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First-Ever Regional Stewardship Awards Announced

AUSTIN, TEXAS—The Alliance for Regional Stewardship honored four metropolitan regions with the 2004 Regional Stewardship Award on Friday, May 21, 2004 at a luncheon banquet in Austin, Texas. The award recipients – regions centered on Salt Lake City, Utah, Birmingham, Ala., Fresno, Calif., and Long Beach, Calif. – were selected by the Alliance for Regional Stewardship (ARS) for excellence in building effective partnerships to address sprawl, workforce readiness, economic development, environmental quality, education, transportation, and other issues that cross conventional jurisdictional boundaries.

Founded in 2000 and based in Denver, Colo., ARS is a nonprofit organization that fosters collaboration across sectors and political boundaries to advance economic, social and environmental progress in metropolitan regions and their communities. ARS pursues its mission through training and direct assistance to regional groups, Internet-based information and outreach services, and semi-annual National Forums on Regional Stewardship, which attract leaders from the government, business and nonprofit sectors who draw inspiration for their activism from a commitment to the places where they work and reside.

The Regional Stewardship Award was established by ARS in 2003 to recognize multi-city and multi-county communities that have abandoned rivalries, pooled resources and worked together to ensure their shared prosperity. The Award carries a cash prize of up to \$25,000 per recipient to encourage dissemination and replication of innovative problem-solving techniques. A total of \$50,000 was distributed to the winners, who were selected and awarded according to a graduated range of four prizes: Gold—\$25,000, received by the Greater Wasatch Region of Utah; Silver—\$15,000, received by Greater Birmingham, Alabama; Bronze—\$7,500, received by Fresno, California; and Honorable Mention—\$2,500, received by the Gateway Cities Region, California.

To be considered for the award, regions had to show tangible progress along four dimensions: livable community, innovative economy, collaborative governance, and social inclusion. “We intended the application to be demanding, so we deliberately set a high bar,” said ARS Chair Christine Chadwick. “As advocates of cross-sector action to address problems that transcend local boundaries, we want to honor regions whose collaborative work has made a real difference in the lives of people.”

Mission: To foster multi-sector collaborative regional stewardship as a means for advancing economic, social and environmental progress, while maintaining a sense of place, in America's metropolitan regions.

The cash prizes were donated by the Morgan Family Foundation of Menlo Park, Calif., whose President, Rebecca Morgan, sits on the ARS Board of Directors and served on the jury that reviewed the award applicants. “In addition to rewarding good intentions, sound planning and solid results, we sought to recognize and promote initiatives and organizations that demonstrate the capacity to reflect, recalibrate and continue into the future—meaningful regional action requires long-term commitment,” Morgan said.

Other members of the Regional Stewardship Award Jury include Scott Fosler of the University of Maryland at College Park, James Gibson of PolicyLink, (Washington, D.C. and Oakland, Calif.), Amy Liu of the Brookings Institution (Washington, D.C.), and Suzanne Morse of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change (Charlottesville, Va.)

ARS President and CEO John Parr hailed the four regions as “centers of innovation that are leading the way for others with their practical, creative solutions. These award winners are blessed with insightful civic entrepreneurs who have recognized the interdependencies of their economy, environment and society, and accepted that they are not competing with each other, but with other regions both nationally and internationally.”

The specific projects for which the winners were recognized, the award criteria and other related details appear in the attachments to this release.

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Attachment 1: 2004 Regional Stewardship Award Recipients

Greater Birmingham/Central Alabama Region

Located in central Alabama, Birmingham is the largest city in the state, and a rapidly growing center for business, commerce and education. The 12-county region has total population of over 1.0 million, and includes dense urban and sparsely developed rural communities, as well as prosperous suburbs.

Greater Birmingham's comprehensive program of regional action has its origins in a 1996 meeting of 60 regional leaders who committed themselves to listening and responding to the needs and aspirations of citizens and addressing problems regionally. Principal concerns included:

- Sprawling growth with attendant mobility and environmental consequences
- Uneven performance of public education
- Disparity in Central City/suburban/rural economic opportunity
- Affordable housing and neighborhood stability
- Strategic positioning in emerging high-tech industries

In 1997, Region 2020, a citizen-based regional civic organization, was founded to coordinate a large-scale visioning and planning process that ultimately would involve thousands of citizens in the 12-county Greater Birmingham region. The centerpiece of the region's strategy is the Regional Growth Association (RGA), an ongoing collaboration among Region 2020, The Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (an MPO). With its leadership and participation consisting of equal numbers of citizens, businesspeople and government officials, the RGA houses planning and action committees that study and develop policy on key regional objectives; many of these committees have spawned free-standing nonprofit organizations with independent governance structures to carry RGA policies forward.

Among the region's achievements to date are the following:

- Development of land-use regulations to protect the Cahaba River watershed
- Generation of hundreds of high-tech sector jobs
- Progress toward low-income homeownership
- Regional support of arts and cultural programs
- Economic development and community design assistance to small rural cities within the 12-county regional footprint
- Development of a two-county regional transportation district proposal

For more information, contact: Ann Florie, Region 2020, 1731 First Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203; (205) 326-1100; ann@region2020.org.

Fresno Region, California

Fresno, California is located in the San Joaquin valley, 180 miles southeast of San Francisco. With a population of 431,890, the residents of the Fresno region are multi-ethnic, with a strong migrant/Spanish-speaking cohort.

In 2000, a new report titled “The Economic Future of the San Joaquin Valley” sparked the interest of the presidents of the Fresno Business Council and California State University-Fresno. These presidents recruited a dozen individuals who had the capacity for CEO-level thinking and a commitment to stewardship; as a team, these individuals met weekly for four months to explore the issues and ideas of the report. Together, the team crafted the five initiatives of the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative (CRI):

- Creation of an Innovative Culture
- Human Investment: Effectiveness in the Human Services and Nonprofit Sectors
- Land Use and Transportation
- Preparation of the "Knowledge Worker"
- Technology Infrastructure

Once these initiatives were in place, a framework for action was developed, and champions were recruited to lead the initiatives. During an inaugural retreat, a sense of community was formed and the participants developed the Community Values of the Fresno Region. These Values have provided operating guidelines for the CRI, and are being adopted by an increasing number of organizations and agencies in the region.

Through the efforts of the CRI, the following initiatives have been achieved:

- A new institute has been launched at Fresno State to lead a Primary Literacy initiative
- 15 business/school partnerships have been formed.
- At Fresno State, an executive MBA has been launched, with funding received to complete planning for expansion of joint doctoral program in education.
- The Community Values of the Fresno Region have been incorporated and adopted by 30 nonprofits, community initiatives and public agencies as the “code of conduct” for community business.
- The Regional Jobs Initiative has been launched – a short- and long-term comprehensive strategy aimed at generating 25,000 to 30,000 new jobs within five years with an average salary of \$29,500.

Additionally, residents of the region are beginning, for the first time, to understand that their opinions matter—that what they say and do are important, and that they can change the future of the region.

For more information, contact: Deborah Nankivell, Fresno Business Council, 5250 North Palm, Suite 300, Fresno, CA 93704; (559) 449-6398; deb@fresnobc.org

Gateway Cities Region

Located in southeast Los Angeles County, California, the Gateway Cities Region comprises 26 diverse cities with a combined population of 2.0 million and vastly contrasting economies and demographics. Many cities in the region have a significant foreign-born, principally Spanish-speaking population.

An indicators report released in 2001 brought a number of strategic issues facing the region into sharp focus. These included:

- Literacy
- K-12 public education performance
- Workforce readiness
- Access to higher education
- Housing
- Livability/quality of life

To address these and other matters, the Gateway Cities Partnership launched a “Sustainability Planning Process” in six pilot cities in the region. Determined to bridge the language gap that historically has undermined participation in local governance, recruitment of resident-participants and planning meetings were conducted in Spanish, as well as English. This outreach strategy was particularly effective in overcoming cultural obstacles to Latino participation, particularly among women.

Having only recently entered the implementation phase, Gateway’s sustainability planning has begun to bear fruit:

- A workforce development program in international trade logistics has trained 70 and placed 50 people in jobs.
- Two community learning resource centers have been opened to assist school children with homework on weekday evenings and Saturdays, and parents with computer training during the day.
- Math Engineer and Science Academies have been implemented in all schools in the City of Paramount in cooperation with California State University at Long Beach.

Ongoing efforts are underway to extend the sustainability planning process to the rest of the region and launch projects addressing affordable housing, neighborhood improvement, civic leadership training, and community involvement in planning for public infrastructure improvements.

For more information, contact: Richard Hollingsworth, Gateway Cities Partnership, Inc., 7300 Alondra Blvd., No. 202, Paramount, CA 90723; (562) 817-0820; rhollin588@msn.com.

Greater Wasatch Region, Utah

The Greater Wasatch Region in Utah is centered around Salt Lake City. While the region covers only 25 percent of Utah's land area, 80 percent of the state's population lives there.

In 1988, the Coalition for Utah's Future (CUF) was formed to address the issues faced by the region as a result of a recession, which led many residents to leave the state to seek employment. The CUF worked to increase cooperation and consensus building on such issues as affordable housing, neighborhood concerns, rural economic development, education, transportation, and information technology issues.

By 1995, the state saw a reversal of its previous plight and experienced a tremendous growth spurt. New worries about how growth would affect Utah's quality of life began to emerge. The CUF began to research the issue; as a result, the Quality Growth Steering Committee (QGSC) was formed in 1995. The QGSC recruited over 200 partners—including educators, business leaders, media representatives, environmentalists, developers, government leaders, minority and civic leaders, and religious leaders. This gathering of leaders led to the formation of Envision Utah.

Envision Utah, through a process of research and opinion polling of the region's residents, developed four potential growth scenarios for the region. The scenarios were widely distributed and exposed and residents were asked to vote for the one they found most desirable. Over 18,000 residents voted, with one growth scenario as the overwhelming favorite. This scenario became known as the Quality Growth Strategy (QGS) – with six primary goals necessary to protect the region's environment and maintain its economic vitality and quality of life. Envision Utah then developed a Toolbox of Urban Planning Tools for Quality Growth; to date over 3,000 local leaders have been trained in the use of the Toolbox. Through this training and promotion of the Toolbox, the following results – among many others – have been realized:

- A quarter-cent sales-tax increase for creation of the region's first light rail system, resulting in the purchase of 175 miles of existing rights-of-way for nine different potential transit corridors.
- Phase One of build-out has begun on the new Kennecott community "Daybreak" – designed with mixed-use development, transit options, housing options (with smaller-than-average lots) and open green space (30%), walkability, environmental-friendly development, high-efficiency irrigation, and mandatory builder recycling in the master plan.
- Spanish Fork City has implemented a new system to bring secondary (not municipal) water to the city, which includes water meters to measure use and a reservoir developed with a park, trails and public beach.
- Park City Open Space Preservation Program—ballots in 1998 and 2002 each included \$10 million for the purpose of purchasing open space; both passed by over 75 percent and over 3,000 acres have been purchased to date, with preservation and conservation plans used throughout.
- The Gateway – a mixed-use development in central downtown Salt Lake City – is 90 percent completed, with 150 condominiums, 332 apartments, 675,000 square feet of retail space, and 350,000 square feet of office space.

- Numerous cities in the region have changed their long-range plans, ordinances and zoning codes to promote the six goals of the Quality Growth Strategy.

For more information, contact: Stephen Holbrook, Coalition for Utah's Future, 254 South 600 East, Suite 201, Salt Lake City Utah, 84102; (801) 303-1453; sholbrook@cuf-envision.org.

Attachment 2: Regional Stewardship Award Criteria

Regional Stewardship Awards presented by the Alliance for Regional Stewardship (ARS) are intended to recognize the work of innovative regions and serve as educational tools for other regions. Awards will be given to regions that have made measurable progress towards implementing the **Principles of Regional Stewardship** (see page 9) and demonstrate effective inter-jurisdictional and cross-sector action and coalition building. Nominations should be presented in the format outlined below.

I. **Initiation**

- Recognition:* How did a core group of individuals recognize a gap between the region's current reality and its desired future; and how did they determine that change was possible?
- Explore:* How did these individuals explore their common interests and the possibilities that arose from such? How did they learn to work together?
- Commit:* What personal commitments were made to work for change? What risks were taken?
- Design:* How were others mobilized by regional leaders? How did people follow through on their commitments?

II. **Mobilization**

- Frame:* How was the broad public discussion about the region's future – its critical issues and opportunities – framed to focus attention on the actions required?
- Communication:* Describe how key information and messages were communicated so that they stimulated learning and discussion among opinion leaders and citizens.
- Inspire:* Describe actions taken to rally and motivate others to join the regional cause.
- Recruit:* Describe efforts to include a broader set of people to participate in the next steps; and how diverse networks were connected.

III. **Performance Based Collaboration**

- Tangible Results:* Describe the specific results that emerged from the collaborative action to address the identified common problems. Describe how the results will be measured and assessed over time.
- New Relationships:* What new networks have been created among participants? How are the new relationships working to continue to address change in the region?
- Changed Mind-Sets:* Provide examples of the new ways of thinking about regional problem-solving. How have these new approaches affected creative thinking about regional issues?
- Cross Boundaries:* Describe the multi-jurisdictional and multi-sector coalitions that resulted in the actions above. How have these been sustained?

IV. **Sustaining Change**

- Develop More Leaders:* How has the region institutionalized regional leadership development? What new skills have regional leaders adopted to ensure sustained change?
- Create and Renew Institutions:* What new civic institutions and alliances have emerged in the process? What are their roles in sustaining regional change?
- Scale the Change:* How has the initiative resulted in systemic change that will be sustained over time? What methods are in place to sustain the change?
- Reignite the Process:* How has the process been designed to refocus and regroup around new regional challenges and opportunities? Is a plan in place? How is it being implemented?

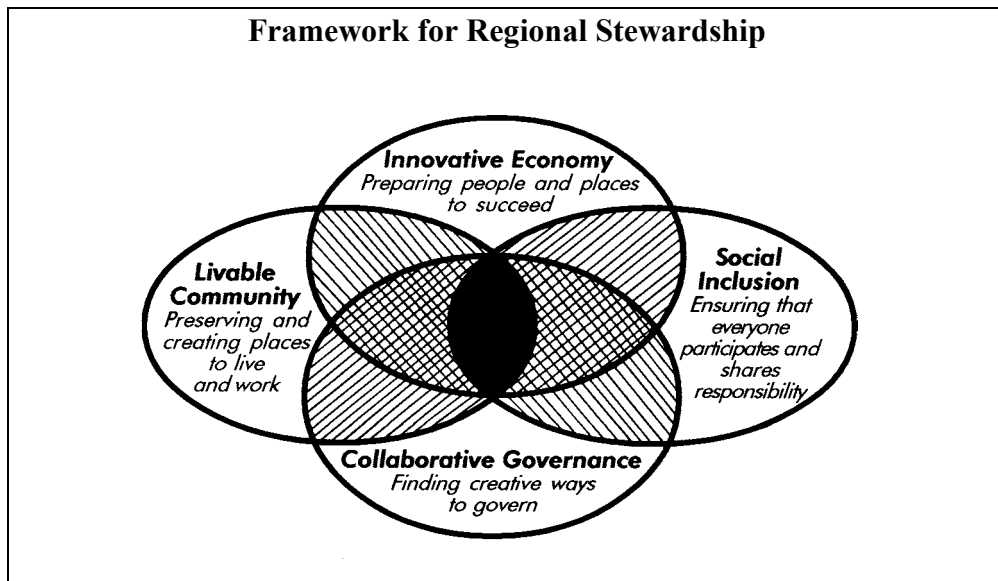
Attachment 3: Principles of Regional Stewardship

Regional stewards—leaders committed to the long-term well-being of place—are integrators who cross boundaries of jurisdiction, sector and discipline to address complex regional issues such as sprawl, equity, education and economic development. They see the connection between economic, environmental and social concerns and they know how to “connect the dots” to create opportunities for their regions.

Regional stewards share basic values of creating broad prosperity: a healthy, attractive environment and inclusive communities for ourselves and subsequent generations. They take responsibility to ensure that we pass on a better place to our children.

Regional stewards apply the same entrepreneurial spirit and persistence to solving regional challenges that business entrepreneurs apply in building a business; they are *civic entrepreneurs*. They see the need for more connected regional approaches to addressing economic, environmental and social issues; they are *integrators*. They build support from leaders, citizens, interest groups and policy professionals toward a shared regional vision; they are *coalition builders*. Regional stewards hold themselves and each other accountable to achieve tangible results and sustained outcomes

Regional stewards include local elected or appointed officials, university or college leaders, business and foundation executives, nonprofit leaders and community activists. What they all have in common is the realization that to accomplish their goals they need to work collaboratively with people in other jurisdictions and sectors by embracing the principles introduced below.



Continued on next page

Innovative Economy: *Preparing people and places to succeed.*

- People work more with their brains instead of their hands. It is an economy in which rapid change is constant; an economy at least as different from what came before as the industrial age was from the agricultural age.
- Competitiveness is based on speed, quality, flexibility, knowledge, and networks.
- Emphasizes skills and knowledge as the keys to economic progress. Skilled and knowledgeable people tend to locate in communities that provide a good quality of life and excellent social, cultural, and natural assets.
- Provide jobs that enable all citizens to enjoy a good quality of life; to produce meaningful jobs that sustain families all along the economic spectrum and provide opportunities for advancement.

Livable Community: *Preserving and creating places to live and work.*

- Ensures the public safety and the well-being of their citizens.
- Ensures housing and public education opportunities for all members of the community.
- Uses new visions of design—including compact development, transit-oriented housing, walkable neighborhoods, safe and secure communities, and protected open space.
- Changes traditional land use practices that result in sprawl and traffic congestion.
- Promotes arts and cultural opportunities that build on the attributes of regions.

Social Inclusion: *Ensuring that everyone participates and shares responsibility.*

- Social Inclusion recognizes that the interests of neighborhoods are connected to the future health of the region and vice versa.
- Long-term regional prosperity is linked to reducing poverty and inequality in metropolitan areas. Thus, equity must become a part of regional strategy, not just an afterthought.
- Everyone is included in the development of regional strategies through decision-making structures and systems support broad inclusion.
- Increasingly diverse populations and perspectives must be engaged and participate as contributing members of a “regional society.”
- Complexity and interdependence of issues means that problem-solving can only be effectively accomplished through regional strategies and community engagement.

- Building trust and relationships requires safe civic spaces for public dialogue and conversations and the appropriate tools to support collaborative public decision-making and civic engagement.

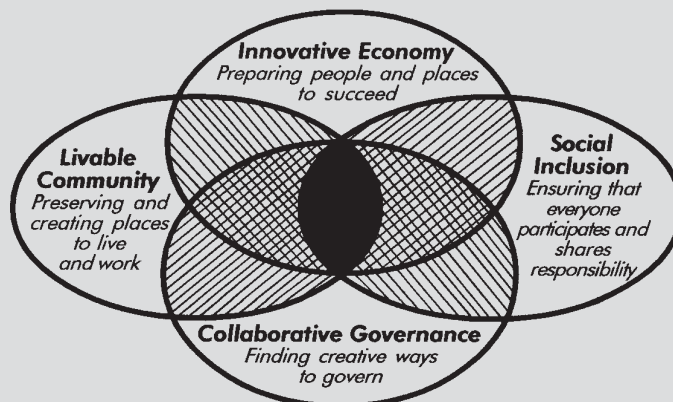
Collaborative Governance: *Finding creative ways to govern.*

- Government alone cannot deal effectively with many community problems. Governance—how people come together to address common problems—is more than government. At the regional level citizens, business, labor, nonprofits, educators, and government must work together to set directions, solve problems and take action.
- Today’s regions are a complex system of overlapping, interrelating jurisdictions—much like a network. Collaborative Governance requires coordination of resources, and sharing of information, ideas, and power.
- Social capital has to be created in regions. Social capital is the networks and norms of trust and reciprocity required to advance civic cooperation.
- Information has to be shared among all the participants

Success requires process and structural changes that emphasize coalitions and actions across jurisdictions *and* across sectors.

Selecting Recipients of the Regional Stewardship Award

Regional Stewards are leaders who are committed to the long-term well-being of the places where they live and work—integrators who cross boundaries of jurisdiction, sector and discipline to address such complex regional issues as sprawl, social equity, education, and economic development. They see the connection — and fundamental interdependence and overlap — between economic, environmental and social concerns, and are willing to find the governance solutions necessary to devise practical solutions. The Alliance for Regional Stewardship asserts that conversations about these issues should take place in an integrated fashion, as illustrated by the diagram below. For this reason, applications submitted to the Regional Stewardship Award Program are evaluated according to their responsiveness to **Innovative Economy**, **Livable Community**, **Social Inclusion**, and **Collaborative Governance**.



Here's how the four winners of the 2004 Regional Stewardship Award measured up according to some of these criteria:

Greater Birmingham Region, Alabama

- *Social Inclusion*—Housing Enterprise of Central Alabama founded to rehabilitate existing homes and offer affordable homeownership opportunities through new construction (average price \$109,000 targeting annual family income of \$18,000).
- *Innovative Economy*—Tech Alabama established to support and expand high-tech industrial sector in Birmingham region (600-plus new high-tech jobs generated).

Fresno Region, California

- *Innovative Economy*—Primary Literacy Initiative and Executive MBA program launched in partnership with Fresno State University; 15 business-school partnerships formed; Regional Jobs Initiative established to generate 25,000 jobs in five years.
- *Collaborative Governance*—Community Values of the Fresno Region (a "code of conduct" for community business) incorporated and adopted by 30 nonprofits, public agencies and community boards.

Gateway Cities Region, California

- *Innovative Economy*—A workforce development program in international trade logistics has trained 70 and placed 50 people in jobs; community learning resource centers established; Math Engineer and Science Academies started in all of the City of Paramount's high schools.
- *Collaborative Governance/Social Inclusion*—Community Sustainability Planning process launched as expressly bilingual initiative to empower and engage Spanish-speaking residents in decision making.

Greater Wasatch Region, Utah

- *Livable Community*—1/4-cent sales tax approved to purchase right-of-way and fund construction of light rail transit system.
- *Collaborative Governance/Social Inclusion*—Coalition for Utah's Future founded in 1988 to engage citizens, government officials and business leaders in collaboration on housing, economic, educational, growth, and transportation concerns.

For more information, contact: Amy Carrier, amy@regionalstewardship.org

Photographs



Greater Birmingham: The Center for Regional Planning and Design opened in August 2003 as a “regional town hall,” a place for citizens, businesspeople and government officials to gather and discuss ways to improve the region. Located in a preserved and converted warehouse, the Center is a partnership among the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, Region 2020 and the Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies.



Fresno Region: Participants from the greater Fresno community discuss boundary crossing and collaboration at a 2001 retreat that formally launched the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative (CRI).



Gateway Cities Region: A predominantly Latino group of residents of the City of Bell, Calif. participate in a “Sustainability Planning Project” session, conducted in both English and Spanish. Lack of English proficiency is a major barrier to broad participation in public process throughout the region—one that the Sustainability Planning Project sought expressly to overcome.

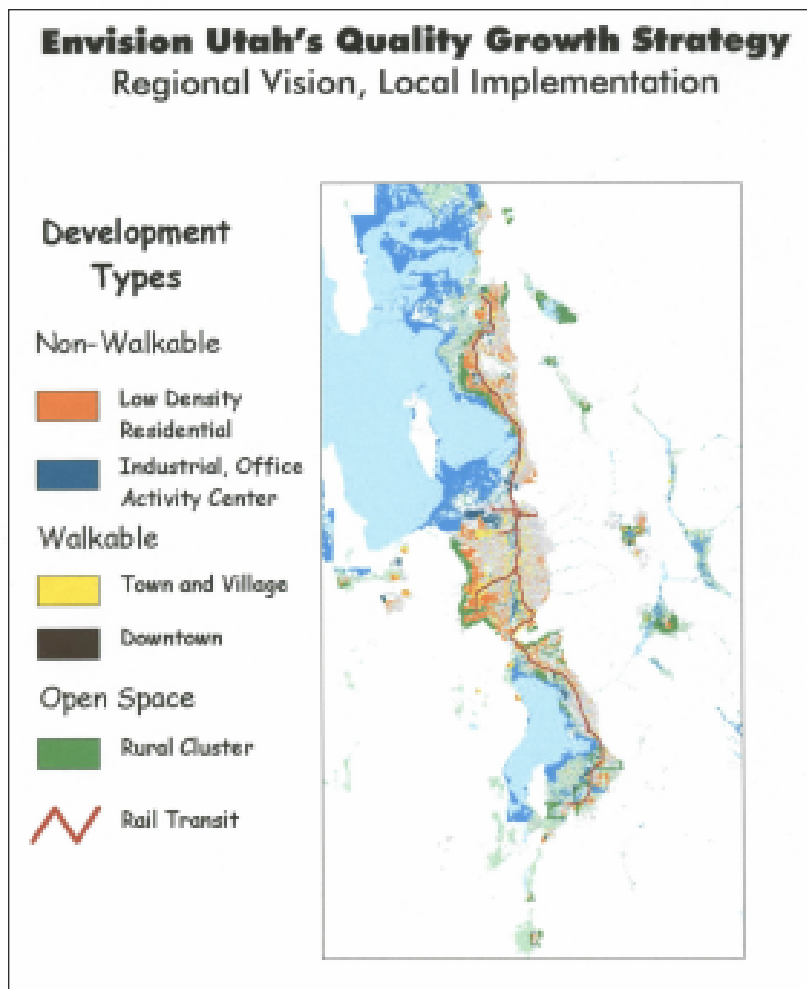
OPTION 1

Photographs

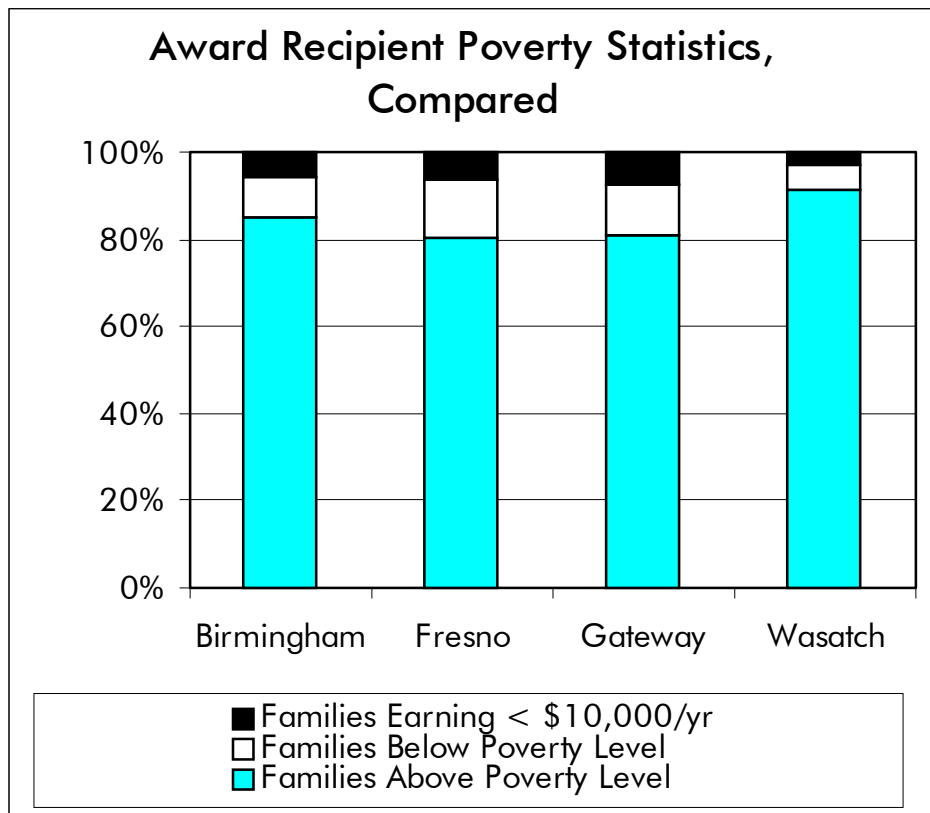
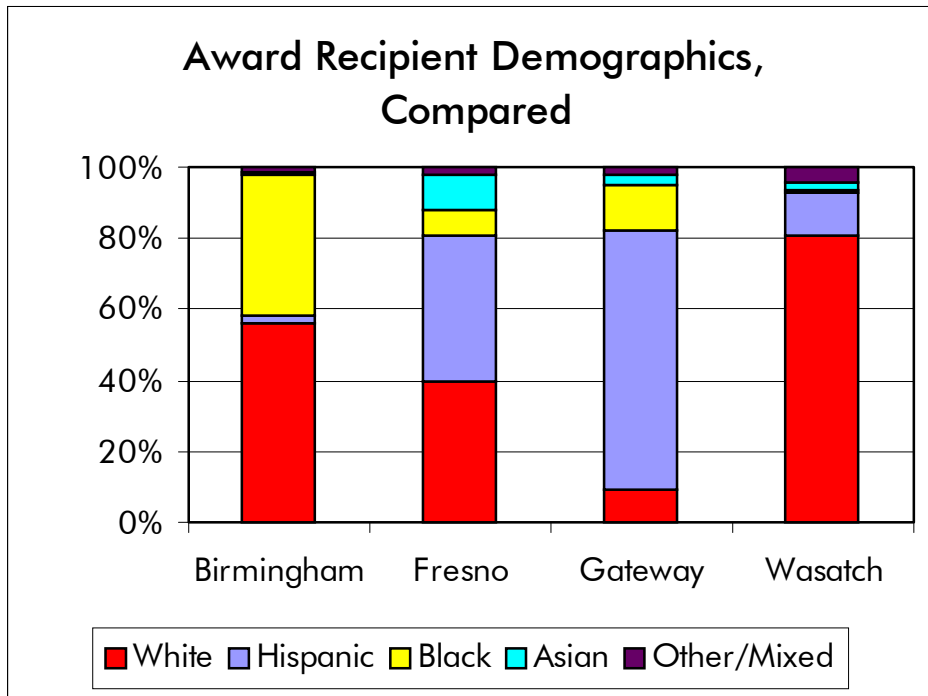


Gateway Cities Region: A bilingual volunteer explains the “Sustainability Planning Project” to a predominantly Spanish-speaking group of residents of the City of Bell, Calif. Lack of English proficiency is a major barrier to broad participation in public process throughout the region—one that the Sustainability Planning Project sought expressly to overcome.

OPTION 2



Greater Wasatch Region: A geographic representation of the growth scenario preferred by a majority of residents of the Greater Wasatch Region in Utah. Eventually dubbed the “Quality Growth Strategy,” the plan embraces six principal goals necessary to protect the region’s environment and maintain its economic vitality and quality of life, among them walkability, transit access and clusters of density and commercial activity.



Award Presentation Ceremony



Gateway Cities Region: Maggie Cordero receives a 2004 Regional Stewardship Award in the category of Honorable Mention. Seated is Morgan Family Foundation President Becky Morgan.



Fresno Region: Ken Newby (left) and Deborah Nankivell (center) receive a 2004 Regional Stewardship Award in the Bronze category from Becky Morgan.



Greater Birmingham Region: David Adkisson (right) receives a 2004 Regional Stewardship Award in the Silver category, as Deborah Vance (left) and Ann Florie look on.

Award Presentation Ceremony



Greater Wasatch Region: Robert Grow receives a 2004 Regional Stewardship Award in the Gold category from Becky Morgan.