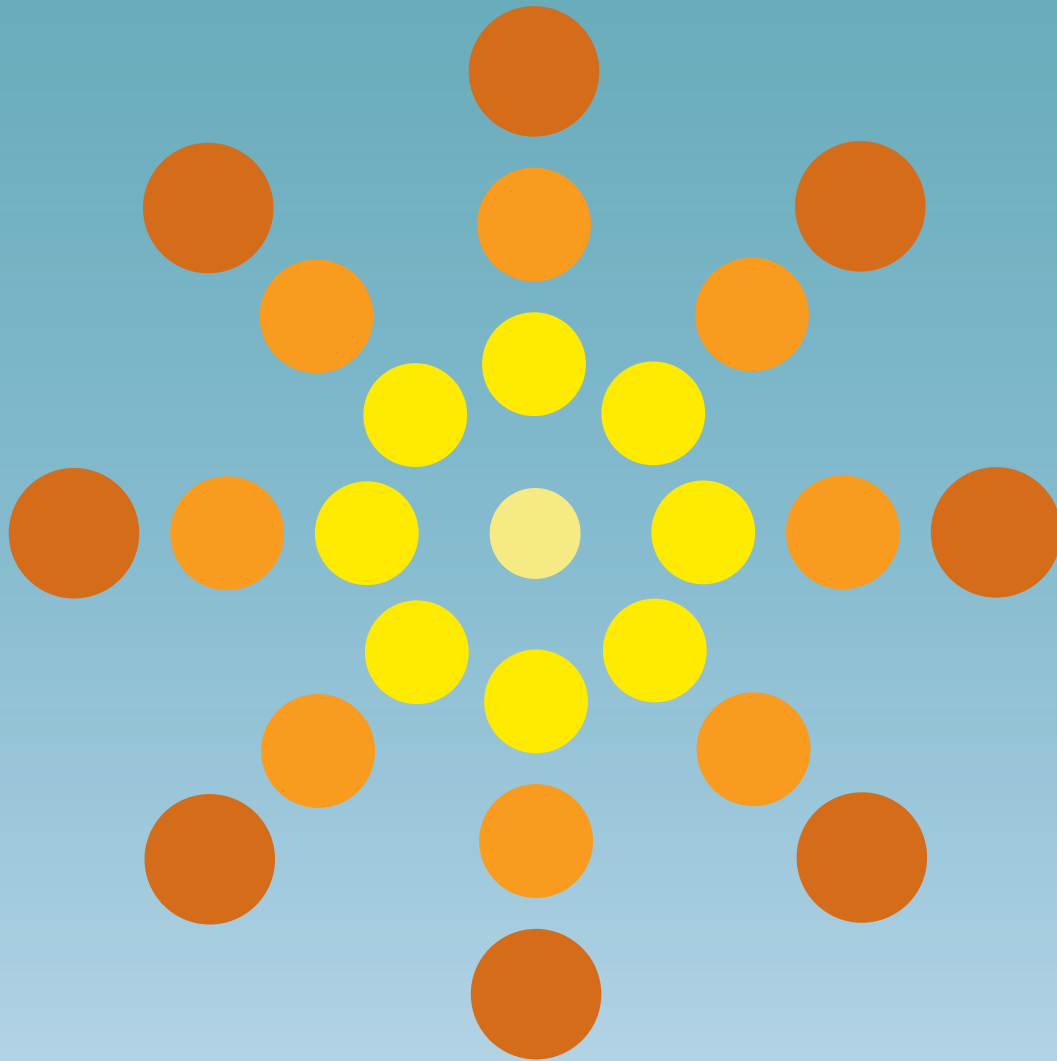




UTAH FOUNDATION  
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

JANUARY 2025



# 2024 Annual Report

Outreach. Output.  
Opportunity.

# UTAH FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT

# 2024

## Utah Foundation Board of Trustees

Kelly Mendenhall, *Chair\**  
Carlton Christensen, *Vice Chair\**  
Benjamin Brown, *Treasurer\**  
Annalisa Holcombe, *Previous Chair\**

Nathan Anderson  
Ryan Andrus  
Scott Barlow  
Craig Broussard  
Mayor Dirk Burton\*  
Jonathan Campbell\*  
Silvia Castro  
David Connelly  
J. Philip Cook  
Cameron Cowan  
Bill Crim  
Aaron Dekeyzer\*  
Cameron Diehl  
Denise Drago\*

Alex Eaton  
Mark Edgley  
Richard Ellis  
Stephanie Frohman  
Shawn Frye  
Bryson Garbett  
David Gessel  
Michael Gregory\*  
Kris Griffith  
Andrew Gruber\*  
Andrew Haaland  
Julie Hatchett\*  
Brandon Hendrickson  
Ben Horsley  
Melanie Jenkins  
Michelle Judd  
Catherine Kanter\*  
Derek Kearl  
Geoff Landward

Drew Maggelet  
Peter Mann  
Dustin Matsumori\*  
Nate McDonald  
Susan McLeod  
Brad Mortensen  
Angie Osguthorpe  
Scott Parson\*  
Jennifer Lynn Robinson  
Stan Rosenzweig\*  
David Rowley  
Tim Sheehan  
Harris Simmons  
Dominic Spaethling  
Nick Starn  
Henrie Walton  
Mayor Mike Weichers  
Chad Westover\*  
Thomas Young

\* Executive Board members

## Utah Foundation Staff

Shawn Teigen, *President*  
Christopher Collard, *Research Director*  
Ashley Marshall, *Research Analyst*  
Megan Keating, *Outreach Coordinator*

## About the Utah Foundation

Since 1945, leaders, legislators, and community members have relied upon the **illuminating, independent, and nonpartisan public-policy research** produced by the Utah Foundation to support informed decision-making on topics that matter most. As a 501(c)3 with broad community support and a 56-member board, the Utah Foundation exists to empower **civic engagement as the foundation for enhanced quality of life for Utahns.**

Known for its signature products such as the Quality of Life Index, Utah Priorities Project, and Social Capital Index, the Utah Foundation has released more than 80 research reports since 2020 on topics ranging from energy and education to taxation and transportation. Access all research, podcasts, videos, statistics, and more at [utahfoundation.org](https://utahfoundation.org).

## A WORD FROM THE UTAH FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

**It has been quite a year.** The annual report is the place to learn all about what we accomplished in 2024. In the following pages you will see us define our success “by the numbers” as well as in qualitative ways. I’d like to highlight three accomplishments in particular.

**First.** We had a stellar year with media outreach... perhaps the best media year ever with at least 220 stories or mentions. In addition, we ramped up our interactions with policymakers. Not only have we focused on strengthening relationships with legislators, but we presented to innumerable local officials as part of our Healthy Communities Roadshow and the 2024 Utah Priorities Project Roadshow.



**Second.** Every four years, the Utah Foundation conducts a series of surveys to discover which topics are most important to Utah voters. We call this the Utah Priorities Project. 2024 marked the 20th anniversary of the project – and the most successful ever. We kicked it off with a wonderful annual luncheon, we released two major reports and 17 research briefs, and we shared all of that with people throughout the state. In addition, we released six other major reports on other important policy topics.

**Third.** How do we do this consistently year after year? We have a fantastic group of staff, interns, volunteers, partners, and supporters. In the words of two of our Trustees:

Last year was a high-water mark for the Utah Foundation. An engaged board and top-notch staff provided more information to more Utahns than ever before. A highlight for me was the 20th anniversary of the Utah Priorities Project – clearly signaling what matters most to voters. – Annalisa Holcombe, 2024 Board Chair

In 2024, the Utah Foundation helped policymakers and the public better understand key issues affecting Utah residents. From comprehensive reports on housing affordability to healthy community roadshows, the Utah Foundation provided thoughtful and objective information, standing out in a world increasingly dominated by biased opinions and misinformation. – Kelly Mendenhall, 2024 Vice Chair and 2025 Board Chair

**We owe it all to you.** Thank you for your support. And a special thanks to the anonymous donor who provided a generous donation in honor of David Ingraham. Without you, our Board of Trustees, our members and sponsors, and other great Utahns, we would not be able to do what we do best:

## Research. Analyze. Inform.

# By the Numbers



in-depth  
research reports



insightful  
briefs

 **59** key findings and highlights



community presentations

with



roadshows

reaching



**850 Utahns**



very  
successful  
annual  
luncheon

**13** staff, interns  
and volunteers

**56** board members



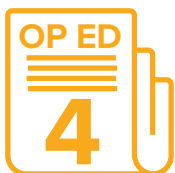
media mentions

**153** social media posts



with **10%** more  
followers

**6** blog posts



op-eds in the **Deseret News**  
and the **Salt Lake Tribune**



podcasts

# 5 Key Findings

The Utah Foundation’s Board of Trustees not only determines each year’s research agenda – it also determines the most important findings for the year. Nearly two-thirds of the board voters picked the number one choice.

1

**Cost of living and political dysfunction topped the list of most important issues for Utah voters in 2024.** Read more in our [\*Priced Out and Fed Up\* report.](#)

**Cost of living and political dysfunction issues were of highest concern for Utahns.**  
17 Ranked Issues of the 2024 Utah Priorities Project

Category	Issue of concern	Average ranking	Rank range
Most Important	Housing affordability	1	1-2
	Politicians listening to voters	2	1-2
High Importance	Earning enough to pay for non-housing needs	3	3-5
	Government overreach	4	3-5
	Partisan politics	5	3-8
Important	Having enough water (other than the Great Salt Lake)	6	5-8
	Kindergarten-12th grade education	7	5-8
	Air quality	8	5-10
Medium Importance	State and local taxes	9	8-14
	Immigration	10	7-14
	Homelessness	11	9-14
	Roads and transportation	12	9-14
	Crime	13	9-14
	Abortion and women's rights	14	9-15
Low Importance	Crowded neighborhoods	15	14-15
Least Important	The Great Salt Lake	16	16-17
	Transgender rights and access	17	16-17

Source: Utah Foundation survey.

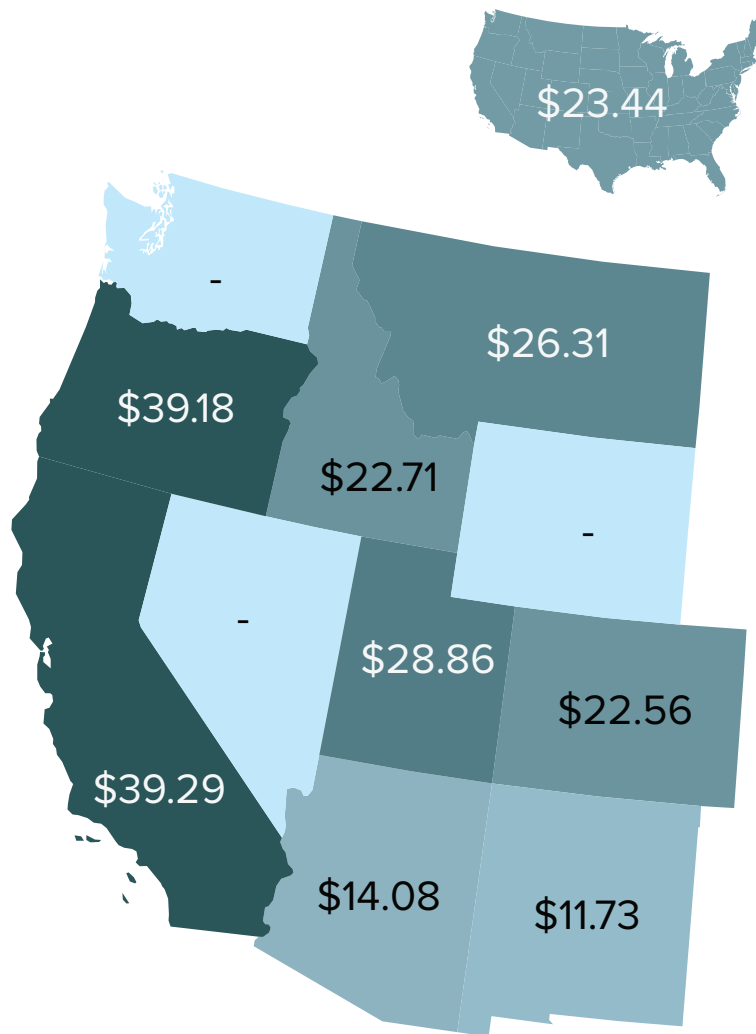
2

Utahns' personal income rose the fastest of any state from 2016 to 2021. Utahns' tax burden also rose over the same time period meaning **the tax collections increased even faster than residents' record personal income growth**. Read more in our *Balancing the Burden Report*.

---

**Utahns have the 3rd largest income tax burden of 11 Western States.**

Income Tax Burden of 11 Western States, 2021



Source: The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.  
Utah Foundation calculations.

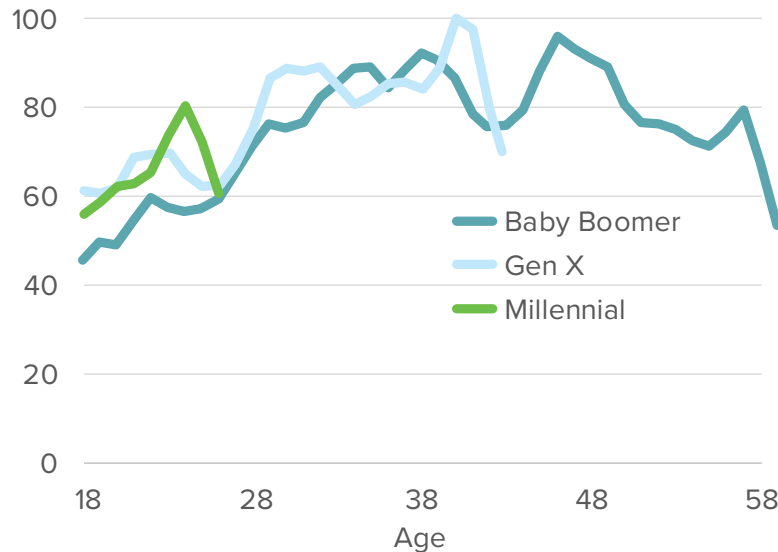
---

# 3

Compared to older generations, **millennials saw the largest decrease in housing affordability during peak household formation years.** Read more in our [\*Moving Utahns Toward Homeownership: Benefits, Rates, Affordability, and Obstacles report.\*](#)

## Millennials saw the largest decrease in affordability in their peak household formation years.

Generational Home Affordability Measured from the Age of 18



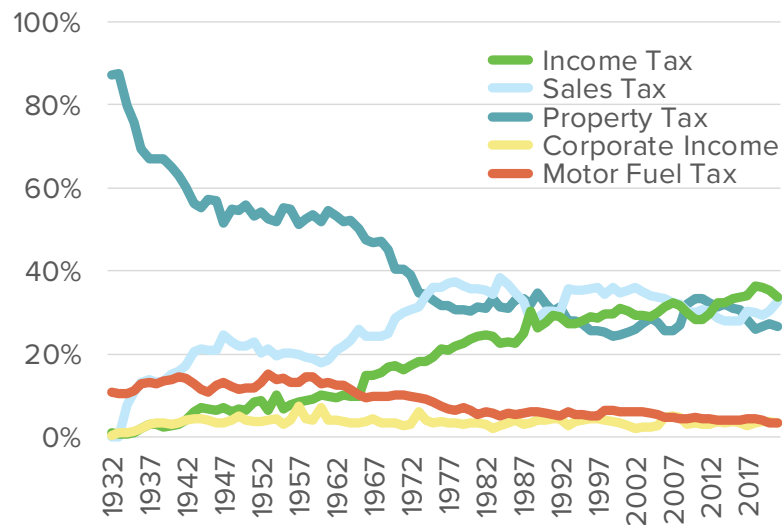
Source: Investopedia.

# 4

Utahns' property tax burden in 2021 was \$22.76 per \$1,000 of personal income – **the lowest property tax burden in the past 100 years.** Read more in our [\*Balancing the Burden Report\*](#).

## Utah tax burden shares converge in the '90s.

Utah Historical Tax Burden Components by Share



Source: The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Utah Foundation calculations.

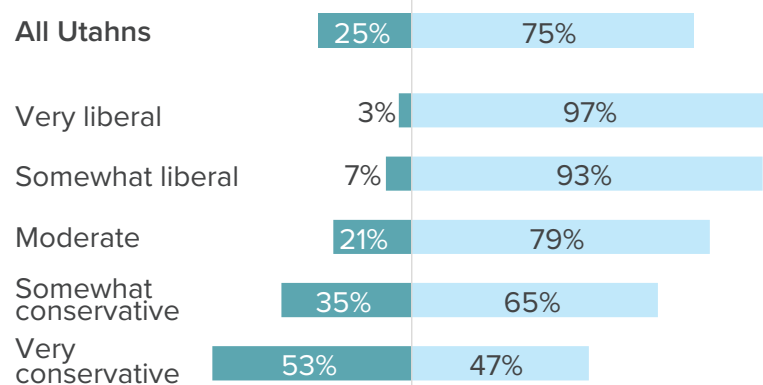


# 5

Half of the Utah Priorities Project’s survey respondents think the policies of the Republican party threaten the nation’s well-being and half of voters believe the Democratic party threatens it. One in six Utah voters think both parties do. Nonetheless, Utahns believe that there is a way forward. **Three-quarters of Utah voters agree that compromise is how things get done in politics, though conservatives are less likely to agree.** Read more in our [Partisan Politics brief](#).

## Conservatives are less likely to support compromise.

Whether Voters View Compromise as “How Things Get Done” or “Selling Out”

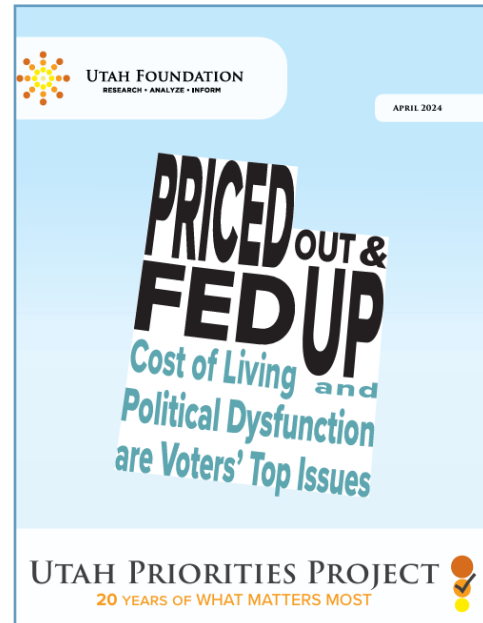
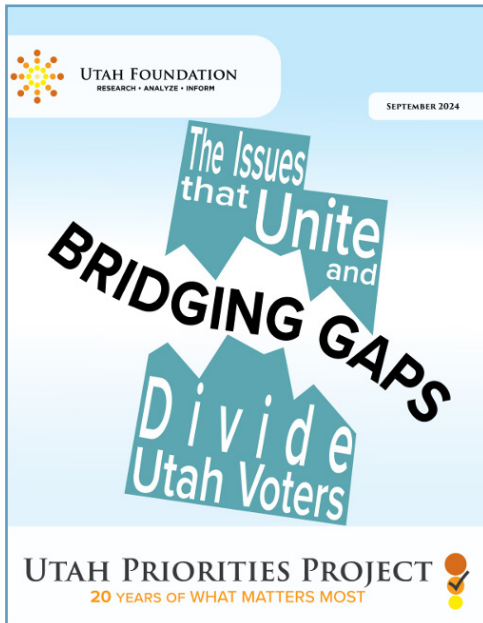


Compromise in politics is really just selling out on what you believe.  
 Compromise is how things get done in politics,  
 even though it sometimes means sacrificing your beliefs.

Source: Utah Foundation survey.

## 8 In-Depth Research Reports

1. Bridging Gaps: The Issues that Unite (and Divide) Utah Voters
2. Priced Out and Fed Up: Cost of Living and Government Dysfunction are Voters' Top Issues



These reports were made possible by:

LARRY H. & GAIL  
**MILLER**  
FAMILY FOUNDATION

**V<sup>2</sup>** ANALYTICS

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
FOUNDATION

**UNION  
PACIFIC**  
**BUILDING AMERICA®**

## 8 In-Depth Research Reports

3. Moving Utahns Toward Homeownership: Benefits, Rates, Affordability, and Obstacles
4. Boosting Utah's Homeownership Affordability: Strategies and Solutions for State and Local Governments



These reports were made possible by:



**CDCU**  
Community Development  
Corporation of Utah

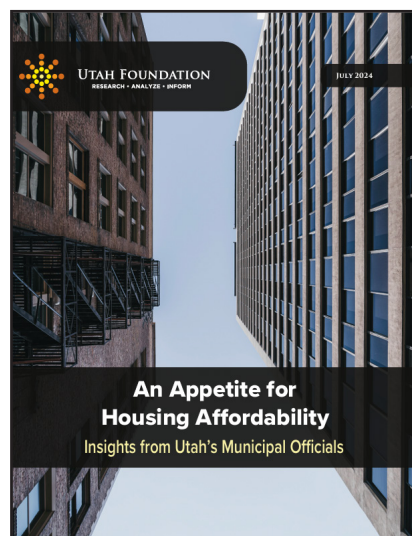


UTAH LEAGUE OF  
CITIES AND TOWNS

**giv**  
DEVELOPMENT

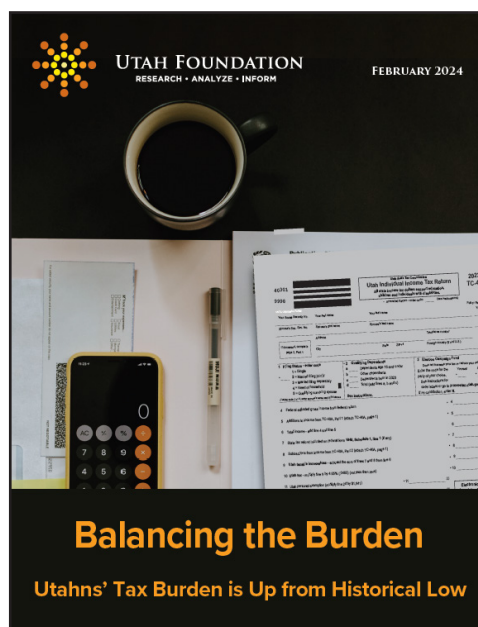
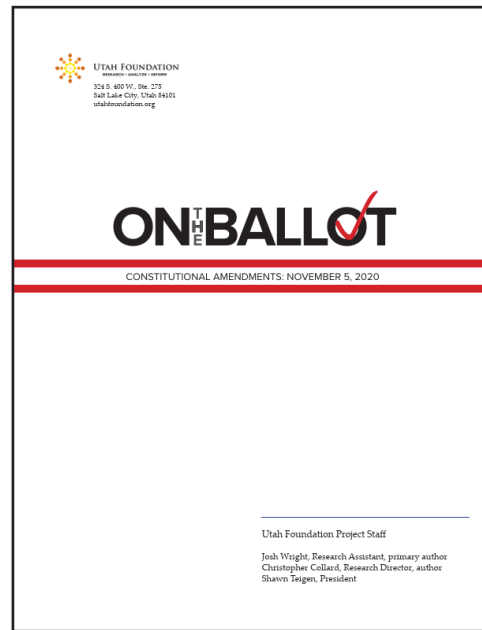
5. An Appetite for Housing Affordability: Insights From Utah's Municipal Officials

This report was made possible by:



## 8 In-Depth Research Reports

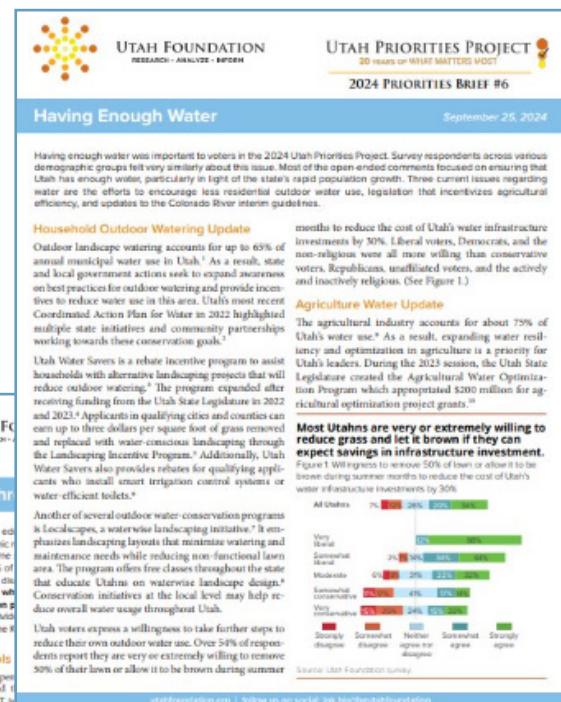
6. [Economic Scenarios for Ogden Valley's Proposed Incorporation](#)
7. [On the Ballot: Constitutional Amendments](#)
8. [Balancing the Burden: Utahns' Tax Burden is Up from Historical Low](#)





## 2025 UTAH PRIORITIES PROJECT ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST TO UTAHNS

- [illegible]



# 1 Very Successful Annual Luncheon

We hope you were able to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Utah Priorities Project at the Grand America Hotel to discuss what matters most. We had about 250 attendees.

The Annual Luncheon included a conversation with **Governor Spencer J. Cox** about the state's policy priorities, as well as a discussion with:

- **Carly Maloney**, a Viewmont High School teacher and Utah's 2024 Teacher of the Year.
- **Dr. Brian Steed**, Executive Director of the Janet Quinney Lawson Institute for Land, Water, and Air at Utah State University and Utah's Great Salt Lake Commissioner.
- **Steve Waldrip**, the state's Senior Adviser for Housing Strategy and Innovation.



Photo: Jeffery D. Allred, Deseret News

The event included our annual awards ceremony honoring two outstanding Utahns with the Insight Award:

- **Natalie Gochnour**, Associate Dean of the David Eccles School of Business and Director of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah.
- **Denece Huftalin**, President of Salt Lake Community College.



We also honored the **Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation** with our Civic Cornerstone Award.

LARRY H. & GAIL  
**MILLER**  
FAMILY FOUNDATION

## 56 Board Members

We are grateful for our 56 board members and innumerable other supporters.

In December, we said goodbye to our Board Chair, **Annalisa Holcombe**, with much appreciation for her work. For 2025, we welcome:

- **Kelly Mendenhall**, Director of Regulatory and Pricing at Enbridge, as our Board Chair.
- **Benjamin Brown**, Manager of Public Affairs at Fidelity Investments, as our Treasurer.
- **Carlton Christensen**, Board Chair of the Utah Transit Authority, as our Vice Chair.

Our board members provide leadership, topical expertise, and unique insights as they direct and support our research products.



## 13 Staff, Interns, and Volunteers

During 2024, we had five staff members. We said goodbye to John late in the year. We wish him the best!

In addition, we had six great interns and two wonderful volunteers. We could not have done it without them.

- Trevor Eckhoff, volunteer
- Krishnam Goel, volunteer, West High School
- Micaela McElrath, Brigham Young University
- Maimia Natividad, University of Louisville
- Melissa Nieto, University of Louisville
- Ella Sjoblom, University of Utah
- Josh Wright, Brigham Young University
- Kyler Zarate, University of Utah





## 2 Roadshows

### Healthy Communities Roadshow

During these events, we brought together state, regional, and local partners as well as community leaders to learn and discuss how we can build healthy communities. **We spoke at nine events to over 450 Utahns. We also presented our research at an additional virtual webinar.**



Participants learned about our recently released Health Communities Series, the Healthy Utah Community Designation run by Get Healthy Utah, and Guiding Our Growth by Utah's Office of Planning and Budget.

**GET HEALTHY UTAH AND  
THE UTAH FOUNDATION PRESENT:**

# HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ROADSHOW

Training local leaders how to support health





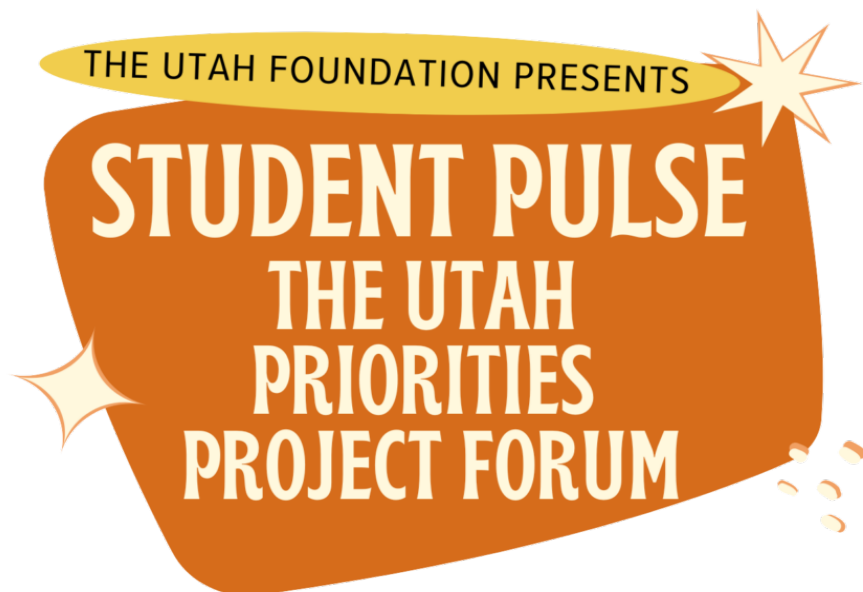
## 2 Roadshows

### Student Pulse: The Utah Priorities Project Forum

We successfully wrapped up the 2024 Utah Priorities Project Roadshow at six college campuses, where we **delivered eight presentations**. Along the way, we **presented to over 400 students and community members**, sharing insights on the issues that matter most to Utahns.



“Getting our research in front of young people is perhaps the most rewarding part of my job,” said Utah Foundation President Shawn Teigen. “Our mission is about engaging and informing Utahns, which is tied nicely to inspiring our future civic leaders with ‘what matters most’ from the Utah Priorities Project.”



Thank you to everyone who joined us, asked questions, and shared their perspectives. Your engagement helps us create a stronger, more informed community.

## 200+ Media Mentions

119 linked media mentions and over 100 additional tracked mentions, including:

The [“Path to the White House”](#) discussion with Max Roth from Fox 13.



The [“Roads to Understanding”](#) from KSL, which used the 2024 Priorities Project as a basis for its weeks-long television series.

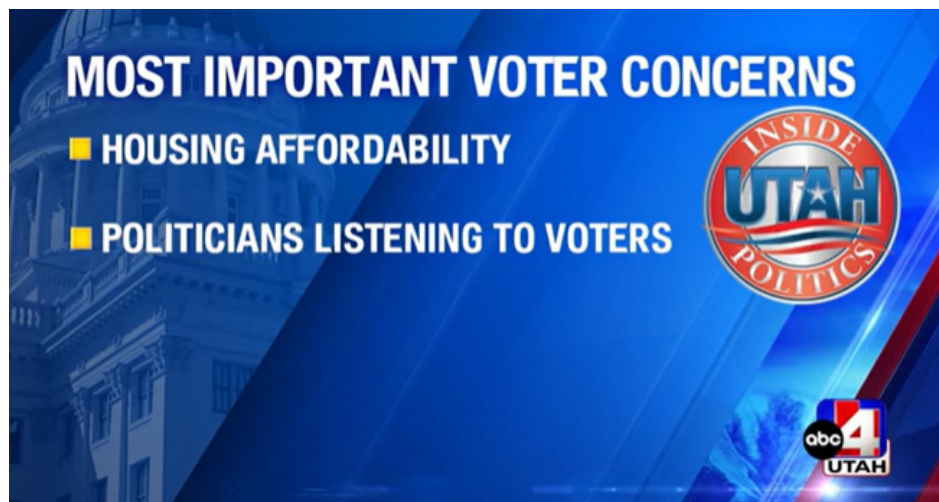
KUER’s [State Street](#) podcast about climate change.



## 200+ Media Mentions

### And:

Brian McElhatten of [Inside Utah Politics](#) spoke with Research Director Christopher Collard about the 2024 Utah Priorities Project.



UPR's [Access Utah](#) with Tom Williams discussion about the 2024 Utah Priorities Project.

Finally, we are regularly featured on the Rod and Greg Show (with Rod Arquette and Greg Hughes), including on September 5th to talk about where Utah voters are aligned in the 2024 Utah Priorities Project: [Do Utah Voters Agree Across Party Lines?](#)



# 153 Social Media Posts & 10% Follower Growth

## On Twitter

Our [best mention](#) was a post from Brigham Tomco at the Deseret News, with a whopping 11,000 views:

One of our [best-viewed posts](#) was referencing our Utah Priorities project kickoff at our Annual Luncheon, with a link to a Brigham Tomco article garnering 1,611 views.

Though that came in behind [our top-viewed post](#) about our tax burden report noting that “Utahns’ property tax burden in 2021 was \$22,76 per \$1,000 of personal income – the lowest property tax burden in the past 100 years” – with 3,164 views.

Our other two highlights are from our friends at the Salt Lake Tribune and the Utah News Dispatch. [Emily Anderson posted](#) about “one of Utah voters’ top concerns” of 2024 Utah Priorities Project with 3,454 views, and [Katie McKellar posted](#) about the top issues of the Project – with 3,624 views.



## On Instagram

Our [top Instagram post](#) showed all top 17 items from the 2024 Utah Priorities Project:

Utah Priorities Project top issues, 2024

Most important	1. Housing affordability
	2. Politicians listening to voters
High importance	3. Earning enough*
	4. Government overreach
Important	5. Partisan politics
	6. Having enough water*
	7. Kindergarten-12th grade education
	8. Air quality
Medium importance	9. State and local taxes
	10. Immigration
Low importance	11. Homelessness
	12. Roads and transportation
	13. Crime
Least important	14. Abortion and women's issues
	15. Crowded neighborhoods
	16. The Great Salt Lake
	17. Transgender rights and access

\* The full issue language for each were “Earning enough to pay for non-housing needs” and “Having enough water (other than the Great Salt Lake).”

theutahfoundation • Follow

theutahfoundation

For the 2024 Utah Priorities Project, housing affordability topped the list of concerns. 🏠 Earning enough to pay for non-housing needs – the other side of the inflation coin – landed in the third spot. 📈

On a different note, and perhaps surprisingly, politicians listening to voters came in at the second spot. Though it in has been at the top of the list before. 🗳️

Read more in our recent post and stay tuned for a number of Utah Priorities Project releases in the coming months. Link in bio!

40w

19 likes

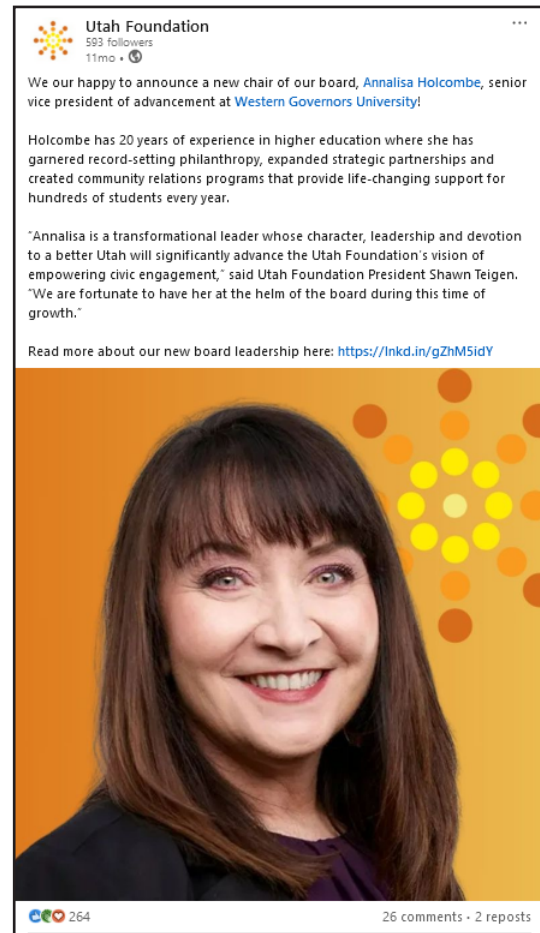
April 4, 2024

Log in to like or comment.

# 153 Social Media Posts & 10% Follower Growth

## On LinkedIn

Our [top LinkedIn post](#) was about our 2024 Board Chair, Annalisa Holcombe. She is clearly a great asset for both the Utah Foundation and the broader Utah community.



## On Facebook

On Facebook, [our top post](#) focused on the top three items from the 2024 Utah Priorities Project.



# 1 Busy Year Ahead

Looking ahead to 2025, the calendar is filled with new reports and plenty of outreach events. The year will focus heavily on the 2025 Utah Social Capital Project – with related reports, an Annual Luncheon, and a roadshow. In addition:

- We will conclude the Utah Priorities Project with a report on Utah’s delegates.
- We will release a report on healthcare cost transparency.
- We are in the final stages of producing reports on the future of post-secondary education as well as a report which seeks to help broaden the educational horizons of young Utahns.

This is just the beginning! In short, we are looking forward to another extraordinary year. Thanks to our friends and supporters who make this hard work possible.

## Many Ways to Support

The Utah Foundation relies upon the support of business and civic leaders, foundations, and others to produce the high-quality and independent research for which we are known. To become a member or sponsor one of our projects or programs, please contact us at 801-355-1400.

You can also visit our website at [utahfoundation.org](http://utahfoundation.org) to [sign up for our newsletters](#) and keep apprised of newly released reports and upcoming events. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) to keep up to date with our newest work and get sneak peeks of what we are working on.



**UTAH FOUNDATION**  
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM



# UTAH FOUNDATION

RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

## PLATINUM MEMBERS

The **Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley** Foundation



**GEORGE S. AND DOLORES DORÉ ECCLES**  
FOUNDATION



THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
FOUNDATION

## GOLD MEMBERS



**LARRY H. & GAIL MILLER**  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



LAWRENCE T. & JANET T.  
**DEE FOUNDATION**



## SILVER MEMBERS

**American-Pacific Corp.**  
**Deloitte**  
**Fidelity Investments**

**Garbett Family Foundation**  
**The Kanter Family Foundation**  
**Molina Healthcare**  
**Northrup Grumman**

**Staker Parson Companies**  
**WCF Insurance**  
**Wells Fargo**

## BRONZE MEMBERS

Brigham Young University  
Community Foundation of Utah  
Cottonwood Heights  
Davis County Chamber  
Denise Dragoo  
Granite School District  
HDR Engineering  
Holland & Hart  
J Philip Cook, LLC

Magnum Development  
my529  
Revere Health  
Ronna Cohen & Stan Rosenzweig  
Salt Lake Chamber  
Salt Lake Community College  
Sandy City  
Snow College  
Suazo Business Center  
University of Utah

Utah Hospital Association  
Utah Promise  
Utah State University  
Utah System of Higher Education  
Utah Tech University  
Utah Valley University  
Wasatch Front Regional Council  
Weber State University  
West Jordan



UTAH FOUNDATION  
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

324 S. 400 W. suite 275  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

[www.utahfoundation.org](http://www.utahfoundation.org)

# UTAH FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2024