

SITLA issues statement on Spanish Valley

April 12, 2019

Agency, San Juan County partner on land use law

The School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration released the following statement regarding its relationship with San Juan County in developing land use codes, particularly in Spanish Valley straddling the Grand and San Juan county line. Some Spanish Valley residents are upset with plans for a Love's truck stop in the area that will be built on land purchased from SITLA.

On behalf of the K-12 public education beneficiary, the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration manages more than 5,000 acres of trust land in the San Juan County portion of Spanish Valley.

Because of its large land holdings, in 2017 the county requested that SITLA participate in and help fund the San Juan Spanish Valley Special Service District sanitary sewer and culinary water planning project.

SITLA and San Juan County jointly funded a land-use

planning process for both trustlands and private lands in San Juan-Spanish Valley that was led by Landmark Design, a Salt Lake City-based community planning and design firm. The planning process involved the San Juan-Spanish Valley community and resulted in the adoption of the San Juan Spanish Valley Area Plan in April 2018 by the San Juan County Commission.

This 2018 Area Plan identified key principles to be used to create guidelines and ordinances. San Juan County re-engaged Landmark Design to prepare guidelines and ordinances, based on those principles, for lands included within the area plan.

Beginning in November 2018, the San Juan County Planning & Zoning Commission has met monthly to carefully review the proposed ordinances and has held multiple public hearings, a process that continues now.

It is SITLA's understanding that the proposed ordinances will serve as the development code to guide growth and development in the San Juan-Spanish Valley, which is envisioned primarily as a residential community with some areas of commercial services. The proposed ordinances cover residential and commercial development, water-efficient landscaping, and outdoor lighting.

SITLA supports the proposed ordinances and San Juan

County's efforts to provide guidelines for a part of the county that is poised for growth due to its proximity to Moab.

Director David Ure said, "Revenue generated from development of school trust lands is deposited into the \$2.5 billion Permanent School Fund, which provides annual interest income to Utah schools at no cost to taxpayers." He added that Grand and San Juan county school districts received a combined \$762,016 this school year and \$5.1 million since 2002.