The 2015 Mayor’s Symposium will focus on the natural systems of land and water that support and enhance the economy, ecology and quality of life in our city. Our natural and working lands, open space and parks, gardens and urban forests, waterways and aquifers, and rain gardens and stormwater detention systems that capture and cleanse stormwater, are all part of a system of green and blue infrastructure. They provide flood protection and water storage, cleanse our air and water, regulate our urban climate, and provide food, recreation and access to nature for citizens. Although Green and Blue are part of the fabric of our community, these important threads are easily lost as we grow.

Here in the Wasatch region, we have a unique set of natural assets, and economic and cultural context. How can we apply the concept of green-blue infrastructure to plan for a future that maintains our current high quality of life? With The Green-Blue City, we will gather leading voices from different perspectives to share their visions for green-blue infrastructure in our region.
12:00 Lunch & Registration

12:15 Welcome, MAYOR RALPH BECKER Salt Lake City

12:40 TED KNOWLTON Wasatch Front Regional Council

1:05 ARI BRUENING Envision Utah

1:30 JAN STRIEFEL Landmark Design

1:55 SARAH HINNERS Ecological Planning Center

2:20 Break

2:35 JEFF NIERMEYER Salt Lake City Public Utilities

3:00 JULIE PECK-DABLING, Salt Lake County

3:25 TIM BROWN Tracy Aviary

3:50 NATALIE GOCHNOUR Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake Chamber

4:15 Closing conversation

4:45 Jane Jacobs Walk - Memory Grove and City Creek

Thank you to our Sponsors!
Ralph Becker was sworn in as Mayor of Salt Lake City in January 2008. As Mayor, Ralph has been an outspoken advocate for sustainable development, as well as an aggressive leader in protecting and improving air quality in the Salt Lake Valley. In addition, he has been an advocate for expanding mobility options within Salt Lake City, and he has significantly extended protections for the City’s LGBT community, rendered City government much more transparent, and increased public involvement in the decision making process. Prior to being elected Mayor, he was a member of the Utah House of Representatives from 1996 to 2007, serving seven years in leadership including five years as the House Democratic Leader. He is a professional planner and a lawyer. Now in his second term, Mayor Becker continues his commitment to increase livability through efficient and accessible transit, sustainability initiatives, and furthering Salt Lake City as a sophisticated and burgeoning urban powerhouse.

Ted Knowlton is Deputy Director at the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC), the long-range transportation agency that represents Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, Box Elder, Morgan and Tooele counties. Ted’s career has focused on helping metropolitan areas coordinate local and regional plans. His regional planning experience includes county and multi-county integrated land use and transportation planning efforts in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, as well as a variety in the Salt Lake City region. His local planning experience includes leading development of the Wasatch Choice for 2040 vision, the Salt Lake countywide “Life On State” plan, and the Salt Lake County Electrical Plan among others. Before joining WFRC, Ted was the Planning Director at Envision Utah – an organization referred to by the Washington Post as the “gold standard” of regional visioning. Ted is an Adjunct Professor in the College of Architecture + Planning at the University of Utah.

Ari Bruening is the Chief Operating Officer at Envision Utah. He has extensive experience in visioning and implementation efforts for regions and large-scale projects. Prior to joining Envision Utah, he managed visioning and entitlement projects for the San Diego region; Laie, Hawaii; the 93,000-acre Kennecott Land Company project in Salt Lake County; the 175,000-acre Superstition Vistas Arizona state trust land parcel; and the 300,000-acre Deseret Ranches of Florida landholding near the Orlando International Airport. Ari is the author of “The TDR Siren Song: The Problems with Transferable Development Rights Programs and How to Fix Them,” 23 Journal of Land Use & Environmental Law 423 (2008) and “Old Regionalism, New Regionalism, and Envision Utah: Making Regionalism Work,” 118 Harvard Law Review 2291 (2005), and a co-author of “Sprawl & Local Government Taxation Regimes: Cause & Effect” in Urban Sprawl: A Comprehensive Reference (2005). He is also a children’s book author.

Jan Striefel founded Landmark Design in 1987 and is currently a Principal in the firm. She has been actively engaged in the planning, design, management and implementation of a broad range projects in Utah and the intermountain region for over 35 years. Jan is a recognized urban designer and landscape architect, with particular interest and expertise in regional landscapes that fit into and complement local climatic, environmental, and cultural environments. Her work in Salt Lake City includes the Visionary Gateway Plan and the Gateway District Land Use and Development Plan, 500 West Park Blocks, Memory Grove Park, Liberty Park, City Creek Park, Gallivan Center Plaza, Washington Square – site of the Salt Lake City and County Building – North Temple Boulevard, and numerous other award-winning projects. Many of these projects involved the collaboration of locally and nationally recognized artists. Jan is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, a Licensed Professional Landscape Architect, and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Sarah Hinners is a landscape and urban ecologist, and serves as the Acting Director of the Ecological Planning Center in the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning at the University of Utah. She teaches courses on urban ecology and green infrastructure, and conducts research on the ecological, economic, and social value of green infrastructure and on urban water sustainability. Sarah works across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries to bring research into direct contact with planning and design processes, so that each may inform the other. Prior to taking on her role with the EPC, she worked with the Metropolitan Research Center on the Wasatch
Choice for 2040 Sustainable Communities project to merge cutting-edge planning research into the scenario planning software Envision Tomorrow Plus. She continues to work with the planning community in the region and ET+ users across the country to enhance our capacity to make informed decisions based on sound research and data, particularly with consideration of the services provided by ecosystems. Most recently, she has helped to form the NatureWorks Alliance, an information-sharing network centered on green infrastructure in the Wasatch region.

Jeff Niermeyer has over 37 years of experience in water resources management in Utah and Alaska. He has been with the SLC Department of Public Utilities for 23 years and currently serves as its Director. The Department operates four enterprise funds: Water, Sewer, Storm Sewer and Street Light funds. Jeff is responsible for the implementation of the Department’s programs to meet the City’s obligations under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. Jeff is active in developing the Department’s climate change adaptation strategies. He has been actively involved with the Intermountain Section of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), including serving as Chair of the section. He is the President of the Utah Lake Water Users Association and Chairman of the Utah Lake/Jordan River Distribution Committee. He also serves on the Provo River Water Users Association board. He has held various positions with the Department including drainage engineer, contracts administrator and treatment and environmental administrator. Prior to coming to work with Salt Lake City, Jeff was a consulting engineer in several engineering firms providing municipal civil engineering services in Alaska, Washington, Oregon and Utah. His experience on the private business side allows him to bring a balanced approach to resolving issues.

Julie Peck-Dabling is Salt Lake County’s Special Services Manager within the Parks and Recreation Department. She coordinates department-wide services including open space, urban farming, adaptive and inclusion services and educational initiatives. Her activities include overseeing commercial and refugee farming leases, the community gardens partnership with Wasatch Community Gardens, and using innovative ways to engage the next generation in environmental stewardship through Utah Conservation Corps and internships. Julie lives in Holladay with her family where she has a garden, enjoys canning and making her world famous jalapeño plum sauce.

Tim Brown is the Executive Director of Tracy Aviary, an organization that inspires curiosity and caring for birds and nature through education and conservation. Tim has been with Tracy Aviary for 11+ years and previously worked for the Utah Society for Environmental Education. He once worked for the Division of Wildlife Resources, and as a river guide, and in other occupations that enabled him to spend a few winters ski buming back in the days when Salt Lake had winter and the snow was deep and light. He is a native of Salt Lake, is married to Angela Dean, a local architect, and has two wonderful children. He can often be found away from his desk.

Natalie Gochnour serves as an Associate Dean in the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah and Chief Economist at the Salt Lake Chamber. Her experience includes a diverse mix of public service and business expertise. For seven years she guided the public policy work of the Salt Lake Chamber, Utah’s largest business association. She created and led the Downtown Rising movement, helped pass a ballot initiative to secure funds for the expansion of Utah’s TRAX light rail and FrontRunner commuter rail service, co-led an effort to launch the Utah Health Exchange, and assisted with the drafting and promotion of the Utah Compact, a widely heralded document supporting immigration reform. During her state service she advised Utah governors Bangerter, Leavitt and Walker. She also served as a political appointee in the George W. Bush administration as an Associate Administrator at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and a Deputy to the Secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She is a sought after public speaker with the unique ability to translate policy-speak into everyday language. A native Utahn, her professional focus and passion are public policies that promote balance, civility and prosperity. She shares her views in monthly columns in both Utah Business magazine and the Deseret News.