

THE RIVER BOTTOMS VISION



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

SUMMARY

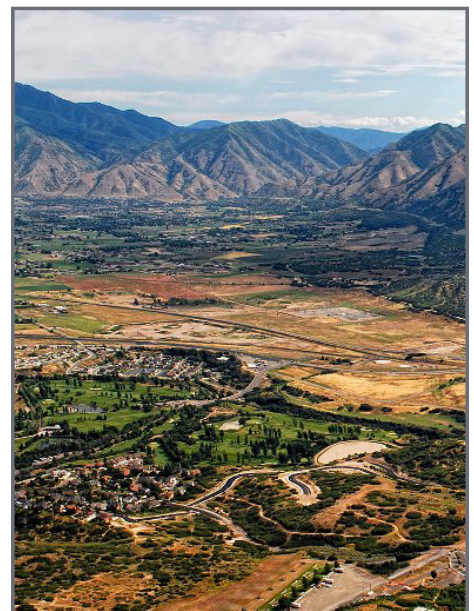
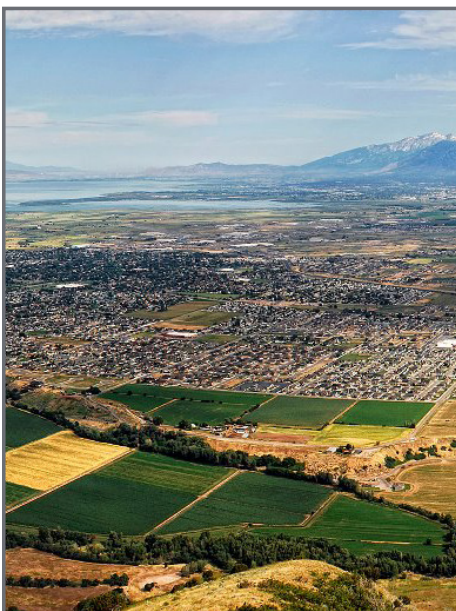
March 2018

On March 6th and 7th, 2018, the consultant team, Logan Simpson, conducted a series of stakeholder interviews at the Spanish Fork City Hall and at other nearby agricultural sites. Over the course of these two days, 32 stakeholders consisting of landowners from the River Bottoms, adjacent landowners, and City officials were given an opportunity to express their opinions and share their ideas about the future, opportunities, and constraints of the River Bottoms. Stakeholders were notified by postcard, by email, and by phone using the best contact information that was available. A total of 149 postcards were mailed out to property owners inviting them to participate. Additional interviews will be conducted as requested by interested stakeholders.

An array of views were shared with the consultant team during the interviews, ranging from some voices calling for complete preservation of the agricultural land, to others desiring that the land be developed, with some wanting a mixture of the two. A theme of private property rights needing to be respected was also strongly articulated as landowners did not want to be limited in what they could do with their land with many wanting to be able to sell it and others wanting to pass it on to their posterity.

The following comments are quotes taken from stakeholders and recorded by the consultant team. These quotes are the opinions of the stakeholders present at the interviews and do not reflect any ideas, plans, or agenda of the consultant team or the City of Spanish Fork.

The City and consultant team would like to thank all those who were in attendance at the interviews, as well as those who allowed the team to go to their property and talk with them. If you would like to participate in a stakeholder interview, please contact Krissy Gilmore at 801-364-0525 x124 or KGilmore@logansimpson.com to schedule a time.



LAND USE: WHAT WE HEARD...

- With the roaring development going on north of here, and now rapidly coming here, we would be incredibly irresponsible to allow this area to disappear into yet another paved over district!
- As far as I can see, it is all private property. I don't think the city and citizens should have much say in what a private land owner can do.
- 1100 East and River Bottoms Road need improvement.
- The plan is critical because you can already develop 5 acre lots and rural subdivisions in the area. We know the result we will get and we want something better. No one wants continuous 5 acre lots too small to farm too big to mow.
- Commercial makes sense to the East.
- Keep it open!
- Everyone would sell for the right price and we cannot predict what future generations will do.
- If we have any development, we do not want cookie cutter homes. They must come with upfront public amenities that contribute to the River Bottoms character.
- We need ways to create density on some of the larger lots since land values are so high, smaller units are necessary.
- The River Bottoms are a natural, beautiful area that have been enjoyed by generations. With housing and other buildings going in there, it will just turn into another neighborhood and Spanish Fork will lose one of its most defining features.
- No high-density housing.
- Support a variety of density in key places so people can live throughout their life in the same place.
- The River Bottoms needs to be divided into zones because each area has different opportunities. Development and the area should have a set of core principles that are followed and given, such as that the river is sacred, public access should be provided, water, streets should terminate in views, and should have a natural feel.
- The City should offer to do a land swap with their golf course and the land owners in the southwest quadrant of the River Bottoms to build a new golf course there and new homes where the golf course currently sits.

AGRICULTURE: WHAT WE HEARD...

- Current zoning restrictions force many small landowners to build smaller structures on their properties resulting in hobby style agriculture.
- Our dream has been to own a small farmstead and be self-sufficient.
- Five acre lots may look nice today but will most likely become weed fields tomorrow.
- The soil in the River Bottoms grows beautiful crops.
- Our vision would be to exempt agricultural zoning.
- We need to frame a vision for the future of agriculture so we can keep these farms for future generations.
- We need to have an educational process as part of this project, where people can learn how the land is currently used, and how the City benefits from that.
- Our farm has changed practices to adapt to the population growth. We decided, why fight them, when we can feed them. We run a u-pick operation and we sell at farm stands.
- People grapple with what it means to develop a farm that is only five acres.
- People enjoy and take advantage of the greenbelt designation.
- Cannot efficiently farm the benches, so other options should be provided.
- Some lands have already been put into permanent conservation protection.
- We need the ability to use tools to preserve working landscapes.
- I am a farmer at heart, but I can see the writing on the walls...

RECREATION: WHAT WE HEARD...

- [The Spanish Fork River Trail]... is by far the most scenic and peaceful area in the county. Please don't allow development in this area -- preserve the open spaces and farmland, which are beautiful.
- The location of the golf course should be moved because the wind from the canyon makes it too windy to golf in the mornings and evenings."
- The River Bottoms needs more trails.
- Should be a special recreational destination.
- We would like to be able to ride our horses along the river and all the way up to the mountains. Horse trails should connect to the Fairgrounds as was promised.
- It is wonderful that the City has invested so much in recreation outside of the City limits, as an amenity for those of us who live here.
- Those who bike the trail don't take care of it. They don't clean up after themselves -- vandalism has skyrocketed.
- People gather at the River Bottoms because they don't have to look at houses; they can just enjoy the open space and views and mountains.
- This is a very special place. It is one of the few places we have where people can pause, relax, and get away from the work fray.
- River Bottoms Trail needs additional access points and parking areas. Create a soft surface trail adjacent to mail trail for runners, equestrians, etc.
- Would love to see a rope course and amphitheater.

ENVIRONMENT: WHAT WE HEARD...

- I am so sad to see the constant case of: the old person dies, the children immediately sell all the land because they have no interest, and the land is turned into dollars, the fields disappear, birds lose habitat, pavement and sidewalks prevent water from soaking in, etc...
- The wetland on the western side of the River Bottoms was built 4" higher than the natural land and is seeping into the water table.
- The 100-year floodplain should dictate a permanent green-way free of development.
- We need to think of the wildlife on the river. If we build up with houses, it could negatively impact the wildlife.
- If you dramatically enhance the river and allow areas to breath and expand the project would be a success.
- We need to apply new tools to preserve our lands, including direct and conservation easement acquisition, new city-wide funding sources, clustering with bonuses, minimum lot sizes, family lot splits, transfer of development rights, and land swaps.
- Reconstruct the wetland as a true gateway.
- Build green-ways around the springs.
- Create a tree protection and mitigation plan.
- It is so important to protect the river.
- We should plan for wildlife areas. There are elk, bobcats, and eagles. There is an opportunity for habitat improvements, like raptor nesting posts.
- Plan should respect the 100-year floodplain.
- There are areas where groundwater is just below the surface.
- Add new central lakes as focal points.