plan needs to become part of how elected officials and City staff operate and think about programs and services. Ultimately, the plan needs to be incorporated into how success is measured in detailed operating plans and regular City business. No matter how comprehensive this plan is, its usefulness will be defined by how effective the City leverages it in guiding decisions and creating the future to which residents aspire.

Methodology

The Saratoga Springs City Council determined the need to bring focus to spending priorities while addressing the needs of the residents of Saratoga Springs. Key to this endeavor was the creation of a community strategic plan. In line with an approach used by countless communities across the country, the Council determined that such an initiative, if it were to survive and become truly useful to the community, would need to be a community initiative driven by residents.

The City Council appointed a committee of resident volunteers, known as the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC), to drive the strategic planning process. The strategic planning process began with SPAC meetings with staff and Council members to define expectations and understand community priorities. These meetings also assisted the committee in identifying critical stakeholder groups that should be engaged during the strategic planning process.

The methodologies used by the SPAC to engage the public included the following:

- Community dialogue sessions.
- Stakeholder focus group meetings.
- Resident surveys.
- Business meetings.
- Interviews with community leaders.
- Announcements at special events.

The Strategic Planning Process

Saratoga Springs Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC)



Erica Groneman



Tyler Tolley



Joel Nelson



Matt Bunker



Stephanie Slack



Dave Weber



Sid Hatch

Stakeholder meetings were held with business groups, service clubs, civic and charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, neighborhood groups, and a host of others. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) held virtual open houses and invited the public to help generate community priorities and ideas that would eventually form the basis for the strategic directives outlined in this plan. Surveys were administered through the City website as well as distributed to City email groups and volunteers. The process of gathering stakeholder input took over four months.

In all, the committee was able to gather 1070 survey responses and synthesize that input into clear priorities. Almost 250 individuals participated in the 12 stakeholder meetings and community dialogue sessions. Participants in the process were able to provide the SPAC with information related to key initiatives and improvements they wanted to see implemented in the plan.

At the end of this process, the SPAC began to synthesize the thousands of pieces of information gathered from residents into more specific focus areas, or “strategic directives.” Ultimately, four strategic directives were produced. As the SPAC volunteers collaborated with staff on addressing resident feedback, they observed that the City is already engaged in significant initiatives that address many resident priorities. In light of that observation, several initiatives in the plan state to continue efforts conducted by the City, with the expectation that communicating and increasing public awareness of the work the City is doing will be a guiding principal moving forward. The committee, utilizing these community priorities, then collaborated with City staff to produce specific strategic initiatives associated with each focus area. The final plan was adopted by the City Council in February 2021. It will stand as a guiding document for the City in both short and long-term planning decisions through 2025.

The Strategic Planning Process

Below is a word cloud gathered from the resident surveys representative of resident priorities:

I believe the City is doing its best to accommodate the influx of people moving in. The City is expanding its economic opportunities, access to recreation, and working hard to address the challenges that come with growth. I am excited to see where we go from here!

"There are many good things to enjoy about this city, and the desire by leadership to continue that quest for improvement is one of them."

Where should the City focus resources?

Rec Center Post Office Open Space Pool
Cemetery Restaurants Crosswalks Lower - Density
Sidewalks **Saratoga Springs** Shopping
Youth Sports
Roads Hardware Store Marina Recreation
Park Development Infrastructure
Trails Library Lakefront Business Offices **Redwood Road**
Density **Traffic**

Saratoga Springs Strategic Plan

Explanation and Definition of Key Strategic Plan Elements

In the process of examining this strategic plan, the reader will encounter various terms and phrases associated with key elements of the plan. It is important to understand the strategic plan within the context of what these elements are intended to contribute.

Primary Directive

This is a statement that clearly describes the City's rationale for existing. It is the product of what we in Saratoga Springs are passionate about, where our competencies lie, and what we believe provides the means to realize our community vision. The Primary Directive represents the highest-level directive, serving as the hub of the plan to which all other strategic directives are attached.

Strategic Directives

This plan contains four strategic directives. A strategic directive is a very high-level priority that is articulated in a way that effectively describes a community priority. Directives are not intended to describe specific initiatives, ideas, programs or services. They merely capture in a very general way what residents believe is most important in Saratoga Springs.

Strategic Initiatives

Each strategic directive is accompanied by several strategic initiatives that assist in bringing the directive to the level of application. In other words, strategic initiatives are more specific actions, programs, and ideas designed to bring about the realization of the strategic directives. A directive is a destination, and the initiatives represent the route that will enable us to arrive at our destination.



The Primary Directive of Saratoga Springs

The primary purpose of government is to provide a foundation for civilized living. While this concept may appear elementary and more than intuitive, much debate in recent years has swirled around the role of government. It is therefore critical that, before presenting the community strategic direction, the City define its role in the lives of its residents. We do this by formulating and articulating the Primary Directive of Saratoga Springs.

This is the central reason for why Saratoga Springs exists. It lies at the intersection of three things:

- 1. What are we deeply passionate about:** Why do we come to work every day? What motivates us? Why do we care about what happens in Saratoga Springs?
- 2. What makes us the best in the world:** Are we uniquely positioned to do something extraordinary? What are we equipped to accomplish? This is a question of not only what we can do, but what we can do better than others.
- 3. What drives our economic or our resource engine:** What needs to happen in order to empower us to realize this primary directive?

Saratoga Springs's Primary Directive:

“To provide and sustain an environment where individuals, families, and businesses join together in creating an exceptional quality of life.”

What are we deeply passionate about?

In Saratoga Springs, we have a passion for elevating and sustaining quality of life. We understand completely the sacred trust that is ours: to maximize our residents' investment by supporting those programs, initiatives, and ideas that will provide an opportunity for all to live the life they dreamed of when they first came here. We believe that our passionate commitment to our community vision and values, combined with careful planning and purposeful follow-through, will translate into opportunities for every resident.

What makes us the best in the world?

With our location to both Northern and Central Utah County and Salt Lake County, Saratoga Springs is uniquely positioned to build a community that enables a truly vibrant and unique quality of life for our residents. Enjoying life in a beautiful, natural environment that is simultaneously close to the major Utah cities allows residents to enjoy the best of both city and suburban life. Our strong sense of hard work is evident and enables all residents to take ownership in contributing to the success of the community.

What drives our economic and resource engines?

We believe that as we lift our residents' quality of life, we will have demonstrated our competency and trustworthiness. As we demonstrate these qualities, we will generate trust from our residents. As our residents' trust increases, they are more likely to continue to invest in the services that we provide. As they invest in the community, we are empowered to continue lifting our level of service, which results in greater trust -- the process repeats itself. Public trust drives Saratoga Springs's resource engine.

The Primary Directive of Saratoga Springs

All programs, initiatives, and energy must therefore be focused on achieving the Primary Directive. All metrics and outcomes should support this Primary Directive. The strategic plan's role in fulfilling the Primary Directive begins by defining what residents believe is essential to quality of life. As a precursor to developing the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee was able to identify four factors that residents believe need to be emphasized to improve the quality of life in Saratoga Springs.

These equally important factors are:

1. Well-Planned Growth & Housing
2. Economic Development
3. Access to Recreation & Natural Beauty
4. Connected Community



Strategic Directive 1

Well-Planned Growth & Housing



“I want to live in a community that welcomes growth, yet is proactive in addressing all the needs which accompany that growth.”

Saratoga Springs is projected to nearly double in the next two decades. While there are many factors related to growth that are outside of the City's authority, the City will continue to work with UDOT, Utah County, Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG) and other State agencies to address the growth-related challenges of traffic and congestion. The City will also continue to pursue state funding to alleviate strategic congestion points such as Mountain View Corridor and Foothill Blvd. At the same time, the City will continue to leverage existing code to ensure that new residential developments are properly zoned and do not exceed agreed upon density limits. Lastly the City will ensure sufficient staffing for emergency services such as fire and police to serve the growing population. By addressing growth in a proactive way, the City can ensure that future generations of residents experience the quality of life that residents currently enjoy.

Potential Initiatives:

- Coordinate with UDOT and State/County on addressing Redwood Road congestion
- Secure State funding and proper development of Mountain View Corridor and Foothill Blvd
- Continue to update, evaluate, and implement Transportation Master Plan
- Continue to enforce policy that limits the density increase of already zoned and approved projects
- Review and update General Plan
- Amidst continuing growth, maintain utility service levels for existing residents
- Continue to update Capital Facilities Plan as needed
- Maintain appropriate staffing levels for emergency response services as the city grows
- Continue to follow resident priorities listed in proposition 6 regarding future growth

What Does Success Look Like?

- Improved, reliable travel options entering and leaving the City
- Continued attention to Redwood Road, Mountain View Corridor, and Foothill Blvd
- General Plan and Capital Facilities Plans remain on track and continue to guide growth
- Maintenance of appropriate emergency response staffing levels

Strategic Directive 2

Economic Development



"I want to live in a place where I can work, shop, and eat without the need to leave the city limits."

Saratoga Springs has now reached a size that begins to naturally attract businesses to operate in the City. Residents expressed a strong desire for more dining options in the city. An important step in making this possible is daytime foot traffic for those restaurants. To attract more dining options and generate more employment within Saratoga Springs, the City will continue to actively recruit businesses and support increasing the number of commercial office locations. The City will continue to streamline the development process to make it easier for businesses to begin construction and eventual operations. Highlighted by recent events, employees more frequently work from home and need access to reliable, high-speed internet. As an essential prerequisite to certain businesses joining the community, the City will also evaluate options to improve access to internet for its residents. In addition, the City will work to diversify its retail base to give residents a wider array of options, including additional dining experiences such as sit-down restaurants. Critical to success in every other area of the strategic plan is the imperative to foster growth-minded economic development and bring more high-paying jobs to Saratoga Springs to support the growing population, and fund public needs to maintain quality of life during growth.

Potential Initiatives:

- Continue to Implement 2018-2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Work to streamline commercial development process and communicate already streamlined processes
- Continue to support investment in infrastructure such as broadband that can attract innovative and technology-based industry
- Continue to recruit additional food-service businesses, including sit-down restaurants
- Continue to expand local retail and shopping options, including hardware, grocery, clothing, and other areas
- Continue to strategically attract and retain a mix of businesses that can provide employment opportunities
- Continue to support commercial development of flex office warehouse space and business parks along Mountainview Corridor and Pioneer Crossing
- Coordinate with Eagle Mountain, and Lehi, on connectivity of commercial projects

What Does Success Look Like?

- Growth in median wage
- Expansion of commercial property tax base
- Job growth
- Presence of more diverse dining options, including sit-down restaurants
- Improved retail and shopping options, including hardware / home improvement

Strategic Directive 3

Access to Recreation & Natural Beauty



"I want to live in a city where each member of my family can enjoy both outdoor and indoor recreation."

The residents of Saratoga Spring highly value the recreational amenities in the community, and desire for the City to expand and build upon the great existing parks and trails networks to continue to support the opportunity for an active lifestyle. For outdoor recreation, the City will strive to develop the North marina on Utah Lake to give residents additional access to the lake. The City will also work on updates to the Marina Park in the South for increased public use. In addition to Utah Lake, the City will continue to implement its Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. For indoor recreation, the City will conduct a feasibility study to assess the possibility of investing in an eventual recreation center. The City will also continue to grow its recreation programs for both youth and adults

Potential Initiatives:

- Continue to implement the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan
- Conduct a feasibility study for a possible recreation center, including aquatic options
- Continued growth of programs for both youth and adult recreation
- Form plan for development of North marina on Utah Lake
- Improve Marina Park for recreational access
- Maintain access to Lake Mountain as a recreational amenity for pedestrians and motorists
- Finalize purchase of remaining land for Patriot Park
- Identify feasible expansion of library services
- Work with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and SITLA to coordinate appropriate public uses of land adjacent to the City
- Create communication plan for public access to natural amenities, including Utah Lake and Lake Mountain
- Continue to encourage development maintaining view corridor preservation of Utah Lake and Wasatch Mountains
- Continue to invest in the planting and expansion of the City's inventory of trees
- Continue to negotiate open space requirements in new community developments

What Does Success Look Like?

- Participation of both adults and youth in organized rec leagues and usage rate of public parks
- Increased number of lakefront acres developed
- Improved public access to Utah Lake as measured by usage rates
- Increased access to trails for pedestrians and motorists (ATV, bicycle)
- Recreation center feasibility study is completed
- Residents are updated on public access to natural amenities
- Increased number of new trees planted
- View corridor preservation is encouraged

Strategic Directive 4

Connected Community



“I want to live in a community where I can get where I need to go by car or on foot in a safe, efficient manner.”

Common among suburban communities is the desire for safe walkability among residential neighborhoods. Currently, there are several gaps in infrastructure between community developments that cause a physical separation between neighborhoods, and limit pedestrian safety. To help connect residents between residential developments, the City will review current contracts to identify any gaps in infrastructure that are not planned to be filled in the coming years. Based on the results of this inventory, the City will address any gaps that are not under the responsibility of developers. the City will continue to work with Alpine School District to identify safe walking routes and implement improvements as needed.

Potential Initiatives:

- Review development contracts to identify any current gaps in residential infrastructure
- Address existing infrastructure gaps between community developments
- Invest in needed pedestrian crossings near schools and select intersections
- Continue to enforce connectivity in new developments
- Educate community on master trails and existing pedestrian options
- Continue to pursue grant opportunities for walkability projects
- Continue coordination with Alpine School District to identify safe walking paths for Saratoga Springs' schools

What Does Success Look Like?

- Improved connectivity and walkability across the City
- Reduced number of infrastructural gaps between highly populated residential developments
- Number of residential pedestrian access points identified and zoned

Implementation of the Plan

Simply having a plan does not ensure its implementation. The City should take specific measures to implement this strategic plan and measure progress toward its realization. Specifically, the City should:

- Utilize this plan as the basis for annual strategic planning, goal setting and budgeting.
- Annually establish and review outcome measures associated with strategic plan directives. Adjust as necessary to ensure close correlation between outcome measures and plan directives.
- Create a community scorecard for City and resident use. This should be in a highly illustrative format, accessible electronically via the City's website. The site should provide data associated with previously identified outcome measures. It is critical that this information is kept as current as possible.
- Under the direction of the City Manager, annually provide the City Council and departmental decision-makers with a City business plan that ties Council goals to strategic directives, identifying critical outcomes, measures, objectives and expected budget impacts.
- Enable the SPAC to conduct annual follow-ups with City management on strategic plan implementation progress and impacts and report high-level findings to the Council.



Special Thanks

The strategic planning process and composition is a broad-based community endeavor. Generally speaking, the broader the base of community participation, the greater the survivability of the plan. In Saratoga Springs, this was definitely a broad-based community effort. The City expresses its appreciation to several individuals and groups that made this initiative possible. Special thanks to:

- The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC): Erica Groneman, Matt Bunker, Sid Hatch, Dave Weber, Joel Nelson, Stephanie Slack, Tyler Tolley
- The Saratoga Springs Kiwanis Club, Thunder Ridge Elementary PTA, Harvest Hills HOA, Greenhouse Community Church, Utah Valley Homebuilders Association, the business community of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga Springs nonprofits and Saratoga Springs Employees.
- Jenna Smith, Carla Jensen, Russell Jones, Jason & Nicole Quiring, Brandon Taylor, David Johnson, and countless other individuals.
- The residents of Saratoga Springs, without whose participation this plan would not be possible.
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