



City of Holladay

CANAL TRAILS STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

August 2022



City of Holladay

4580 South 2300 East, Holladay, Utah 84117

801-272-9450 | www.cityofholladay.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

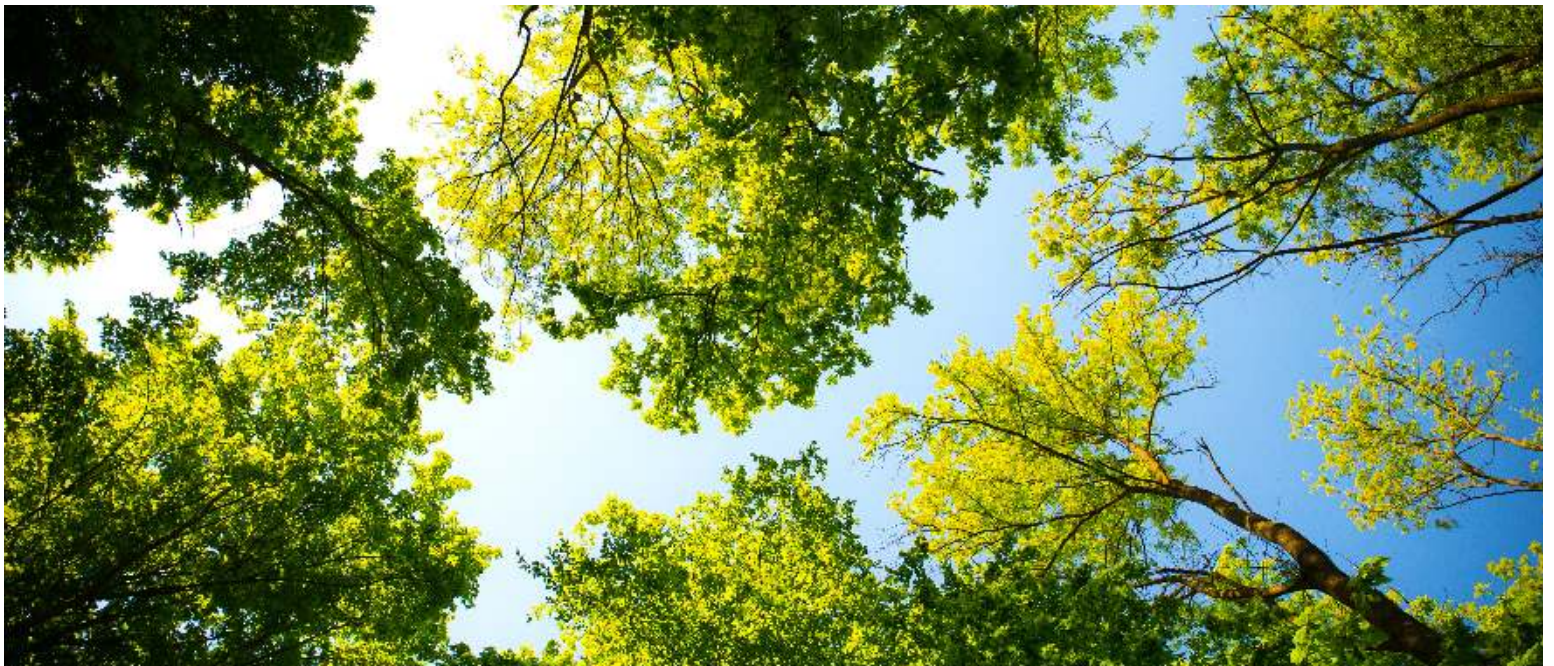
PAGE	03	Introduction
	04	Property Ownership
	08	Public Outreach & Feedback
	13	Conceptual Design & Cost Estimate
	17	Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The City of Holladay officially became a city in November of 1999. Soon after its incorporation, the City completed its first parks, open space, and trails master plan. The City has evaluated and refined that plan over the last 20+ years and has identified a number of potential long-term bicycle/pedestrian network enhancements, as found within the current Holladay General Plan, 2016-2031. Additionally, in a community survey conducted in Spring 2019, as part of the Holladay@20 Preparing for Tomorrow process, residents indicated that the most important projects to their overall quality of life were maintaining roads and developing trails. Because Holladay is fairly built out, the City is exploring the feasibility of future trail development opportunities to meet these goals.

The spaces along the existing Jordan and Salt Lake Canal and the East Jordan Canal that cross through the City of Holladay and connect to Murray City to the west and Millcreek City to the north were identified as proposed trails in the Holladay General Plan. Both of the canals and a majority of the right of way adjacent to the canals were believed to be either owned or have an existing easement by Salt Lake City Public Utilities (SLCPU). Prior to this study, no conclusive documentation of property rights was available. SLCPU is open to the possibility of canal trails, as the trail could also serve as a maintenance road for the canal.

Holladay was awarded a grant from the Wasatch Front Regional Council's Transportation and Land Use Connection (TLC) program to study the feasibility of a trail system along the canals with the assistance of MGB+A, a consulting firm of landscape architects, urban planners, and designers, and Environmental Consultants Inc (ECI), a group of licensed surveyors. This study is an important step to help the City: 1) document property ownership, 2) gather general community feedback and input from neighbors adjacent to the canals, and 3) understand what the potential trail system would cost to construct. With these details, the Holladay City Council can make an informed decision on the next step for the canal trails concept.



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

The City of Holladay has numerous canals in the community. The study area focuses on limited sections of the Jordan and Salt Lake Canal and East Jordan Canal. It does not include the Upper Canal or any other waterways in the City.

Jordan and Salt Lake Canal

The Jordan and Salt Lake Canal runs the entire length (north/south) of the City of Holladay. The study focused on the section of canal from Murray Holladay Road to the Van Winkle Expressway (see Exhibit A). This canal was constructed from 1879 to 1882.

East Jordan Canal

The East Jordan Canal was constructed in the 1920s and generally runs parallel to Highland Drive from Walker Lane to Van Winkle Expressway.

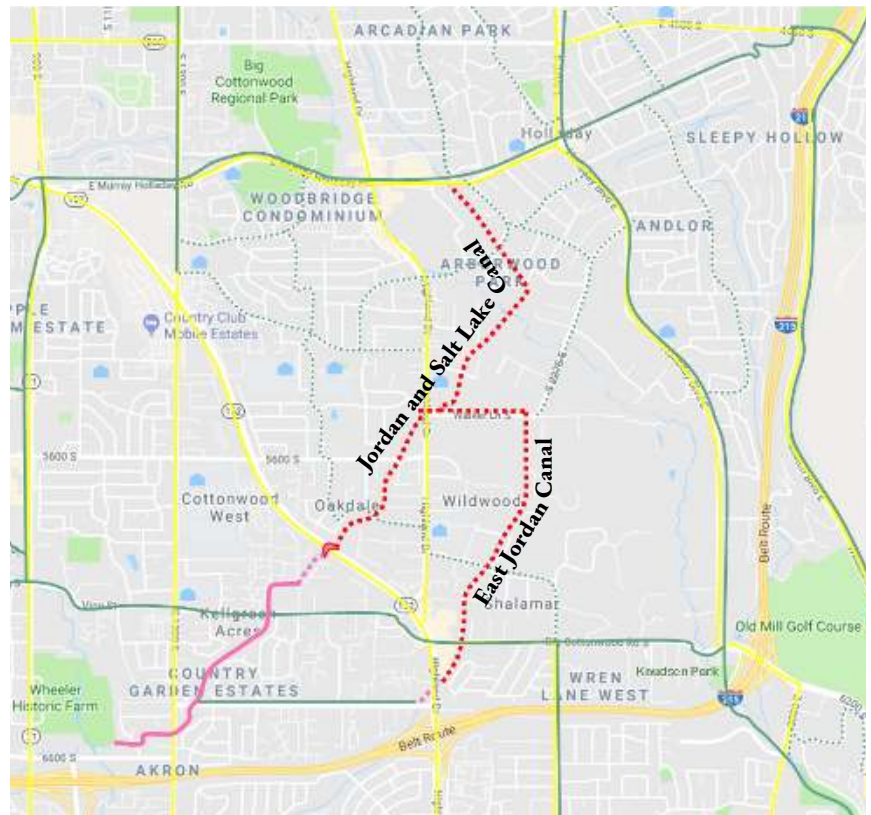


Exhibit A. Canal Trails Study Area



Property Ownership Key Definitions



Deed

A written document by which the ownership of land is transferred from one party to another.



Easement

A limited right to use property belonging to another owner for the purposes stated in the conveying document.



Fee Simple

The owner of the property has full and irrevocable ownership.



Title

The right to or ownership of land or the evidence of ownership of land.

A team of licensed surveyors, Environmental Consultants Inc (ECI), researched each of the parcels along the canals in the study area, which included the collection of title, deed, and easement documentation from the Salt Lake County archives.

Title Research Highlights

- All 218 parcels that abut the Jordan and Salt Lake Canal and the East Jordan Canal within the study area were researched. Chain of title documentation, including parcel titles, deeds, and easements with other supporting materials, were provided to the City of Holladay. Of the 218 total parcels that were researched, only one parcel did not have a clear chain of title on the East Jordan Canal.
- The Jordan and Salt Lake Canal was established before adjacent land was purchased, so all of the right of way for the canal is fee simple or owned out right by Salt Lake City Public Utilities and supported by chain of title documentation. Any future, potential property negotiations for pursuing the possibility of a recreational trail would be between Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the City of Holladay.

***Of the 218 total
parcels that were
researched,
only one parcel
did not have a
clear chain of
title.***

- The East Jordan Canal came after land was privately owned; therefore, the land for the canal was established primarily by easements across the private property, with a few areas owned by Salt Lake City Public Utilities towards the southern limits of the canal corridor. The easement agreement includes the conveyance of water and maintenance access. Under these ownership conditions, potential property negotiations for pursuing the possibility of a recreational trail would be between Salt Lake City Public Utilities, the City of Holladay, and private landowners, including the parcel that does not have a clear chain of title.

On the map to the right, Exhibit B, the canal corridors highlighted in green indicates existing documentation of fee simple ownership or easements (217 parcels), and the parcel highlighted in red (1 parcel) did not have a clear chain of title. Exhibits C on the following page highlights the specific location of the one parcel without written canal rights.

It is important to note that the status of ownership or easements does not mean that the property is free of encroachments nor does it necessarily mean that the trail use is permitted by the easement. Additionally, several instances of encroachment were observed along both canal corridors through the course of the study and some areas of the corridors are currently being used informally as recreational trails.

Exhibit B. Canal Trails Study Area: Property Ownership Overview

-  Clear chain of title
-  No clear chain of title



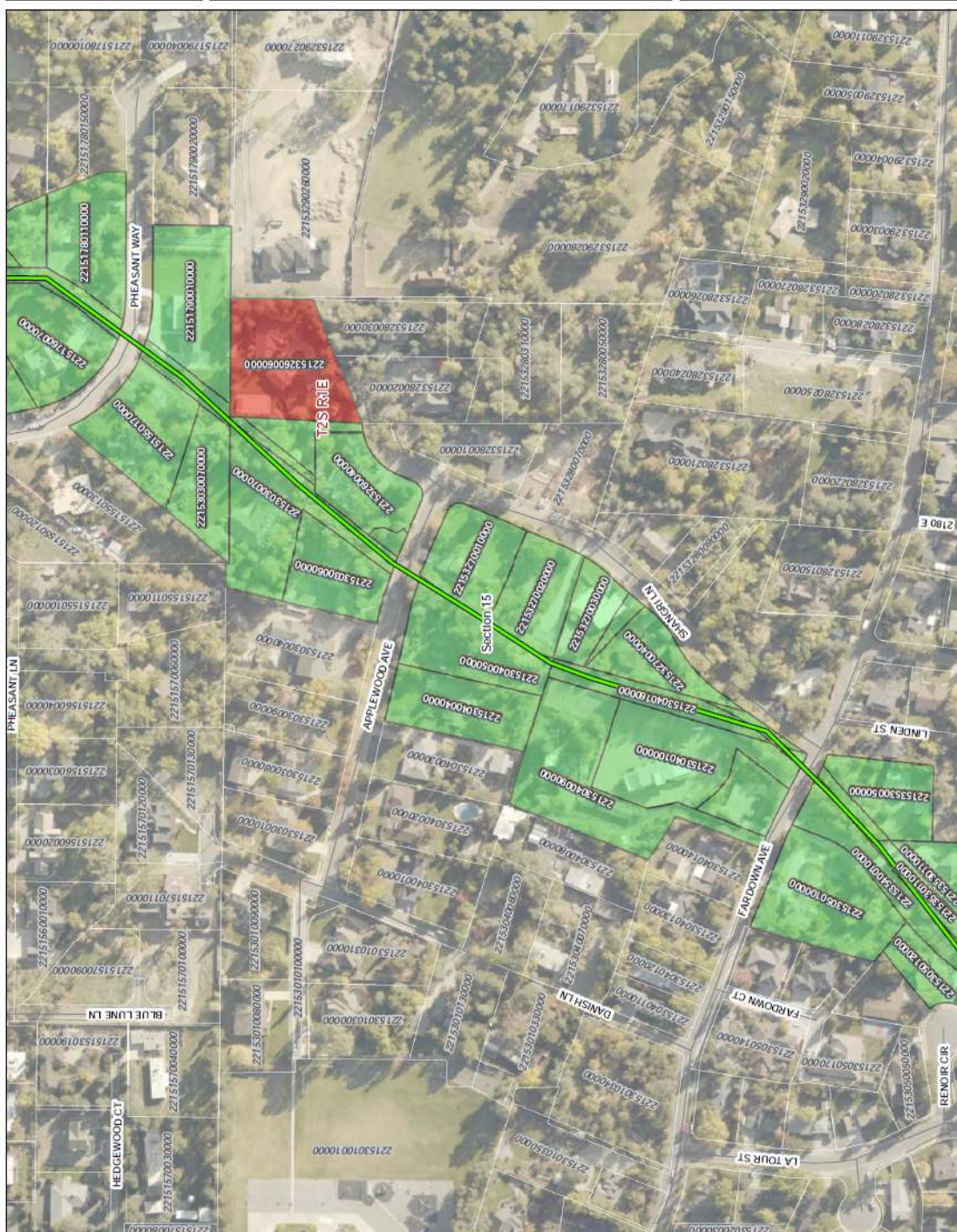
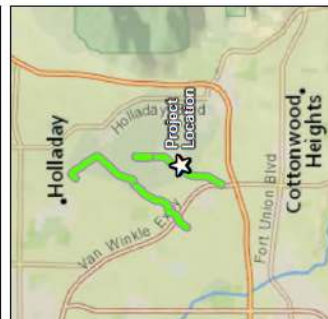
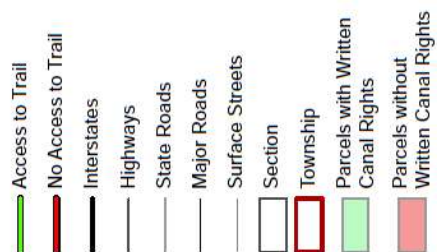


Exhibit C. Canal Trails Study Area: Parcel Without Written Canal Rights

PUBLIC OUTREACH & FEEDBACK

Conducting public outreach and gathering feedback from residents on the concept of the possibility of canal trails was a central goal of the study. The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges for in-person public outreach events. Feedback was primarily collected through on-line surveys and outdoor walking tours with small groups of residents that live along the canals.

General Communitywide Survey on Canal Trails Concept September to October 2020

A communitywide survey about the canal trails concept was promoted across City communication channels and 264 individuals participated.

Key Takeaways

- Most respondents supported the idea of adding the trails and indicated that they would use it.
- The potential frequency of use of the trails had mixed results.
- The most frequently mentioned benefits by respondents included safer routes away from roads/cars, healthier community, more mobility options, neighborhood connections, and improved maintenance of the canals/trails that are currently, informally used.
- Common concerns cited were increased crime, decreased property value, less privacy for properties adjacent to the canals, increased parking along the neighborhood streets, and no community benefits.

Focused Canal Neighbors Survey on Canal Trails Concept September to October 2020

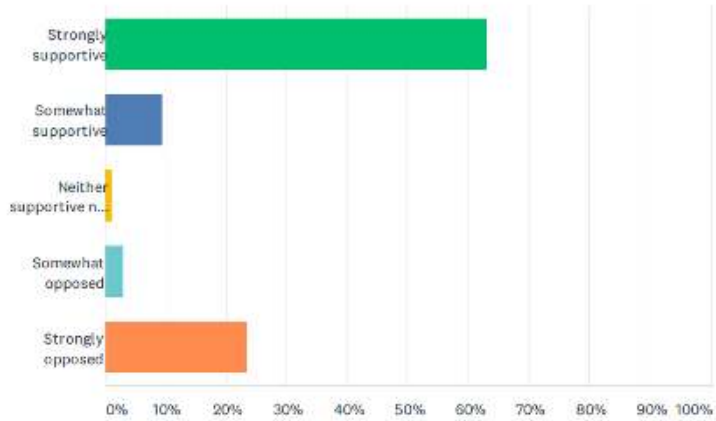
A focused survey about the canal trails concept was conducted for the residents that live adjacent to the canals. The survey questions were the same as the general survey, but the results were kept separate. A total of 263 survey invitations were hand-delivered to each home adjacent to the canals, and 63 individuals participated.

Key Takeaways

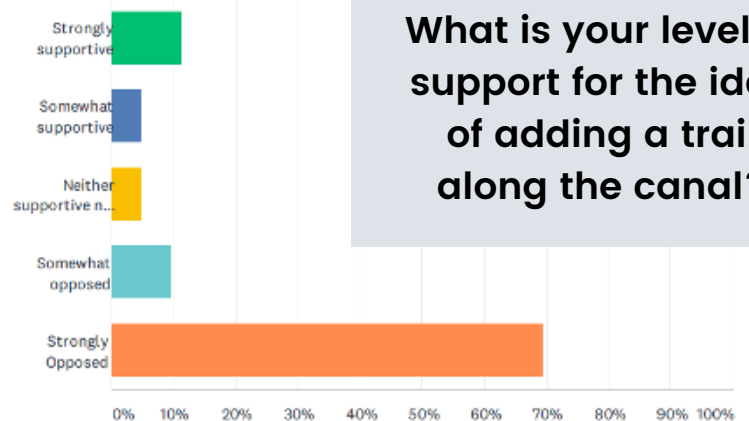
- Most respondents were strongly opposed the idea of adding the trails.
- There were mixed results to the questions about the likelihood and frequency of use of the trails.
- The most frequently mentioned benefits included safer routes away from roads/cars, more walkable and improved community, increased social interactions, lower crime, connection to nature, and improved maintenance.
- Common concerns cited were increased crime, decreased property value, loss of privacy for properties adjacent to the canals (sentiment that residents had invested in higher cost property with an expectation for privacy), increased parking along the neighborhood streets, and increased noise.

Comparison of Fall 2020 Canal Trails Survey Responses

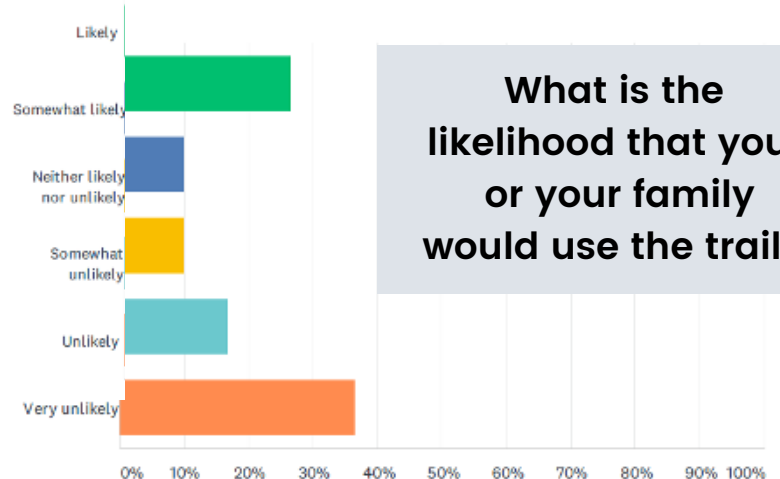
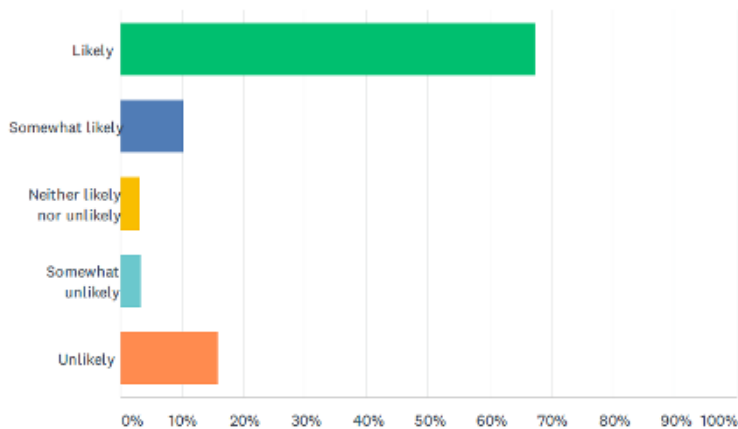
General Survey



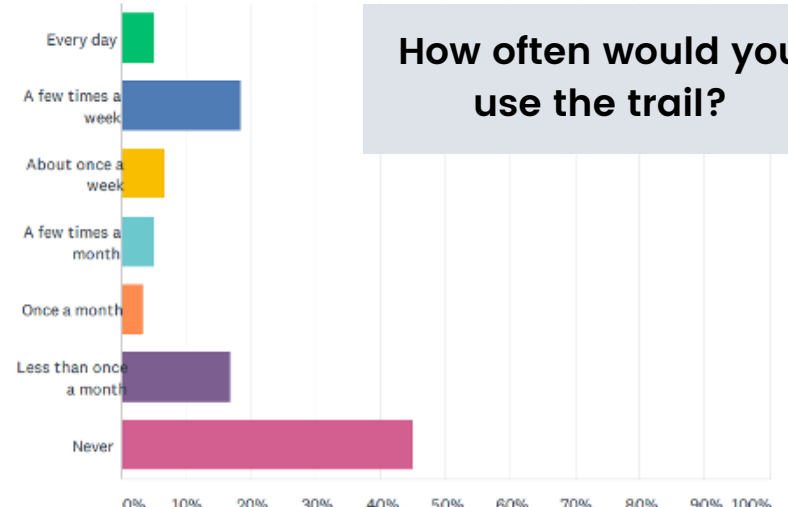
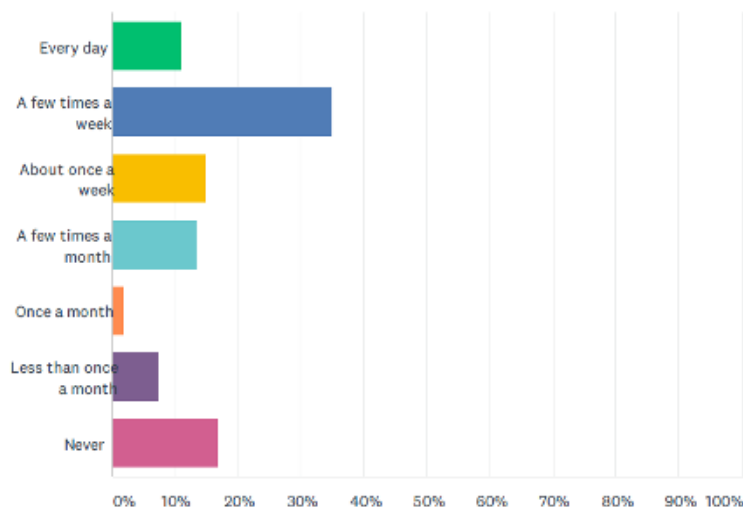
Focused Survey



What is your level of support for the idea of adding a trail along the canal?



What is the likelihood that you or your family would use the trail?



How often would you use the trail?

General Communitywide Survey on Design Preferences February to March 2021

A communitywide survey was issued to primarily gather design preferences for the potential canal trails. This information was important to the creation of price estimates. The survey was promoted across City communication channels and 293 individuals participated.

Key Design Preferences

- Privacy/security walls that resembled wood or stone.
- Dark wood or wood-like fences.
- Traditional bridge style with added safety barriers.
- Farm-inspired gates.
- Wood post wayfinding signage.
- Earthen material trail surface.
- No lighting or very low-level lighting.
- An underpass crossing at the Van Winkle Expressway to connect with the Murray Canal Trail.



Photos: Sample of images included in the survey that were selected as preferred design elements.

Walking Tours

The project team conducted 8 in-person walking tours in the months of September and October 2020. The events were held outdoors at various locations along the potential canal trails in compliance with the COVID-19 guidelines for social distancing and mask wearing. The events were promoted primarily by door hangers on the homes of residents living adjacent to the canals and with on-site A-frame signage placed on a neighborhood street or near the canals. The goals of these meetings were to walk the section of the canal with residents, share the potential canal trails idea, and understand potential concerns and ideas for opportunities from residents.



8

walking tours offered

133

total residents participated

Schedule of Walking Tours

Tour 1 - September 9, 2020 at 4:00 pm, East Jordan Canal, Highland Drive to 6200 South (starting at Highland Drive heading north on the canal)

Tour 2 - September 9, 2020 at 5:30 pm, East Jordan Canal, 6200 South to Fardown Ave. (heading North on the canal from 6200 S)

Tour 3 - September 23, 2020 at 5:00 pm, Jordan and Salt Lake Canal, 5600 South (heading north to Highland Drive behind assisted living center) and 5600 South (heading south to Cecelia Circle)

Tour 4 - September 23, 2020 at 6:15 pm, East Jordan Canal, Walker Lane section (heading south to Fardown Avenue)

Tour 5 - September 30, 2020 at 5:00 pm, Jordan and Salt Lake Canal, 2100 East and Normandy Woods Court (heading north to Big Cottonwood Creek)

Tour 6 - September 30, 2020 at 6:15 pm, Jordan and Salt Lake Canal (from Arbor Lane north to Murray Holladay Road and south to Big Cottonwood Creek catwalk)

Tour 7 - October 14, 2020 at 5:00 pm, Jordan and Salt Lake Canal from 2100 E and Normandy Woods Court (southward toward Walker Lane)

Tour 8 - October 14, 2020 at 6:00 pm, Jordan and Salt Lake Canal from Cecelia Circle (west side of Highland Drive, then heading west/southwest to Van Winkle Expressway)

Concerns Expressed by Residents During Walking Tours

- Privacy of adjacent properties.
- Lack of home safety.
- Safety concerns when crossing at roadways and bridges.
- Trail users parking on neighborhood streets.
- People who do not live in the area would drive to the neighborhood to use the trail.
- Increased crime, specifically, drug-related activities.
- Transient people would be attracted to the area.
- Increased noise generally and preference for no bicycling allowed on the trail, as it would augment the noise level significantly.
- Residents are currently maintaining/using the canal right-of-way adjacent to their private property and don't want to lose that additional space.
- Trash and dog feces polluting the waterways.

Opportunities/Ideas Shared by Residents During Walking Tours

- Residents are already using the accessible canal trails informally and it would be good to have the trails better maintained.
- Provides a way to address weed and rodent issues.
- Potential trails are asset to community based on the experience of living in other communities with similar amenities.



- Add high fences to protect privacy and safety of adjacent private properties.
- Preserve tree canopy.
- Keep status quo usage - limit use from those outside the neighborhood.

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN & COST ESTIMATE



Conceptual Design

The conceptual design for the canal trails was developed with consideration of the current physical conditions of the canal and the preferences, concerns, and ideas from residents. The purpose of the design work was mainly to inform eventual cost estimates.

To understand current conditions, the project team walked the entire length of the canal, excluding two portions where access is blocked along the Jordan and Salt Lake Canal, one just west of Highland Drive and one just east of Van Winkle expressway. During these walks, several opportunities and constraints were noted. There are many areas of the canal that are open and clear for trail installation as well as other portions that are severely overgrown. It was also observed that there are many encroachments along the canal: buildings and sport courts, fences erected across the canal, yard waste, and yards extending to the edge of the canal. There are also a few areas where the trail would need to be shared by a road. The existing trail condition for each section was also documented in photographs. Based on an analysis, the ease of trail development was determined, as noted in Exhibit E as easy (green), moderate (yellow), and difficult (red).

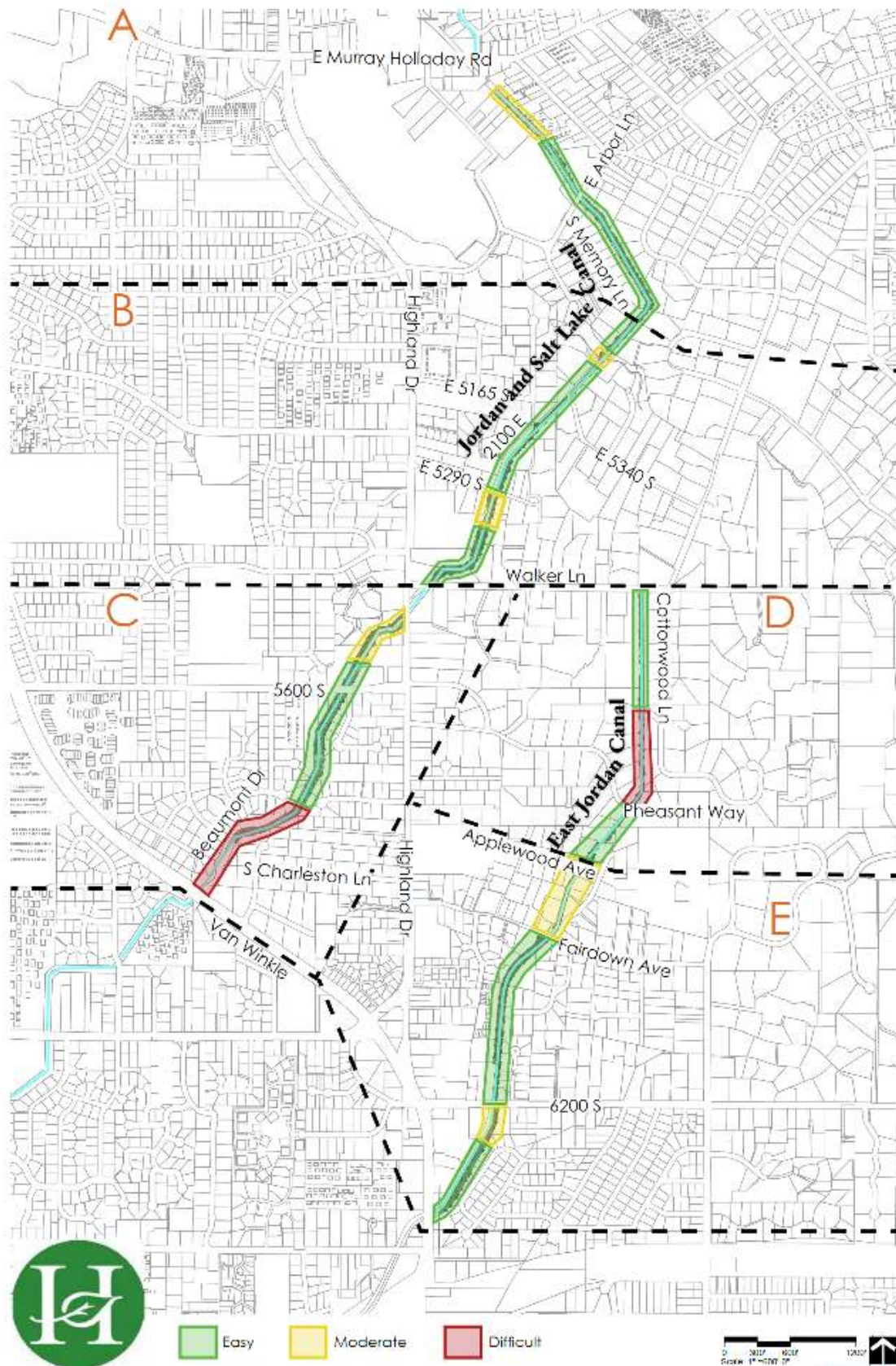


Exhibit D. Canal Trails Study: Ease of Development



The conceptual design for the canal trails was broken into 5 sections - A, B, C, D, and E. (See Exhibit D on the previous page.) The high-level design details identified a variety of potential trail amenities, features, obstacles, or constraints, including suggested no parking areas (where neighbors were concerned about parking), canal bridge crossings, fencing/walls, trail entrances, and wayfinding signs. This information was used to determine unit quantities for the cost estimate.



3

miles of potential
canal trails

\$2-3 million

total estimated cost, depending on
materials selected

Cost Estimate

A cost estimate for the construction of the canal trails was prepared using details from the conceptual design. (See Exhibit E on the following page.) The cost was broken down for each section of the canal - A, B, C, D, and E. The cost estimate features two different options of materials - one being a less expensive option with lower cost materials and one being more expensive with higher quality materials. Some sections of the canal would be less expensive to improve as a public trail, because a maintenance dirt road already exists, while other areas would be more expensive, correlating with the site preparation, grading, bridges, and other elements that would be needed.

If all sections of the canal trails were built, the new system would be about 3 miles long and cost between \$2 million and \$3 million to construct. The construction of the potential canal trails would be eligible for several grant programs. It is important to note that these cost estimates are for construction only. Anticipated legal costs to address challenges from property owners adjacent to the canals who are opposed to the potential trails are not factored into these proposals.

Exhibit E. Canal Trails Study: Cost Estimate

	Option 1: LOW less expensive with lower cost materials	Option 2: HIGH more expensive with higher quality materials
Section A	\$195,920	\$356,000
Section B	\$551,225	\$873,125
Section C	\$497,240	\$707,000
Section D	\$202,840	\$367,000
Section E	\$544,535	\$774,875
TOTAL	\$1,991,760	\$3,078,000



CONCLUSION

The key outcomes of the Canal Trails Study are summarized below.

Property Ownership. The Jordan and Salt Lake Canal was established before adjacent land was purchased, so all of the right of way for the canal is fee simple or owned outright by Salt Lake City Public Utilities. The East Jordan Canal came after land was privately owned; therefore, the land for the canal was established primarily by easements across the private property, with a few areas owned by Salt Lake City Public Utilities.

It is also critical to note that the existing easement right for water conveyance and maintenance of the canal does not necessarily support use of the property for a public trail. Further legal analysis on this point is necessary. In addition, current state law does not permit the use of eminent domain for the acquisition of property to support a public trail.

Public Feedback. Residents have mixed sentiments on the potential canal trails. Generally, the community supports the concept, while the adjacent neighbors are largely and strongly opposed. Residents have shared opportunities and ideas as well as highlighted issues and concerns. This study represents the first opportunity to work with residents on the canal trails concept. If the canal trails concept moves forward, additional public outreach and continued, close coordination with adjacent property owners would be critical for the project's success.

Design and Cost. The construction of the potential 3 miles of canal trails is estimated at \$2-3 million dollars, depending on the type of materials selected for construction. The construction of the potential canal trails would be eligible for several grant programs.

Based on these outcomes and other considerations, the Holladay City Council has a number of options for the next step as the study concludes, including, but not limited to, the following:

Option 1: Decide not to construct the canal trails.

Option 2: Table any decisions on the canal trails for a future date at the discretion and priority of the City Council.

Option 3: Pursue the construction of all the proposed canal trail sections as a single project effort.

Option 4: Initiate phased implementation or only advance limited sections of the proposed trails.

