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Salt Lake County lays out plans for Oquirrh hills

By [Doug Smeath](#)

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Kennecott Land has laid out its plan for what it hopes to do with 75,000 acres along the Oquirrh Mountain foothills. Starting today, residents can see what Salt Lake County planners are thinking about that land.

The first public draft of the county's general plan for the west bench area — a huge swath of undeveloped land used for years by Kennecott Utah Copper for buffers and transportation in its mining operations — is now available for review, and the county is looking for public input on the plan.

"As you read through it all, ask yourself questions. Ask questions of the plan," county planner Tom Roach said Tuesday as planners summarized the plan for members of the community councils that represent unincorporated townships in the county planning process. Several of those townships, including Copperton and Magna, abut the land.

Kennecott Land plans to develop about 41,000 of the 75,000 acres in the coming 50-75 years. The rest of the land is on steep slopes and will remain open space. But the area is still vast — the largest undeveloped piece of land in a U.S. metropolitan area, county planners say — and is expected one day to be home to 500,000 people.

Kennecott's general plan for the area, released late last year after a series of public planning summits, is much more detailed than the county's plan. It calls for two large urban centers — one in Salt Lake City near Magna, the other at South Jordan's Daybreak community — connected by transit lines with smaller residential and commercial developments throughout.

The company talks of schools, five parks, offices and retail centers and possibly even a ski resort in the Oquirrh.

The county's general plan, once adopted by the county council, will instead be a guiding set of goals and principles that will be used as a framework for specific land-use decisions as the development begins to take shape.

And while Kennecott Land and county officials are creating the plan, it is ultimately up to residents and community leaders to let them know what the plan should include, county planner David White said.

The plan will focus on 11 key elements, including the way the development fits into the Wasatch Front as a region, transportation and land-use issues, environmental sustainability, community values, economic sustainability, affordable and diverse housing and so-called "heritage resources," such as historic sites.

The plan is available online at www.pwpds.slco.org/zoning/html/GeneralPlans/wbplan.htm. It can also be seen at the county planning division's offices in the north building of the county government complex, 2100 S. State, and at county libraries.

Throughout the summer, three county planning organizations will have discussions on the plan, all to be held in Room N1100 at the county government building:

- Salt Lake County Planning Commission, 9 a.m. July 11 and Aug. 8.
- Magna Planning Commission, 4 p.m. July 13 and Aug. 10.
- Copperton Planning Commission, 9 a.m. July 19 and Aug. 16.

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