

## Spring View Farms: *Completing a Regional Trail with Greenway Subdivision Conservation Land*

by *Randall Arendt*

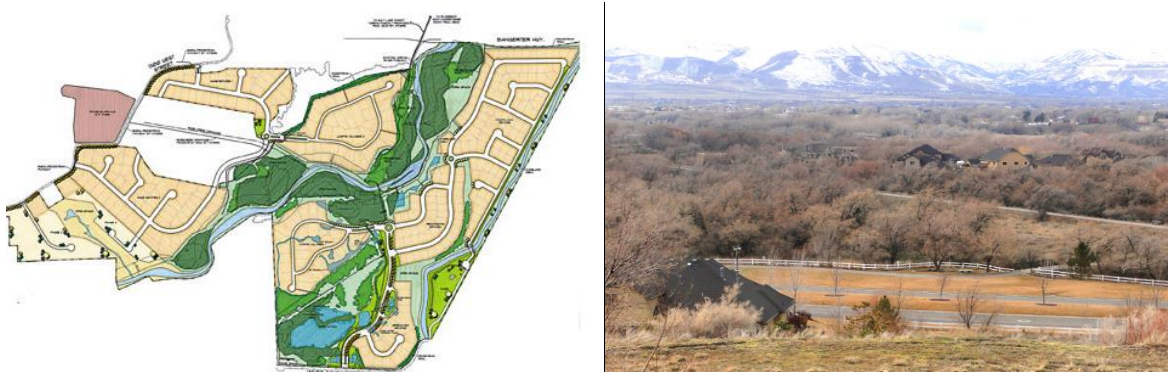
*Location:* 1120 West and 14600 South, Bluffdale, Utah,

*Site Designers:* CW Management Corporation, West Jordan Utah and Think Architecture, Salt Lake City, Utah

*Developer:* CW Management Corporation, West Jordan, UT

*Dates:* 2002- ongoing

An excellent example of using subdivision design to help complete greenway networks is Spring View Farms in Bluffdale, Utah (population 7,975). Nearly 60 percent (150 acres) of this 258-acre development's area has been preserved as permanent open space for wildlife habitat and active recreation. Approved in 2003, its 4.5-mile paved multi-use trail for strolling, jogging and cycling completed one of the last segments of the 40-mile Lake-to-Lake Trail connecting Utah Lake with Salt Lake, a project that was decades in the planning.



**Figure 1:** The layout of Spring View Farms (left) is dominated by the greenway park that runs through its middle, along the Jordan River Valley View from the five-acre municipal park on the property's highest point encompass the boulevard parkway at the bottom, the greenway park beyond the white fence, and the snow-capped Oquirrh Mountains in the background. (Source: CW Management Corporation) Source: CW Management Corporation (left), and Randall Arendt (right)

The open space network encompasses but is not limited to about 1.5 miles of river corridor, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive features. Natural riparian edges were carefully preserved and habitat was augmented with six ponds and several other water features. This project is a fine example of greenway planning benefitting residents and the wider community, in addition to being profitable to the developer, epitomizing the “twice green” concept (green both environmentally and economically).

These positive results were made possible through clustering provisions, supplemented with bond money and private funds to preserve more land than what the ordinance could protect by granting a 35 percent density bonus in this one-acre zoning district, and by allowing homes to be built at about three to the acre (307 lots located on approximately 110 acres – in addition to the 150-acre preservation area).

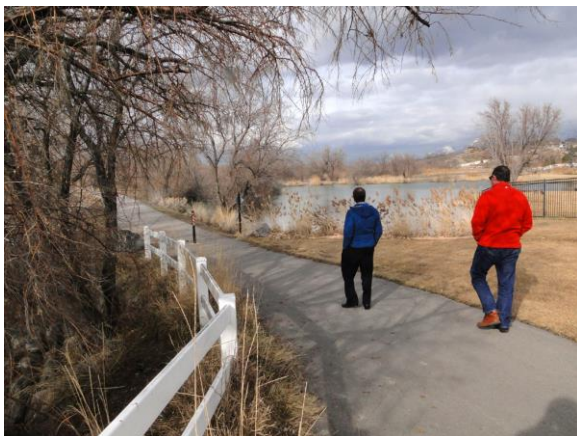
Among the notable neighborhood design elements is the 1,500-foot entrance boulevard (Spring View Parkway) which is bordered by conservation land on its entire western edge, emphasizing the open space character of this neighborhood from the moment one first enters it. Two street intersections are graced with landscaped roundabouts, and shade trees are planted between sidewalks and curbs along every street. Numerous trail heads provide easy access for neighborhood residents, and a parking area with toilet facilities at the public trailhead a few blocks away provides convenient access to the general public, who are welcome to use the development's interior trail loops in addition to the Jordan River Trail spine.



**Figure 2:** About 40 of the homes back up directly to the parkland open space, ten of which are located relatively close to the public trail. Spring View Parkway, the main entrance street, runs alongside the parkland for more than one-third of mile, providing open space views instead of a line of houses and driveways. Source: Randall Arendt

Salt Lake County agreed to accept the vast majority of the conservation lands, incorporating them into its park system. (A map of the entire Jordan River Parkway, including the southernmost segment containing Spring View Farms) is downloadable at <http://parks.slco.org/jordanRiverParkway/index.html>) The county also purchased a section of the subdivision with river frontage with bond money to increase the amount of open space being preserved.

The city accepted a five acre parcel on the property's highest point, which the developer transformed into a municipal park. With children's playground equipment, a picnic pavilion, and informal seating areas, this small park provides long vistas over the Jordan River Valley, and an excellent view of the greenway park. The homeowner association mows the grassy areas within the development (mostly roadside verges and the boulevard median).



**Fig 3:** On the left, the Jordan River Trail passes between the river and one of six ponds created by the developer. It crosses the river on a bridge constructed by the county park department, providing views back into the development and up to the mountains (right). Source: Randall Arendt

The river and some of the ponds support small fish populations, attracting a modest number of fishermen. The range of wildlife is impressive, including elk, deer, bobcats, coyotes, foxes, pheasants, cranes, pelicans and a bald eagle, in addition to the more common Mallard ducks and Canada geese.



**Figure 4.** One of the loop trails created by the developer branches from the main spine (Jordan River Trail), connecting the parkland with several neighborhoods. These trails are also open to the public. The ponds provide habitat for mallard ducks, Canada geese, and American coots (right). Source: Randall Arendt