



UTAH FOUNDATION

RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

2019

ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 2020

# UTAH FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT

2019

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Christopher Collard, *Research Analyst*  
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## 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 decision-makers 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.



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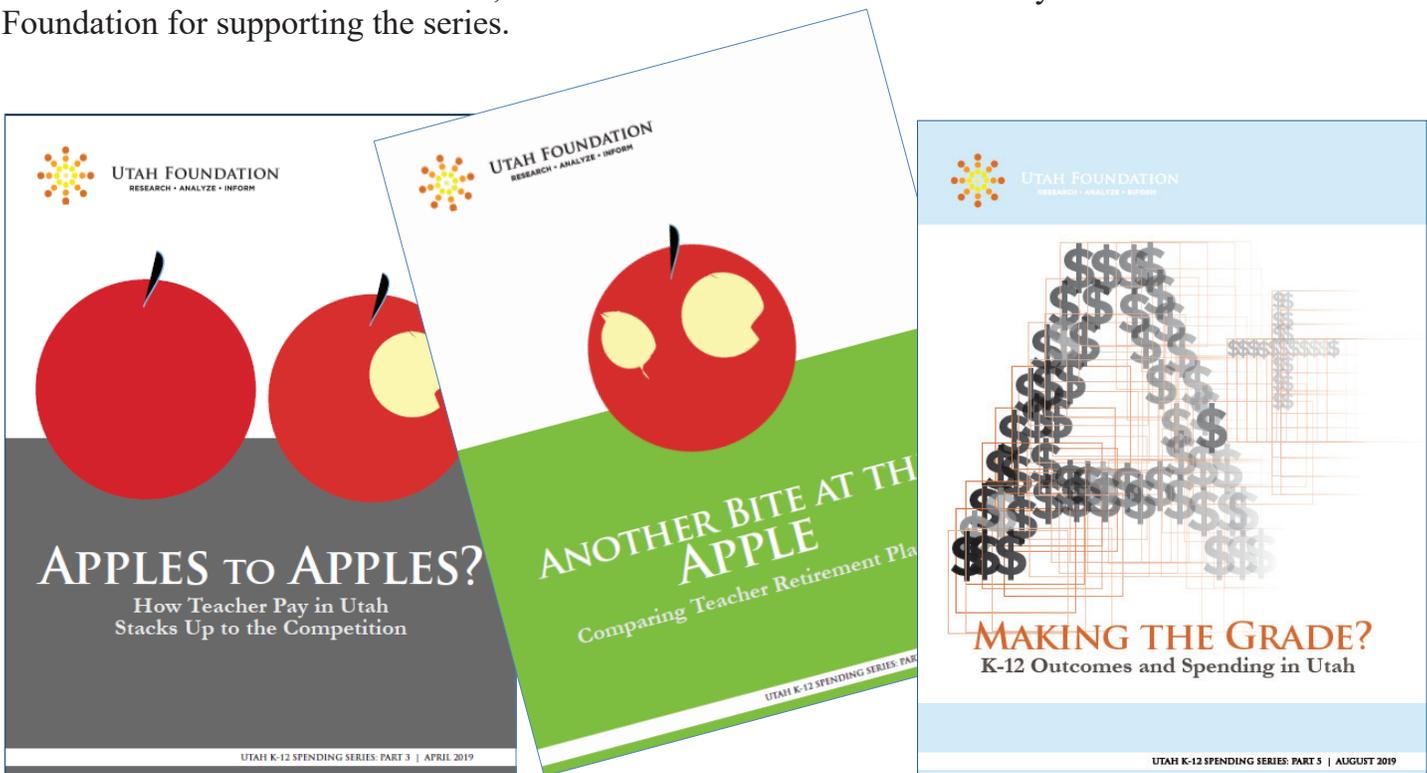
# Utah Foundation in 2019: Aiming High, Hitting Targets

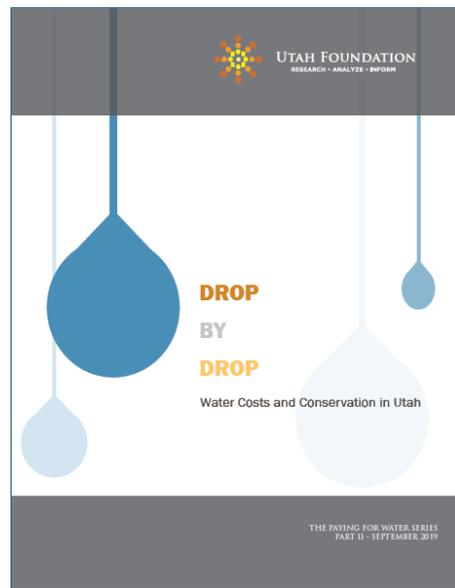
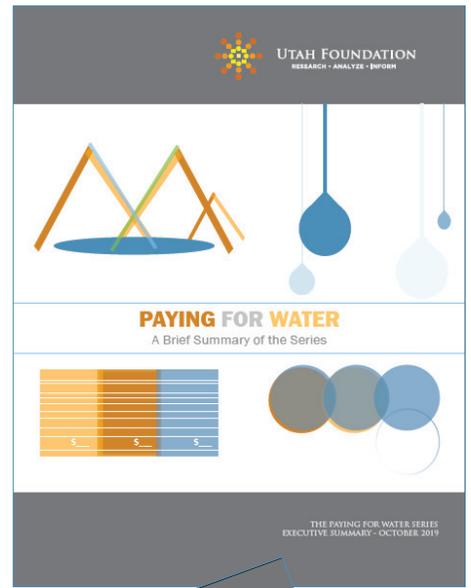
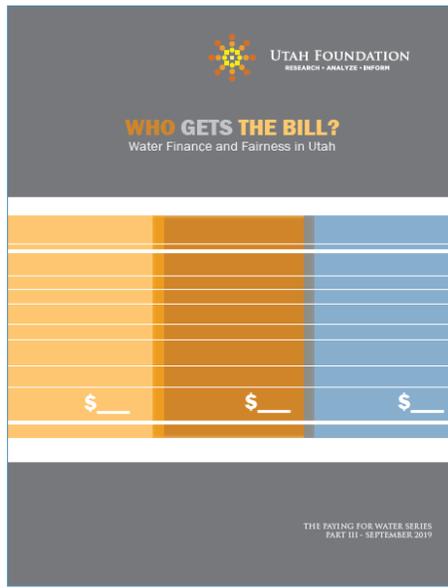
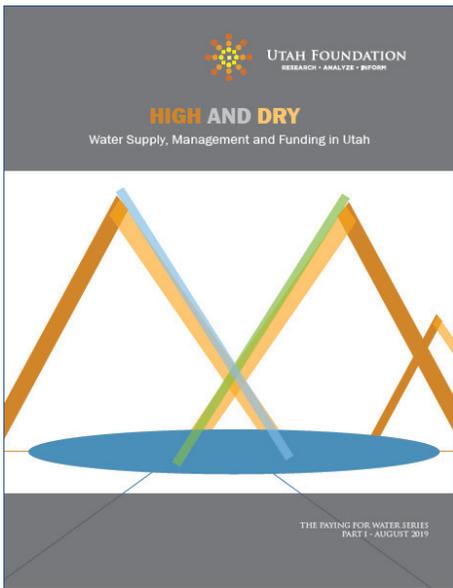
LOOKING BACK over 2019, Utah Foundation enjoyed yet another extraordinarily productive year. We issued 14 major reports. We published op-eds and produced podcasts once per month. We expanded our Breakfast Briefing forum series to a quarterly affair and released three online videos. We presented to more than a dozen civic groups and government bodies, including committees of the Utah Legislature. The news media covered our work more than 120 times. Our website hits continued a rapid upward trajectory. And we were honored for our work twice, both at the national and state levels. Meanwhile, thanks to the generosity of our many supporters, we ended the year on a strong financial footing. Finally, our Annual Luncheon featuring Robert Putnam was presented to a record crowd. As 2020 begins, we expect the new year to be just as strong.

BY THE NUMBERS:  
**14**  
MAJOR REPORTS

## The K-12 Spending Series

Utah Foundation launched a five-part series on K-12 spending in 2018, and 2019 saw the release of the final three installments: *Apples to Apples? How Teacher Pay in Utah Stacks up to the Competition*; *Another Bite at the Apple: Comparing Teacher Retirement Plans*; and *Making the Grade? K-12 Outcomes and Spending in Utah*. The reports on teacher compensation played a key role in efforts by civic leaders during 2019 to improve teacher attraction and retention. The three reports yielded some of Utah Foundation's most intriguing findings in 2019. (See p. 6 for a listing of our top research findings of the year.) Thanks to the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation, Lawrence T. & Janet T. Dee Foundation, and the Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley Foundation for supporting the series.





## The Paying for Water Series

BY THE NUMBERS:

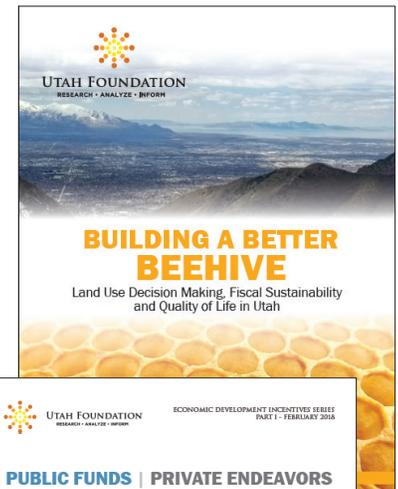
12

OP-ED ARTICLES

From August to October 2019, we presented the five-part Paying for Water Series. The series was the result of two years of research into more than 300 water providers across Utah. The series lays out, for the first time, all of the issues surrounding how we pay for water in Utah. It included the following reports: *High and Dry: Water Supply, Management and Funding in Utah*; *Drop by Drop: Water Costs and Conservation in Utah*; *Who Gets the Bill? Water Finance and Fairness in Utah*; *Getting Clear on Water: Practical Considerations in the Tax Versus Fee Debate*; and *Paying for Water: A Brief Summary of the Series*. The series received significant attention from policy-makers, and Utah Foundation was invited to testify on its findings before two committees of the Utah Legislature. Thanks to the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation for supporting the water series.

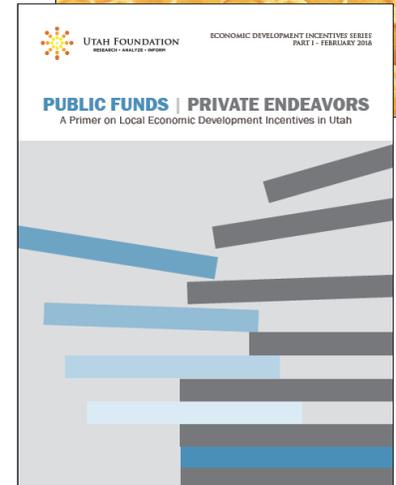
## Building a Better Beehive

Drawing from the findings of our 2018 Quality of Life series and the results of our municipal survey work, Utah Foundation released *Building a Better Beehive: Land Use Decision Making, Fiscal Sustainability and Quality of Life in Utah*. The report served as a jumping off point for a breakfast forum on how Utah can build quality of life into its future development. Utah Foundation will undertake a spinoff project in 2020, focused on how Utah communities can promote high-quality in-fill development. Thanks to Union Pacific, the Wasatch Front Regional Council and the Utah League of Cities and Towns for supporting the *Better Beehive* project, our single largest report of 2019.



## Examining Economic Development Incentives

In 2019, Utah Foundation issued the first in the series of reports on economic development incentives with *Public Funds, Private Endeavors: A Primer on Local Economic Development Incentives in Utah*. We will release two more installments in the Economic Development Incentives Series early in 2020. Thanks to Salt Lake County, the Salt Lake Chamber, the Utah Valley Chamber and the Utah League of Cities and Towns for supporting this series.



### SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2019, Utah Foundation staged four Breakfast Briefings and our largest-ever Annual Luncheon.

The June briefing, “Building Community into Growth,” featured Cameron Diehl, Utah League of Cities and Towns; Bryson Garbett, Garbett Homes; Robert Grow, Envision Utah; Andrew Gruber, Wasatch Front Regional Council; and Beth Holbrook, UTA. UTA sponsored the event, and Zions Bank hosted.

Our second briefing, in September, focused on housing affordability challenges. It featured Lani Eggertsen-Goff, Salt Lake City Housing & Neighborhood Development; Kevin Emerson, Utah Clean Energy; Ross Ford, Utah Home Builders Association; Randy Lewis, Mayor, City of Bountiful; and Jim Wood, University of Utah’s Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. Garbett Homes sponsored the event, and Zions Bank hosted.

Our third briefing, in November, addressed mental health access and suicide prevention efforts. It featured Dr. Craig Bryan, Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Utah and Executive Director of the National Center for Veterans Studies; Dr. Sheila Crowell, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Utah and Director of the Dialectical Behavior Therapy Program; Rep. Steve Eliason, Utah House of Representatives, District 45; and Dr. Morissa Henn, Community Health Program Director, Intermountain Healthcare. The University of Utah College of Social and Behavioral Sciences sponsored the event and Zions Bank hosted.

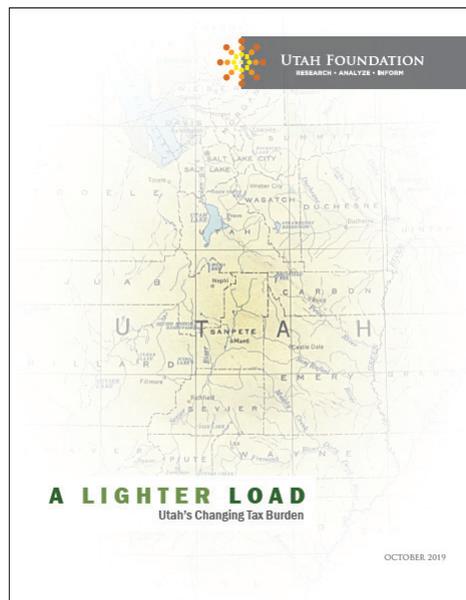
The final briefing, “Game Changers,” focused on the new airport, another bid for the Winter Olympics, the inland port and the prison relocation and Point of the Mountain redevelopment. The December event included Fraser Bullock, Co-Founder, Senior Advisor, Sorenson Capital, and COO/CFO, Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games; Theresa Foxley, President and CEO, Economic Development Corporation of Utah; Derek Miller, President and CEO, Salt Lake Chamber; and Bill Wyatt, Executive Director, Salt Lake City Department of Airports Intermountain Healthcare sponsored the event and Zions Bank hosted.

Our Annual Luncheon in October was an unprecedented success. World-renowned political scientist Robert Putnam was the keynote speaker. Utah Foundation honored Rio Tinto with our Civic Cornerstone Award. We sold the room out and are looking forward to an even bigger crowd at our 2020 luncheon, at which we will celebrate Utah Foundation’s 75th anniversary. Thanks to the many supporters of our Annual Luncheon, Utah Foundation’s sole fund-raising event of the year.

BY THE NUMBERS:  
**120+**  
MEDIA APPEARANCES

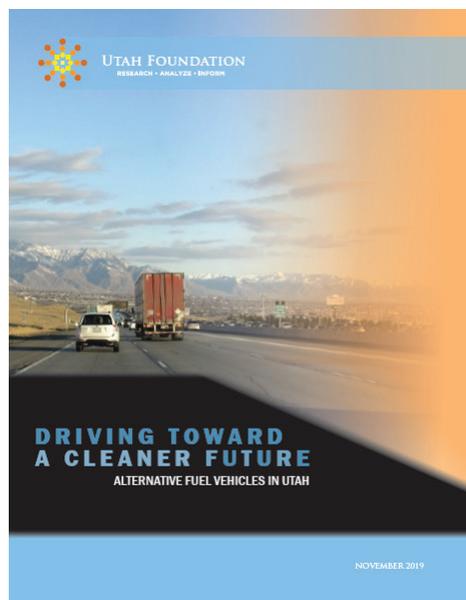
### Informing the Debate on Tax Reform

Building on its award-winning, 2018 Utah Tax Policy Series, we released a report on Utah's tax burden in October, during the height of the 2019 debate over tax reform. *A Lighter Load: Utah's Changing Tax Burden* has received significant media attention and has been cited by several policymakers, including Gov. Herbert.



### Providing Key Guidance on Air Quality

*Driving Toward a Cleaner Future: Alternative Fuel Vehicles in Utah*, released in November, provides significant new insights on the effectiveness of incentives in encouraging consumer embrace of electric vehicles, as well as on the importance of infrastructure. Thanks to UCAIR for its support.



BY THE NUMBERS:  
**4**  
BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS

### Consulting Work

As part of its portfolio, Utah Foundation conducts consulting work and projects commissioned by public and private entities. The work in 2019 indicates the variety of contract projects we might undertake in a given year. They included: an economic impact study on the aggregates industry; an assessment of municipal government revenues in Davis and Weber counties; and a survey on legal needs in Utah for the Utah Bar Foundation.

#### LEADERSHIP

The following officers will lead Utah Foundation in 2019:

**Chad Westover**, CEO of **University of Utah Health Plans**, became chair in September, following the retirement of Elizabeth Hitch, former Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs in the Utah System of Higher Education.

**R. Dan Eldredge**, General Manager of **Intermountain Power Agency**, is now vice chair; he previously served as treasurer.

**Melissa Shanjengange**, General Manager of Human Resources at **Rio Tinto**, is the new treasurer. Ms. Shanjengange replaces Ray Hall, Chief Human Resources Officer at Larry H. Miller Management Corp.

In addition, **Brian Autry**, Director, Hypersonic Booster Programs at **Northrop Grumman**, is serving as Fund-Raising Chair.

In 2019, Utah Foundation ended the year well ahead of pace on its goals for financial strength.

## Expanding Our Reach, Executing on Our Plans

Starting in 2017, we began making our “Utah Thrives” podcast a more regular affair, and we now produce podcasts on a monthly basis. We also write op-ed commentaries highlighting our work on a monthly basis, primarily for the Deseret News and the Salt Lake Tribune.

In addition, last year we began producing online videos summarizing our work. We produced three this year – on drug rehabilitation, quality of life, and housing.

Finally, we began executing on our 2025 Strategic Plan, which was completed in 2018. We now operate under stated goals, strategies and actions in five priority areas: ensuring financial stability, expanding outreach to policymakers, clarifying our identity, building our name recognition and increasing our focus on local issues. In 2019, we set ambitious target numbers to make progress on all of those fronts, meeting or exceeding our targets in almost every category.

Of course, we depend on our supporters to make our work possible, and in 2019 they once again stepped forward in a big way: Utah Foundation ended 2019 well ahead of pace on its goals for financial strength.

## Honors

For the third year in a row, Utah Foundation was recognized by the national Governmental Research Association. In 2019, the GRA recognized Utah Foundation in the category of Effective Education for its 2018 Quality of Life series. In addition, Utah Foundation was honored by in the nonprofit category at the Utah Ethical Leadership Awards.

## Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to 2020, the calendar is already popping with new releases.

We are set to release a report on state-level economic development incentives, with a separate report on local-level incentives soon to follow. We will complete studies on legal needs in Utah and employee benefits. We will bring forward major new projects on higher education and homelessness. We will address telecommuting as an air quality issue. We plan to release a social capital index comparing Utah to other states. Finally, we will unfold a major survey, reports and events as part of our 2020 Utah Priorities project. That's just part of what we anticipate for 2020, another great year already in the making.

Thanks to all of our supporters for helping to make our work possible.

BY THE NUMBERS:

12

PODCASTS

BY THE NUMBERS:

3

ONLINE VIDEOS

## Top 10\* Utah Foundation Findings of 2019

1. While Utah spends less – and in most cases far less – per pupil than both the other Mountain States and peer states, it performs respectably overall in terms of outcomes. And while higher-spending states tend to outperform the rest of the states, Utah outperforms higher-spending states collectively on several measures. (*Making the Grade? K-12 Outcomes and Spending in Utah*)
2. (Tie) Comparing Utah’s water providers shows that, on average, providers with 10% higher rates have 6.5% lower water use. (*Drop by Drop: Water Costs and Conservation in Utah*)
2. (Tie) Utah’s teachers on average earn less than three-quarters of what private sector professionals with bachelor’s degrees in other fields earn. As a result, the competition for teachers is not interstate or inter-district as much as it is with other opportunities altogether in Utah’s own strong economy. (*Apples to Apples? How Teacher Pay in Utah Stacks up to the Competition*)
4. (Tie) From 2007 to 2016, Utah saw the nation’s sixth largest decrease in tax burden. A key driver was a large increase in Utahns’ personal income – the third-fastest increase in the nation. (*A Lighter Load: Utah’s Changing Tax Burden*)
4. (Tie) If Utah were to use tax credits to encourage significant new market embrace of electric passenger cars, it would have to make a large investment in sizable credits. Utah Foundation found no evidence that smaller credits, such as those Utah previously had in place, make a significant impact. (*Driving Toward a Cleaner Future: Alternative Fuel Vehicles in Utah*)
6. Nearly one out of every five education dollars is spent on teacher benefits, even though most prospects for college teaching programs appear to be far more interested in pay than benefits. (*Apples to Apples? How Teacher Pay in Utah Stacks up to the Competition*)
7. (Tie) While Utah’s teacher retirement plan benefits may be lower in Utah than in the other Mountain States, the plans in the other seven states require teachers to provide between 7% and 15% of their salaries to participate. Utah’s teachers are not currently required to contribute to their retirement, providing them a major front-end compensation advantage. (*Another Bite at the Apple: Comparing Teacher Retirement Plans*)
7. (Tie) While redevelopment agencies are required to publish data on economic development incentives in annual reports, the availability and quality of these reports vary widely, making it difficult to evaluate the prevalence or effectiveness of the incentives on a broad basis. (*Public Funds, Private Endeavors: A Primer on Local Economic Development Incentives in Utah*)
7. (Tie) A Utah Foundation survey of municipalities statewide found that, 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. (*Building a Better Beehive: Land Use Decision Making, Fiscal Sustainability and Quality of Life in Utah*)
10. More than 90% of Utahns live within the jurisdiction of a water provider that collects property taxes, effectively lowering households’ water rates. (*High and Dry: Water Supply, Management and Funding in Utah*)

\*As determined by Utah Foundation’s Board of Trustees in December 2019.



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