UTAH FOUNDATION

RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

BUILDING A BETTER BEEHIVE

Land Use Decision Making, Fiscal Sustainability and Quality of Life in Utah

JUNE 2019

Building a Better Beehive

Special thanks to the following for providing project-based support for this report:

UNION PACIFIC

UTAH LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS

WASATCH FRONT REGIONAL COUNCIL

Utah Foundation Project Staff
Sam Brucker, *Research Analyst, Principal Author*
Peter Reichard, *President*
Shawn Teigen, *Vice President and Director of Research*
Dan Bammes, *Communications Director*
Christopher Collard, *Research Analyst*

Research Report 763

UTAH FOUNDATION
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

150 S. State St., Ste. 444
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
utahfoundation.org

About Utah Foundation
Utah Foundation's mission is to produce objective, thorough and well-reasoned research and analysis that promotes the effective use of public resources, a thriving economy, a well-prepared workforce and a high quality of life for Utahns. Utah Foundation seeks to help decisionmakers and citizens understand and address complex issues. Utah Foundation also offers constructive guidance to improve governmental policies, programs and structures.

Utah Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization.

Support Our Work
Utah Foundation relies on the support of business and civic leaders and average citizens to produce the high-quality, independent research for which we're known. To become a member or sponsor one of our projects or programs, contact us at 801-355-1400.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Utah's population has been projected to nearly double during the next 40 years, with most of the growth occurring in Utah's urban areas. This projected trend challenges local governments to manage growth while fostering long-term fiscal stability and maintaining a high quality of life. Land use decisions are pivotal to both fiscal sustainability and quality of life in Utah communities.

This report identifies five strategic categories for local governments to consider in addressing both fiscal and quality of life concerns in the context of land use decision making. They are:

- Promoting efficient land use.
- Expanding transportation options.
- Preserving green spaces and natural assets.
- Preserving and improving community character.
- Avoiding undue taxpayer subsidy of new growth.

KEY FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT

- Nearly 76% of Utah local governments responding to a Utah Foundation survey noted that the need to increase road capacity was one of the greatest impediments to growth, with water infrastructure a close second.
- About 64% of Utah local governments surveyed said their residents expressed "high" or "extreme concern" over increasing residential density.
- Promoting efficient land use will require policymakers to seek strategic opportunities to increase density, encourage mixed-use development where appropriate and implement parking management strategies.
- Compared to 10 years ago, about 83% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation responded that they allow for higher-density developments and 72% allow for smaller lot sizes.
- About 95% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation zone for multi-family housing.
- About 83% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation noted that they zone for mixed-use development.
- Traditional main street / downtown properties can have far higher property values per square foot than suburban retail areas. Comparison properties in various Utah cities demonstrated a mixed-use property delivered $375 per square foot, compared to $37 for a big-box store.
- Transit-oriented development, pedestrian friendly development features and interconnected street networks all offer opportunities to expand transportation options and reduce congestion.
- About 52% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation noted that they have zones to accommodate transit-oriented development.
- Preserving green spaces and natural assets is a key quality of life concern to Utahns.
- Utahns would like to see improvements to community spaces. Key policy areas to consider include place-based planning, programs to improve building conditions, and policies and investments to improve streetscapes.
- After adjusting for inflation, total impact fees decreased by 3% for multi-family units from 2007 to 2018, and by 13% for single-family units.
- About 68% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation use other funds along with impact fees to cover costs of new infrastructure, primarily to promote affordability.
- Communities across Utah are moving to create or promote higher-quality community spaces that more efficiently use land and include a mix of uses to help build the tax base. Walkable, transit-oriented developments allowing for higher densities are among them.

Promoting efficient land use. Promoting more efficient land use can improve local revenues while improving quality of life. Local governments may consider taking a closer look at issues surrounding density, mixed-use development and parking. If used in strategic locations, density – often a matter of concern for existing residents – can enhance quality of life. It can also boost the local tax base, more efficiently deploying land resources and providing opportunities for new residents and businesses. The strategic use of higher densities in concert with mixed-use developments offers opportunities to create dynamic communities while reaping a stronger tax revenue return per square foot. Well-executed mixed-use developments both in Utah and nationally have created walkable communities and appealing streetscapes and community spaces. Additionally, right-sizing parking requirements allows for a more efficient use of available land and helps local governments maximize tax revenues.

Expanding transportation options. As population growth consumes capacity of existing transportation networks, it will be necessary for state, regional and local government agencies to collaborate on meeting the changing transportation needs of commerce and people. Transit-oriented developments, public transit, active transportation and interconnected street networks all play important roles in meeting the needs of a growing population and easing traffic congestion. Transit-oriented developments may also offer the opportunity for more efficient land uses and mixed-use communities, with direct connections to employment centers. Features that promote pedestrian transportation options, like bike paths, sidewalks and trails, are commonly seen as quality of life amenities. They also improve the walkability of neighborhoods, a key quality of life feature. Having an interconnected street network, meanwhile, allows access to both public transit and safe active transportation options.

Preserving green spaces and natural assets. Utah Foundation's survey work demonstrates that Utahns see natural surroundings and parks and recreation as essential to their quality of life. These assets are also crucial to economic development and, in many cases, local tax revenues, drawing tourists and influencing relocation decisions. Green and open spaces are a treasured part of the urban fabric, particularly in denser cities. Green and open spaces help offset the negative aspects of increasing density and compact development. Urban green spaces are a key quality of life feature and generally bolster nearby property values (and thereby tax revenues). Through flexible zoning requirements, local governments can encourage green spaces in new developments to enhance the quality of life in those areas without incurring new public sector capital costs. Utahns also perceive farmlands as vital to the economy and character of the state. However, rapid development puts pressure on agricultural lands. Efficient urban growth patterns are critical to easing that pressure, and local governments may benefit from the creation of special advisory commissions and strategic plans focused on the conservation of farmlands and other natural assets.

Preserving and improving community character. Utah Foundation's survey work revealed that Utahns feel neighborhoods and streetscapes need improvement. Their appeal is critical to quality of life and local tax revenues. It is also an important draw to those looking to relocate to Utah. Policymakers can improve public spaces by planning through placemaking, improving building conditions and enhancing streetscapes. Many jurisdictions have opportunities to pull together citizens, businesses and other stakeholders in place-based planning efforts around neighborhood cores and key intersections. With developer participation, such efforts can yield high-quality streetscapes and community gathering places that improve quality of life and boost tax revenues. Local governments can accommodate new growth within the envelope of the existing cityscape by promoting the redevelopment of historic, underutilized buildings, brownfield redevelopment and infill development. Improvements along these lines can improve the urban landscape, enhance quality of life and bring in new tax revenues, sometimes without requiring significant new public infrastructure investments. To enhance streetscapes, policymakers may need to give attention to landscaping, lighting, pedestrian friendliness, parking, signage and scale. For instance, along wide boulevards, taller buildings can enhance the appeal by anchoring the street. They may also take better advantage of existing road capacity and offer opportunities to enhance the tax base.

A balanced approach will enhance quality of life by providing residents with opportunities to live, work and play in their own community without having to jump into traffic to reach employment centers or retail. A balanced approach will also provide fiscal stability in the short term by welcoming commercial development, and in the long term by ensuring commercial development unfolds in a manner that respects and enhances community character.

Avoiding undue taxpayer subsidy of new growth. Though growth brings new challenges, most governments would prefer a growing population to a declining population. With that said, many local governments face challenges on the expense side, where the cost of providing services and infrastructure to a new development is beyond their means. Many local governments use impact fees to ensure that current residents do not subsidize new developments. Impact fees in Utah are on the low side compared to the other Mountain States. Additionally, when adjusted for inflation, impact fees for single-family homes have been dropping. While impact fees help to ensure that current residents do not subsidize new developments, they are controversial. To some extent, they may have negative impacts on housing affordability. For that reason, it is important that local governments seek to calibrate impact fees and regularly revisit them to ensure that they defray an appropriate portion of public costs without becoming unreasonably high. Part of the fiscal landscape also includes the tax base. A healthy tax base will allow local governments to stay on top of the service and infrastructure costs that accompany growth over time. This usually means that local governments must ensure not just a strong residential base, but also a robust commercial base. On the other hand, local governments that chase tax revenues with laissez-fare approaches to commercial development may eventually damage the appeal of the built environment and thereby damage the long-term fiscal picture. A balanced approach will enhance quality of life by providing residents with opportunities to live, work and play in their own community, without having to jump into traffic to reach employment centers or retail. A balanced approach will also provide fiscal stability in the short term by welcoming commercial development and in the long term by ensuring that commercial development unfolds in a manner that respects and enhances community character.

Land use decisions matter for quality of life, efficiency and the bottom line. Communities across the country have understandably made efforts to chase big projects, particularly in the retail sector, in order to bolster tax revenues and provide amenities. But the model that rose to prominence in recent decades – a large, single-story retail site surrounded by acres of parking – may not always be the most efficient use of limited land resources. For this report, Utah Foundation worked with the Wasatch Front Regional Council to publish maps showing significant differences in the property tax yield per acre, depending on the land use approach. In the more traditional downtown areas of Bountiful, Ogden and Provo, for instance, the property valuations per acre tended to be much higher than in nearby suburban commercial areas. This suggests that downtowns and main streets, along with the underlying land use frameworks that enabled them, deserve a closer look when it comes to future development. As this report demonstrates, many communities in Utah are already thinking in these terms.

Statewide, local governments are looking at strategic locations for higher density development that creates compact, centralized locations – often around public transit – and provides a range of market options to accommodate a wider range of consumer preferences. Cities and towns across Utah are creating or have executed plans that focus on finding strategic opportunities and locations to create or revitalize core city centers that are mixed-use, walkable developments near transit. The characteristics differ by city. For some, it may be a downtown city center. Other communities may choose to create a town center or revitalize a main street. Regardless, local, regional and state policymakers are working toward building a better beehive. This report seeks to help take those efforts to the next level.

INTRODUCTION

Utah's population has been projected to nearly double during the next 40 years. Most of the growth will occur in Utah's urban areas, challenging local governments to manage growth in a manner that fosters long-term fiscal stability while maintaining a high quality of life.

In Utah, there are 248 cities and towns, each with its own unique set of needs and assets. There are 29 counties and four metropolitan planning organizations. While each jurisdiction is identifying how to best prepare for growth, a strategic approach centered on both fiscal health and quality of life – which, in the long run, will support fiscal health – provides a framework from which all communities can proceed.

Balancing various objectives – such as promoting economic prosperity, creating vibrant places, maintaining community character and fostering fiscal sustainability – can be difficult. Sometimes, priorities among local officials, community members, developers, as well as local, regional and state goals, can fall out of alignment. The balancing act can be even more difficult to manage in the face of rapid population growth.

This report examines the challenges of population growth to local governments and the general population. Specifically, the report explores the fiscal challenges that accompany growth, both in the short-term and in the long-term. The report also draws from Utah Foundation's 2018 *Quality of Life* survey to demonstrate what Utahns most value in their communities and which issues concern them most. The report identifies various development patterns and the associated influence on fiscal health of local governments, as well as impressions on community preferences. It also includes maps showing differences in valuation according to divergent land use patterns.

Building from the fiscal challenges and quality of life concerns, the report identifies five strategic categories to confront the costs of growth, to ensure fiscal sustainability and to retain a high quality of life. The discussions contained within these five categories – promoting efficient land use, expanding transportation options, preserving green spaces and natural assets, preserving and improving community character, and avoiding undue taxpayer subsidy of new growth – are meant to help local governments plan for growth in a way that secures fiscal sustainability and promotes a high quality of life.

Finally, Utah Foundation surveyed dozens of cities across Utah to reveal the challenges and

METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

This report draws on Utah Foundation's 2018 *Quality of Life* survey data, Utah Foundation's fall 2018 survey data for the Utah League of Cities and Towns, Wasatch Front Regional Council data, interviews with experts and public officials statewide, a review of general plans in cities and towns in various counties, and scholarly research and literature.

Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey asks survey respondents a series of questions on 20 aspects of their local communities (the area within a 30-minute drive). Respondents ranked these on a five-point scale, from "poor to excellent." Utah Foundation creates the *Quality of Life Index* by averaging the responses about each aspect and adjusting them to a 100-point scale. For more information on results and methodology, the *Quality of Life* reports are available from Utah Foundation's website (www.utahfoundation.org/uploads/rr756.pdf.)

For the Utah League of Cities and Towns survey, Utah Foundation surveyed 82 Utah cities and towns with populations near or greater than 5,000 residents.

This report does not provide an exhaustive list of what all cities and towns are doing to plan for growth in Utah. There is a strong emphasis on key examples in population centers along the Wasatch Front, with notable examples elsewhere in the state. The report is designed to create a broad, comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities local governments are facing to further discussion among the public and policymakers in the state.

It should be noted that while housing affordability is a matter of significant concern regarding future development, examining the array of possible policy interventions would require a separate report (or multiple reports). Housing affordability is therefore not comprehensively addressed within this report.

UTAH'S METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

In Utah's urban areas, metropolitan planning organizations coordinate transportation planning efforts. The process includes creating a 20-year transportation plan and a transportation improvement program. The four organizations are:

Cache Metropolitan Planning Organization, which represents the Cache Valley area.

Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization, which represents the St. George area.

Mountainland Association of Governments, which represents the Provo and Orem areas.

Wasatch Front Regional Council, which includes the urban areas from Ogden to Salt Lake City.

The Utah Department of Transportation oversees the statewide transportation planning process, which includes plans for rural transportation needs. The Utah Transit Authority, a public agency, provides transportation services. These organizations frequently work together to coordinate regional transportation plans.

Source: Utah Department of Transportation; Utah Transit Authority.

trends on the ground. The report also offers a series of bite-sized case studies across the state where Utah cities are already deploying key features of the strategies under discussion.

BACKGROUND

Utah's population has been projected to nearly double, from 3 million to 5.8 million by 2065.[1] Utah's anticipated rapid population growth presents challenges to local governments, as most of this growth will occur in Utah's urban areas and their surroundings.

While Washington County is currently growing at the fastest pace, the Wasatch Front will experience the majority of Utah's total population increase. This is significant as 75% of the state's population already resides in the four populous counties along the Wasatch Front – Davis, Salt Lake, Utah and Weber.[2]

Some counties will absorb more growth than others. Utah County is projected to account for about 37% of the statewide growth by 2065, while Salt Lake County will account for about 21%, despite a small land area compared to most counties in the state.[3] These two counties already account for more than half of Utah's total population (about 55%) and contain Utah's five largest cities.[4]

While planning for growth is a higher priority in certain areas, the issue is important statewide, as the impacts of transportation choices, land use decisions, open space and air quality policies often span beyond local boundaries. Therefore, a regional approach to development is an essential overlay to local planning.

In 2018, the Wasatch Front Regional Council and Mountainland Association of Governments adopted Wasatch Choice 2050, a regional vision based on collaboration with local communities, the Utah Department of Transportation, the Utah Transit Authority and key stakeholders regarding land use decisions, transportation needs and economic development. The Wasatch Front Regional Council and Mountainland Association of Governments gathered input from these participants to explore several scenarios to help communities understand the impacts of different development approaches. The resulting vision identified four strategies to guide anticipated growth: provide transportation choices; support housing options; preserve open space; and link economic development with transportation and housing decisions.[5]

Similarly, the Cache metropolitan planning organization and the Dixie metropolitan planning organization also have long-range plans for their respective areas. These organizations, along with the Utah Department of Transportation and the Utah Transit Authority came together to create Utah's Unified Transportation Plan to coordinate long-range regional planning initiatives.

As local and regional government entities ramp up planning efforts, the state is also making growth planning a priority. Governor Herbert's budget recommendations for fiscal 2020 highlighted, as a top priority, the need for managing growth while maintaining Utah's high quality of life.[6] The recommendations identify several key areas, one of which focuses on improving quality of life in thriving communities.

THE COSTS OF GROWTH

Key players at every level of government are rapidly making plans for population growth. Increased population, and the development it necessitates, can come with both a fiscal cost to local governments and quality of life concerns for current residents. How local governments plan for growth has a major impact on both the fiscal picture and future quality of life.

Fiscal Costs

Local government entities include counties, municipalities, metro townships, special districts (such as water authorities) and school districts. Collectively, these entities are responsible for services to residents, from providing education and public safety needs to building and maintaining infrastructure.

Local governments experience firsthand the challenges of growing demands on services and infrastructure. They must consider both the immediate and long-term costs of new services and infrastructure, raising questions as to who should bear the burden: current or future residents.

THE RISE OF THE SUBURBS

The start of suburbs in the U.S. were spurred by several social, economic, demographic and technological factors in the 20th century such as the population boom after World War II, the mass production and increased use of cars, and the accessibility and availability of suburban homes. In the early 1900s, the introduction of the car led Americans to single-family homes on the outskirts of city centers. Automobile-oriented communities allowed people to commute longer distances to work, which gave businesses and industry liberty to move beyond urban cores. (There are some areas in the U.S. where there are exceptions to this.)

This transition created a demand for roads and highways, wider downtown streets, and other transportation infrastructure to accommodate automobile traffic. The most dramatic phase of American suburbanization occurred immediately after World War II. Federal housing and transportation policy contributed to suburban growth as a part of federal housing loans that facilitated suburban home ownership and highway funding that linked city centers and suburban communities. The rise of large, single-use, residential communities connected by freeways to urban cores created suburban landscapes where residents were dependent on cars for most aspects of daily life.

Critics of typical suburban developments highlight low-density development that exhibits strict separation between residential, commercial and other land uses and reduces the viability of walking, bicycling and transit use. They point to streetscapes that fail to accommodate pedestrians, leading to more sedentary populations and attendant health problems. They also highlight examples of inefficient land development that increases the rate of conversion of forest and farmlands, increases the mileage of roads and other infrastructure, and lowers housing supply per acre. Critics deride these development patterns as "sprawl."

However, many residents choose suburban settings because they perceive a variety of benefits, such as a higher quality of life, lower housing costs, increased public safety, better schools and lower property taxes. In many cases, there is a mix of traditional urban and suburban development patterns within a single "suburban" community.

Sources: U.S. National Park Service, *An Overview of Suburbanization in the United States, 1830 to 1960*. U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Community Development: Extent of Federal Influence on 'Urban Sprawl' is Unclear*. Cornell College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, *Defining Sprawl and Smart Growth*. Transit Cooperative Research Program, *Costs of Sprawl.* American Public Health Association, *Conventional Development Versus Managed Growth: The Costs of Sprawl.*

Short-term Costs. In 2018, Utah Foundation conducted a survey of local governments statewide for the Utah League of Cities and Towns to review how local governments are paying and planning for development. Some local governments reported that the cost of infrastructure is one of the greatest impediments to growth. (See Figure 1.)

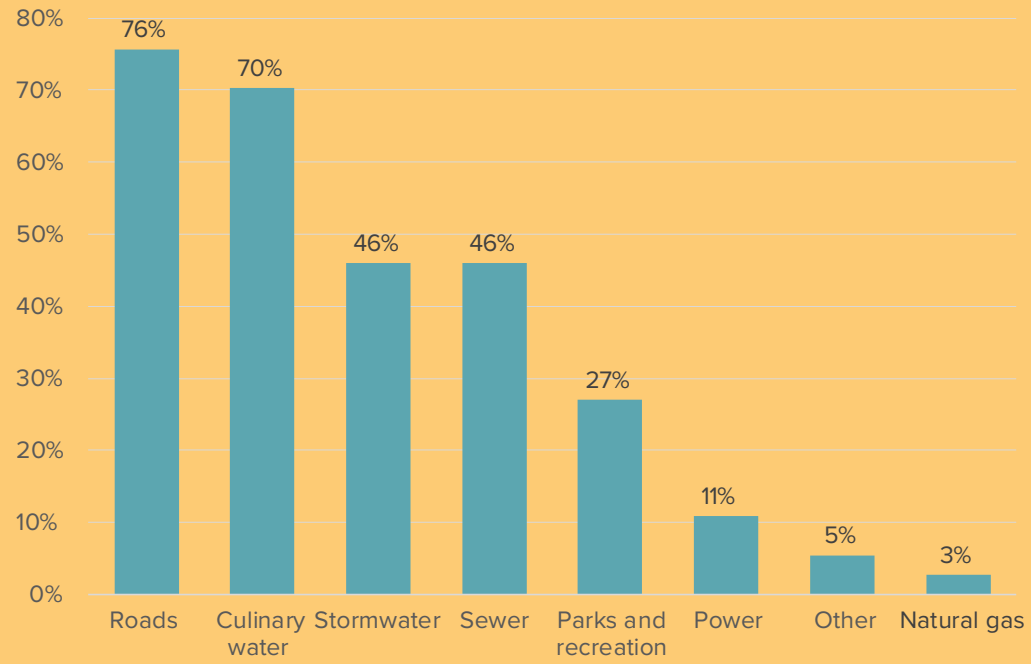
Local governments often struggle to pay for the necessary infrastructure to accommodate new growth. Construction costs for one new mile of road depend on several factors, including: location, terrain, type of construction, number of lanes, lane width and durability. According to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, construction of a new, two-lane, undivided road can cost, on average, between $2 million to $3 million dollars per mile in rural areas and about $3 million to $5 million per mile in urban areas.[7] Other elements of new development, such as water/wastewater and stormwater pipes, can also be expensive for local governments, depending on the size and location of the project. Although developers may – in some cases – install infrastructure, local governments are typically responsible for the long-term maintenance and replacement of it, a key issue that is discussed in greater detail later in the report.

Because of the length of time that may be needed to save for a new road, park or water system, local governments can create a capital project fund, dedicated for specific projects.[8] Prior to creating a fund, one recognized best practice for municipal fiscal management is to create a capital investment plan. (See sidebar on page 9 for more information.)

Salt Lake City, for instance, has a capital improvement program that is a multi-year planning program for construction, purchase or rehabilitation of infrastructure. This may include buildings, parks, streets, sidewalks, bridges, transportation features, traffic signals

About 76% of cities responding to the survey noted that the need to increase road capacity was one of the greatest impediments to growth, with water infrastructure a close second.

Figure 1: Biggest Impediments to Growth for Utah Cities and Towns



Source: Utah Foundation survey for Utah League of Cities and Towns.

LOCAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING

Capital investment plans can help provide a bridge between general planning and annual budgets. Typically, municipal capital investment plans are multiyear strategies that identify anticipated public infrastructure projects and financing strategies. Plans often include an inventory of the local government's existing policies and financial capabilities to build and manage projects in relation to urban land use and transportation decisions.

Other items that should be included with the plan are goals, guidelines and actions for fiscal management, such as the percentage of the annual budget to be dedicated to capital projects, strategies to limit annual debt and possible limits on outstanding debt. It should be noted that debt can be an appropriate option, as it can provide a means of deferring costs of new infrastructure to people who will use it over time.

The plan might identify specific projects, as well as general schedules, that align with local governments' expectations for population growth. The plan should also consider future operating expenditures, maintenance costs and revenues. For instance, funds for capital projects may include general funds, grants and transfers from the state or federal government, grants from external sources, and long-term debt such as bonds. Local governments may consider updating capital investment plans annually to account for increased value in surrounding properties as a result of new infrastructure.

Source: The World Bank, *Capital Investment Planning*.

and other physical structures.[9] After first prioritizing deferred maintenance of existing infrastructure, the city considers new capital projects with money transferred from the general fund to the capital improvement fund. The city has also recently raised taxes specifically to cover unmet transportation costs.

Capital projects can stimulate the economy through increased construction activity, increased economic activity and increased property values in the vicinity of the new investments. However, these benefits can be short-lived and do not always account for the long-term maintenance costs associated with the new facilities or infrastructure. It is not unusual for governments to forego long-term plans to pay for maintenance and replacement. This results in the need for larger capital investments down the road and the transfer of costs to future taxpayers.

Long-term Costs. Beyond the immediate need for funds to build infrastructure to accommodate the demands of growth, local governments also need to consider the long-term ripple effects of development projects. For instance, new development projects can affect the wear and tear on roads, put pressure on school systems, strain water infrastructure, increase the need for public safety services, and limit access to green and open spaces.

Unplanned or poorly planned growth can overwhelm the capacity of local governments to pay for maintenance on its existing infrastructure. Across the nation, all levels of government are struggling to pay for improvements to roads and other infrastructure. [10]

Maintenance on these essentials of civilization are sometimes neglected, and local governments nationally are struggling with degraded systems. For instance, a comprehensive study by Utah State University reviewing water main networks in the U.S. found that the typical age of failing water mains is 50 years, and 28% of all water mains are more than 50 years old.[11] In fact, the study found that the national rate of pipe replacement is 125 years.[12]

One report estimates that the U.S. municipal water infrastructure needs will cost about $638 billion in capital expenditures over the next decade.[13] Capital expenditures for municipal water infrastructure includes a wide range of needs, such as manhole covers to underground piping networks, fire hydrants, water service line replacements and new, data-based technology. These costs also include necessary improvements to deteriorating pipe networks and sewer systems. Rising population demands on treatment plants and service networks in some cases add to the challenge.[14]

Another measure found the state of road infrastructure in the U.S. is poor and at risk of failure from advanced signs of deterioration.[15] The study by the American Society of Civil

Engineers found that one out of every five miles of highway pavement is in poor condition, with an increasing backlog of rehabilitation needs.[16] In fact, the study estimates a $2 trillion infrastructure funding gap by 2025.[17]

For Utah communities to avoid these scenarios, it will be critical for local governments to find funding to replace or repair infrastructure before the systems reach crisis mode. Long-term planning is critical for doing so.[18] This report is not suggesting that all cities in Utah are unprepared for future infrastructure replacement. However, care should be taken to make sure this national trend is not perpetuated in Utah.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUES

Utah has four primary types of local governments: school districts, special and local districts, counties, and municipalities. Their tax revenue collections vary depending on the type of entity, which taxes local governments choose to implement, if communities are new or more mature, what types of amenities are available, and what is allowed by the state government.

School districts rely primarily on property taxes and intergovernmental transfers from the state. Special and local districts are dependent on property taxes and service fees, as allowed by state code. Counties are primarily funded through property and sales taxes. Municipal governments source their revenue primarily from property taxes, sales and use taxes, franchise fees, and charges for services.

Utah Foundation's report *The Essential Tax: Property Taxation in Utah* found that tax revenues for cities and towns have roughly matched population growth and inflation, and county property tax revenues have grown at a slower pace. Revenues collected by school, special and local districts outperformed this baseline.

However, Utah Foundation's report *The Everyday Tax: Sales Taxation* in Utah found that local sales tax revenues have continued to grow, primarily due to rate increases or a wider adoption of local sales tax options.

Local revenues not only vary by type of entity, but also based on local preference and amenities. Some communities rely on a dominant tax revenue stream, such as tourist towns that have a higher proportion of sales tax revenue. This lack of diversified tax revenues can expose some communities to a higher risk in the event of an economic downturn.

State policies can influence how cities choose to develop. Primary residences are taxed on only 55% of the assessed property value. By contrast, second homes and commercial properties are taxed based on 100% of the assessed market value. Local governments have no access to income taxes. These state policies can incentivize a priority on retail and commercial development, and less of a priority on bringing jobs or residential housing into a community.

In some cases, local revenues do not increase fast enough to meet the rise in public service demands. Some communities note this is a significant hurdle when trying to fund the infrastructure necessary to support growth. One city told Utah Foundation that there is often a delay in when property taxes are collected from when new developments are built. For instance, if a developer purchases a plat, property taxes are assessed based solely on the land value. The total property value including the new units, or commercial development, is not assessed until the January after the project is complete. Those taxes are then not due for another 11 months. Cities therefore provide infrastructure and services potentially long before receiving any property tax revenue, creating a funding gap.

Half of sales tax revenues are distributed back from their source based on population. For some high growth communities, the sales tax remitted to them based on population can be delayed for years depending on when state population estimates are updated

Sources: Interviews with local Utah officials; Utah Foundation, *The Essential Tax: Property Taxation in Utah*, February 2018; Utah Foundation, *The Everyday Tax: Sales Taxation in Utah*, June 2018; Utah State Tax Commission, "Residential Property," propertytax.utah.gov/real/locally-assessed/residential.

Quality of Life Challenges

Beyond direct fiscal considerations, local governments must consider how development and growth effect quality of life. After all, declines in quality of life will, in the long run, have a negative impact on fiscal health.

Issues associated with growth are a growing concern for some Utah residents. Utah Foundation's 2018 *Quality of Life* survey revealed that even as Utah's economy is expanding, perceptions of quality of life have actually dipped.[19]

For some, growth elicits fear of potential long-term social and economic impacts on existing communities. Many communities and local governments are already feeling strained by new development and associated traffic congestion. Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey report revealed four general policy goals that would most improve Utahns' overall quality of life:

- Promote production of quality, affordable housing.
- Build on policies and programs aimed at improving air quality.
- Invest in streetscapes and promote attractive, high-quality developments.
- Invest in transportation infrastructure and programs to reduce traffic and improve the quality of roads and highways.[20]

All four aspects are either directly or indirectly related to growth, with implications for development and planning improvements. In addition to these four areas of concern, Utahns indicated that they strongly value green spaces and natural assets, though they did not express concern regarding the quality of these assets.

Housing Affordability. Housing affordability is an issue of growing concern in Utah. In fact, the availability of quality housing that is affordable was the worst performing factor on Utah Foundation's 2018 *Quality of Life* index and has declined significantly since 2011.[21] Specifically, those with lower incomes, renters and residents of Salt Lake County were more likely than other Utahns to respond that their own housing was unaffordable.[22]

These perceptions in many ways align with reality. The price of homes in Utah have increased at an average annual rate of about 3.3% since 1991, compared to 1.5% nationally. Meanwhile, Utah household incomes increased at a rate of only 0.4% during the same time frame.[23] (These numbers have been adjusted for inflation.) One of the leading causes of rapidly increasing housing prices is a tightening supply, which can largely be explained by rapid population and job growth.[24] As the state grows, limited land supply, labor shortages, rapidly increasing costs of materials and an inability for developers to build fast enough to meet demand have directly affected housing affordability.

As previously mentioned, addressing housing affordability is beyond the scope of this report. It is an issue that entails its own constellation of policy interventions, many of which are complex and controversial or meant to address a wide variety of social goals beyond fiscal and quality of life considerations.

Air Quality. Cities along the Wasatch Front face significant air pollution challenges. In fact, the American Lung Association ranked the Salt Lake City-Provo-Orem area as the eighth most polluted metro in the U.S. for short-term particulate pollution.[25] It is also ranked as 18th worst in the nation for ozone pollution.[26] Short-term particulate pollution is most intense during winter inversion days, and the biggest source of emissions for particulate pollutants is vehicles, accounting for nearly half of the total.[27]

Planning and land use decisions can have a significant impact on the trajectory of Utah's future air quality. A 2018 research study used 17 years of data from six carbon dioxide emissions sensors in Salt Lake County and found a strong association between growth patterns and increased emissions. Specifically, the report concluded that population growth in suburban, residential areas yielded increasing emissions, while population growth in developed urban cores was linked with stable emissions.[28]

To some degree, it's a matter of simple math; far-flung bedroom communities place more commuters and shoppers at a longer distance from work and stores, putting more vehicles on the road for longer periods of time and more emissions in the air. It also expands service areas for delivery trucks, which tend to have higher emissions. On the other hand, residential developments closer to employment and shopping areas not only mean fewer miles traveled for those residents, it also opens a greater possibility for alternative modes of transport altogether, such as mass transit, biking and walking.

High-Quality Developments. Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey responses revealed that the attractiveness of streets, homes and buildings in public spaces is of high importance, but is considered low-performing by respondents. In other words, Utahns place value on the attractiveness of the built environment, but may find the current built environment disappointing.[29]

Local governments play a prominent role in the attractiveness of the built environment. For one, while cities are responsible for constructing only a fraction of the buildings in a community, how buildings and homes are built is largely a result of land use and development guidelines. The quality of streets, roadways and community spaces also falls to the lap of local governments. The same is true of streetscapes (defined as the natural and built fabric of a street as well as the design quality of a street and its visual effect).[30] Urban design and land use rules therefore play a large role in how residents view the aesthetic quality of their neighborhood.

In some cases, challenges arise regarding scale and density and how they relate to the expectations of both residents and developers. Take, for instance, certain historic sections of downtown Ogden or downtown Provo, or of Main Street in Salt Lake City. Few would take issue with the scale, setback, mix of uses or parking limitations in those settings; rather, a consensus view would probably deem those areas to be "charming." However, land development regulations can make replicating those historic patterns to create enlivened streetscapes in newer communities difficult, if not impossible. This issue is addressed in detail later in this report.

Traffic & Transportation Infrastructure. Based on Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey, Utahns perceive that one factor, above all, would increase their quality of life: reducing traffic. While traffic is inevitable in a growing community, persistent congestion can have significant negative impacts on quality of life. Similarly, Envision Utah found Utahns also want increased access and convenience to transit, that could in turn reduce traffic.[31]

Beyond the cost of commuters' time, several studies have found that traffic congestion negatively effects both physical and psychological well-being.[32] Longer time spent commuting is associated with obesity, high blood pressure and overall poor physical health.[33] Additionally, it is a chronic stressor that has been correlated with higher rates of self-reported tension, fatigue, and other negative mental and physical health effects.[34]

Time spent in cars is a function of both speed of travel (affected by congestion) and travel distances. Nationally, about 4% of households travel more than 26,000 miles per year.[35] In counties along the Wasatch Front, the percentages of households driving more than 26,000 miles per year exceed the national average – some by a large degree. (See Figure 2 on the next page.)

In Salt Lake County, 6.5% of the population traveled above that threshold. Nearly 22% of the population in Weber travel more than 26,000 vehicle miles per household per year. About 54% of Utah County residents traveled more than 26,000 miles per household per year. Data for Davis County are not available. These data do not consider how quickly those miles are traveled, but rather it is a representation of how much some Utahns may be driving.

Projects currently underway to add capacity, coupled with the growth in employment centers outside of the urban core, could reduce the time spent in traffic. However, capacity-adding projects are not likely of themselves to reduce miles traveled. On the contrary, adding highway capacity typically facilitates new growth farther from employment centers,

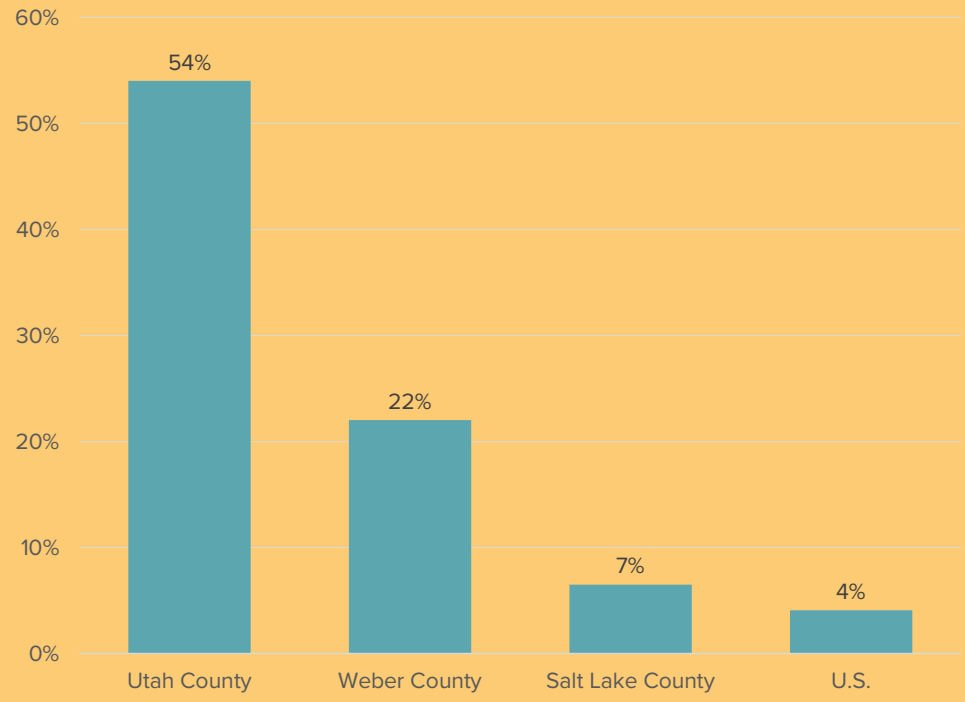
and in the long term the new capacity is eventually absorbed by new commuters. This is sometimes referred to as generated traffic, induced travel, or induced demand – or the additional peak-period vehicle traffic that results from road improvements or increased capacity.[36]

Indeed, there are other ways to address traffic congestion, and time spent traveling, that go beyond adding road capacity. For instance, land development patterns influence how people spend their time. Coordinating land use decisions with transportation infrastructure can help reduce overall vehicle miles traveled.

Finally, it should be noted that the *Quality of Life* survey found that Utahns see much room for improvement in the state's public transit assets. The goals of public transit are often in competition with one another. Often, transit agencies are expected to pursue both high ridership and broad coverage. However, transit agencies have limited resources, and these goals are often in competition with one another.

Households along the Wasatch Front drive significantly more miles per year than the U.S. average.

Figure 2: Households Driving More than 26,000 Miles per Year, Utah, Weber and Salt Lake Counties, 2012



Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology.

Note: There was no available data for Davis County.

The ridership goal focuses on placing frequent and reliable service on streets and key destinations where there are large numbers of people. This has the benefit of lowering the cost per rider, serving dense urban areas, managing congestion, reducing emissions and using revenues efficiently.[37] This strategy, however, does not reach communities that are more rural and suburban.

The coverage goal, on the other hand, seeks to serve every community, even if the service is infrequent. This strategy serves all communities, including people in need, and rural and suburban areas. With this strategy, however, bus services can be thin.

The Utah Transit Authority is currently administering a survey to get feedback to help guide their strategies on balancing these competing goals.

Green Spaces and Natural Assets. One last finding of the *Quality of Life* report deserves mention. The survey asked Utahns about what aspects they value most in their communities. Two items at the very top of the list – natural surroundings and parks/recreation – have direct implications for planning and land use decision-making. As a result, this report addresses this policy area as well.

CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OF GROWTH

Rapid growth in Utah is seemingly inevitable, and it brings the promise of statewide prosperity. But local governments are faced with the complicated task of producing fiscally sustainable communities that both appeal to the values of Utahns and mitigate their quality of life concerns.

Local governments that concentrate their planning efforts on efficient, strategic growth can create a competitive advantage in their regional economy. By coordinating economic and fiscal considerations with quality of life priorities, municipalities can create thriving areas that are attractive to both businesses and residents.

The following sections identify broad categories for local governments to consider as they plan for growth and that may help provide strategies to accomplish a general plan. These categories include:

- Promoting efficient land use.
- Expanding transportation options.
- Preserving green spaces and natural assets.
- Preserving and improving community character.
- Avoiding undue taxpayer subsidy of new growth.

PROMOTING EFFICIENT LAND USE

In 2016, the nonprofit Envision Utah, which convenes policymakers and community members around growth issues, found that there is limited available developable land left in the most populated areas of the state. In Salt Lake County, there were about 40,000 vacant developable acres, with 20,000 in Davis County and 40,000 in Weber County. However, there were more than 200,000 acres in Utah County, double the total in the other three counties combined.[38]

The state's rapid growth coupled with considerable natural limitations poses significant challenges. In Salt Lake County, growth is constrained by the Wasatch range to the east and the Oquirrh Mountains constricting outward growth to the west. In Weber and Davis counties the Wasatch range and the Great Salt Lake constrict growth. Utah County faces transportation limitations as Utah Lake creates a bottleneck in northern Utah County with the east and west mountain ranges creating limited transit corridor expansion routes. Statewide, topography, pub-

ENVISION UTAH

Created in 1997 by a group of prominent Utahns who included Governor Michael Leavitt and Larry H. Miller, Envision Utah set out to maintain Utah's high quality of life in the face of rapid growth. Envision Utah created a regional visioning process that included input from stakeholders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, as well as the general public. The process helped participants understand various growth scenarios and possible trade-offs. From that process, the *Quality Growth Strategy* was created, with a broadly supported vision for the Wasatch Front region.

Since then, the organization has worked with over 100 Utah communities to help identify the consequences of different growth patterns and transportation investments. Envision Utah gathers public input, engages stakeholders and models scenarios that show the impacts of growth choices.

In 2013, Envision Utah was charged by Governor Herbert to lead the *Your Utah, Your Future* process to help create a statewide vision for 2050. The vision includes 11 topics that cover complex and historical data to help guide the future. Today, the organization continues to conduct visioning efforts for various places and topics, where stakeholders from all backgrounds can help shape and learn about Utah's future.

Source: Envision Utah.

lic lands and limitations on natural resources pose constraints. In the face of these challenges, efficient land use becomes a key concern. In that light, this section identifies three strategies:

- Identifying opportunities for strategic density.
- Encouraging mixed-use development.
- Implementing parking management strategies.

Identifying Opportunities for Increased Density

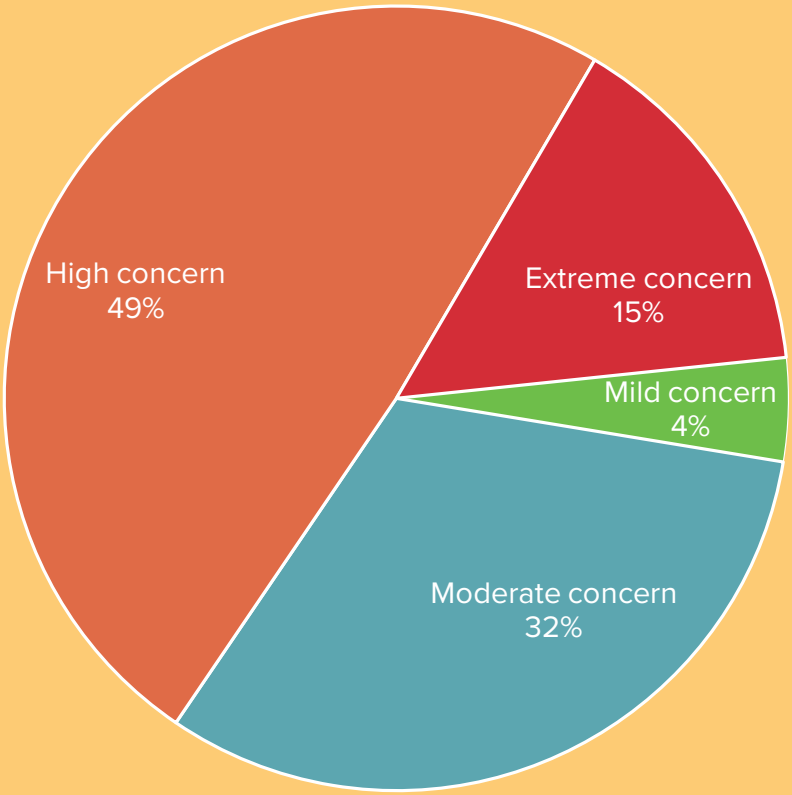
Increased density remains a highly divisive topic and a major concern for residents in Utah's cities and towns. (See Figure 3.)

This is perhaps triggered by perceptions of density, which are often based on characteristics of past failed projects or fears of drastic changes that may alter community character. In fact, "higher density" may mean single-family homes on small lots or townhomes. Characteristics of unpopular high-density projects often include: single land use, lack of public spaces and amenities, dependence on one mode of transportation (usually a car), and failure to provide a vibrant atmosphere.[39] Concerns can also arise with regard to aesthetic issues such as monotonous building designs, designs that are out of step with a neighborhood's character or the use of cheap building materials. Residents may also express concerns over social, economic and quality of life issues, such as increased traffic, changes in neighborhood character, higher crime and reduced property values.

Some local government officials with whom Utah Foundation spoke noted residents tend to be less concerned when high-density projects are strategically located in commercial areas and near public transit lines.[40] They also observed that there is less opposition to high-density developments when residents of existing neighborhoods perceive that their areas are insulated from high-density developments. Finally, they observed that residents tend to be less averse to high-density projects if they feel they have been consulted and if they believe that there are sound planning principles behind projects.[41] It should be noted that a key driver of Utah's high quality of life is the quality of its neighborhoods, and homeowners' net worth is often heavily tied to the equity they hold in their homes. As a result, citizen concerns about neighborhood development are frequently rooted in concern for future infrastructure capacities of their community and cannot always be written off as "NIMBYism."[42]

About 64% of Utah cities and towns surveyed said their residents expressed "high" or "extreme concern" over increasing residential density.

Figure 3: Percentage of Cities and Towns That Expressed How Their Residents are Responding to Increased Residential Density



Source: Utah Foundation's survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

BY THE NUMBERS

About 64% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation said their residents expressed "high" or "extreme concern" over increasing residential density.

Compared to 10 years ago, about 83% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation said that they allow for higher-density developments and 72% allow for smaller lot sizes.

About 95% of Utah Foundation survey respondents zone for multi-family housing.

About 83% of Utah Foundation survey respondents zone for mixed-use development.

Mixed-use downtown development properties tend to have far higher property values per square foot than big-box stores – comparison properties demonstrated a mixed-use property delivered $375 per square foot, compared to $37 for a big-box store.

Clear guidelines for development, vetted by citizens of the locality but with reasonable opportunity areas designated for high-density development, can help to avoid controversies and the pitfalls of failed density projects. It is also critical that density be used as a tool in strategic locations, such as urban cores, along transit lines, along high-capacity transportation corridors and in mixed-use centers. This strategy is central to the Wasatch Choice 2050 Vision. Additionally, Utah's 2019 Legislative Session saw passage of S.B. 34, which seeks to increase density along transit lines (discussed in greater detail later in this report.)

Density can be used to revitalize blighted or declining corridors or intersections, strip malls, commercial centers and main streets. High-density developments can also bring streetscape improvements where there are surface parking lots, the need for infill development or even existing residential and commercial uses that are poorly scaled for high-capacity corridors. Infill and redevelopment strategies are discussed in greater detail later in the report. Given the natural constraints in most urban valleys in Utah, strategic density is important to accommodating growth, while keeping housing costs down and transportation problems at bay.

In short, high-density development should not be seen as either a bugaboo or a bludgeon. Rather, it should be used strategically to advance a community's quality of life and fiscal objectives.

Fiscal Benefits and Land Use Efficiency. Higher density in strategic locations can be a fiscally responsible choice for local governments. One University of Utah study found that when comparing the lowest to highest density development patterns, public costs were three times higher per household for the lowest density pattern.[43] One analysis that compared uncontrolled versus compact growth scenarios over a projected 25-year period from 2000 to 2025 found that the compact growth scenario realized significant savings in land conservation, water and sewer infrastructure, local transportation infrastructure and local public service costs.[44]

In other words, low-density development patterns that reach far afield may have negative fiscal consequences by requiring more mileage of infrastructure and far-flung service areas. This can mean a greater cost per taxpayer, on the one hand, and a smaller tax yield per acre, on the other.[45]

A Matter of Perspective. It is important to note that "high-density" development means different things in different contexts and there are different definitions depending on the community. For instance, Utah Foundation's review of general plans in multiple Utah

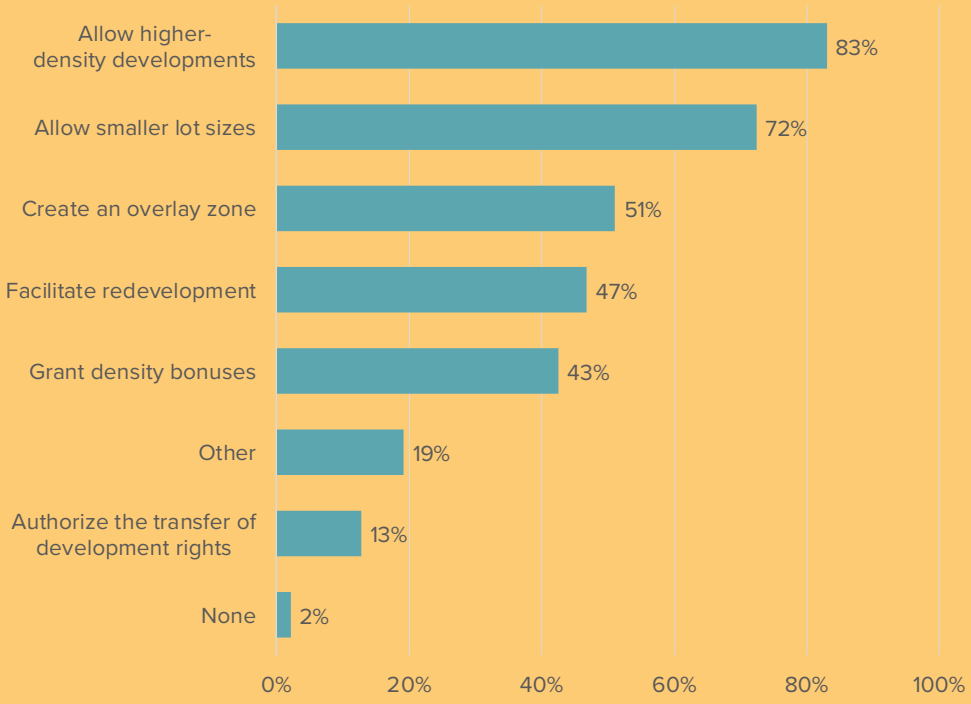
jurisdictions found definitions of high-density residential development ranging from 200 units per acre all the way down to eight units per acre.[46]

The differences may very well be appropriate. For instance, while a block in the core of downtown Salt Lake City might benefit from the addition of a 200-unit residential tower, the same building in an existing residential neighborhood of Bountiful could be inappropriate.

At any rate, "high-density" does not necessarily mean "high-rise," and in fact, high-rise buildings should only be considered if they fit into the local character of the community, or as part of a much larger comprehensive strategy. There are several options that exist between detached single-family homes and mid- or high-rise buildings. This is sometimes referred to as the "missing middle." It includes duplex, triplex, fourplex, courtyard apartments, bungalows, townhomes, multiplex buildings and live/work spaces. It could also include smaller lot sizes for single-family houses.

Utah's cities and towns have taken various actions to increase residential density.

Figure 4: Percentage of Cities and Towns That Have Taken Actions to Increase Residential Density



Source: Utah Foundation's survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

Utah Local Government Actions. Numerous local Utah governments are looking at strategic locations for new or infill higher density development that creates compact, centralized locations – often around transportation – and provides a range of market options to accommodate a wider range of consumer preferences.[47]

During the last 10 years, cities and towns across the state have been planning for growth by allowing for higher-density development. About 83% of local governments surveyed by the Utah Foundation responded that they allow for higher-density developments and 72% allow for smaller lot sizes compared to 10 years ago. (See Figure 4.)

About 51% of local governments surveyed by Utah Foundation use overlay zones to increase density.[48] Overlay zones place a layer on top of existing zones to incentivize developers to build housing units within specific districts, often in zones where residential or multi-family development is not typically allowed.[49] Additionally, about 95% of local governments surveyed zone for multi-family housing.[50]

The survey revealed that local governments are using several other tools to increase density in their communities, such as providing administrative resources to facilitate redevelopment, granting density bonuses to developers and authorizing the transfer of development rights.

In 2019, the Utah Legislature passed S.B. 34, which requires communities with at least 5,000 people in larger counties to create plans for developing housing for low- and moderate-income households. The bill requires local governments to implement at least three

STATE LAWS AND LOCAL LAND USE DECISION MAKING

The Land Use, Development, and Management Act (LUDMA) authorizes and governs land use and zoning regulation by cities and counties and establishes mandatory requirements for local governments. LUDMA creates a legal framework that local governments must follow regarding zoning decisions, ordinances and plans.

Local governments must adopt a "general plan," which is a guiding framework for future land development and growth. Local governments must also create planning commissions and appeal authorities. Some of the responsibilities of planning commissions typically include preparing and recommending a general plan to city councils, considering and making recommendations on zoning changes, and approving planned developments and subdivisions. Appeal authorities are authorized to consider appeals to land use decisions and may grant variances in zoning regulations.

Additionally, local governments are required to process new development applications within a reasonable time, and determine if the application is complete and ready for further review. If the application is deemed not complete, local governments must explain what information is necessary to complete. If the process is not done in reasonable amount of time, applicants can request a decision on completeness be made with 30 days. Furthermore, applicants can request final decisions are made within 45 days.

Source: Utah Department of Commerce, Office of the Property Rights Ombudsman.

policy strategies to plan for an increase in their affordable housing stock. (See Appendix A for the bill's list of policy strategies.) If municipalities do not comply, they lose eligibility for state transportation funds.[51] Compliance with the law might encourage higher-density residential projects in strategic locations, such as transportation corridors. Other state laws also affect local land use decision making. (See sidebar for more information.)

Other Policy Options. During the past two decades, local governments across the U.S. have begun using a tool called "graduated density zoning," which allows higher density levels on larger tracts and for there to be a more gradual transition from large multi-unit buildings to smaller single-family homes. For instance, if a small tract is zoned for single-family homes the developer can build a multi-family development if they assemble enough adjacent properties to meet the size threshold. It can also increase the potential for mixed-use developments, discussed later in this report. Among other benefits, this approach can help to promote higher density development while ensuring it does not clash with the character of the neighborhood – because it *is* the neighborhood. It may also increase property values, and thereby tax revenues, to such an extent that the development may be more efficient for the jurisdiction in question.

Local governments can also consider allowing accessory dwelling units, which are smaller, independent residential units located on the same lot as a stand-alone home. Under standard zoning laws that favor low-density single-family neighborhoods, such dwelling units tend to be prohibited. As cities and regions across the nation deal with affordable housing issues, some have eased restrictions or allowed new accessory dwelling units to be built. In late 2018, Salt Lake City adopted a new accessory dwelling unit ordinance that allows for residents to build smaller units on their properties, provided they align with certain guidelines.[52] Similar opportunities may exist to allow for the conversion of single-family homes to duplexes under certain circumstances.

In some areas, local governments are looking at underutilized parking lots as an opportunity for infill development. One example of converting an underutilized surface parking lot to a more economical purpose can be found in downtown Salt Lake City. The Birdie is a six-story mixed-use project. The structure will include retail space on the ground floor with 70 one- and two-bedroom apartments on the top five floors.[53]

Infill development that converts underutilized, inefficient surface parking lots (or other vacant or underutilized spaces) can improve walkability, improve streetscapes, bolster tax revenues, and expand options for housing, offices and retail. Utah Foundation hopes to explore infill strategies in-depth in a future report.

Encouraging Mixed-use Development

Since the early 20th century, most American cities have used Euclidean zoning to designate specific areas as single-use districts. This was meant to protect certain land uses from encroaching on others and destroying quality of life, such as the placement of heavy industry in residential neighborhoods. In concert with highway construction, this type of land use zoning has fostered automobile-centered development patterns and, in some cases, inefficient land uses. The commonly cited alternative is mixed-use development.

Mixed-use development is the traditional way in which city cores have developed in most of the world. Picture, for instance, a typical historic European town center. There, you will find rows of buildings with retail on the ground floor and residences above, alongside business and government offices, restaurants, cafes and a church. A single block will contain at least two types of land use, usually in a pedestrian friendly setting.[54] Indeed, one need not go abroad in search of examples. The downtowns of Ogden, Provo and Salt Lake City offer similar arrangements. Other communities with similar mixed-use projects include the Holladay Town Center, University Place in Orem, downtown St. George, Bountiful's Main Street, Park City's Main Street, the Cairns in Sandy and the Sugarhouse neighborhood in Salt Lake City. About 83% of respondents to Utah Foundation's survey stated that they allow for mixed-use development. Beyond the cultural significance and aesthetic qualities of these places, it is the dynamism of a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environment that appeals to visitors.

The Urban Land Institute's Mixed-Use Development Handbook defines mixed-use development as an area that provides three or more revenue-producing uses, fosters integration, density and compatibility of use, and creates a walkable community.[55] These developments can gather a critical mass of activity that not only allows residents to live, work, shop, gather and play in a single location, but also increases the viability of transit opportunities.

The two types of mixed-use development patterns are vertical and horizontal configurations.[56] Vertical configurations mix multiple uses in single building structures and stack the different uses on top of one another. For instance, a building may have retail space on the bottom with parking and residential space above. Horizontal configurations place single-use buildings with different uses next to one another. For instance, a row of three separate buildings may include residential, office and retail space.

Consumer Preferences. At least one key aspect of mixed-use developments appears to be popular: walkability. In 2017, the National Association of Realtors conducted a survey to review people's community and transportation preferences. Those living in walkable neighborhoods reported an overall higher quality of life.[57]

This also appears to be the case in Salt Lake City. In 2014, a survey of Salt Lake City residents found that while residents typically preferred single-family homes, residents also preferred being in pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods with proximity to work and other community services.[58]

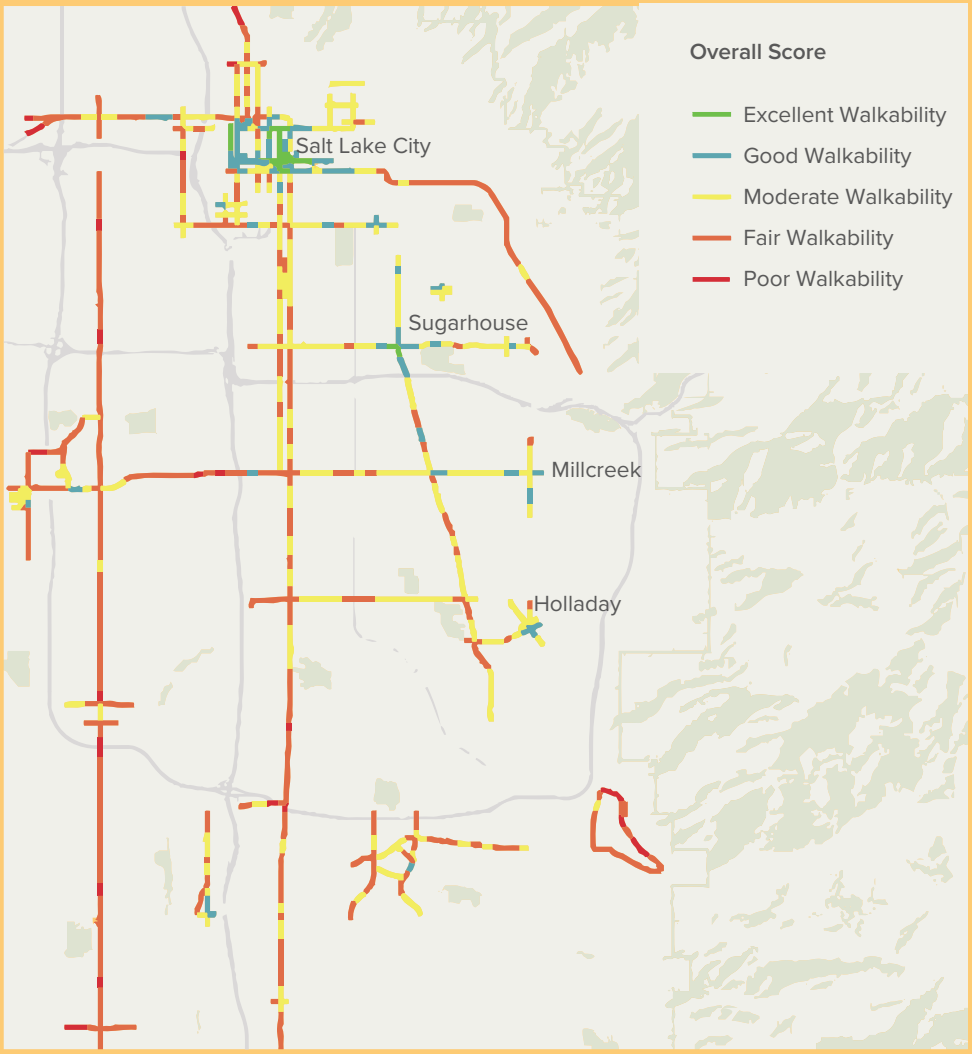
It should be noted that walkability can be achieved within lower-density, suburban-style settings. For instance, in the postwar era, communities across the country have been created in which single-family homes predominate but are centered around a commercial/community hub and include a network of sidewalks and pedestrian access to green spaces that draw residents outdoors. These communities provide the quality-of-life amenities that residents enjoy without insisting on high density and an aggressive mix of uses. Many of the residential neighborhoods of the late 19th and early 20th centuries bear these attributes as well.

However, walkability appears to be lacking in some Utah communities. Based on five community design principles, the Wasatch Front Regional Council scored walkability in communities along the Wasatch Front. The five urban design principles are:

- Imageability: The quality of a place that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable.
- Enclosure: How well streets and public spaces are defined by buildings, structures and trees.

Downtown Salt Lake City received an overall high walkability score based on five urban design principles.

Figure 5: Walkability in Key Areas Along the Wasatch Front, 2016



Source: Wasatch Front Regional Council.

Note: For image clarity, this figure does not display all areas that were scored.

- Human Scale: Matching the size and proportions of buildings to pedestrians.
- Transparency: How well pedestrians can view activity in public spaces.
- Complexity: Architectural diversity, landscape elements and public art.[59]

The Wasatch Front Regional Council conducted field work to score over 1,200 blocks along the Wasatch Front using these five principles. Areas shaded in green in Figure 5 are more walkable, as defined by those five principles. Except for the City Creek development in downtown Salt Lake City and a few other smaller locations, high walkability scores are sparse.[60] (See Figure 5.)

Mixed-use downtown development properties can have much higher values per square foot than big-box stores.

Figure 6: Big-Box Stores Value Compared to Mixed-use Downtown Development, Salt Lake City

Development Type	Lot Area (Square Feet)	Lot Area (Acres)	Assessed Value ($)	Value per Square Foot ($)	Value per Acre ($)
Big Box #1	573,685	13.17	21,366,600	37	1,622,370
Bix Box #2	480,903	11.04	13,178,619	27	1,193,714
Mixed-Use #1	4,786	0.11	1,787,800	375	16,333,173
Mixed-Use #2	5,227	0.12	1,429,600	274	11,913,789

Source: Salt Lake County Assessor.

Fiscal Benefits. Mixed-use developments can be complex, high-risk projects for investors. While an increasing track record has begun to allow more predictable returns on investment for developers, the complexity of financing and execution, as well as the risk, can still be too high for some.[61] Some communities would welcome high-quality mixed-use developments, but have found that developers are reluctant to invest in them, particularly in suburban communities.

Ensuring a mix of options can reduce traffic and travel time for residents to reach jobs and amenities. The mix can also bolster tax revenues through higher property tax revenues and new sales tax revenues.

While mixed-use developments can be a challenge, some communities have noted that attracting "big-box" stores has become increasingly difficult as consumers are making more purchases online.[62] For years, the appeal of standard big-box stores to local governments has been based on the stores' total taxable value and high sales tax yields, as well as the shopping amenities they provide. It's the equivalent of landing a big fish, whereas it would take a collection of traditional stores in a compact, mixed-use setting to yield the same tax revenues.

However, from a land use efficiency and quality of life perspective, the picture changes.[63] Traditional mixed-use developments can have a substantially higher value per square foot than standard big-box stores, primarily because big-box commercial stores typically have more surface parking and take up much larger sites.[64]

Utah Foundation compared individual parcels of two big-box stores and two mixed-use developments on a per square foot and per acre basis. (See Figure 6.) Both mixed-used developments have a much higher property value per square foot than both big-box store examples.

Another aspect to consider for development types is their future impact on the community. In 2017, major U.S. retailers closed nearly 7,000 stores, the highest recorded rate of closures.[65] This can have a major impact on cities and towns that depend on the property and sales tax revenue from such developments. It can also have impacts regarding the store sites themselves. Smaller scale, mixed-use sites are comparatively easy to repurpose if a business fails. However, if a big-box store fails, there are usually only two options: find another big-box retailer to replace it or demolish it and rebuild something entirely different on the site. This process largely falls to the decision making of the private property owner. Either process can take years.

For instance, a 2019 report by CBRE, a large commercial real estate services and investment firm, found that while retail redevelopment in Salt Lake City is bringing down retail vacancy rates, the going is slow.[66] In the first quarter of 2018, retail vacancy rates were 7.3%, down from a post-recession high of 10.1%. In the first quarter of 2019, that percentage is down to 6.8%. The 0.5% decrease is largely due to a former Kmart that was demolished and redeveloped to multi-family units. The report noted that overall market improvement could move slowly, as 13 vacancies over 40,000 square feet remain, with five more large stores set to close this year. Some areas are far more susceptible to high vacancy and closures than other areas. One part of Salt Lake City has a 10.4% vacancy rate, while another area has just 2.2%.[67]

That said, the report also noted that with a fast-growing, confident consumer base, activity is expected to increase in population growth centers and existing business centers.[68] Local governments facing redevelopment challenges may need to revisit their zoning laws to allow greater flexibility in redevelopment of abandoned big-box sites. One way forward could be to allow for mixed-use development at such sites. Big-box stores are frequently placed at key intersections or off-ramps, which can make many of these locations prime real estate for redevelopment.

Implementing Parking Management Strategies

Increasingly, planning experts who analyze parking policies argue that large swaths of surface parking are an inefficient use of land.[69] For local governments that rely on property taxes, having an abundance of parking lots can represent a loss of potential tax revenue.[70] As previously noted, large surface parking lots often yield significantly smaller property values per square foot for retail developments.

Beyond raising fiscal issues, large surface parking lots may also hurt quality of life by decreasing walkability and connectivity and diminishing the appeal of streetscapes.

For the time being, however, parking lots appear to be a given and, at least to some extent, necessary feature of modern American life. They present a challenge to developers and land use decision-makers, as too little parking could inhibit growth and reduce quality of life by increasing congestion, while too much land dedicated to parking can be wasted space that could be used for other economic purposes.[71] A balance must be sought, in which opportunities to minimize parking and bolster the fiscal benefits of land uses are pursued, while also ensuring that parking does not become so scarce as to stifle economic activity and increase congestion. Furthermore, when parking is provided, it should include features that address aesthetic issues and negative impacts on pedestrians.

Parking spaces use a considerable amount of land. One study estimated there are 800 million surface parking spaces in the U.S., which equates to about eight nonresidential parking spaces for every passenger car.[72]

One study focusing on parking management strategies generally recommends maintaining 85% to 90% parking occupancy rates.[73] Setting such goals allows cities to gauge how efficiently the spaces are being used, while also ensuring adequate parking. Around Salt Lake City's downtown core there are about 33,000 parking spots, with about a 60% occupancy rate at any given time.[74] A 2016 parking study found that downtown Salt Lake City has enough parking to sustain decades of future growth without building additional parking.[75]

Similarly, Provo created a parking management plan in 2015 to collect parking space inventory and to guide decision making. The study collected parking occupancy data in peak hours in downtown Provo and residential areas. The study found about 59% of on-street parking spaces and 58% of off-street parking spaces were occupied.[76] Other local governments in Utah, such as South Salt Lake, have conducted similar studies.

Parking minimums found in zoning laws can constrain parking flexibility. Local jurisdictions have historically set minimum parking requirements based on the maximum observed demand for free parking in areas with no transportation choices. In some cases, the standard is set higher than the maximum demand, leaving many spaces underutilized most of the time. This has led to large swaths of underutilized land that offer little value for taxation purposes.

Parking minimums can also deter the opening of small businesses because of the cost of setting aside land for parking spaces. Homeowners may be unable to build accessory dwelling units because of parking restrictions. Developers may be unable to execute projects because a lack of space available for parking. Renters can lose out because of underutilized space that could otherwise be used more productively, such as for the development of rental housing.

Parking requirements vary by land use and by context, with some areas requiring far less than others. For instance, a parking study that looked at the Point of the Mountain area (from Sandy to Lehi), found that there are substantially different needs for parking depending on the neighborhood and type of residential units. The study recommended two spaces per single-family detached home in a bedroom community and 0.9 spaces per multifamily unit in mixed-use, compact developments.[77] This may be due in part to the difference in household size. A downtown or mixed-use center, especially near transit, may benefit from substantially lower parking demand than a similar development that is not in a mixed-use or transit-oriented setting.

Calibrating the demand across user groups is important. For instance, in mixed-use areas, different types of land uses attract people at different times of the day. Peak demand for office parking tends to be during the day. But the same parking spaces can be used to meet the demand among residents or evening patrons of nearby restaurants or other nightlife. If differing parking user groups are not considered, the supply of parking can significantly exceed the parking demand during peak hours.

Local governments may seek to ease parking requirements through overlay zones. Parking minimums requirements can also be lowered or eliminated using designated zoning districts or specific neighborhood plans, such as central business locations. They can also be lowered near transit hubs or along transit lines where fewer residents, workers or retail customers tend to be drivers. Examples of this can be found in Salt Lake City, Park City and South Salt Lake City.

Local governments may consider offering parking reductions as part of a strategic and targeted development incentive package. For instance, projects with affordable housing components or senior living apartments may contain residents who are less likely to own vehicles, allowing for a reduction in parking.

Key Takeaways: Promoting Efficient Land Use

Promoting more efficient land uses holds the promise of improving local revenues while improving quality of life. It requires a closer look at issues surrounding density, mixed-use development and parking.

Identifying Opportunities for Strategic Density. Promoting efficient land use requires decision makers to take a strategic approach to density, allowing for higher densities in appropriate areas and under set criteria. For instance, some communities have decided to concentrate high-density development in areas with high-capacity thoroughfares, major intersections and along major transit lines – and away from existing low-density neighborhoods. Around the country, communities have begun allowing higher densities once a developer has met a minimum threshold for tract size. Others have designated blighted areas or underutilized corridors or infill areas for higher densities. In short, density can be used as a tool for enhancing quality of life for existing residents, boosting revenues, more efficiently deploying land resources, and providing opportunities for new residents and businesses.

Encouraging Mixed-Use Development. The strategic use of higher densities in concert with mixed-use developments offers opportunities to create dynamic communities while reaping a stronger tax revenue return per square foot. Well-executed mixed-use developments both in Utah and nationally have created walkable communities and appealing streetscapes and community spaces. Mixed-use developments may also create the potential for live-work-play settings that reduce the need for commuting or driving to find retail or other amenities. This can help to ease traffic congestion. Likewise, these developments may provide enough critical mass of activity to justify transit service (although in some cases adequate transit service may be a prerequisite to development).

Implementing Parking Management Strategies. Right-sizing parking requirements allows for a more efficient use of available land and helps local governments to maximize tax revenues from development sites. Eliminating unnecessary parking may also yield more attractive streetscapes and create more pedestrian-friendly environments. Local governments may choose to reduce parking requirements in circumstances that meet set criteria, such as commercial centers near public transit service or housing that serves transit-dependent populations.

EXPANDING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Building and maintaining roads is a core function of every level of government. But local areas eventually hit a point where they no longer have opportunities to increase road capacity. And, as noted previously in this report, adding capacity at the regional level is a short-term fix, as new capacity tends to facilitate new growth at the urban fringes, which in turn consumes new capacity. With traffic congestion a key economic and quality of life concern, government must find ways beyond adding road capacity to meet commuter demand.

Improving public transportation is a key component of growth planning in metropolitan areas worldwide. It requires local, regional and statewide coordination to accomplish its goals. And, when well executed, it can serve as a driving force behind efficient, high-quality growth. Investing in public transportation that increases ridership can also reduce traffic congestion, shorten auto trips and improve air quality. However, funding can be a significant challenge.

This section reviews several strategies to promote transportation, including:

- Transit-oriented development.
- Active transportation.
- Connected street networks.

Transit-oriented Development

Transit-oriented development includes a mix of commercial, residential, office and entertainment services that are centered around transit stations. Local governments can focus on developing transit near dense, mixed-use neighborhoods – or, more to the point, developing dense, mixed-use neighborhoods along transit lines.

Research suggests that transit-oriented development can enhance economic development by connecting multiple employment sectors and activities in a central location.[78] Residential transit-oriented developments, meanwhile, can connect people to employment centers without congesting roads and highways.

Transit-oriented development also offers opportunities to improve quality of life for residents by allowing many of them to spend less time in traffic and improve air quality by

BY THE NUMBERS

About 52% of Utah Foundation local government survey respondents noted they have zones to accommodate transit-oriented development.

About 56% of Utah cities and towns that Utah Foundation surveyed coordinate with their counties, and 51% coordinate with adjoining cities, on transportation and land use plans.

About 60% of communities in the four large counties along the Wasatch Front have completed, or have funded to complete, plans that follow a set of active transportation standards.

reducing the number of miles traveled by car. This type of development pattern may also include complementary features that encourage residents to bike and walk to work and other key destinations.[79]

To properly execute transit-oriented developments, local governments and transit providers must work together to determine target areas for higher-density land use designations. Those designated areas may need to be re-zoned to include multiple uses, revisions to maximum density or a reduction in parking minimums. Local governments may also consider adding transit overlay zones for certain areas. The transit provider, meanwhile, may need to make facility upgrades or new infrastructure investments.

Planners may also need to review general plans and zoning codes for other community features that support public transit. These may include mixed land uses, sidewalks and connected streets to ensure safe access to transit stations, higher densities and affordable housing. Planners may also need to analyze local land use plans alongside regional and state long-term transportation plans, along with the plans of neighboring jurisdictions and the transit agency. Land use and transportation plans must be highly integrated for successful transit-oriented development to occur.

Historically, much of the commercial activity along the Wasatch Front has centered primarily on Salt Lake City, which contributes to increased traffic and reduced air quality as people travel to get to the major downtown. However, this trend is changing as local Utah governments plan to be more polycentric, with multiple centers throughout the region that are connected and served by public transit – a key strategy of Wasatch Choice 2050. These centers may be downtown urban centers, main streets, office parks, major town centers, neighborhood centers or transit hub communities. About 52% of Utah Foundation survey respondents noted they have zones to accommodate transit-oriented development.[80] From 2010 to 2017, about 42% of new multi-family development, 41% of new hotel space, 39% of new office space and 28% of new retail space has been within a half mile of a rail station. According to Envision Utah, the estimated benefits of this are nearly 800,000 fewer miles driven per day, equating to about 303 tons less emissions per year.[81]

Some cities and towns have coordinated with other local governments regarding their general plans. Utah Foundation's 2018 survey found that 56% of cities and towns surveyed coordinated with their counties, and 51% coordinated with adjoining cities. Many have also indicated that they are working with the state and transit agencies to try to get public transit to more distant neighborhoods.

Some local governments reported to Utah Foundation that they are concerned with creating denser neighborhoods without the guarantee of more public transit lines to serve them. However, this can become a catch-22; public transit requires the promise of demand, or at least future demand, in order to justify investment. Resolving this dilemma depends on

REGIONAL PLANNING IN SOUTHWEST SALT LAKE COUNTY

On unincorporated land next to Herriman, a high-density development known as Olympia Hills sparked outcry in the area regarding the strain it would put on infrastructure and services, particularly on transit corridors, which are already struggle during peak travel times. As a result of this ongoing controversy, the executives of Herriman, West Jordan, South Jordan, Bluffdale, Riverton and Copperton joined together to discuss the proposed development, but also to discuss the future of the southwest region of Salt Lake County, an area experiencing rapid growth. The newly formed coalition coined the area as the "Southwest Quadrant" and formed the "Southwest Quadrant Mayors Council," a new voice in regional planning. Perhaps the most significant decisions to come from the coalition thus far is to raise $250,000 to develop a shared growth strategy and vision for the region. Salt Lake County has awarded $100,000 to conduct transportation studies. The cities committed another $25,000 and a grant for $125,000 is pending.

Source: Utah League of Cities and Towns.

strong coordination among state, local and regional entities. In the meantime, various communities in Utah are planning for public transit services even though it will take years for the infrastructure to reach them.

This is the purpose of Utah's Unified Transportation Plan, a collaborative effort among transportation agencies statewide in coordination with local governments and other stakeholders across the state. The plan maps out the total transportation needs from 2015 to 2040; it accounts for the total revenue needed for maintenance, preservation and operation expenses for transit and roads, as well as funds for new projects to accommodate growth. The estimated total transportation needs are $80.5 billion dollars, with $67.5 billion identified for the most critical needs. The plan identifies transit and road maintenance as top priorities, but does not completely meet the estimated needs, as the remaining funds are set aside for increasing transit and road capacity.[82] The plan outlines both anticipated transportation investments and the land use assumptions that support and necessitate those investments. Additionally, the plan sets forth opportunity areas for a variety of transportation choices.

While transit projects are often supported by federal funding, additional funding or infrastructure investments may be necessary from local governments.[83]

Active Transportation

Everyone travels for work, school and play. How people travel has direct impacts on society and personal health outcomes. Active transportation – getting around on foot or bicycle – contributes to quality of life by promoting healthier lifestyles, vibrancy in neighborhoods, reduced traffic congestion and improvements to the environment. This of course depends on the being able to get to a destination safely. Active transportation opportunities may include bike lanes, trail networks, sidewalks and pedestrian bridges.

Active transportation is a key priority in Utah, with key stakeholders working to improve a regional bicycle network.[84] State, local and regional government agencies collaborated to create the 2015-2040 Regional Priority Bicycle Network plan, which places emphasis on increasing access, convenience and safety for active transportation.[85] Additionally, communities coordinate with neighboring municipalities for local trails and bike facilities. About 60% of the local jurisdictions in the four largest counties along the Wasatch Front have completed, or have been funded to complete, plans that follow a set of active transportation standards.[86]

Improving active transportation options is also an important goal for the state. In 2017, Governor Herbert initiated a campaign to build 1,000 new miles of bike paths, lanes and trails by 2027. The goal is to have new bicycle opportunities for on-street biking, multi-use pathways for recreation and transportation, new mountain bike trails and neighborhood bike routes.[87]

Local governments can think about active transportation planning by implementing comprehensive "complete streets" policies, which help streets be safe for people of all ages and abilities, and ensure a balance of different transportation modes.[88] Funding for complete streets programs can be allocated to pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects, facilities and infrastructure. Planning policies might look at a community comprehensively to determine where bike lanes and crosswalks could be best used, or where transit-oriented development stations are being developed.[89] Farmington, Ogden, Murray, Provo, St. George and Salt Lake City are among the Utah cities making efforts to promote active transportation.

Local governments can also look at implementing policies that help foster an active transportation environment. For instance, local governments might also consider adding traffic calming measures that reduce the negative effects of automobiles on pedestrians' safety. Having ample bike racks and bike parking facilities also help create a supportive environment. In addition, local governments may require that new developments include sidewalks and bike lanes.

Connected Street Networks

Well-built, well-designed street networks are critical not only to motorists, but also to the movement of goods and services, to biking and walking and to bus transit.[90]

In the past, many emerging cities were built on grid plans, whereby city streets run at right angles and form a grid shape. In their early years, Utah cities and towns rigidly adhered to this approach, a key feature of the pioneers' urban vision. Over the course of the 20th century, however, new developments began to include cul-de-sacs and disconnected street patterns intended to discourage through traffic. As the years passed, gated communities went to the next level, often providing only one way in or out. Today, traffic engineers generally associate disconnected street patterns with inefficiency and increased traffic congestion.[91]

Envision Utah noted that focusing on creating better street networks is one of the most important planning principles for Utah communities to consider.[92] Good street networks should create the backbone and framing of a community with lively commercial activity, quiet living and a variety of lifestyles in between. These street networks should accommodate a wide variety of transportation networks that are placed in strategic areas with roads that connect at both ends. This type of network helps disperse traffic along various routes, facilitates public transit and creates a safer environment for active transportation. Policymakers can ensure greater connectivity in future growth by requiring or encouraging new developments to tap into and build upon the existing street network.

In 2017, the organizations involved with the Unified Transportation Plan coordinated and developed a comprehensive guide for local governments to improve street connectivity.[93]

Key Takeaways: Expanding Transportation Options

As population growth consumes the capacity of existing transportation networks, it will be necessary for state, regional and local government agencies to collaborate on meeting the transportation needs of commerce and people. Transit-oriented development, public transit, active transportation and interconnected street networks all play important roles in meeting the needs of a growing population and easing traffic congestion.

Promoting Transit Ridership and Connectivity Through Development. Transit-oriented development allows both the public and private sectors to capitalize on existing or planned public transit lines or transit hubs. Residents see access to high-quality transit as a quality of life benefit. For the wider population, transit-oriented developments can reduce congestion and wear and tear on the roadways. These developments may also offer the opportunity for more efficient land uses and mixed-use communities, with direct connections to employment centers. They can represent a rational approach to designating areas for high-density development. They may also boost government revenues. Local governments can promote transit-oriented development through re-zoning or zoning overlays and by coordinating with the transit agency serving their area.

Encouraging Active Transportation. Features that promote bicycling and pedestrian transportation options, like bike paths, sidewalks and trails, are commonly seen as quality of life amenities. They also improve the walkability of neighborhoods, a key quality of life feature, and encourage exercise, promoting public health. In the bigger transportation picture, they can reduce traffic congestion and wear and tear on the roadways. Local governments can promote active transportation by encouraging pedestrian amenities in new developments, installing bike paths, creating complete streets policies and introducing traffic-calming measures where appropriate and as funding allows.

Creating Interconnected Street Networks. Hodge-podge suburban development patterns nationwide (and within Utah) have often been accompanied by disconnected neighborhood street patterns. Traditional grid patterns, by contrast, allow for a more efficient movement of traffic and facilitate public transit, helping to reduce roadway congestion.

PRESERVING GREEN SPACES AND NATURAL ASSETS

In Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey, Utahns expressed that natural surroundings and parks and recreation are important factors for a high quality of life. In fact, two of the top five most important aspects of a high quality of life for Utahns were "the availability of good parks, green spaces, or places for recreation" and "the attractiveness of the natural surroundings."[94]

There are several reasons why communities may want to preserve open and green spaces, including: environmental (protecting groundwater, wildlife habitat, etc.); agricultural (preserving farming industries and communities); aesthetic (preserving rural character and scenic beauty); recreational (outdoor sports, hunting, fishing, etc.); and growth management. In 2012, the Wasatch Front Regional Council released a Green Infrastructure Plan for the Wasatch Front. The plan identified numerous health, social, environmental and economic benefits of green infrastructure. The report also identified related increases in residential and commercial property values as a significant economic benefit.[95]

Green and open spaces are a treasured part of the urban fabric, particularly in denser cities. Green and open spaces help offset the negative aspects of increasing density and compact development. It should also be noted that in communities that plan for strategic density in areas with existing infrastructure, more land may remain available for green and open spaces.

Planning for green and open space may take many different forms, depending on the community. For instance, some communities may be close to being built-out and may need diligent planning for urban parks and green space that offset density and urban living. Other communities that are largely agricultural may consider policies that conserve open space and instead develop in areas with existing infrastructure to support growth. This is a problem in Utah communities on the urban fringe.

Communities might consider creating separate master plans that collect an inventory of existing green assets and plan for strategic areas to add more greenery. A so-called "greenprint" is a strategic conservation plan that recognizes the economic and social importance of parks, open space and working lands that benefit communities. Greenprints help stakeholders identify, map and prioritize areas for wildlife and plant conservation, parks and open space, recreation, and agricultural and farmland preservation.

Urban Green Spaces

Within the urban context, urban green spaces may include parks, community and rooftop gardens, pocket parks, playgrounds, school yards, public seating areas, public plazas, and vacant lots that can be redeveloped. It might also include sporting and recreational fields, stream and riverbank areas, greenways and trails, street trees and nature conservation areas.

Green spaces provide opportunities for recreation and leisure, and they increase overall physical activity levels.[96] They can improve physical and mental health among residents.[97] And the environmental benefits of green and open spaces include preserving existing ecosystems and reducing heat island effects.

While economic effects of green and open spaces are difficult to value, a consistent body of research shows that green and open spaces near neighborhoods generally increases the sales prices of homes – and thereby their valuations for the purposes of taxation.[98]

On the other hand, public green spaces themselves are not subject to taxation and require capital and maintenance investments. For this reason, some parks charge user fees for general access, or certain recreational activities, such as pools. However, charging for park admittance can limit access for lower-income citizens.[99] It also runs the risk of skewing recreational activities to types that produce the greatest revenue streams.

There may also be opportunities for local governments to partner with other governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations that have similar missions. Additionally, there may be opportunities for public and private partnerships. This often includes private donations, or sponsorships, from individuals or corporations that gain naming rights to facilities.

UTAH'S NATURAL ASSETS ARE AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

Utah has a variety of natural assets that add to residents' quality of life, while serving as an economic driver by helping Utah attract skilled labor and tourism. In 2016, Utah's economy saw a record-setting $1.25 billion in state and local tax revenues as a result of traveler spending.

The economic impacts of Utah's tourism and travel industry includes jobs. The number of jobs in the tourism and travel industry increased 16% from 2012 to 2016. The tourism industry is primarily supported by the attraction to Utah's ski resorts and national and state parks.

Businesses that aren't directly involved in tourism and travel also prize Utah's access to the outdoors. In a survey of the 50 fastest growing companies in Utah, outdoor recreational opportunities were regarded as an important decision for businesses moving to Utah. In fact, Utah's outdoor lifestyle and access to a variety of outdoor recreation were the second and third most important factors for businesses deciding to move here. (The number one factor was the ability to attract and retain workforce.) Business leaders also spoke to the importance of access to outdoor recreation as it contributes to Utah's overall quality of life, of which 94% indicated it contributes significantly.

Sources: Kem C. Gardener Policy Institute, *The State of Utah's Travel and Tourism Industry*, 2018. Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, Utah Outdoor Partners Survey of Businesses, 2018.

Finally, in new developments, local governments have opportunities to encourage developers to provide trails and green spaces as part of development plans, perhaps in exchange for exceptions to density requirements. The approach yields new green space for residents of the new community without adding to the public burden of building and maintaining it.

The abundance of federally owned land in Utah provides ample opportunities for new developments to capitalize on the proximity of natural assets – without local governments footing the bill.

Natural Assets

Citizens consider Utah's natural surroundings to be one of the chief factors affecting their quality of life – indicating that policymakers ought to strongly consider impacts on natural assets as they review proposed development projects, transportation infrastructure and building location and design. (See the sidebar for information on the economic aspects of natural assets.)

Utahns also view agricultural land as a significant element of Utah's growing economy as well as its quality of life. A survey by Envision Utah found that three out of four Utahns believe farming and ranching are critical.[100] Envision says farms and ranches are faced with development pressure. Protecting Utah's agricultural farmland has significant implications when it comes to land use decision making. It also underscores the importance of efficient urban growth patterns.

All levels of government play an instrumental role in protecting the natural environment. As Utah grows and economic development remains a hot topic both locally and regionally, it is essential for general plans to address which lands are essential for conservation. These areas may include water resources, scenic resources, wildlife and plant habitats, vegetation, recreational opportunities, and agricultural and farmland areas.

City and county governments may consider creating open space conservation commissions that work on protecting local and regional open spaces while considering other pressures. Washington and Oregon (and metropolitan areas worldwide) have even gone so far as to establish urban growth boundaries.[101] However, critics argue that by constraining the supply of buildable land, housing costs and cost of living are driven up, preserving green spaces at the expense of lower income residents. To a large extent, growth in Utah is already constrained by mountains and lakes, as well as designated state and federal forests, parks and other public lands. To some extent, these features form de facto growth boundaries.

BY THE NUMBERS

Three out of four Utahns believe that farming and ranching are critical.

For Utah, the challenge will be to ease development pressures on agricultural lands through efficient growth patterns while ensuring that new developments incorporate and protect the natural features contained within urbanizing areas.

Key Takeaways: Preserving Green Spaces and Natural Assets

Utahns see natural surroundings and parks and recreation as essential to their quality of life. These assets are also essential to economic development and, in many cases, local tax revenues, drawing tourists and influencing relocation decisions. To a large extent, encroachment upon natural assets is constrained by natural features and public lands. However, farmlands and other natural areas face constant development pressure. To address the creation, maintenance and protection of natural assets, local governments should create an inventory of green and open spaces, and a strategic plan for future green space development.

Promoting Urban Green Spaces. Urban green spaces are a key quality of life feature and generally bolster nearby property values (and thereby tax revenues). However, they require public capital and maintenance investments. Through flexible zoning requirements, local governments can encourage green spaces in new developments to enhance the quality of life in those areas without incurring new public sector capital costs.

Protecting Natural Assets. Utahns perceive farmlands as vital to the economy and character of the state. However, rapid development puts constant pressure on agricultural lands. Efficient urban growth patterns are critical to easing that pressure. Local governments may benefit from the creation of special advisory commissions and strategic plans focused on the conservation of farmlands and other natural assets.

PRESERVING AND IMPROVING COMMUNITY CHARACTER

In Utah Foundation's Quality of Life survey, Utahns noted that improving streetscapes is one of the top actions that would improve their overall quality of life. The attractiveness of the built environment is a key concern for officials involved in land use decisions.

This section explores the following areas:

- Placemaking.
- Building conditions.
- Streetscapes.

Preserving and enhancing existing community character is an important consideration in how Utah communities grow. It may involve examining existing historical sites and revitalizing old main streets and downtowns that were once thriving. Historic main streets can often serve as key points of investment. In other cases, it may simply involve preserving the character of a neighborhood of any age – the very character that attracted its residents in the first place.

Attractive places command higher home prices and may thereby enhance tax revenues. The quality of Utah's neighborhoods is a key consideration for businesses and individuals looking to relocate here. Beyond the positive fiscal and economic effects, the perceived beauty and aesthetic character of a location can have a positive and significant effect on overall quality of life and community satisfaction.[102]

Placemaking

Preserving and enhancing the overall aesthetic quality of neighborhoods often requires a long-range strategy. Some communities may consider plans for the entire area, while others may consider plans for specific districts, or blocks. Often the overarching idea for this type of planning approach is known as placemaking. Some key elements of placemaking may include carefully managing signage, ensuring transparency on ground floors of buildings and opening the way for public art or monuments.

Placemaking refers to a collaborative approach that connects the people of a community and the public spaces that a community occupies. It often seeks to capitalize on a community's assets while addressing its challenges to create quality public spaces that contribute to public health and overall quality of life goals. More intense forms of development often fit with desires for placemaking, and the first area for a community to focus on creating a sense of place is generally in its center (such as a downtown or Main Street).

As part of the placemaking process, governments should engage with stakeholders such as chambers of commerce, downtown advocacy organizations, local businesses, neighborhood groups and tourism organizations. Ultimately, it may require a developer to lead the way in the placemaking process with a core project.

Building Conditions

The condition of existing buildings may have a prominent influence on the character of a neighborhood. For instance, deteriorated buildings and facilities reflect poorly upon the condition and safety of the neighborhood at large. Abandoned, vacant and dilapidated buildings can be particularly detrimental. It can reflect a lack of care or value of the property. The same may be true for public facilities or infrastructure.

Encouraging infill development and the redevelopment of underutilized, deteriorating buildings that have aesthetic value can help to efficiently accommodate growth while preserving and enhancing the character of a place and improving the tax base. Jurisdictions nationwide have used façade restoration programs in downtowns and along main streets as a means of encouraging property owners to improve the appearance of their properties. Nationally, façade restoration programs assist business owners with financial incentives to renovate their commercial storefronts. Here in Utah, for instance, Logan has created a downtown façade grant program. It should be noted that in many cases these areas often already have adequate infrastructure, allowing the public sector to keep new investments to a minimum. The improvements may ultimately pay for themselves by lifting property values in the target area.

Encouraging brownfield redevelopment is another potential means of efficiently accommodating growth, enhancing community character and building the tax base. Brownfields are properties with which the expansion, redevelopment or reuse could be complicated because of potentially hazardous substances and contaminants in the ground or water. Cleaning these properties can remove pollutants from the ground and water, reduce blighted areas, and take pressure off green and working lands.[103] There are several brownfield redevelopment projects in Utah currently underway, such as Midvale's Slag Superfund site.[104]

Streetscapes

Green infrastructure has potential environmental, economic and quality of life benefits. It may also boost property values, leading to government revenue enhancements. Municipalities may consider key areas for increasing greenery, such as county and community gateways; they may also consider adding ornamental trees, landscaping and container plantings along major corridors and neighborhood streets. Municipalities may also consider other strategic locations, such as medians and traffic circles. Other areas for shade and ornamental trees could be in village and towns centers, walkways and pedestrian plazas.

Local governments can identify new landscape goals for existing and new development that include ornamental planting bulbs, perennials, shrubs and ornamental grasses. Landscape designs should be considered in this light as part of the decision-making process for new developments.

XERISCAPING

Xeriscaping is a landscaping or gardening process that reduces or eliminates the need for additional water for maintenance. These types of landscapes are designed to conserve water, an important consideration for the arid West. Xeriscaping includes a wide variety of plants that are resistant to drought, native plants, rocks and mulch designed to use water conscientiously. Dry gardens also require minimal pesticides and fertilization. Local governments across the West have implemented programs to encourage residents to change to a water-wise landscape. Water conservancy districts in Utah are encouraging "localscapes," a landscaping strategy that uses plants and practices that uniquely fit Utah's climate.

Source: Colorado Water Wise, *Xeriscape Colorado*.

Other means of enhancing streetscapes include lighting improvements, pedestrian walkways, street improvements and public art. In addition, it may be important to address the amount of commercial signage along neighborhoods and major transit corridors to prevent a cluttered effect.

Similarly, a hodgepodge arrangement of building types, scales and setbacks can create a chaotic feel. Scale in general is an important matter for consideration. For instance, wide boulevards can be enhanced by taller buildings and give them a sense of being anchored. Several major corridors along the Wasatch Front are flanked by single-story residential or commercial buildings that not only fail to anchor those roadways but also fail to take advantage of their capacity. Examples can be found in numerous locations along State Street in Salt Lake County. Meanwhile, for the jurisdiction, property values may be unnecessarily suppressed by single-story residences being located along busy corridors, particularly if the location reduces the market value of those residences.

Finally, as discussed earlier, parking lots and the access points to them can have a negative impact on streetscapes, particularly diminishing the pedestrian-friendly feel.

Key Takeaways: Building and Preserving Community Character in the Context of Growth

The appeal of neighborhoods is critical to quality of life and local tax revenues. It is also an important draw to those looking to relocate to Utah. In many cases, Utahns are relatively happy with the current character of their neighborhoods; in those cases, the challenge is to ensure that new developments in those neighborhoods are complementary, rather than detrimental, to that character. But Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey found dissatisfaction with streetscapes and the built environment. Policymakers can improve public spaces and streetscapes by planning through placemaking, improving building conditions and enhancing streetscapes.

Placemaking. Many jurisdictions have opportunities to pull together citizens, businesses and other stakeholders in place-based planning efforts around neighborhood cores and key intersections. With developer participation, such efforts can yield high-quality streetscapes and community gathering places that improve quality of life and boost tax revenues.

Building Conditions. Local governments can accommodate new growth within the envelope of existing cityscapes by promoting the redevelopment of historic, underutilized buildings, brownfield redevelopment and infill development. Improvements along these lines can improve the urban landscape, enhance quality of life and bring in new tax revenues, sometimes without requiring significant new public infrastructure investments.

Streetscapes. Improving streetscapes is an important quality of life improvement for pedestrians and motorists alike. Policymakers can approve their appeal and improve tax revenues by giving attention to landscaping, lighting, pedestrian friendliness, parking, signage and scale. For wide boulevards, taller buildings can enhance the appeal by anchoring the street. They may also take better advantage of existing road capacity and offer opportunities to enhance the tax base.

AVOIDING UNDUE TAXPAYER SUBSIDY OF NEW GROWTH

BY THE NUMBERS

After adjusting for inflation, total impact fees decreased by 3% for multi-family units from 2007 to 2018, and by 13% for single-family units.

About 68% of Utah cities and towns use other funds along with impact fees to cover costs of new infrastructure, primarily to promote affordability.

In general, local governments see growth as a positive. Though it brings new challenges, most governments would prefer a growing population to a declining population. However, new development does not always pay for itself. Many local governments face challenges on the expense side, where the cost of providing services and infrastructure to a new development is beyond their means. They can also face challenges on the income side, where a growing jurisdiction lacks the proper mix of commercial and residential developments to meet their growing revenue needs. To the extent that local governments are unable to meet new revenue and expense challenges associated with growth, the existing taxpayer base may end up needing to pay more to subsidize the growth. In the long run, creating a well-balanced tax base will be critical to both the fiscal picture and quality of life.

Impact Fees

Municipalities have several revenue streams to help supplement tax revenue and intergovernmental transfers to meet growing costs. These include fees, licenses, permits and fines.[105] The following discussion focuses primarily on impact fees, which are payments requested by local governments on new developments to help fund new infrastructure or expand existing facilities.

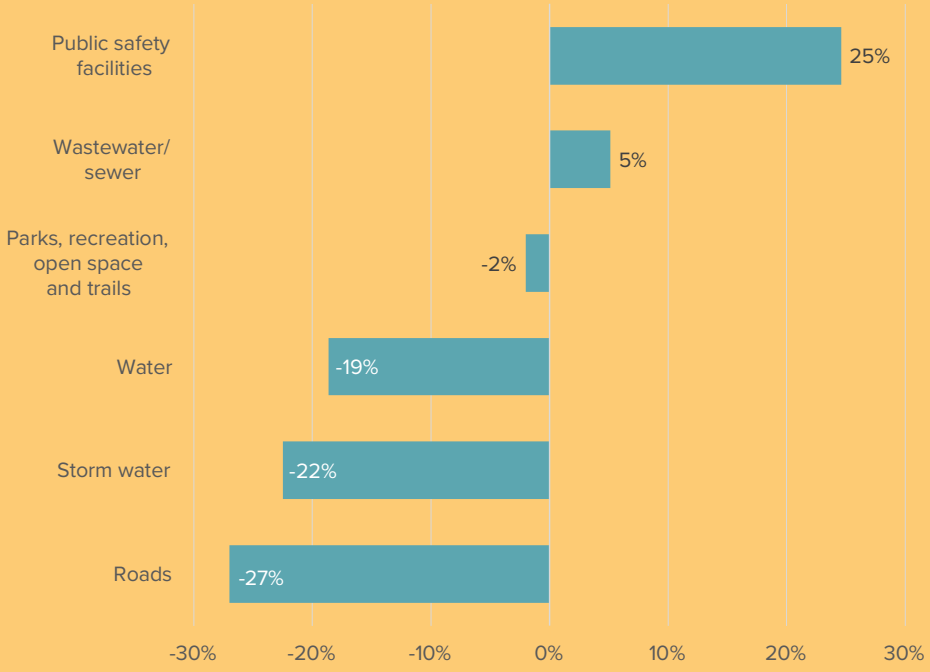
In Utah, local governments can charge impact fees for several public facilities, including:

- Water systems and water rights.
- Roads.
- Wastewater systems.
- Stormwater control systems.
- Parks.
- Municipal power facilities.
- Public safety facilities.[106]

Utah Foundation's 2018 survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns found that from 2007 to 2018 the median amount of inflation-adjusted, multi-family development impact fees charged by a city, town or third party increased for public safety facilities and wastewater/sewer facilities.[107] Conversely, impact fees decreased for parks, recreation, open space and trails, water, storm water facilities, and roads.[108] (See Figure 7.)

After adjusting for inflation, impact fees decreased for most multi-family development items.

Figure 7: Percent Change in the Median Amount of Impact Fees for Multi-family Units, 2007–2018, Adjusted for Inflation



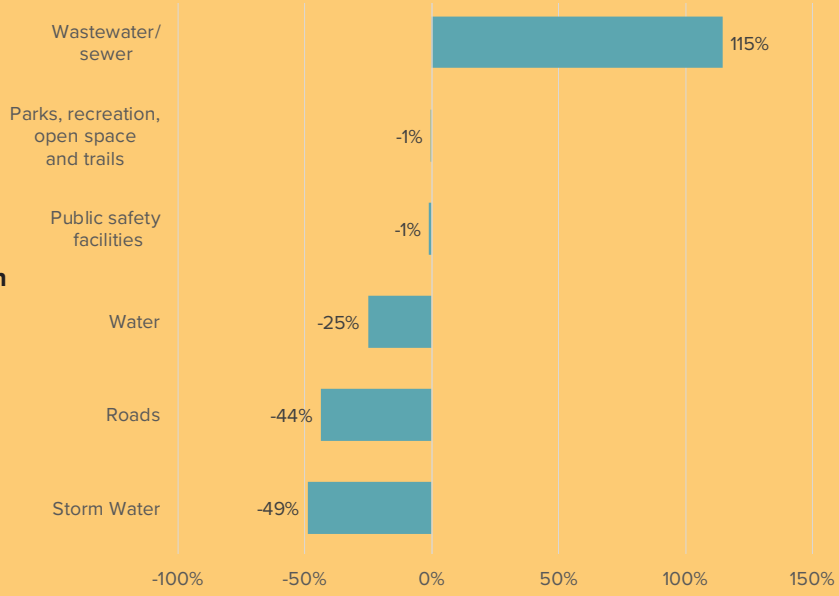
Source: Utah Foundation survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

The picture looks slightly different for single-family units. After adjusting for inflation, except for wastewater/sewer facilities, impact fees decreased. (See Figure 8.)

Similarly, the total amount of impact fees has decreased from 2007 to 2018 for both multi-family units and single-family units. (See Figure 9.)

After adjusting for inflation, waste-water/sewer facilities were the only single-family development item that increased in cost.

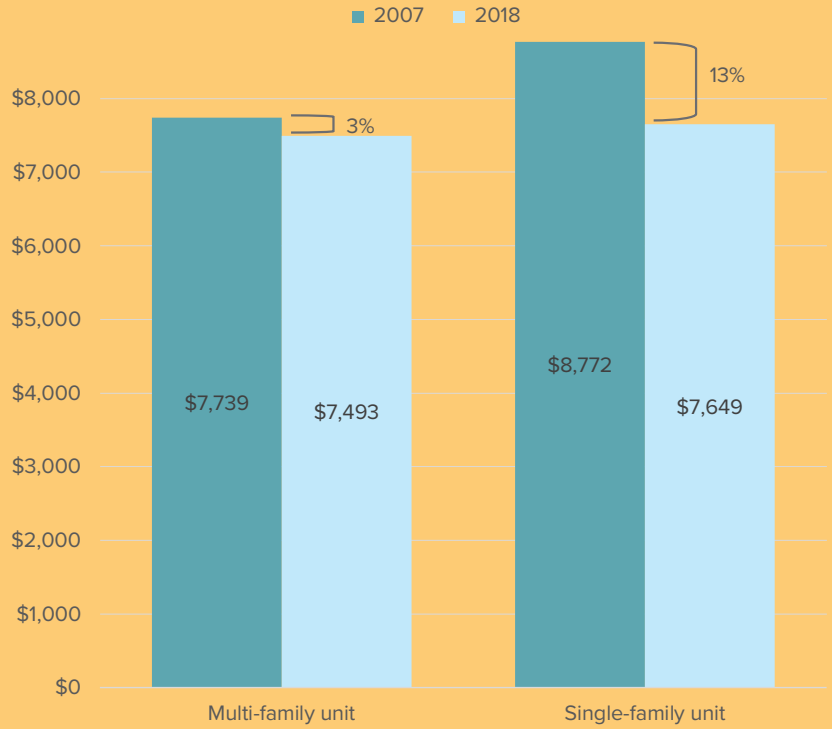
Figure 8: Percent Change in the Median Amount of Impact Fees for Single-Family Units, 2007 – 2018, Adjusted for Inflation



Source: Utah Foundation survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

After adjusting for inflation, total impact fees decreased by 3% for multi-family units from 2007 to 2018, and 13% for single-family units.

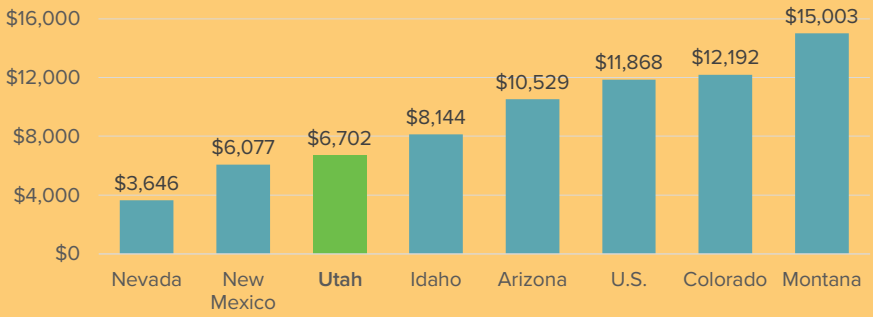
Figure 9: Change in Total Impact Fees for Multi-family and Single-family Units in Utah, 2007 – 2018, Adjusted for Inflation



Source: Utah Foundation survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

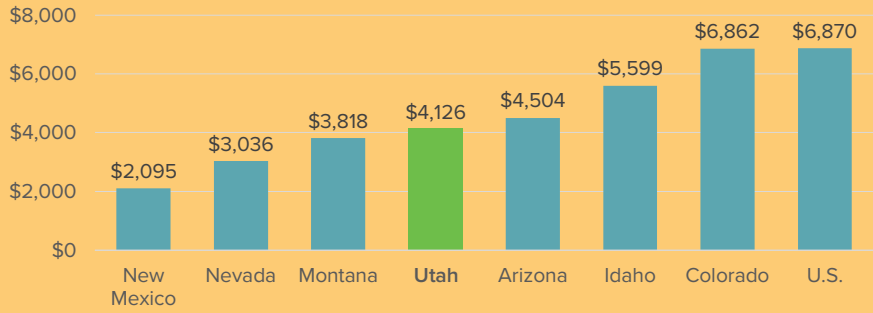
Utah's average total impact fees for a single-family unit were among the lowest in the Mountain States in 2015.

Figure 10: Average Total Impact Fees for Mountain States for a Single-family Unit, 2015



Utah's average total impact fees for a multi-family unit were well below the national average in 2015.

Figure 11: Average Total Impact Fees for Mountain States for a Multi-family Unit, 2015



Source: Duncan Associates, National Impact Fee Survey, 2015. No available data for Wyoming.

Utah's total impact fees are smaller than the national average and some Mountain States. In 2015, Utah's average total impact fees for the average single-family unit were far below the national average and most Mountain States. (See Figure 10.)

A similar pattern emerged when comparing average total impact fees for a multi-family unit. Utah's average total impact fees were again smaller than the U.S. national average. (See Figure 11.) However, not all states have legislation that allows local governments to impose impact fees. As of 2018, only 29 states had adopted impact fee enabling legislation.[109] Some states allow jurisdictions to impose impact fees only under special acts of the legislature.[110]

Impact fees can be a contentious issue between local governments and developers. Proponents of impact fees argue that it is unfair for existing taxpayers to pay for improvements that will serve new residents. By charging developers impact fees, local governments can reduce the extent to which existing taxpayers pay for new growth.

While impact fees are a one lump-sum payment meant to pay for the immediate infrastructure needs, local governments must rely on other revenue streams, such as property and sales taxes, to pay for long-term maintenance costs and the services needed to accommodate new residents and businesses.

Some oppose impact fees altogether. Opponents argue that impact fees hinder growth by shifting the cost of new development to a narrower segment of the population. In effect, developers are often faced with several choices to deal with increased costs. Developers and builders can increase housing prices to offset fees, pay fees out of pocket, decrease the amount offered to pay for land, or decrease the number of new houses built.[111] Research suggests the most probable outcome is passing impact fees onto buyers in the form of higher home prices, consequently increasing property values. While this brings a positive effect for existing residents and local governments by expanding the revenue base, it can decrease housing affordability.[112]

In fact, this is a major concern for local governments in Utah, as 68% of cities and towns Utah Foundation surveyed responded that they use other funds along with impact fees to

cover costs of new infrastructure. While there are several reasons why local governments supplement costs, the most common answer was "to keep costs down for residents (to promote affordability)."

A Healthy Tax Base

As previously noted, local governments rely heavily on property and sales taxes to maintain infrastructure and provide services. While fees of various kinds supplement this funding and the overall revenue mix depends on the jurisdiction and its development profile, tax revenues are a core component of local government funding. As this report has noted, a healthy tax base depends upon a high quality of life, which increases the community's appeal to residents and businesses, boosting both the property and sales tax bases.

However, fiscal and quality of life priorities can at times come into conflict. For instance, one local jurisdiction may emphasize retail development to such an extent that the built environment becomes a secondary concern to new sales tax revenues, negatively effecting the appeal of the built environment. Another may assume retail developers will eventually "chase rooftops" and emphasize rapid residential development in the hopes that sales tax-producing businesses will follow, leaving the local jurisdiction with increasing service costs without the revenue to meet them. Still another local government may be beholden to a resident base intent on maintaining the character of a bedroom community, even while fiscal challenges emerge; there, quality of life may begin to diminish as residents must travel to other jurisdictions for employment and shopping. It is also important to note that residential development alone often fails to generate sufficient revenue to pay for services and infrastructure, particularly at low densities.

Along these lines, each local government faces a unique set of challenges. However, all must find a way to bring residents and developers on board with a common objective: to create a tax base with the proper mix of revenues needed to avoid service and infrastructure deficiencies and ease upward pressure on tax rates; and to open the way for revenue-producing commercial developments that enhance, rather than diminish, quality of life – providing residents with local employment, recreation and shopping opportunities.

Key Takeaways: Avoiding Undue Taxpayer Subsidy of New Growth

Impact Fees. Impact fees in Utah are on the low side compared to the other Mountain States. When adjusted for inflation, impact fees for single-family homes have been dropping. In certain categories, fees even in nominal terms have decreased. While impact fees help to ensure that current residents do not subsidize new developments, they are controversial. To some extent, they may have negative impacts on housing affordability. For that reason, it is important that local governments seek to calibrate impact fees and regularly revisit them to ensure that they defray an appropriate portion of public costs without becoming unreasonably high.

A Healthy Tax Base. A healthy tax base will allow local governments to stay on top of the service and infrastructure costs that accompany growth over time. This usually means that local governments must ensure not just a strong residential base, but also a robust commercial base. In the end, communities that seek to prevent commercial developments altogether will often pay the price in the form of diminished services and infrastructure. On the other hand, local governments that chase tax revenues with laissez-fare approaches to commercial development will eventually damage the appeal of the built environment and may thereby create a bleak long-term fiscal picture. A balanced approach will enhance quality of life by providing residents with opportunities to live, work and play in their own communities, without having to jump into traffic to reach employment centers or retail. A balanced approach will also provide fiscal stability in the short term by welcoming commercial development and in the long term by ensuring commercial development unfolds in a manner that respects and enhances community character.

BUILDING QUALITY OF LIFE: LOCAL AREAS IN ACTION

Downtowns, town centers and main streets can serve as major factors in promoting quality of life. These areas can also often serve as the heart of the neighborhood as cultural and civic hubs. They are also potential economic engines that can produce a high fiscal return while providing efficient approaches to land use.

Cities and towns across Utah are creating or have executed plans that focus on finding strategic opportunities and locations to create or revitalize core city centers that are mixed-use, walkable developments near transit. The characteristics differ by city. For some, it may be a downtown city center. Other communities may choose to create a town center or revitalize a main street.

For instance, almost all cities and towns in Salt Lake County are working towards creating centers as outlined by their general plans. While they come in all different shapes and sizes and serve different segments of the population, most communities and towns in Salt Lake County are working to create an identifiable core. Several local governments in Utah County are also planning for high-density projects consolidated around city centers that help preserve open space, trail access and large-lot suburban neighborhoods. The communities along the Wasatch Front collaborated on the Wasatch Choice 2050 to highlight current and anticipated locations of development centers.

Many of these areas have received funding from the Wasatch Front Regional Council's Transportation and Land Use Connection program. From 2014 to 2018, the program has invested about $6 million in 65 different land use and transportation planning projects that include small area plans, active transportation projects and general plan updates.[113]

Downtowns

Several cities in Utah are improving or creating central downtown areas that function as centers for housing, employment and entertainment. Central city locations can use a relatively small amount of land while producing a higher overall percentage of economic opportunity. One study found that the average U.S. downtown made up 3.4% of total citywide land area, but accounted for 13% of the income tax revenue generated in the jurisdiction, 14% of sales tax revenue, 19% of property tax revenue, 45% of hotel tax revenue and 64% of parking fee revenue.[114] The same study found that on average, a downtown contributed four to 20 times the overall tax revenue produced in the rest of the city.

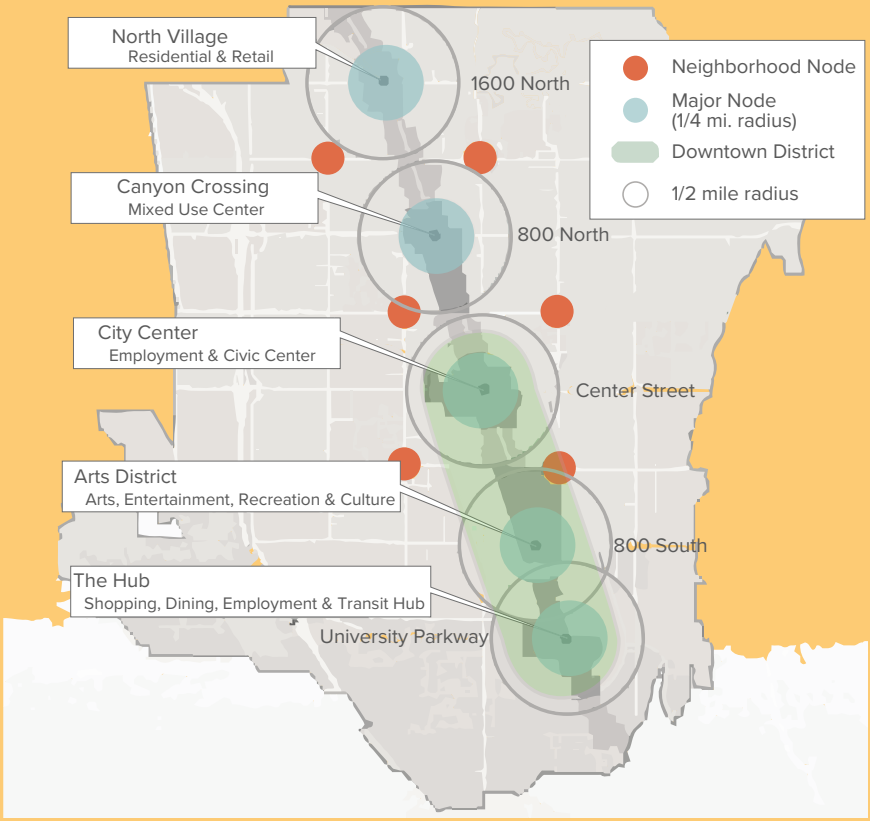
Downtowns can also support a dense employment sector, with jobs centered around transit-oriented, multi-modal areas. On average, downtowns account for 40% of their city's total available office space, with 30% of total citywide employment.[115] Retail space is also a significant component of downtown development, as higher rents and property values typically exist in urban centers. For instance, one study found that, on a per square-mile basis, downtown land has five times the average value of land in the rest of the city.

Clearfield. In 2016, Clearfield City in Davis County created a general plan that includes a detailed vision for a string of four connected downtown districts that are centered around mixed uses and major transportation corridors.[116] The plan calls for a pedestrian town square and events center with a mix of uses for residents to live, work and play. The plan also creates space for outdoor seating and several streetscape features, including public art, distinct signage, and aesthetically pleasing landscaping and lighting.

The plan offers design guidelines that includes streetscapes, architecture, sidewalks, open space and parking management strategies that they refer to as "Park Once Districts." The idea is to create an area where visitors to downtown can park once to access a variety of destinations in a walkable area. The plan also calls for several transportation improvements including pedestrian crossings, traffic calming and safety measures, bicycle infrastructure, widened sidewalks for an enhanced walking experience, and increased public transportation access and infrastructure.[117]

Orem's State Street corridor master plan envisions five new major downtown districts.

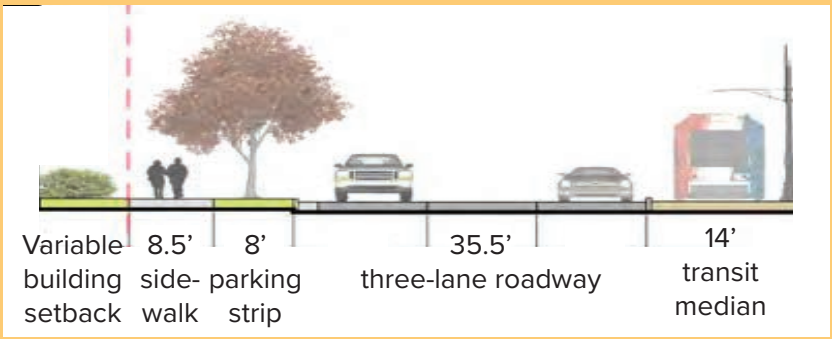
Figure 12: Map of Orem's Five Transit-Oriented Downtown Districts



Source: Orem City, State Street Corridor Master Plan.

Orem plans to incorporate pedestrian-friendly walkways with green spaces into the five major districts.

Figure 13: Orem's Plans for Pedestrian-Friendly Walkways



Source: Orem City, State Street Corridor Master Plan.

Logan. In 2012, Logan completed a specific plan for its downtown to redevelop the area as the city's heart and commercial center. The plan focuses on improving facades of historic buildings, improving the economic vitality of the area, promoting the area as a place to live, work and play, and working with various stakeholders to create a space that benefits the entire community. The city implemented the Downtown Façade Grant Program to help local business owners give facelifts to historic buildings.[118] The city is also working with developers to create a mixed-use development in the center of downtown.[119]

North Ogden. In 2015, North Ogden completed an update of its general plan, which calls for the creation of a downtown core. North Ogden has transformed rapidly, as many Utah communities have, from an agricultural community to a primarily suburban residential one. But it is now looking to implement a core city center where residents can work, shop, live and play. [120] The downtown plan also provides for several modes of transportation – both public and active – including widened sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping zones and medians. The plan also calls for open space and improved streetscapes.

Orem. In 2018, Orem updated its general plan to include five separate high-density, mixed-use development districts along State Street, a major transportation corridor.[121] The plan includes a main city center and a new approach to four other major intersections, including an arts district and a shopping hub. The five districts are meant in part to guide high-density developments to strategic, transit-oriented areas and away from single-family neighborhoods. (See Figure 12.)

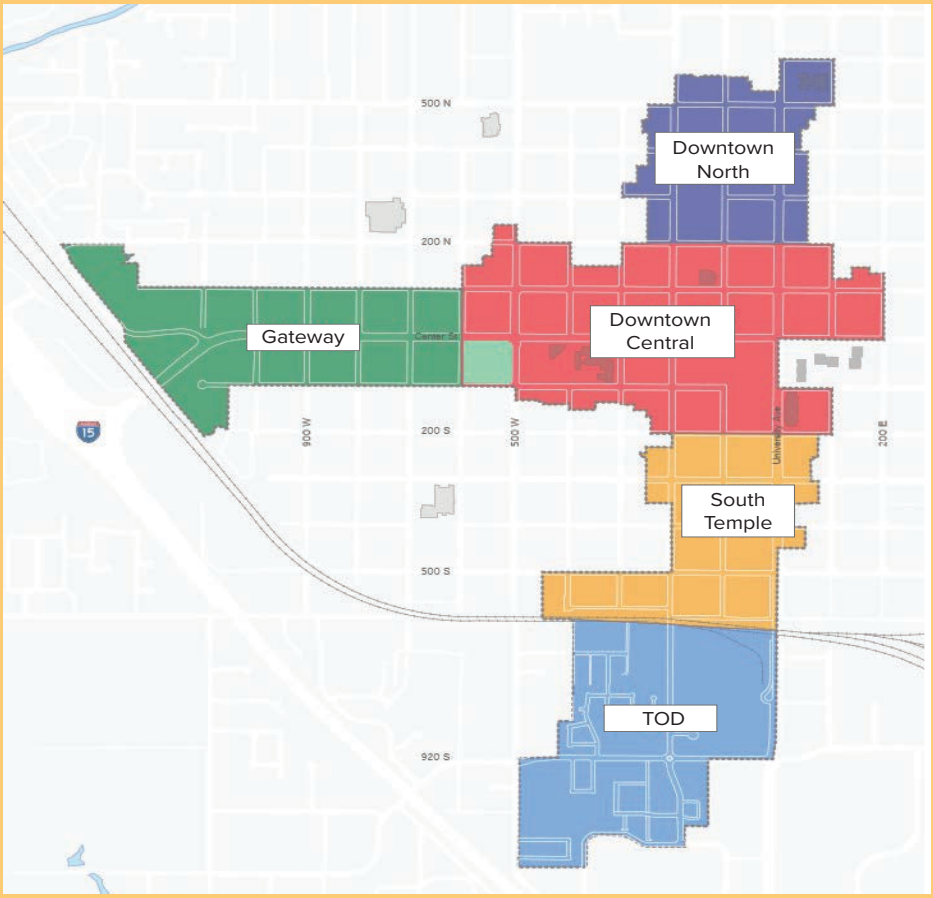
The city is coordinating with the Utah Department of Transportation, the Utah Transit Authority, business owners, developers, residents and neighboring cities to coordinate major transit opportunities.[122] In addition, new buildings and development projects will be held to certain streetscape design principles that create more walkable, pedestrian-friendly areas with greenways providing buffering along sidewalks. (See Figure 13.)

Provo. The city of Provo is increasingly being built out as open space on its west side is facing pressures from new development. As such, the city is looking to create high-quality projects in strategic locations, such as near major transit and in its historic downtown area**.** In 2014, Provo created a downtown master plan as a supplement to the general plan. The downtown master plan creates five separate districts with distinct features. (See Figure 14.) The five contiguous areas serve as Provo's hub for commercial, civic and cultural activities. There are dining, retail and office buildings, as well as historical landmarks and green space.[123]

The downtown master plan identifies existing amenities and opportunities for redevelopment on nearly 23 acres of publicly-owned land. The plan also identifies opportunities where land is vacant, underutilized or undervalued, but that may be attractive to developers under this vision. The plan also creates a transit-oriented development district, which is zoned to allow both residential and commercial uses.

Provo's downtown master plan includes five contiguous areas with distinct features.

Figure 14: Map of Provo's Downtown Master Plan

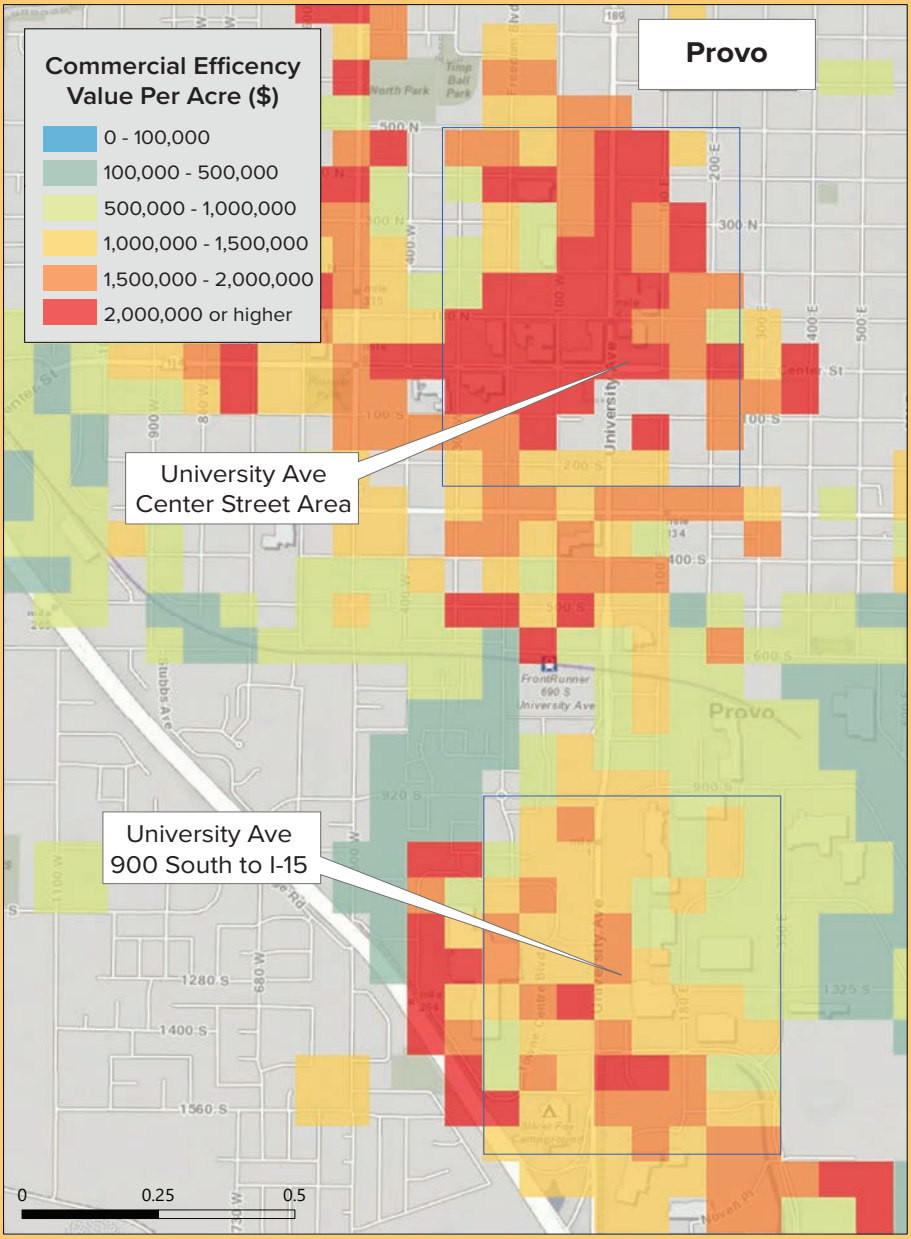


Source: Provo City, Downtown Master Plan.

A new mixed-use development in downtown Provo.

Downtown Provo property values per acre are much higher than a nearby commercial strip.

Figure 15: Provo's Downtown Compared to a Neighboring Commercial Center



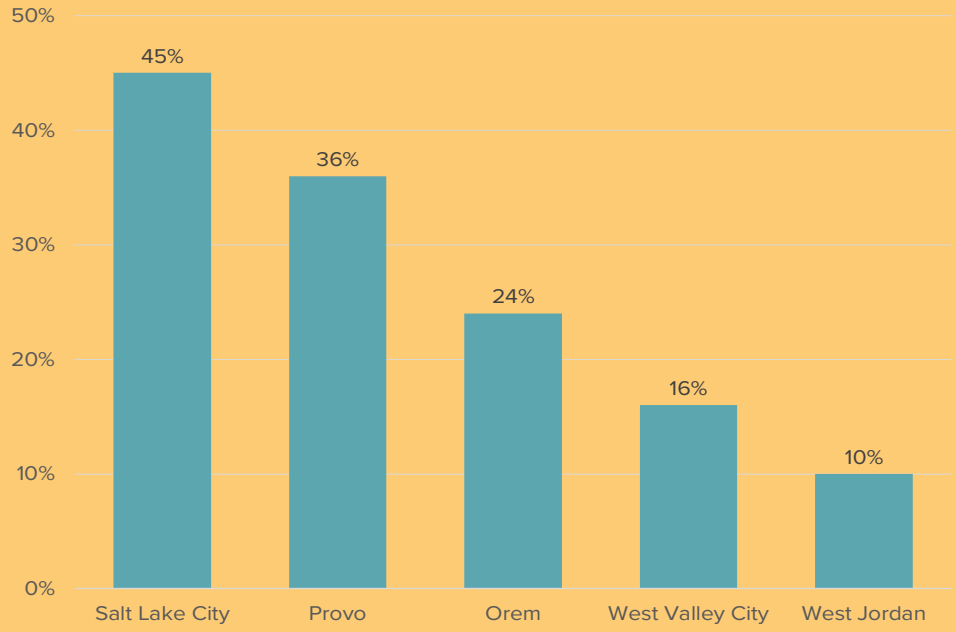
Source: Created by Wasatch Front Regional Council for Utah Foundation.

Provo's downtown per-acre property values are much higher than its suburban-style commercial strips. (See Figure 15.) As downtown infill proceeds, Provo may continue to see strong yields in terms of quality of life, land use efficiency and tax revenues.

Salt Lake City. Salt Lake City's downtown has seen an increase in walkable mixed-use properties centered around major transit stations. The downtown area is also a major center for employment. In fact, Salt Lake City's daytime population increases by nearly 73% as a result of commuters coming to Salt Lake for work.[124]

Many Salt Lake City residents also work within the city.

Figure 16: Percentage of Residents in the Largest Five Utah Cities who also Work There, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, On the Map 2015.

Salt Lake also has many residents employed within the city. (See Figure 16.) More cities and towns are trying to create communities where residents can live and work without having to commute to other jurisdictions. If a local government helps to create an environment where residents can both live and work, it can increase the revenue generated in the city. It can also reduce the amount of time people spend in traffic commuting to work and thereby help to improve air quality.

However, because Salt Lake City is still the major employment center in the Wasatch Front, the city faces particular challenges in that it needs to provide services to meet the needs of the daytime population.

City Creek is a 20-acre mixed-use, transit-oriented downtown development opened in 2012, meant to transform downtown Salt Lake City into a live-work-play destination.[125] A report by the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute found that, in 2010, downtown had about 5,200 rental units, and estimated that number to double by 2020. Downtown retail sales increased 46% from 2010 to 2016, retail employment increased 85%, and downtown hotel room bookings increased 62%.[126] Wages in hotel services, food service and retail also increased significantly. Downtown saw five million out-of-state visitors to the shopping center in 2016, which contributed to about 17 million total visits to City Creek.[127]

Despite the robust growth in recent years, Salt Lake City's downtown area still offers multiple opportunities for infill development in a manner that will improve quality of life, make efficient use of land and boost local tax revenues. Utah Foundation hopes to explore the topic of infill development further in a future report.

Sandy City is now bringing together a transit-oriented, mixed-use downtown development.

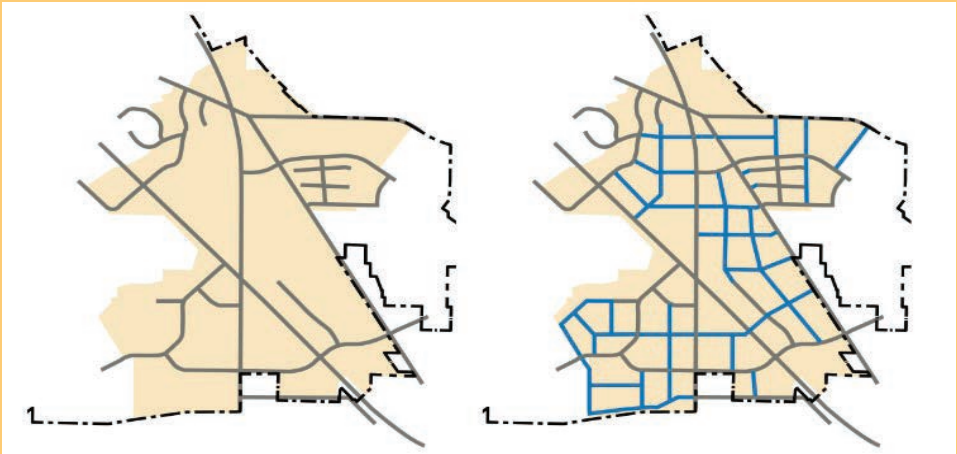
Figure 17: The Cairns

Source: Sandy City, Cairns Master Plan Highlights.

Sandy. In 2017, Sandy City created a master plan for its emerging downtown area, known as The Cairns. The intention of the plan is to create a "live, work and play" environment that functions as a mixed-use downtown, with a vibrant community that has access to transit and active transportation options.[128] The city is focused on working in tandem with other local and regional plans to ensure a well-coordinated built environment. The plan also outlines a vision that extensively considers community character and streetscapes. In fact, the entire plan is called "The Cairns" as to create a specific brand: "Where mountain meets urban." Sandy's master plan for a downtown considers both the economic benefits of creating an employment center and the appeal of a city that boasts a high quality of life with easy access to both Little and Big Cottonwood canyons. (See Figure 17 for a rendering.) The development of the area is well underway.

South Ogden City is looking to create a better-connected street network.

Figure 18: Rendering South Ogden's Plans for a Connected Street Network



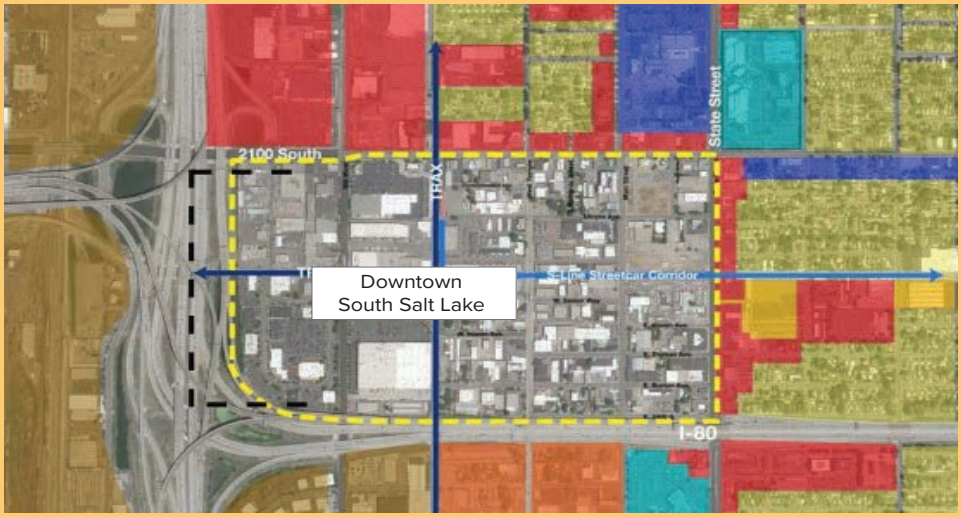
Source: South Ogden City, South Ogden Commercial Areas Form Based Code.

South Ogden. In 2016, South Ogden City created a new code to facilitate the creation of a downtown district that functions as the center of the city around a major transit corridor. The goal is to create several walkable downtown districts, with a better-connected street network.[129] (See Figure 18.)

The plan calls for mixed uses, including retail, office, commercial and green space areas. The plan addresses green

South Salt Lake is planning for a major mixed-use downtown center to be centered around public transit.

Figure 19: South Salt Lake Downtown Location

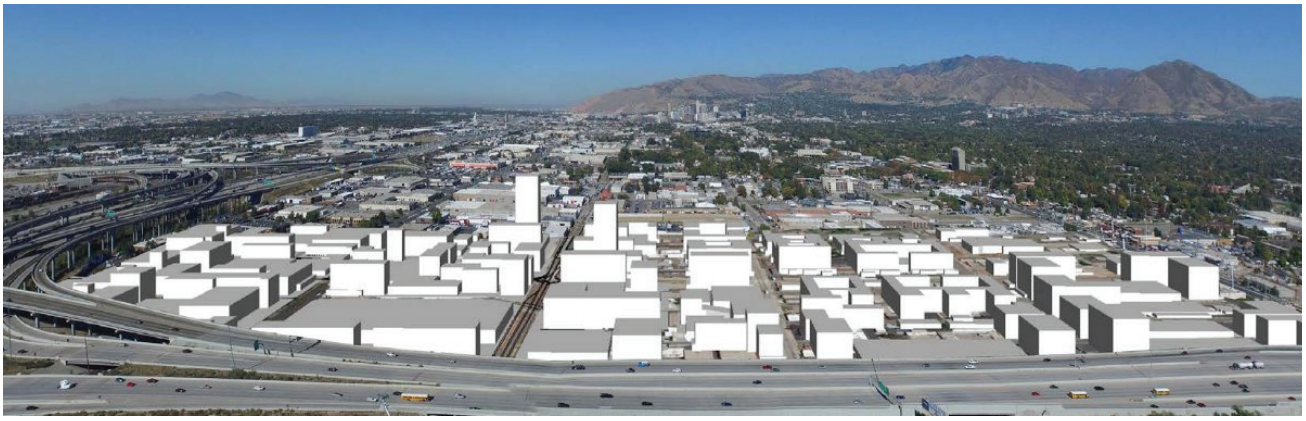


Source: South Salt Lake City, Downtown Master Plan.

spaces by incorporating both active and passive areas through towns squares, commons, pocket parks, large parks and greenways. South Ogden City also has landscape standards to enhance public streetscapes and to create a buffer between pedestrians, cyclists and cars. Another way the city is looking to improve streetscapes is through gateways, awnings and several varieties of signage.

South Salt Lake. South Salt Lake is planning a downtown city center around a public transit station and enclosed by four major transit corridors – I-15, I-80, 2100 South and State Street. (See Figure 19.)

The 235-acre neighborhood will include the addition of 2,500 multi-family housing units, 1.5 million square feet of retail, 3 million square feet of office and commercial space, and green spaces and cultural attractions.[130] (See Figure 20.) The downtown plan is meant to give the city more economic and fiscal stability while improving quality of life for residents.



South Salt Lake plans to build a major transit-oriented, mixed-use downtown development.

Figure 20: South Salt Lake's plans for a Downtown

Source: Sandy City, Cairns Master Plan Highlights.

St. George. While this report has focused primarily on the most populated areas along the Wasatch Front, St. George is also growing rapidly. The city's 2016 general plan included a set of principles that work to create compact development and discourage the inefficient use of land and resources.[131] The vision for the community also includes pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use centers. The plan prioritizes connected street networks and more efficient use of land for parking stalls. Additionally, the city encourages the distribution of parks and green spaces throughout neighborhoods, as well as the preservation of open spaces that define the community.

As such, the city is investing in its downtown to create a place that generates pride among residents and is an inviting space for tourists. Several strategies are outlined, with some major construction underway, to create a vibrant, entertaining and attractive space for people to visit, such as a mixed-use apartment complex with offices, restaurants, a boutique hotel and retail space.

West Valley City. West Valley City is planning a new community focal point, known as Fairbourne Station. The mixed-use development covers 40 acres of land and is centered around a light rail stop. It includes high-density apartment units, retail space and office space.[132] (See Figure 21.) The goal is to create a new focal point in the city and generate fresh enthusiasm.

Town Centers

Some cities and towns are focused on creating smaller scale or neighborhood-based town centers. These are occurring both in new, smaller cities and towns, and in existing cities as a means of boosting quality of life, land use efficiency and fiscal returns.

West Valley City envisions a central mixed-use, downtown centered around major transit.

Figure 21: West Valley City's Future Land Use Plan for a Recognizable Downtown

Source: West Valley City.

Eagle Mountain. Eagle Mountain is geographically the 3rd largest city in Utah with 50 square miles of land. It is also a young city, providing a large blank canvas of undeveloped land. The city is anticipating significant continued growth and is working to plan in a way that is efficient, environmentally sound and ensures a high quality of life for residents.

Eagle Mountain is planning to focus growth and invest in key village centers along major transportation corridors. The idea is for Eagle Mountain's village centers to serve as the anchors of walkable, convenient districts for employment, amenities and entertainment.[133]

Herriman. Like many of the communities in Utah, Herriman started off largely as an agricultural community with large lots. The town has grown into a lively bedroom community with growing demands on housing, transportation, jobs and amenities. Herriman is creating a town center that will be used as the central location of the city with residential, commercial and community facilities.[134] The town center is also has the highest density in the community, with a mix of housing types and styles. Herriman is also working on creating transit-oriented development, aligning light rail with its high-density development plans. Although Herriman has a high level of development and increasing density, the city places a heavy focus on recreation and retaining open space.[135]

Herriman has been at the center of a controversial high-density community, known as Olympia Hills. In 2018, the Salt Lake County Council approved a zoning change for a 930-acre development in an unincorporated area adjacent to Herriman. The development was vetoed by the former Salt Lake County Mayor in response to intense public backlash. Citizens raised concerns about the cost of new infrastructure, strain on public services and increased traffic congestion. The developers have come up with a new design for a live-work-play community that reduces density from nine units per acre to seven units per acre. A final decision on the project has not yet been made.

Holladay. A notable example of town center development is the village center created in Holladay. This development includes retail, restaurants, office space and a parking structure, as well as multi-family housing units. There are also civic buildings and open space areas.

Millcreek. Millcreek City plans on creating a mixed-use, pedestrian friendly city center to serve as the focal point for city residents and tourists. It is also at the center of major trans-

Holladay's Village Square.

portation arterials and is envisioned as having both local and regional public transit opportunities, with significant emphasis on walkability.[136] The city's strategies to create a town center include continuing to refine and expand overlay zones as the city center develops, updating city codes to support multi-modal transit rights of way and establishing a parking management strategy to regulate on-street parking for businesses.[137]

North Salt Lake. North Salt Lake City created a Town Center Master plan that seeks to create a unique and distinct center location that serves as the heart of the city. Like many other areas, the plan puts the town center at the focal point of the city in the center of major transportation corridors. The idea is to transform the area to include more public transit access with pedestrian friendly walkways nearby. The goal is also to include mixed-use area with expansion to multi-family development options around a park.[138] See Figure 22 for the town center land use vision.

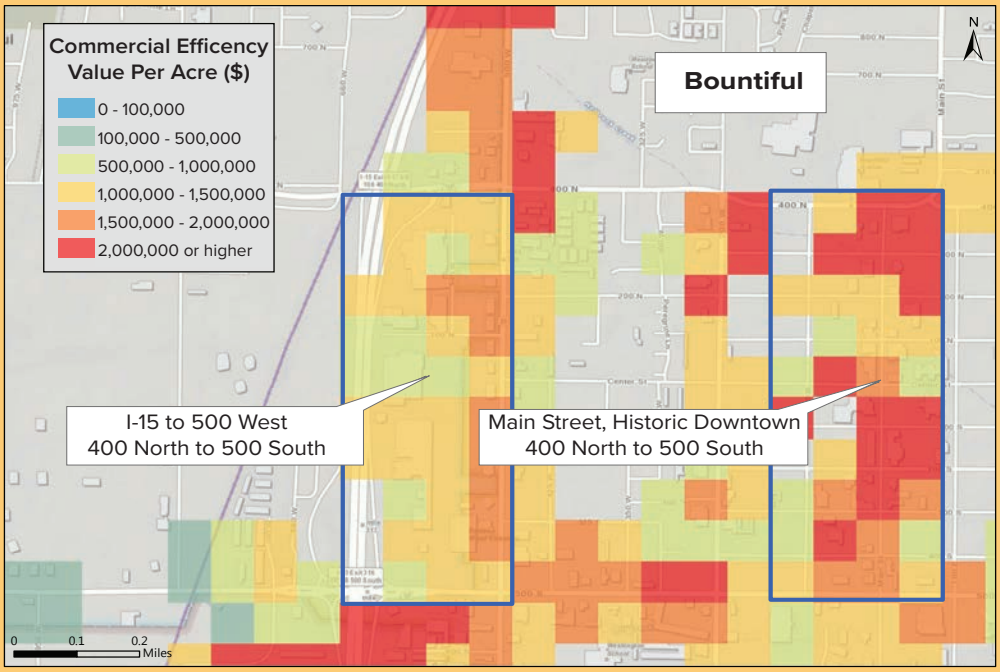
North Salt Lake City is planning for a mixed-use, transit-oriented town center.

Figure 22: North Salt Lake City's Land Use Town Center Vision

Source: City of North Salt Lake, Town Center Master Plan.

Bountiful's Main Street has higher property values per acre than a nearby commercial area.

Figure 23: Bountiful's Main Street Compared to a Nearby Commercial Center



Source: Created by Wasatch Front Regional Council for Utah Foundation.

Main Streets

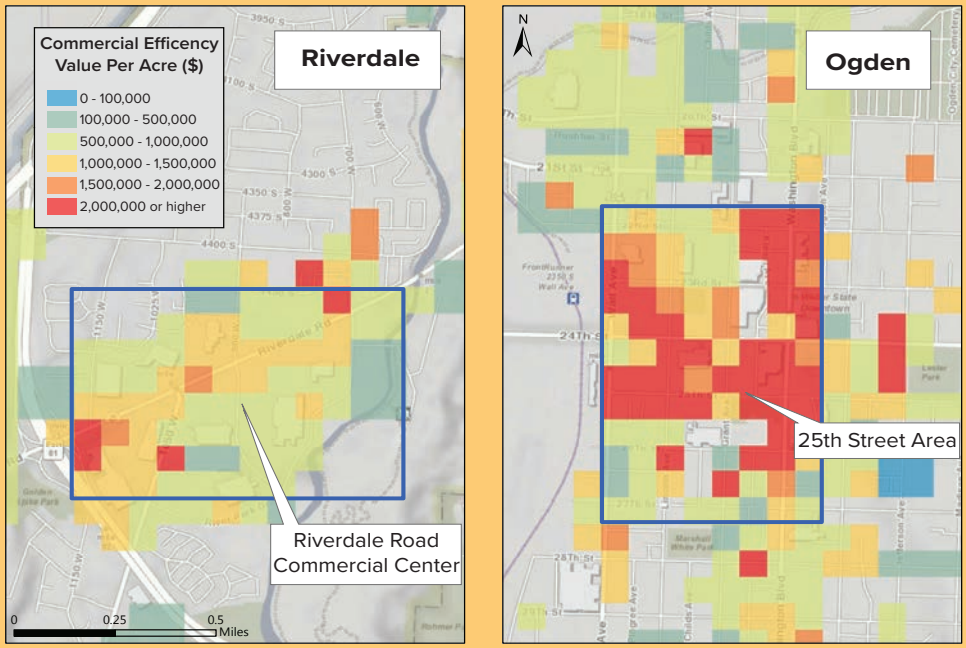
For some communities, revitalizing main streets, as opposed to creating new town centers, is a more suitable option. Often main streets create a walkable environment that also provides increased tax revenue for local governments.

Bountiful. Bountiful's guiding planning principle is to make Main Street the heart of the city and of southern Davis County.[139] The goal is to build on existing assets of historic character, varied retail and civic buildings, and pedestrian-friendly areas to attract people from other areas in the county as well as tourists. The plan envisions new community spaces while preserving the historic character to create a distinct center. The plan also focuses on walkability, filling in gaps to improve the streetscape and attract more foot traffic to generate retail activity. The city is also building a downtown plaza with green space and recreation areas that can hold community events and activities. Bountiful has also seen multi-family housing built on Main Street in recent years. The developments may further improve Bountiful's downtown tax revenue, which already has higher property valuation per acre than a suburban-style commercial area nearby. (See Figure 23.)

Midvale. Another example of a city working to revitalize a historic downtown main street is Midvale. Midvale recognizes Main Street as its historic city center and is working to invest in the area to bring more people to live and work in the area.[140] In 2015, the City Council approved a community development project area to revitalize Main Street. Out of this came the Midvale Main Street Small Area Plan. The plan identifies goals, strengths and challenges facing the city's Main Street. Specifically, it places emphasis on attracting new investment, supporting existing businesses to update historic, aging properties, improving street connections from Main Street to existing residential areas, and enhancing the neighborhood identity by creating a stronger heart of the city.[141]

Ogden's downtown has a substantially higher value per acre than a more suburban commercial center nearby.

Figure 24: Ogden's Main Street Compared to a Nearby Commercial Center

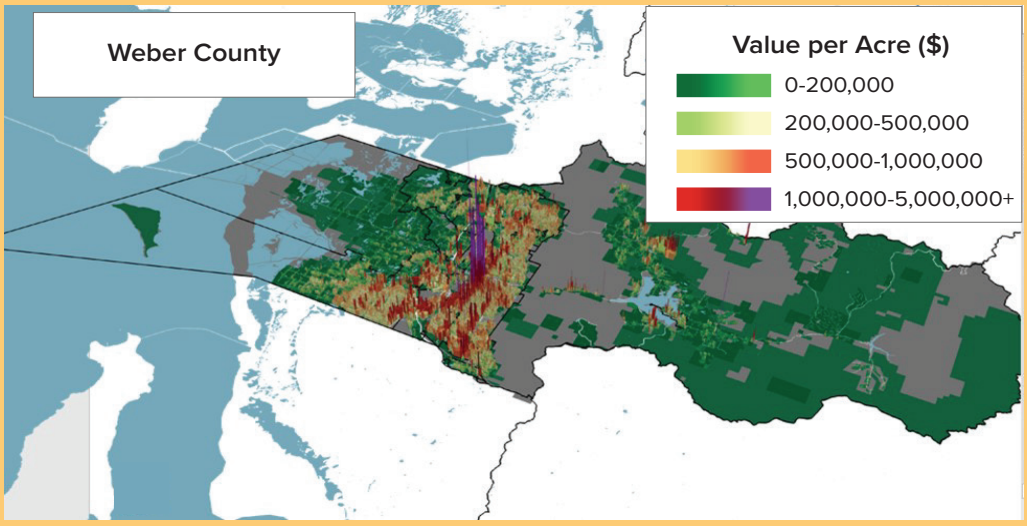


Source: Created by Wasatch Front Regional Council for Utah Foundation.

Ogden. A prominent example of a city with a historic core as an opportunity for redevelopment is Ogden. Ogden's historic 25th street has benefited from a focus on revitalization to create a mix of uses that includes shops, restaurants and housing. Ogden's downtown has a much more concentrated return on investment than a suburban-style commercial area nearby. (See Figure 24.)

The property value per acre is highly concentrated in Ogden's downtown core compared to the rest of Weber County.

Figure 25: Value per Acre in Weber County

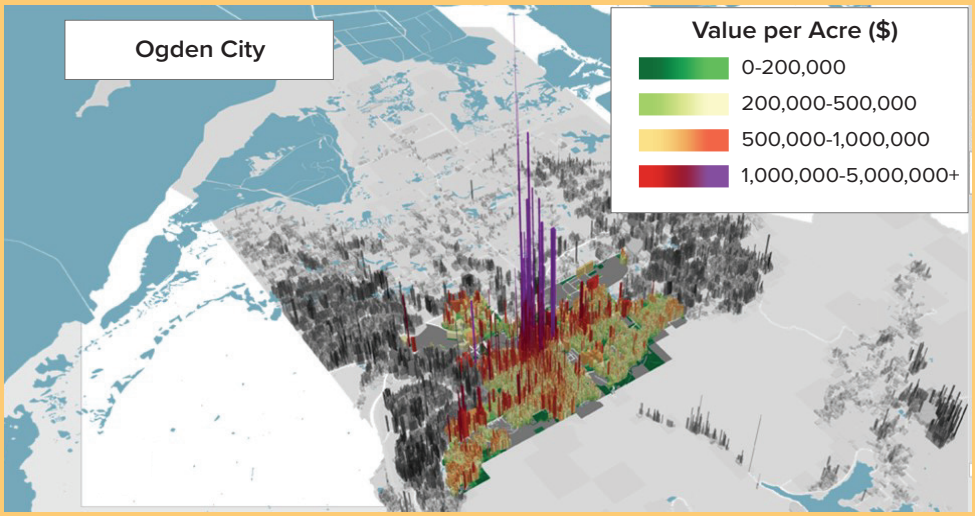


Source: Urban3 Map Developed for Ogden. Legend simplified for this report.

The example in Figure 24 demonstrates that Ogden's more compact, walkable mixed-use development is substantially more profitable on a per acre basis. In fact, much of the revenue generating properties are valued at two million dollars or more per acre. Ogden's downtown has some of the highest values per acre in Weber County. (See Figure 25.) The economic benefit of denser

The property value per acre is highly concentrated in Ogden's downtown core.

Figure 26: Value per Acre in Ogden



Source: Urban3 Map Developed for Ogden. Legend simplified for this report

development and connectivity is even more prominent when focusing on Ogden's urban core. (See Figure 26.)

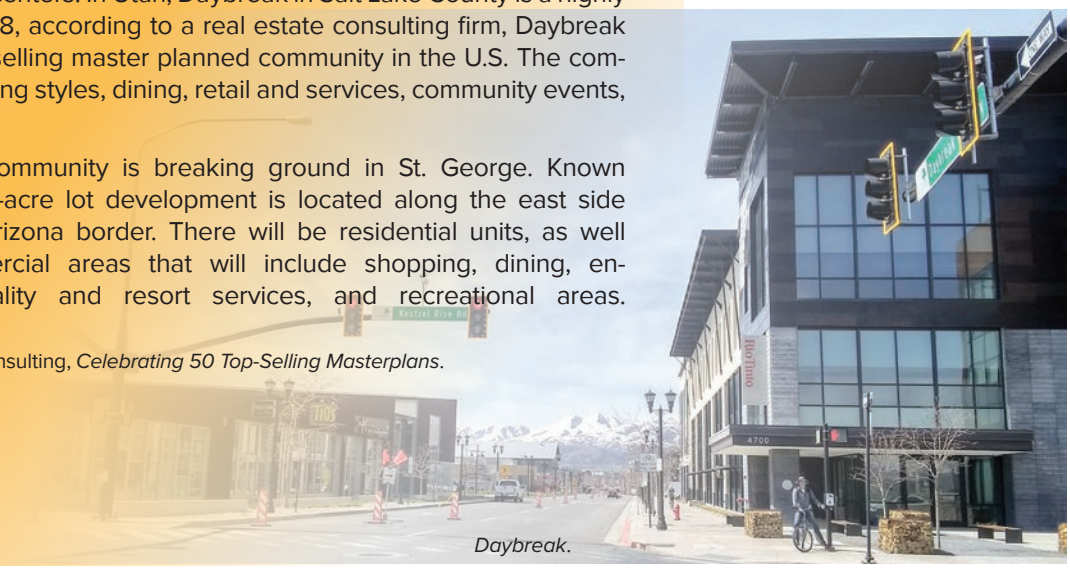
Other main street revitalization examples in Utah include Main Street in Park City and the 9th and 9th area in Salt Lake City.

MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITIES

Master planned communities are large-scale neighborhoods that differ from subdivisions insofar as they offer several amenities that intend to create self-sustaining environments. Often these communities have residential and commercial areas, as well as open space and job centers. In Utah, Daybreak in Salt Lake County is a highly regarded community. In 2018, according to a real estate consulting firm, Daybreak ranked as the 13th highest-selling master planned community in the U.S. The community has a variety of housing styles, dining, retail and services, community events, and recreation activities.

Another master planned community is breaking ground in St. George. Known as Desert Color, the 3,350-acre lot development is located along the east side of I-15, just north of the Arizona border. There will be residential units, as well as mixed-use and commercial areas that will include shopping, dining, entertainment, retail, hospitality and resort services, and recreational areas.

Source: John Burns Real Estate Consulting, *Celebrating 50 Top-Selling Masterplans*.



Daybreak.

CONCLUSION

Utah is at a pivotal moment in its history. The state's population is expected to nearly double during the next few decades, with much of the growth concentrated in population centers along the Wasatch Front. The challenge before local, regional and state leaders is to help create communities that are both fiscally sustainable and continue to offer a high quality of life. This is not an easy task, and these two goals, in the near term, can sometimes appear to be at odds. However, in the long-term, ensuring a high quality of life is good economic development – and it is the key to fiscal sustainability.

Local governments are feeling the brunt of growth challenges as they search for ways to pay for the short- and long-term costs of infrastructure. While growth adds to tax and other revenues, and certainly beats economic decline, growth does not always pay for itself. Therefore, finding the right mix of revenues is critical, which means that providing the right mix of land uses is also critical.

At the same time, local governments are considering how to maintain and enhance the quality of life Utahns enjoy. Quality of life is a major part of Utah's economy. It is one of the many reasons residents and businesses relocate to or stay in Utah. The quality of life attributes Utahns are most concerned with, and most value, tend to be directly related to how communities develop.

Looking ahead, perhaps one of the most important considerations for local Utah governments is how to use land efficiently. Specifically, local governments should consider opportunities for strategic density, mixed-use development and parking management strategies. Communities should consider these land use decisions in conjunction with local, regional and state transportation plans. Efficient development patterns not only buy communities time in the face of development pressures, they can also create a much greater fiscal return per foot or per acre. If executed properly, efficient approaches can deliver on many of the quality of life attributes Utahns desire, such as walkable neighborhoods and improvements to traffic congestion and air quality. Efficient use of land can also help to preserve green and open spaces. Of course, the decisions of property owners are a determining factor.

Increased population growth and density will require improvements to transportation infrastructure. In this context, transit-oriented development, active transportation and improved street connectivity are all important tools: Access to high-quality transportation alternatives alleviates traffic congestion, improving quality of life for residents. This may require increased investment for planning, transportation improvements, open space preservation and other infrastructure.

To create a more humane urban environment, local governments should consider the many benefits of creating and maintaining urban green spaces and preserving surrounding natural assets. Utahns highly value green and open spaces. Local governments should therefore explore opportunities to encourage green spaces in new developments and preserve open spaces on the urban fringe.

The community character of neighborhoods is also important to Utahns. In particular, Utah Foundation's *Quality of Life* survey revealed that improving streetscapes is a top concern among citizens. Local governments can consider placemaking, the condition of existing buildings and streetscape enhancements as strategies for improving and maintaining community character. This may include identifying strategic areas to create community spaces, or historic neighborhoods that could benefit from preservation and redevelopment.

Finally, local governments should keep in mind who is going to pay for new growth and ensure that impact fees and the tax base are well calibrated to meet growing demands on services and infrastructure.

The challenge before local, regional and state leaders is to help create communities that are both fiscally sustainable and continue to offer a high quality of life.

As one of the nation's recognized growth engines, Utah is on a big stage and has an opportunity to be a leader in community planning, economic development and transportation infrastructure.

Together, these strategies can help local governments thrive fiscally and create community spaces that enhance quality of life. In fact, communities statewide are planning for growth with many of these principles in mind.

Yet there is still much to be done. While many communities have plans in place, the execution can often be challenging. Therefore, educating the public and policymakers on the significance and potential of land use decisions – which this report has attempted to do – is essential.

As one of the nation's recognized growth engines, Utah is on a big stage and has an opportunity to be a leader in community planning, economic development and transportation infrastructure. In many respects, the groundwork for success has already been laid. Looking ahead, stakeholders from every level of government, average citizens and private businesses all have a part to play.

APPENDIX A: S.B. 34 AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES

The state bill outlined 23 common policy strategies to increase local governments' affordable housing stock. They include:

- Re-zone for densities that assure moderate income housing
- Facilitate the rehabilitation or expansion of infrastructure that supports moderate income housing
- Facilitate the rehabilitation of vacant housing stock into moderate income housing
- Consider using funds to waive fees on developers
- Reduce regulations, or allow for, accessory dwelling units
- Allow for higher density of mixed-income housing in city centers
- Revise parking minimum requirements
- Allow for single room occupancy developments
- Implement zoning incentives for low- and moderate-income developments
- Utilize strategies to preserve low- and moderate-income units long-term
- Preserve existing units
- Reduce impact fees
- Implement mortgage assistance programs for public employees
- Apply for, or partner with an entity that applies for:
    - State and federal funds for low- and moderate-income developments
    - Funds through the Utah Housing Corporation
    - Affordable programs administered by the Department of Workforce Services
    - Programs administered by an association of governments
    - Services provided through a public housing authority
    - Programs administered by a metropolitan planning organization or transportation agency that can provide technical assistance
- Utilize a moderate income housing set aside from a community reinvestment agency or redevelopment agency
- Any strategy that addresses the needs of residents that make 80% of the area median income

Source: Utah State Legislature, S.B. 34 Affordable Housing Modifications. Utah League of Cities and Towns, www.ulct.org/housing.

ENDNOTES

1 Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, *Utah's Long-Term Demographic and Economic Projections Summary*, July 2017.

2 Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, *Fact Sheet: Utah at a Glance*, January 2018.

3 Ibid.

4 Salt Lake City, West Valley, Provo, West Jordan, Orem. U.S. Census Bureau 2017 population estimates.

5 The Wasatch Front Regional Council, "Wasatch Choice 2050," wfrc.org/vision-plans/wasatch-choice-2050/.

6 Governor Gary R. Herbert, "Governor Herbert's 2020 Budget Plan," 2018, governor.utah.gov/2018/12/06/governor-herberts-2020-budget-plan/.

7 American Road and Transportation Builders Association, "How Much Does it Cost to Build a Mile of Road?", /www.artba.org/about/faq/.

8 Ibid.

9 Salt Lake City Government, "Salt Lake City Capital Improvement," www.slc.gov/blog/2018/08/17/salt-lake-citys-capital-improvement-program-is-now-accepting-applications-for-funding-public-infrastructures/.

10 Council on Foreign Relations, "The State of U.S. Infrastructure," 2018, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/state-us-infrastructure. The U.S. relies on a vast network of infrastructure from roads and bridges, water networks, rail systems, ports, and electrical and internet wires. Many of these networks were put into place decades ago and are long overdue for maintenance or replacement. Literature on the state of the infrastructure in the U.S. points out that the state of bridges and roads pose safety concerns, and outdated water systems pose public health risks.

11 Utah State University, *Water Main Break Rates in the USA and Canada: A Comprehensive Study*, March 2018, p. 19.

12 Ibid.

13 Bluefield Research, *U.S. Municipal Water Infrastructure: Utility Strategies & CAPEX Forecasts, 2018-2027,* March 2018.

14 Ibid.

15 American Society of Civil Engineers, "2017 Infrastructure Report Card," www.infrastructurereportcard.org/making-the-grade/what-makes-a-grade/.

16 Ibid.

17 American Society of Civil Engineers, "Economic Impact," 2017, www.infrastructurereportcard.org/the-impact/economic-impact/.

18 Strong Towns, "Transactions in Decline," 2015, www.strongtowns.org/journal/2015/8/31/transactions-of-decline.

19 Utah Foundation, *Quality of Life Index: Measuring Utahns' Perceptions of Their Communities, Personal Lives*, September 2018.

20 Ibid. Affordable housing refers to keeping pace with wages. Transportation infrastructure is a broadly inclusive term.

21 Utah Foundation, *What's the View from your House? Housing Affordability Concerns in Utah*, October 2018, p. 2.

22 Ibid.

23 Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, *Housing Prices and the Threat to Affordability*, March 2018, p. 1.

24 Ibid.

25 American Lung Association, "Most Polluted Cities," www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities.html.

26 Ibid.

27 The adverse health impacts of particulate matter are well researched. Particulate matter causes damage to lungs, which can in turn cause respiratory infections, lung disease (especially bronchitis), asthma attacks, cardiovascular disease, and lung cancer. Additionally, researchers at the University of Utah who conducted Utah-specific studies found that women living along the Wasatch Front have a higher risk of miscarriages after short-term exposures to air pollution. The World Bank, *Urban Air Pollution*, March 2003. University of Utah, "Report Reveals Link Between Air Pollution and Increased Risk for Miscarriage," 2018, healthcare.utah.edu/publicaffairs/news/2018/12/airquality-miscarriage.php. Utah Clean Air, "Sources of Emissions," www.ucair.org/sources-of-emissions/.

28 Mitchell, Logan E., John C. Lin, David R. Bowling, et. al., "Long-term Urban Carbon Dioxide Observations Reveal Spatial and Temporal Dynamics Related to Urban Characteristics and Growth," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America,* Vol. 115, No. 12, pp. 2912-2917.

29 Utah Foundation, *Quality of Life Index.*

30 University of Delaware, "Complete Communities: Streetscaping," www.completecommunitiesde.org/planning/complete-streets/streetscaping/.

31 Envision Utah.

32 Gee, Gilbert C., David T. Takeuchi, "Traffic Stress, Vehicular Burden and Well-Being: A Multilevel Analysis," *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol. 59, No. 2, pp. 405-414.

33 Hoehner, Christine M, Carolyn E. Barlow, Peg Allen, Mario Schootman, "Commuting Distance, Cardiorespiratory Fitness, and Metabolic Risk," Vol. 42 No. 6, pp. 571-578.

34 Ibid.

35 Center for Neighborhood Technology, "Housing and Transportation Affordability Index," htaindex.cnt.org/map/.

36 Victoria Transport Policy Institute, *Generated Traffic and Induced Travel: Implications for Transport Planning*, March 2019, p. 3.

37 Utah Transit Authority, "UTA Service Choices," 2019, servicechoicescentral.metroquest.com/.

38 Envision Utah, "Real Estate Shifting," 2016, envisionutah.org/envision-utah-blog/item/445-real-estate-shifting.

39 Urban Land Institute, *Density: Drivers, Dividends and Debates,* June 2015, p. 10.

40 Interviews with local Utah officials.

41 Interviews with local Utah officials.

42 "NIMBYISM" is a negative characterization of opposition by residents to a proposed development in their area, implying that their opposition is unreasonable. The acronym stands for "Not In My Back Yard".

43 Smart Growth America, The University of Utah, *The Best Stimulus for the Money: Briefing Papers on the Economics of Transportation Spending*, April 2009, p. 38.

44 Transit Cooperative Research Program, *Costs of Sprawl*, 2000, pp. 2 – 13.

45 Strong Towns, "The Growth Ponzi Scheme," 2011, www.strongtowns.org/the-growth-ponzi-scheme/.

46 Review of general plans of cities in Davis, Salt Lake, Utah and Weber Counties.

47 Interviews with local Utah officials.

48 Utah Foundation's survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

49 Homes for All, "Housing Overlay Zones," homeforallsmc.org/toolkits/housing-overlay-zones/.

50 Utah Foundation's survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

51 Utah State Legislature, "S.B. 34 Affordable Housing Modifications," 2019, le.utah.gov/~2019/bills/static/SB0034.html.

52 Building Salt Lake, "Salt Lake City Now Has a City-wide ADU Ordinance," 2018, www.buildingsaltlake.com/salt-lake-city-now-has-a-city-wide-adu-ordinance/.

53 Downtown SLC Alliance, "Downtown Rising: The Birdie," www.downtownrising.com/go/the-birdie.

54 University of Delaware, "What is Mixed-Use Development?" www.completecommunitiesde.org/planning/landuse/what-is-mixed-use-development/.

55 Ibid.

56 Urban Land Institute, "Mixed-use Development 101: The Design of Mixed-use Buildings," triangle.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2013/01/Design-of-Mixed-Use-Buildings.pdf.

57 National Association of Realtors, "2017 Community & Transportation Preference Survey," www.nar.realtor/infographics/infographic-2017-community-transportation-preference-survey.

58 Tian, Guang, Reid Ewing, Willian Greene, "Desire for Smart Growth: A Survey of Residential Preferences in the Salt Lake Region of Utah," Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 446-462.

59 Ewing, Reid and Clemente, Otto, *Measuring Urban Design* (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2000). Wasatch Front Regional Council, "Walkability and Measuring Urban Street Design," wfrcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=7d1b1df5686c41b593d1e5ff5539d01a.

60 Wasatch Front Regional Council, "Walkability and Measuring Urban Street Design," wfrcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=7d1b1df5686c41b593d1e5ff5539d01a.

61 Real Assets Adviser, "How to Invest in Mixed-use Real Estate Projects," Vol. 5, No. 1.

62 Interviews with local Utah officials. "Big-box" stores are defined as large buildings outside of the historic or downtown district that have expansive parking. Iowa Economic Development, "How to Conduct a Property Tax Assessment in Your Community," www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/userdocs/documents/ieda/HowToPropertyTaxAssessment.pdf.

63 Strong Towns, "We Measure Car Value Based on Miles per Gallon, Not Miles per Tank. Why Don't We do the Same for our Cities' Developments?", 2018, www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/6/22/miles-per-gallon-tank-value-per-acre.

64 Urban3, "Data-driven Storytelling," www.urban-three.com/.

65 Coresight Research, "Weekly Store Openings and Closures Tracker 2018 #1: A Review of 2017's Record U.S. Closures; Sears to Close Over 100 More Stores; Macy's to Close 11 Stores," 2018, coresight.com/research/weekly-store-openings-and-closures-tracker-2018-1-a-review-of-2017s-record-us-closures-sears-to-close-over-100-more-stores-macys-to-close-11-stores/.

66 CBRE, *Salt Lake City Retail, Q1 2019: Redevelopment brings down retail vacancy, but the going it slow,* 2019.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 UCLA Luskin, "Shoup's 2005 Book Earns Place in Planning History," 2018, luskin.ucla.edu/shoups-2005-book-earns-place-in-planning-history/.

70 Strong Towns, "Mapping the Effects of Parking Minimums," 2017, www.strongtowns.org/journal/2017/11/20/mapping-the-effects-of-parking-minimums.

71 International Parking & Mobility Institute, "Urban Parking as Economic Solution," www.parking.org/2016/01/19/tpp-2013-12-urban-parking-as-economic-solution/.

72 International Parking & Mobility Institute, www.parking.org/2016/01/19/tpp-2013-12-urban-parking-as-economic-solution/.

73 Victoria Transport Policy Institute, *Parking Pricing Implementation Guidelines: How More Efficient Parking Pricing can Help Solve Parking and Traffic Problems, Increase Revenue, and Achieve Other Planning Objectives,* April 2018, p. 4.

74 Downtown SLC Alliance, "Parking in Downtown Salt Lake City," www.parkingslc.com/.

75 Building Salt Lake, "Report Shows Salt Lake has an overabundance of Parking," www.buildingsaltlake.com/report-shows-salt-lake-overabundance-parking/.

76 Kimley-Horn: Planning and design Engineering Consultants, *Strategic Parking Management Plan*, November 2015, November 2015, p. 16.

77 Metropolitan Research Center, *Point of the Mountain Parking Generation Method Documentation*, 2018.

78 Nelson, Arthur C., "Transit-Oriented Developments Make a Difference in Job Location," *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 4, pp. 1079-1102.

79 There are generally higher physical activity levels among public transit users. U.S. Department of Transportation, "Active Transportation," 2015, www.transportation.gov/mission/health/active-transportation.

80 Utah Foundation's survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

81 Envision Utah, *Benefits of building near rail stations: Wasatch Front development since 2010,* 2017.

82 Ibid.

83 As such, local governments may need to consider financing mechanisms such as user fees, local fees on parking, additional impact fees, increases in local option taxes, public private partnerships and bonds. Center for Transit-Oriented Development, *Planning for TOD at the Regional Scale: The Big Picture,* 2011, p. 23.

84 Wasatch Front Regional Council, "Active Transportation," wfrc.org/programs/active-transportation/.

85 Ibid.

86 Interview with Bike Utah, a nonprofit advocacy and education organization, has helped connect communities to regional and state partners that help provide technical assistance and funding for bike plans.

87 Bike Utah, "1,000 Miles Campaign," 2018, www.bikeutah.org/1000miles/.

88 Smart Growth America, "Elements of a Complete Streets Policy," 2018, smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/elements-complete-streets-policy/.

89 International Technology Scanning Program, *Public Policies for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety and Mobility: An Implementation Project of the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety and Mobility International Scan,* 2010, p. 17.

90 Congress for the New Urbanism, "Street Networks 101," www.cnu.org/our-projects/street-networks/street-networks-101.

91 Institute of Transportation Engineers, "Technical Resources: Complete Streets," www.ite.org/technical-resources/topics/complete-streets/.

92 Interview with Envision Utah.

93 Wasatch Front Regional Council, Mountainland Association of Governments, Utah Department of Transportation, Utah Transit Authority, *Utah Street Connectivity Guide*, March 2017.

94 Utah Foundation, *Quality of Life*, p. 5.

95 Wasatch Front Regional Council, *(Re)Connect: The Wasatch Front Green Infrastructure Plan,* 2007, p. 7.

96 Cilliers, Elizelle Juaneé, "The Importance of Planning for Green Space," *Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries,* Vol. 4, No. 4-1, pp. 1-5.

97 U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Improving Urban Health Through Green Space," 2017, www.usda.gov/media/blog/2017/11/28/improving-urban-health-through-green-space.

98 Lutzenhisher, Margot, Noelwah, R. Netusil, "Effect of Open Spaces on a Home's Sale Price," *Contemporary Economic Policy*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 291-298.

99 Urban Institute, *Financing the Future: The Critical Role of Parks in Urban and Metropolitan Infrastructure,* p. 4.

100 Envision Utah, "Utah County Agriculture," www.envisionutah.org/projects/utah-county-agriculture.

101 American Planning Association, "APA Policy Guide on Agricultural Land Preservation," 1999, www.planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/agricultural.htm. Mathur, Shishir, "Impact of Urban Growth Boundary on Housing and Land Prices: Evidence from King County, Washington," *Housing Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1., pp. 128-148. Urban growth boundaries are a tool that local governments, and the state, can use to protect farms and forests from urban sprawl, and to promote the efficient use of land. Urban growth boundaries limit services to inside the perimeter. Perhaps the most well-known and controversial aspect is the impact on housing prices. However, some research has found the urban growth boundaries increase the price on land, yet slightly decrease the price on homes. As such, the impact may be mitigated by policies that increase affordable housing units within the boundary.

102 Martin Prosperity Institute, *Beautiful Places: The Tole of Perceived Aesthetic Beauty in Community Satisfaction,* March 2009, p. 1.

103 Environmental Protection Agency, "Smart Growth, Brownfields, and Infill Development," www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-brownfields-and-infill-development. Environmental Protection Agency, "Sharon Steel Superfund site in Midvale, Utah among sites on redevelopment focus list," 2018, www.epa.gov/newsreleases/sharon-steel-superfund-site-midvale-utah-among-sites-redevelopment-focus-list-1.

104 Utah Department of Environmental Quality, "Brownfields: 2018 State of the Environment Report," www.epa.gov/

smartgrowth/smart-growth-brownfields-and-infill-development.

105 Utah League of Cities and Towns, "The Budget Process: Municipal Government Finances," 2013, www.ulct.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2013/02/Background-to-Budgets.pdf.

106 Utah Department of Commerce, Office of the Property Rights Ombudsman, "Impact Fees," propertyrights.utah.gov/impact-fees/.

107 One explanation for this may be unfunded mandates from the federal and state governments.

108 Utah Foundation 2018 survey for the Utah League of Cities and Towns.

109 Clancy Mullen, Duncan Associates, *State Impact Fee Enabling Acts*, February 2018, p. 1.

110 Ibid.

111 Evans-Cowley, Jennifer, Larry J. Lockwood, Ronald C. Rutherford and Thomas M. Springer, "The Effect of Development Impact Fees on Housing Values," Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 173-194.

112 Ibid.

113 Wasatch Front Regional Council, *Transportation and Land Use Connection: 2018 Annual Report Card,* 2018, p.4.

114 International Downtown Association, *The Value of U.S. Downtowns and Center Cities: An IDA Pilot Study Calculating the Value of Downtown,* 2018, p. 21.

115 Ibid, p. 22.

116 Clearfield City, *General Plan,* June 2016, pg. 4.

117 Ibid, p. 13.

118 Logan City, "Downtown Façade Program," 2016, www.loganutah.org/government/mayor_s_office/economic_development/downtown_facade_program.php.

119 Holly H. Daines, *State of the City Address,* January 2019.

120 North Ogden City, *The Downtown and Southtown Districts,* p. 2.

121 Interviews with local Utah officials.

122 Ibid.

123 Provo City, *Downtown Master Plan,* 2014, p. 1.

124 University of Utah College of Architecture & Planning, *Salt Lake City Daytime Population: Should Commuter Support City Services, Commuter Tax Option,* 2012, p. 3.

125 Building Salt Lake, "City Creek's Impact on Downtown Growth by the Numbers," March 2017, www.buildingsaltlake.com/downtown-growth-numbers/.

126 Downtown Alliance, *City Creek & Downtown: A Catalyst for Change,* 2016.

127 Ibid.

128 Sandy City, *The Cairns Master Plan: A 25 Year Development Plan for Sandy's Downtown District*, January 2017, p. 6.

129 South Ogden City, *South Ogden Commercial Areas Form Based Code*, November 2017, p. 2.

130 South Salt Lake City, *Downtown Master Plan.*

131 City of St. George, *General Plan: Community Form,* pg. 7-2.

132 Interviews with local Utah officials.

133 Eagle Mountain City, *General Plan*, 2018, p. 29.

134 Herriman City, *General* Plan, December 2013, pg. 3-32.

135 Interviews with local Utah officials.

136 Millcreek City, *Millcreek Community Development Memo to Community Councils,* August 2018, p. 4.

137 Millcreek City, *Millcreek Together: General Plans*, February 2019, p. 58.

138 City of North Salt Lake, *Town Center Master Plan*, August 2016.

139 Bountiful City, *Goals and Policies: Main Street Corridor*, p. 2.

140 Midvale City, "Midvale Main Street," midvalemainstreet.org/.

141 Midvale City, *Midvale Main Street Small Area Plan*, December 2018, p. 2.

Utah Foundation

RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

PLATINUM MEMBERS

Larry H. Miller Group of Companies

Rio Tinto

Dominion Energy

George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation

Salt Lake County

Semnani Family Foundation

GOLD MEMBERS

UTA

Union Pacific — Building America

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Foundation

IPA Intermountain Power Agency — Energy for Today & Tomorrow

Clyde Companies

Salt Lake City

Zions Bank

University of Utah Health

UCAIR

Intermountain Healthcare

Lawrence T. & Janet T. Dee Foundation

Sorenson Legacy Foundation

Utah System of Higher Education — Building a Stronger State of Minds

Garbett

Utah League of Cities and Towns

The Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley Foundation

SILVER MEMBERS

CBRE
Enterprise Holdings
Management & Training Corp.
Molina Healthcare
Northrop Grumman
Salt Lake Chamber
Staker Parson Companies
University of Utah
Utah Valley Chamber
Wasatch Front Regional Council
Wells Fargo
Wheeler Machinery
Workers Compensation Fund

BRONZE MEMBERS

AMD Architecture
Bank of Utah
Brigham Young University
ConexEd
CRS Engineers
Deloitte
Dixie State University
Energy Solutions
Fidelity Investments
Granite School District
HDR Engineering
Holland & Hart
J Philip Cook, LLC
Key Bank
Kirton|McConkie
Love Communications
Magnum Development
my529
Ogden City
Revere Health
Salt Lake Community College
Sandy City
South Jordan City
Snow College
Stoel Rives
Thanksgiving Point Institute
United Way of Salt Lake
University of Utah
Utah Farm Bureau Federation
Utah Hospital Association
Utah State University
Utah System of Technical Colleges
Utah Valley University
Vicki Tu'ua Insurance Agency
Visit Salt Lake
Webb Publishing
Weber State University
West Valley City
Westminster College

UTAH FOUNDATION
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

150 S. State St., Ste. 444
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
utahfoundation.org

BUILDING A BETTER BEEHIVE

Special thanks to the following for providing project-based support for this report:

UNION PACIFIC

UTAH LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS

WASATCH FRONT REGIONAL COUNCIL