

Collaborative Regional Planning: A Tool for Helping Gateway and Small Resort Towns Thrive

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WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

Federal and state agencies?

Local government?

Planners?

Non-governmental organizations?

Tribal?

Consultants?

From a gateway/small resort town??

Other?

WHO IN THE ROOM HAS BEEN TO ZION NATIONAL PARK RECENTLY?



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SESSION OVERVIEW

THE CHALLENGE

Helping gateway communities and small resort towns thrive amid the pressures they face

THE INTERVENTION AND TOOLKIT

Collaborative regional planning

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Needs, opportunities, tools, and strategies

DEBRIEFING

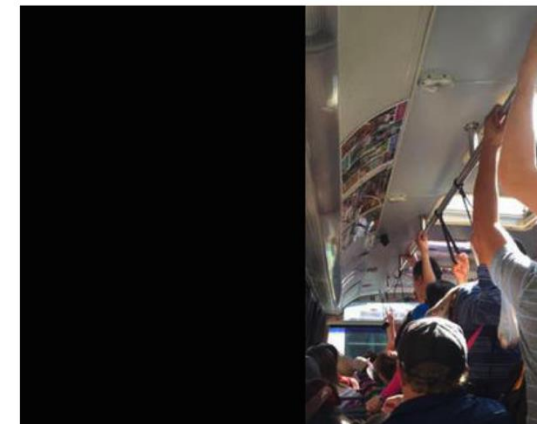
Takeaways and next steps

THE CHALLENGE

The mighty wait at the mouth of the canyon (Utah's national park)

By Amy Joi O'Donoghue [@amyjoi16](#)
Published: April 15, 2016 2:55 p.m.

1 of 14



Park Officials: Tiny Utah town's stunning canyon draws thousands of hikers — and a potential federal buyer

Another Bustling Glacier

By BRIAN MAFFLY AND NATE CARLISLE | The Salt Lake Tribune
First Published Jul 11 2016 08:00AM • Last Updated Jul 11 2016 03:25 pm

Superintendent: Glacier Park
crowds again in 2016

BY DILLON TABISH // MAR 3, 2016 // OUTDOOR RECREATION



SHOW CAPTION

RELATED STORIES:

- Glacier Park Visitation Record Settles at 2.36 Million
- Storylines That Could Define 2016
- Flathead Leads State in Visitor Spending

waiting to enter the popular park long. The traffic backed up all the dreds of cars lined both sides of t



(Steve Griffin / The Salt Lake Tribune) Hikers climb a ladder made from a tree at the first falls of the Kanarrville Falls hike in Kanarrville Wednesday July 6, 2016.

Outdoor recreation » As hiker traffic overwhelms tiny Kanarrville, BLM seeks to buy private land at canyon's mouth.



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Kanarrville • This tiny Iron County town has a big problem that some rural Utah communities would kill for.

Thousands of visitors come here, drawn to an increasingly popular [day hike to a slot canyon](#) and waterfalls up Kanarra Creek. But other than a \$10-a-car parking area, an RV park and kids' lemonade stands, Kanarrville lacks opportunities to tap these visitors' wallets. The trailhead is easily accessible off Interstate 15 south of Cedar City on Zion National Park's northern boundary. Yet there are no groceries, restaurants, gas stations or shops here.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GATEWAY REGIONS AND SMALL RESORT TOWNS...

...AND A CHALLENGE

- Pressure on **parking** and **transportation** systems
- Impacts on **other infrastructure** - from **restrooms** to **water treatment** facilities
- Pressure on **emergency management** and **safety services**
- Concern about **affordability of housing** – for residents and employees
- Concerns about **community character** and **quality of life**
- **Environmental** and **recreational amenity** degradation



ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES WILL REQUIRE:

- **A regional approach**
- **Working and coordinating across jurisdictions**
 - E.g., National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, county government, municipal government
- **Multi-stakeholder collaboration**
 - Including NGOs, local businesses, tourism offices, the outdoor industry, etc.

THIS CHALLENGE IS OFTEN COMPLICATED BY (REAL OR PERCEIVED) TENSIONS BETWEEN:

- **Federal and local governments**
- **“Old timers” and “incomers”**
- **Different economic activities**
 - E.g., resource extraction and grazing vs. recreation and tourism
- **Private property rights and community concerns**
- **“Too much” and “not enough”**

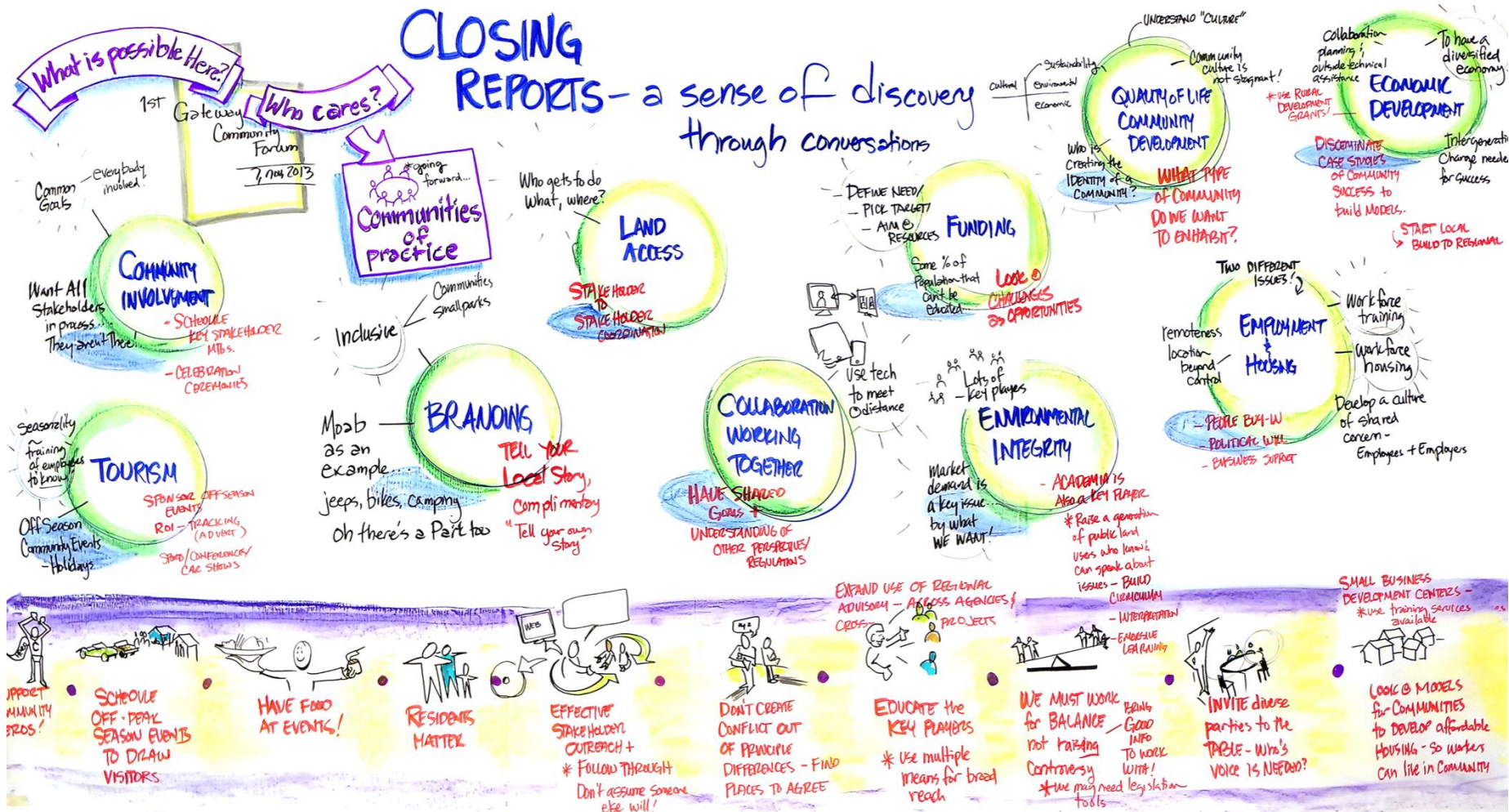
GATEWAY COMMUNITY FORUMS

Connecting community leaders to their
neighboring national parks and monuments



Each decision made in a gateway community – to widen a road, add a hotel, or increase parking – can add to the flow of visitors into the park, and each decision in the park – to change a fee, require a permit, or add a timed entry system – can change the daily life and dynamics of that gateway community. And how communities market and promote the national park experience can help shape visitor behavior and expectations.

UTAH GATEWAY COMMUNITY FORUM





- **More people are seeking forums to build bridges and work together to solve public land challenges than the media and elected officials regularly portray.**
- **Understanding each other's perspectives is critical to finding common ground.**
- **Open dialogue is fundamental for understanding each other's goals and limitations.**
- **Be ready to meet people where they are...not where you want them to be.**

WESTERN ZION CANYON

COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL PLANNING

- **Zion National Park Collaboration Clinic** in August 2015
 - Interest in collaboration, but no active follow-up engagement
- **Situation Assessment** conducted in spring 2016
 - Conducted by the Environmental Dispute Resolution Program and Ecological Planning Center, with funding from a University of Utah seed grant
 - Identified key issues, areas of agreement and disagreement, opportunities and challenges, key stakeholders, and potential for collaboration
- **First stakeholder workshop** in July 2016
- **Goal:** to develop a **model approach** and resources for transferring **lessons learned**

WESTERN ZION CANYON

COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL PLANNING

- **Quarterly (or so) workshops**
 - Fourth meeting is in April
 - Professionally facilitated
 - Funding from St. George Area Convention and Tourism Office + educational grant + university resources
- **Engaging key regional stakeholders**
 - ZNP; BLM; Washington County Commission and tourism office; mayors and public officials from the towns of Springdale, Rockville, Virgin, La Verkin, and Hurricane; UDOT; NPCA; local businesses; hoteliers; Utah Office of Tourism; Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation; representatives from Kane and Iron Counties; and others
- **Focus on active planning**
 - Not developing “a plan that sits on a shelf”
 - Coordinating efforts and developing a joint strategy to deal with regional concerns
 - Current focus on transportation, messaging, community character, camping and recreation, and corridor interpretive plan



REC LAB

REGIONAL COLLABORATION, RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Goals

- Research, education, and capacity building
- Develop a model approach for other gateway and small resort town regions
 - Currently modeling off of the Zion Regional Collaborative to create a regional collaborative planning effort in Bonner County, Idaho
- Create tools and lessons learned to help other region facing similar challenges

REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

TOOLKIT

Academic tools:

- Learning objectives (knowledge and skills)
 - What do planners need to know to effectively work in these communities?
- Scenarios
 - 1-2 page “conversation starters” based on real world examples
- Role-play simulation
 - Mock decision-making exercise teaching key learning objectives

Stakeholder tools:

- “Roadmap”
 - When and how to undertake a regional collaborative planning effort
 - Lessons learned and best practices
- Handouts on relevant resources and tools
- Resource spreadsheet
 - Where to find more information, resources, funding, etc.

QUESTIONS?

CLARIFICATIONS?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Form groups of 5 or 6

- Introduce yourselves quickly (name, organization, and title)
- Identify a facilitator/note-taker who will report out

Take 20-30 minutes to discuss the following questions:

- Which gateway/small resort communities in the Rocky Mountains are **being impacted** or are **struggling to thrive**?
- What are **needs** and **challenges** for these communities?
- What are **opportunities** for these communities?
- What do you think about the **idea of collaborative regional planning** as a way to help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?
- What **tools** and **resources** would help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?

REPORT OUT

- Which gateway/small resort communities in the Rocky Mountains are **being impacted** or are **struggling to thrive**?
- What are **needs** and **challenges** for these communities?
- What are **opportunities** for these communities?
- What do you think about the **idea of collaborative regional planning** as a way to help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?
- What **tools** and **resources** would help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?
- **Anything else** interesting?

DISCUSSION

- What do you think about the **idea of collaborative regional planning** as a way to help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?
- What **tools** and **resources** would help these communities address their challenges and capitalize on opportunities?

ANY FINAL QUESTIONS, THOUGHTS, OR IDEAS?

Danya Rumore

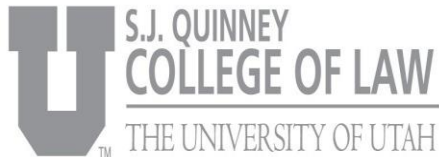
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