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utah quality of life series | 2022

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The 2022 Utah Community Quality of Life Index

Is a Booming Economy Making Life Better?

2022 UTAH COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE

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About the Utah Foundation

The 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. The Utah Foundation seeks to help decision-makers and citizens understand and address complex issues. The Utah Foundation also offers constructive guidance to improve governmental policies, programs and structures.

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Research Report 802

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INTRODUCTION

Utahns frequently cite a high quality of life as their reason for living in the Beehive State. In economic development circles, quality of life is sometimes seen as the goose that lays the golden eggs. But despite a booming economy, Utahns' perceptions of their quality of life is in decline.

In collaboration with Intermountain Healthcare, the Utah Foundation periodically surveys Utahns to understand how they feel about both their community and their personal quality of life. This report focuses on community quality of life – based on a survey where Utahns rate their communities (the area within 30 minutes of their primary residence) on a series of 20 factors. In this report, the Utah Foundation discusses the results of the 2022 survey, compares 2022 data with previous years, analyzes responses by population group, and suggests targeted ways that policymakers might improve quality of life in Utah communities. Please note that this report addresses only those correlations, relationships or changes that are statistically significant at least at the 95% level.

Since 2011, the Utah Foundation has measured community quality of life with the Index five times. In 2022, the Community Quality of Life Index stands at 64 out of a possible 100 points, making this year the clear low mark.

This is the first release in the Utah Foundation's 2022 Quality of Life project. A report on personal quality of life and other releases will follow.

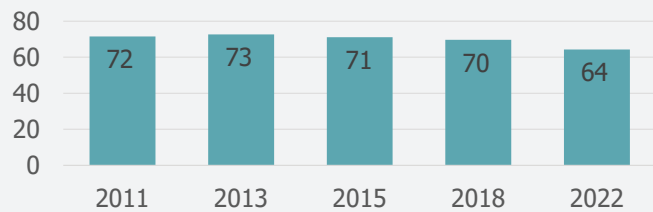


KEY FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT

- Utahns' perception of community quality of life has declined since 2013 – from an Index score of 73 to 64.
- Affordable housing has the lowest performance rating in the index – far lower than any other factor.
- Housing affordability and other costs of living accounted for nearly two-thirds of the overall decrease in community quality of life from 2018 to 2022. Eleven other factors also decreased during the same time period.
- The availability of good jobs is the only factor on Utah Foundation's Community Quality of Life Index that has trended upward during the past decade.
- Utahns who are religiously affiliated, those with higher levels of education, older Utahns, men, and those with higher incomes all reported better community quality of life than did their counterparts. Those respondents who identified with a religion indicated a higher community quality of life on 12 of 20 aspects on the index, and those with more education indicated a higher community quality of life on 11 of 20 aspects.
- When asked what could improve quality of life for Utahns, more than one-third of Utahns suggested that their communities need to see more housing that is affordable.
- In the policy arena, the findings primarily suggest:
 - A need for promoting the production of quality, affordable housing and find other ways to reduce the cost of living.
 - Investing in the built environment and enhancing land use policies to promote attractive, high-quality developments and streetscapes that are pedestrian friendly and include key amenities.
 - Building on policies and programs aimed at improving air quality.
 - Investing in transportation and transit infrastructure to reduce traffic and improve the quality of roads and highways.
- Other areas of concern for policymakers include water issues and the quality of public schools.

While year-to-year variation had been small between 2011 and 2018, the index decreased significantly in 2022.

Figure 1: Utah's Community Quality of Life Index



COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE OVER TIME

In 2022, the Community Quality of Life Index stands at 64 out of a possible 100 points, lower than any previous years (see Figure 1). Although the index shifted from survey to survey between 2011 and 2018, these small fluctuations were not always meaningful. However, the change from 2013 to 2018 was significant; Utahns' sentiments about quality of life in their communities declined between 2013 and 2018. And the differences between 2022 and all previous years are significant; Utahns' views about the quality of life in their communities are dimmer than in any other year that the Utah Foundation administered the survey.

Why the big decrease in 2022? The change is due primarily to the costs of living, both in terms of housing and other living costs. These two factors alone account for two-thirds of the decrease in quality of life on the Index from 2018 to 2022. The remaining portion of the decrease is due to smaller declines in 11 other factors. No community quality of life factor improved from 2018 to 2022.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

All but two of the 20 factors have seen a downward trend during the previous 11 years. The two exceptions to the trend are “the extent to which people have family nearby,” which has not changed significantly, and “opportunities for good jobs,” which is the only factor to have seen a positive trend since 2011. This is likely due to the consistently-improving job market in Utah since the end of the Great Recession – with the exception of the pandemic's effect on employment in 2020.

That's the longer-term view. In the shorter term, none of the factors improved. Comparing 2018 with 2022, Utahns report that 13 factors are now performing worse (ranked from the largest decrease in quality to the smallest):

- The availability of good housing that is affordable.
- The affordability of living costs other than housing, such as food, utilities and services.
- Traffic conditions on the roads and highways.
- The availability of recreational, social or cultural events and programs.
- The quality of the public schools.
- The availability of quality education beyond high school such as good trade schools, colleges and universities.
- The availability of good stores or other places to get the food and other things people want and need.
- How much people support and help each other.
- The availability of quality public transportation such as buses or trains.
- The availability of spiritual or religious activities or groups.
- How much people share similar values or views of the world.
- The availability of quality healthcare services.
- Opportunities for good jobs.

The seven other factors on the Index remain unchanged from 2018 to 2022:

- The level of safety in your area and security from crime.
- The quality of the environment such as air and water quality.
- How accepting and respectful people are of individual and group differences.
- The extent to which people have family nearby.
- The attractiveness of the streets, homes, and other buildings.
- The attractiveness of the natural surroundings.
- The availability of good parks, green spaces or places for recreation.

Housing and other living costs have the largest decrease in assessed performance. Utah's rapidly rising housing costs have made many Utahns feel like rents and ownership are no longer affordable. And inflation is causing angst among many Utahns. As noted, these two factors account for two-thirds of the decrease in community quality of life – with smaller changes among the eleven other factors accounting for the remaining decrease.

One possible explanation for the decline in the majority of factors from 2018 to 2022 may be after-effects from the pandemic. The decline may also be due in part to ripple effects from Utahns' increasing costs of living. Rapid growth may also be revealing its downsides. A recent survey from Envision Utah suggests for the first time that more Utahns would prefer to slow rather than foster the state's population growth (with 45% agreeing to some extent that "growth is bad and should be limited" compared to 38% agreeing to some extent that "growth is good and should be fostered").

POPULATION DIFFERENCES

Various demographic factors have an important effect on the Community Quality of Life Index. The difference that pertains to the greatest number of factors is religious affiliation, though people with more education, older Utahns, men and Utahns with higher household incomes also perceive their communities' as offering a higher quality of life. Interestingly, location – or whether Utahns live on or off the Wasatch Front – shows differences in several aspects of quality of life, but no overall Index difference.

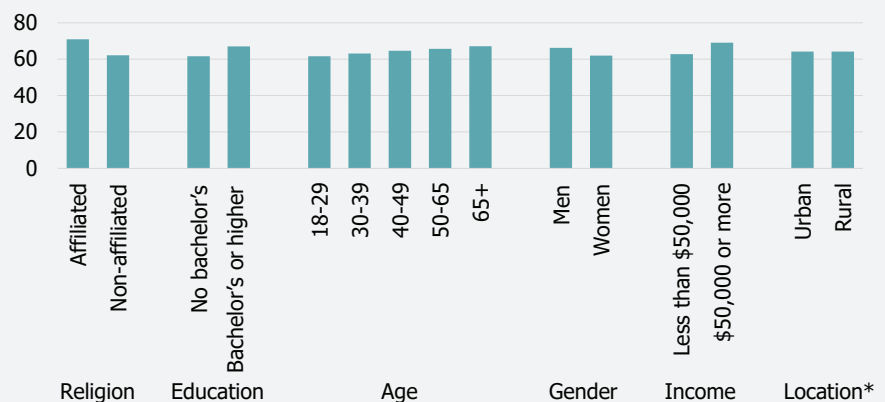
Only larger factor differences are discussed in this section for the six demographic groups. See all of the factor differences in Appendix A, Figure A4.

Religious Affiliation and Higher Community Quality of Life

The Utah Foundation compared individuals who reported a religious affiliation to those who were unaffiliated with any religion. Religiously affiliated Utahns were more likely to rate their communities higher in most quality-of-life aspects. Of the 12 aspects in which religious Utahns rate their communities' more favorably, five aspects stood out for their higher average ratings:

Religious affiliation is the largest demographic differentiator when it comes to community quality of life perceptions.

Figure 2: Statistically Significant Index Differences by Demographic Group



** Three factors favor more-rural Utahns while four favor Wasatch Front residents, though there is no overall difference on the Index between the two.*

- The availability of spiritual or religious activities or groups.
- How much people share similar values or views of the world.
- How much people support and help each other.
- The quality of public schools
- How accepting and respectful people are of individual and group differences.

Religiously affiliated Utahns had a Community Quality of Life Index nearly nine points higher than non-affiliated individuals, after accounting for other demographic differences. Religiously affiliated Utahns had a Community Quality of Life Index of 71 while non-affiliated individuals had an index of 62.

The Lift from Educational Attainment

The Utah Foundation compared people with at least a bachelor's degree to people without. Respondents with bachelor's degrees or more education were likely to rate 11 aspects more favorably. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, the biggest difference was with "the availability of quality education beyond high school, such as good trade schools, colleges and universities."

Utahns with at least a bachelor's degree have a Community Quality of Life Index five points higher than Utahns without, after accounting for other demographic differences. Utahns with at least a bachelor's degree had a Community Quality of Life Index of 67 while those with less than a bachelor's degree had an index of 62.

Does Quality of Life Increase with Age?

Age played a role in five community quality-of-life factor differences. No differences stood out, though topping the list was that older Utahns had a more positive perception of the environment. Overall, Utahns age 18-29 had a Community Quality of Life Index of 62 while Utahns aged 65 and older had an index of 67, after accounting for other demographic differences. Utahns between those age groups fell in between.

Men and Women

Men reported a higher performance on eight factors. None of the differences stood out, though housing affordability and cost of living were the top differences. Overall, these eight factors resulted in a difference on the Index of four points, with 62 for women compared to an index of 66 for men, after accounting for other factors.

The Impact of Income

The Utah Foundation compared Utahns with household incomes of greater than \$50,000 to Utahns below that threshold. Respondents with higher incomes specifically rated the performance of five aspects higher. The largest differences were the availability of jobs and having family nearby.

Utahns with a household income lower than \$50,000 had a Community Quality of Life Index six points lower than those households earning \$50,000 or more, after accounting for other demographic differences. Those earning \$50,000 or more had an index of 69, while those earning less had an index of 63.

How the Wasatch Front Compares to the Rest of the State

The Utah Foundation compared Utahns in more-urban locations along the Wasatch Front (Weber, Davis, Salt Lake and Utah counties) to their more-rural counterparts across the rest of the state. Utahns in these more-rural counties tended to indicate that the following aspects had higher performance than did their Wasatch Front peers on three factors, with "the quality of the environment such as air and water quality" standing out as a large boon to more-rural areas.

However, these more-rural Utahns rated the performance lower on four aspects, with the following three differences standing out:

- The availability of quality public transportation such as buses or trains.
- The availability of good stores or other places to get the food and other things people want and need.
- Opportunities for good jobs.

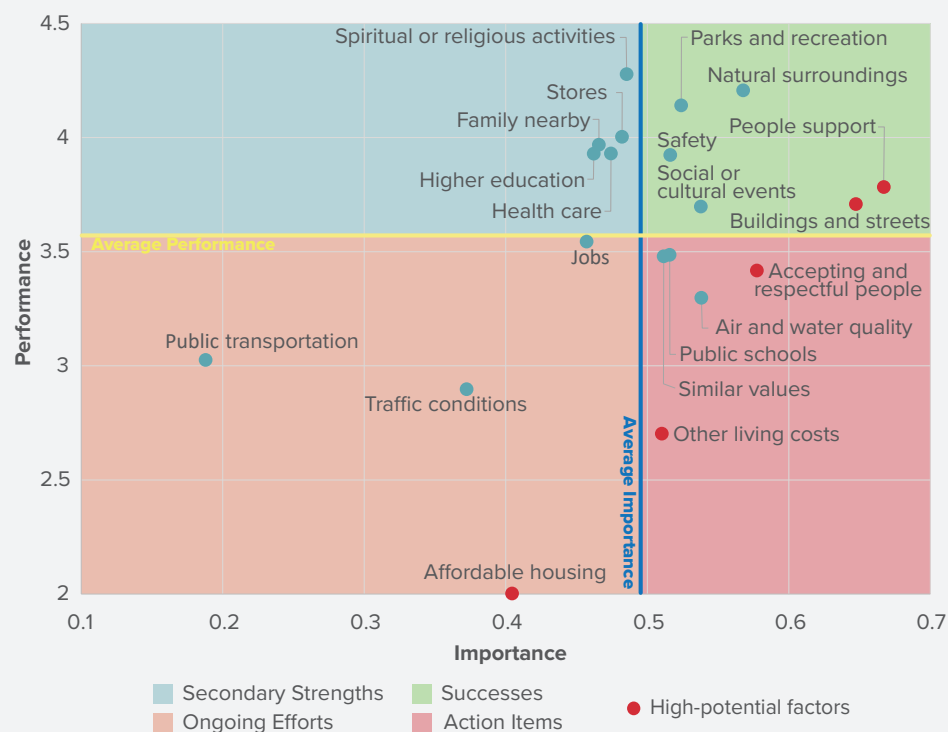
None of these is particularly unexpected. However, it is notable that there was no difference on the overall Index score for Utahns along the Wasatch Front and their more-rural peers.

COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE MATRIX

A useful way of visualizing the ratings of community quality-of-life aspects is by plotting them onto a matrix, as presented in Figure 3. The four matrix quadrants categorize factors based on performance and importance. High-performance, high-importance aspects might be thought of as “successes” while high-performance, low-importance items are “secondary strengths.” Low-performance, low-importance items can be thought of as “ongoing efforts” while low-performance, high-importance items might be “action items.”

Five items are in the “action items” quadrant – with high importance, but low performance.

Figure 3: Community Quality of Life Matrix



Successes and Secondary Strengths

Over the course of five surveys since 2011, four factors have continued to land among Utah's *successes* – factors that Utahns rate highly and stay in step with their overall feelings about the community. Those four factors are:

- The level of safety in your area and security from crime.
- The attractiveness of the natural surroundings.
- The availability of good parks, green spaces or places for recreation.
- How much people support and help each other.

Similarly, since 2011 four factors have remained among Utah's *secondary strengths* – factors that Utahns rate highly in their community, but are less tightly linked to their overall perceptions of the community. Those four factors are:

- The extent to which people have family nearby.
- The availability of quality education beyond high school such as good trade schools, colleges and universities.
- The availability of spiritual or religious activities or groups.
- The availability of good stores or other places to get the food and other things people want and need.

There are another two factors in which Utah constantly performs well, but over the years they have bounced between *successes* and *secondary strengths*:

- The availability of quality health care services.
- The availability of recreational, social or cultural events and programs.

These 10 items appear to form the backbone of Utah's high quality of life. Utah's natural beauty and recreational opportunities are often cited as people magnets. Additionally, recent Utah Foundation research on social capital has highlighted how Utah is first in the nation when it comes to weekly religious service attendance as well as levels of volunteerism and participation in neighborhood projects. These statistics are reflected in Utahns' high rankings of spiritual or religious activities and how much people support and help each other.

Ongoing Efforts

Two items stand out among Utah's *ongoing efforts*: public transportation and traffic conditions. These two factors are substantial outliers in terms of their performance and importance. Every iteration of the survey, these two factors have been near the bottom for in terms of their importance and their quality. Public transit has been the least important factor every year, and for each iteration of the survey it has grown progressively less important. At the same time, these two factors are seen as big weaknesses for the state. This may have to do with the fact that these two are the most "balanced" factors by a substantial margin. For every person that has a negative or somewhat negative opinion of the factor, there is someone else with a positive or somewhat positive opinion. These may be factors that are highly salient to individuals who commute or rely on public transit as their primary source of transportation, but are much less salient to the public at large.

Action Items

Interestingly, the *action items* quadrant seems to be the most dynamic. Only two factors have been on the *action items* list since the initial survey in 2011: "acceptance and respectfulness of individual and group differences" and "quality of public schools." Other factors have slipped in and out to neighboring quadrants over time.

The “action items” quadrant has been the most dynamic over time, with only two factors remaining over the course of the Index.

Figure 4: Action Items Quadrant on the Community Quality of Life Matrix

	2011	2013	2015	2018	2022
Opportunities for Good Jobs					
The Availability of Good Housing that Is Affordable					
The Affordability of Living Costs Other than Housing, Such as Food, Utilities, and Services					
The Quality of the Environment Such as Air and Water Quality					
How Accepting and Respectful People Are of Individual and Group Differences					
How Much People Share Similar Values or Views of the World					
The Quality of the Public Schools					
The Attractiveness of the Streets, Homes, and Other Buildings					

Two of the factors in this quadrant – public schools and air and water quality – represent areas that occupy a lot of the focus of state and local governments. Similarly, Utah Foundation has spent much of its time in past and current research investigating public education and air quality and water issues. Other factors – such as “how accepting and respectful people are of individual and group differences” and “how much people share similar values or views of the world” – are still important to how Utahns feel about their community, but lack clear avenues for government-led improvement.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE

The Utah Foundation takes several approaches in order to try to identify ways to improve the quality of life for Utah communities. One way to improve it is by taking public policy measures to address relevant *action items*. After all, this quadrant hosts the highly important but lower-performing factors. And, as mentioned above, air and water quality and public schools represent to areas of constant public and government focus. Two other ways to determine an approach to improving community quality of life are by identifying high-potential factors and through an open-ended survey question.

High-Potential Factors

In addition to the items in the *action items* quadrant, the Utah Foundation has also highlighted five “high-potential factors” that fall near a line drawn between the item that is most important (the “people support” factor) and the item with the least quality (housing affordability). (For more details on this methodology, please see Appendix B.) This line represents factors where investment provides the most “bang for the buck” either because it is a low performing item and improvement would drive up the quality of life or it is an item so important that even smaller improvements would go a long way. Of the five “high-potential factors,” those with avenues for public policy intervention include:

- The availability of good housing that is affordable.
- The affordability of living costs other than housing, such as food, utilities and services.
- The attractiveness of the streets, homes and other buildings.

As mentioned earlier, the decreases of the affordability of housing and other living costs was responsible for nearly two-thirds of the total decrease in the Index – 3.5 points worth. Restoring these two factors to their previous level of quality would go a long way to improving the overall index. However, there are no simple solutions to these problems.

The enormity of the issue of housing affordability reaches most Utahns – whether directly or indirectly. However, whether or not people think that their community is a good place to live has little to do with housing affordability, perhaps in part because it is a pervasive problem that most Utahns recognize. While 70% of Utahns ranked housing affordability as poor or somewhat poor, only 9% ranked it as excellent or somewhat excellent. With the 2018 Index, the Utah Foundation published a [targeted look](#) at Utah’s housing affordability problems. The Utah Foundation has also continued to track this issue as [housing and rental prices surged](#) in 2020 and 2021. Recently, the Utah Foundation also released a series of reports on how “[middle housing](#)” might play a larger role in helping to create housing that is affordable.

The affordability of other living costs is the co-conspirator to Utah’s lower quality of life and seems to be primarily driven by nationwide increases in inflation – jumping to heights not seen in 40 years. It is not clear how long this will last or how it might affect Utah differently from the rest of the nation, although recent inflationary pressures have been particularly pronounced in the Mountain States. (According to data provided to the Utah Foundation by Zions Bank, this is driven primarily by the increase in housing prices.) Much of the report focused on “Middle Housing” also addresses how to do so in a way that maintains residents’ opinions of the community’s character and attractiveness.

Open-Ended Question

The Utah Foundation’s survey also asked respondents what could most improve their areas as places to live. Most people suggested just one item, but many suggested more possible improvements.

The open-ended responses often related to the 20 Index questions that had been asked of respondents, beginning with housing affordability. That was far and away the most common of the open-ended responses. Just over one-third (34%) of all respondents said that their community needs more affordable housing, such as “affordable housing for young couples.” Another respondent suggests that “Homes in this area are wildly expensive... It’s just sad that small families can’t afford single-family starter homes in this area anymore.”

There are significant concerns about the built environment. Walkability and sidewalks were a top issue for some respondents: “More pedestrian friendly, safer, walkable

Respondents focus on housing affordability as top needed improvement.

Figure 5: What could most improve respondents’ areas as places to live?

** Percentages add to well over 100% because many respondents offered more than one suggestion.*

Open-ended response category	Percentage of respondents
More affordable housing	34%
Availability of good stores and restaurants	12%
Better roads, walkability, parking and infrastructure	10%
Attractiveness of building and streets	10%
Acceptance and respect for differences	10%
Affordability in general	10%
Traffic	9%
Environment and air quality	8%
Parks	7%
Public transit	6%



There are significant concerns about the built environment.

streets, with actual sidewalks, more crosswalks with safety lights and signs, more bike lanes, more posted speed limits and speed bumps to slow traffic through neighborhoods.” Combined with better roads, infrastructure and parking, 10% of people suggested these types of improvements. And 10% focused on the attractiveness of the built environment, such as streetscapes and buildings. Another 7% focused on improving parks and community spaces – and building more of them.

Nearly one-in-10 (9%) respondents cited traffic as their top issue, while 6% suggested the need for better transit. As one put it: “Less traffic, lower gas prices!” In terms of affordability, 10% said that lower prices of goods and services overall would be their largest community benefit. Improving the environment (with a focus on air quality) was an important issue for 8% of respondents.

Policy Focus

The matrix, high-potential factors and the open-ended questions together highlight a number of issues where a targeted policy focus could drive an improvement of individuals overall quality of life. The top-10 open-ended categories accounted for the vast majority of the open-ended survey question responses. Five of these 10 items align with the lowest-performing items on the Index. Other issues relate to some of the most important factors.

The availability of good stores and restaurants is not a Utah wide concern on the Index, but is very important for more rural Utahns. Transit and traffic is not important for Utahns at large, but the answers from the open-ended question indicate it is the main problem for some people – likely transit users and commuters.

This reinforces the point that policymakers and community support groups should focus on those high-potential factors – those that align with the topics that benefit the most people – while keeping in mind those factors that target certain groups, such as stores, transit and traffic.

A final issue is less policy oriented, but in some ways may be one of the most important areas for improvement: people getting along. An *action item* every year since 2011, and an important response on the open-ended survey relates to the level of respect Utahns have for one another. This is clearly an ongoing issue.

On the policy front, the areas of greatest possible improvement on community quality of life are the following:

1. Promote production of quality, affordable housing and explore other ways to reduce the cost of living.
2. Invest in the built environment and enhancing land use policies to promote attractive, high-quality developments and streetscapes that are pedestrian friendly and include key amenities.
3. Build on policies and programs aimed at improving air quality.
4. Invest in transportation and transit infrastructure and programs to reduce traffic and improve the quality of roads and highways.



In the shadow of the pandemic, sky-rocketing housing costs and inflation, overall perceptions of community quality of life have dropped.

CONCLUSION

While Utah generally celebrates its high quality of life, public perceptions have shifted. In the shadow of the pandemic, sky-rocketing housing costs and inflation, overall perceptions of community quality of life have dropped.

But the perceptions vary from group to group. Among the most striking findings in this study is the tight linkage between religious affiliation and a significantly higher community quality of life. In fact, those respondents who identified with a religion indicated a higher quality of life on 12 of 20 aspects of the community index. Having post-secondary attainment was also tightly linked, with bachelor's degree holders indicating a higher quality of life on 11 of 20 aspects.

Looking ahead, several policy areas emerge from the findings as being in need of attention. In the policy arena, the findings primarily suggest a need for promoting the production of quality, affordable housing and exploring other ways to reduce the cost of living; investing in the built environment and enhancing land use policies to promote attractive, high-quality developments and streetscapes that are pedestrian friendly and include key amenities; building on policies and programs aimed at improving air quality; and investing in transportation and transit infrastructure to reduce traffic and improve the quality of roads and highways. Other areas of concern for policymakers include water issues and the quality of public schools.

With progress in these areas, future Utah Foundation Quality of Life surveys may find citizens feeling better about the quality of their communities. They might even be happier, a matter into which we will delve in the next report in this series: personal quality of life.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL FIGURES

































































Figure A1: Aspect Performance Rating, 1-to-5 scale

Aspect	Performance
The Availability of Spiritual or Religious Activities or Groups	4.3
The Attractiveness of the Natural Surroundings	4.2
The Availability of Good Parks, Green Spaces, or Places for Recreation	4.1
The Availability of Good Stores or Other Places to Get the Food and Other Things People Want and Need	4.0
The Extent to Which People Have Family Nearby	4.0
The Availability of Quality Healthcare Services	3.9
The Availability of Quality Education Beyond High School Such as Good Trade Schools, Colleges, and Universities	3.9
The Level of Safety in Your Area and Security from Crime	3.9
How Much People Support and Help Each Other	3.8
The Attractiveness of the Streets, Homes, and Other Buildings	3.7
The Availability of Recreational, Social, or Cultural Events and Programs	3.7
Opportunities for Good Jobs	3.5
The Quality of the Public Schools	3.5
How Much People Share Similar Values or Views of the World	3.5
How Accepting and Respectful People Are of Individual and Group Differences	3.4
The Quality of the Environment Such as Air and Water Quality	3.3
The Availability of Quality Public Transportation Such as Buses or Trains	3.0
Traffic Conditions on the Roads and Highways	2.9
The Affordability of Living Costs Other than Housing, Such as Food, Utilities, and Services	2.7
The Availability of Good Housing that Is Affordable	2.0

Figure A2: Aspect Importance Score, 0-to-1 scale

Aspect	Importance
How Much People Support and Help Each Other	0.67
The Attractiveness of the Streets, Homes, and Other Buildings	0.65
How Accepting and Respectful People Are of Individual and Group Differences	0.58
The Attractiveness of the Natural Surroundings	0.57
The Quality of the Environment Such as Air and Water Quality	0.54
The Availability of Recreational, Social, or Cultural Events and Programs	0.54
The Availability of Good Parks, Green Spaces, or Places for Recreation	0.52
The Level of Safety in Your Area and Security from Crime	0.52
The Quality of the Public Schools	0.52
How Much People Share Similar Values or Views of the World	0.51
The Affordability of Living Costs Other than Housing, Such as Food, Utilities, and Services	0.51
The Availability of Spiritual or Religious Activities or Groups	0.49
The Availability of Good Stores or Other Places to Get the Food and Other Things People Want and Need	0.48
The Availability of Quality Healthcare Services	0.47
The Extent to Which People Have Family Nearby	0.47
The Availability of Quality Education Beyond High School Such as Good Trade Schools, Colleges, and Universities	0.46
Opportunities for Good Jobs	0.46
The Availability of Good Housing that Is Affordable	0.40
Traffic Conditions on the Roads and Highways	0.37
The Availability of Quality Public Transportation Such as Buses or Trains	0.19

Figure A3: Matrix Quadrant Over Time

	2011	2013	2015	2018	2022
The Availability of Quality Healthcare Services					
Opportunities for Good Jobs					
The Availability of Good Housing that Is Affordable					
The Affordability of Living Costs Other than Housing, Such as Food, Utilities, and Services					
The Level of Safety in Your Area and Security from Crime					
The Quality of the Environment Such as Air and Water Quality					
How Accepting and Respectful People Are of Individual and Group Differences					
The Extent to Which People Have Family Nearby					
How Much People Share Similar Values or Views of the World					
The Quality of the Public Schools					
The Availability of Quality Education Beyond High School Such as Good Trade Schools, Colleges, and Universities					
The Availability of Spiritual or Religious Activities or Groups					
The Availability of Quality Public Transportation Such as Buses or Trains					
Traffic Conditions on the Roads and Highways					
The Attractiveness of the Streets, Homes, and Other Buildings					
The Attractiveness of the Natural Surroundings					
The Availability of Good Parks, Green Spaces, or Places for Recreation					
The Availability of Recreational, Social, or Cultural Events and Programs					
The Availability of Good Stores or Other Places to Get the Food and Other Things People Want and Need					
How Much People Support and Help Each Other					

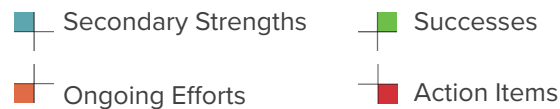
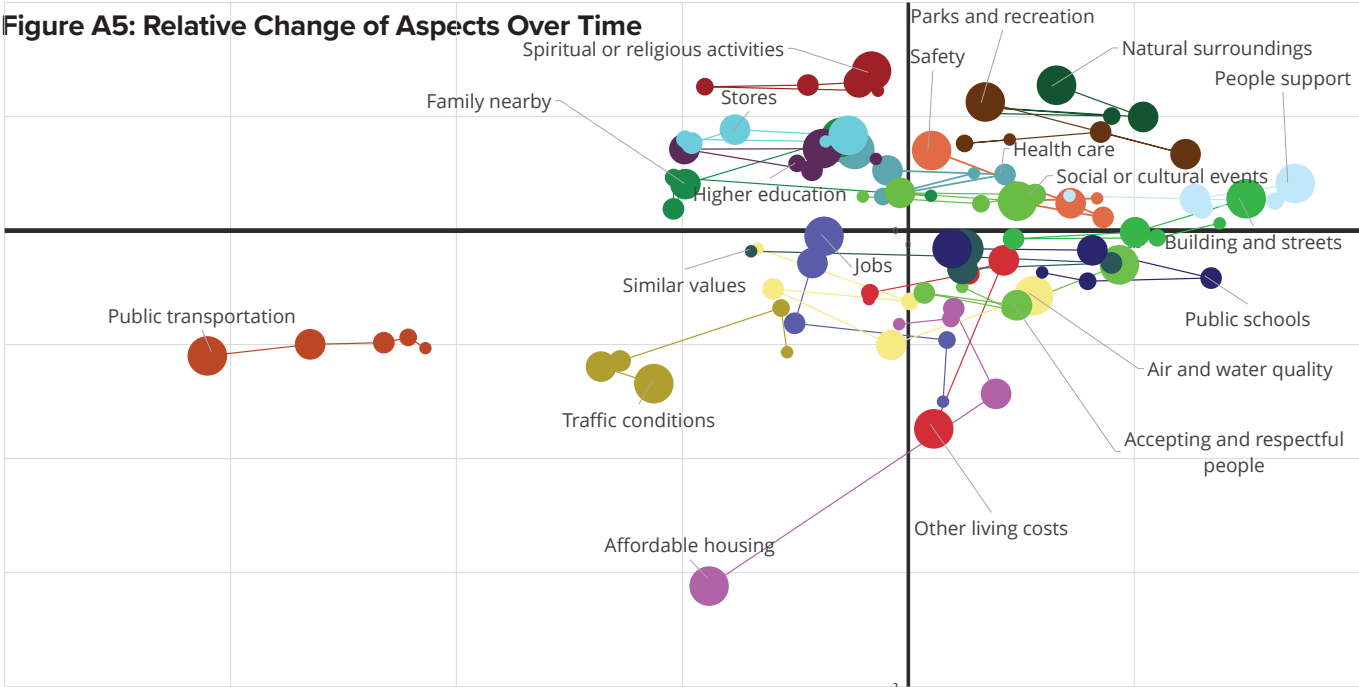


Figure A4: Demographic Group Index Difference, Factors with a Difference, and Total Number of Different Factors

	Religion – affiliated	Education – more	Age – older	Gender – men	Income – higher	Location – rural*
Index difference	9	5	5	4	6	0
The Availability of Quality Healthcare Services		x	x	x		-x
Opportunities for Good Jobs				x	x	-x
The Availability of Good Housing that Is Affordable	x			x		
The Affordability of Living Costs Other than Housing, Such as Food, Utilities, and Services	x	x		x	x	
The Level of Safety in Your Area and Security from Crime		x				x
The Quality of the Environment Such as Air and Water Quality	x	x	x	x		x
How Accepting and Respectful People Are of Individual and Group Differences	x		x	x		
The Extent to Which People Have Family Nearby	x			x	x	
How Much People Share Similar Values or Views of the World	x			x		
The Quality of the Public Schools	x					
The Availability of Quality Education Beyond High School Such as Good Trade Schools, Colleges, and Universities	x	x			x	
The Availability of Spiritual or Religious Activities or Groups	x					
The Availability of Quality Public Transportation Such as Buses or Trains						-x
Traffic Conditions on the Roads and Highways		x				
The Attractiveness of the Streets, Homes, and Other Buildings		x				
The Attractiveness of the Natural Surroundings	x	x			x	x
The Availability of Good Parks, Green Spaces, or Places for Recreation						
The Availability of Recreational, Social, or Cultural Events and Programs	x	x	x			
The Availability of Good Stores or Other Places to Get the Food and Other Things People Want and Need		x				-x
How Much People Support and Help Each Other	x	x	x			
Total number of factors	12	11	5	8	5	7*

* Three factors favor more rural Utahns while four favor Wasatch Front residents.



Note: The smallest dot for each factor is 2011, the largest is 2022, with other survey iterations in-between.

APPENDIX B: 2022 METHODOLOGY

Survey Methodology

Utah Foundation worked with Lighthouse Research to administer the survey. Lighthouse Research generated a random sample from its database of 98% of Utah households. An adult in each sampled household was first asked to participate via email. Follow-up texts and phone calls were sent to those who did not yet complete the survey. The survey collected 508 responses. The margin of error was 4.3%. The household response rate was 7.1%. The survey was administered from May 10 through May 25, 2022. The survey reached respondents from 26 of the state's 29 counties. Responses were weighted using survey demographic data and U.S. Census Bureau data by income, gender and age to more closely represent the demographic profile of Utah as a whole.* The 2022 survey data were combined with previous years for analysis. Over the past five iterations, the Utah Foundation has collected 3,261 respondents – 508 residents in 2022, 570 residents in 2018, 605 in 2015, 608 in 2013, and 621 in 2011. The 2018 iteration used both Internet and telephone surveys. Prior to 2018, the survey was only administered only via telephone.

Index Methodology

The Utah Foundation Community Quality of Life Index measures Utahns' quality of life by asking survey respondents a series of questions on 20 aspects of their local communities (the area within a 30-minute drive). Respondents ranked each aspect on a five-point scale, from "poor to excellent." The Utah Foundation creates the overall Quality of Life Index by averaging the responses about each aspect and adjusting them to a 100-point scale. (For a deeper understanding of how these 20 aspects were chosen, see the first Utah Quality of Life Index report, released in 2011.†)

Matrix Methodology

The matrix is generated by plotting each aspect on a graph where the y-axis represents the quality of each aspect and the x-axis represent the importance of each aspect. The performance of each aspect is calculated by averaging the respondents' ratings of that aspect for their community. The importance of each factor is measured by the correlation of each of the 20 aspects with the respondents' overall evaluation of the quality of life of their communities. The correlation (naturally bound between 0 and 1) makes up index's "importance" measure. For more information on the validity of using this measure to estimate importance, please see the appendix of the 2018 Quality of Life Index Report.‡ The Utah Foundation then uses the average performance and average importance to divide the matrix into four quadrants.

High-Potential Methodology

The Utah Foundation seeks to highlight the aspects where improvement would have the highest potential to improve the overall quality of life. These items would be either the lowest-performing items – where there is a lot of room to improve – or the most important items – where even small improvements could drive up the overall quality of life. These items were selected by first calculating the line between the lowest performing aspect and the most important aspect. High-potential aspects were those that fell within a specified margin of that line. The margin was specified based on the slope of the line. The margin was made dynamic to account how lower slope lines tended to include more aspects than higher slope lines over the past five iterations of the survey. The margin varied between 5% and 15% where the margin would be 5% if the slope were 0 and 15% if the slope were 12. The average slope over the past five iterations of this line was approximately six.

* The Utah Foundation and Intermountain Healthcare made the determination not to weight all of the demographic factors. While some races and ethnicities were not well represented, the samples were too small to weight appropriately. While the survey sample was somewhat more educated than the population as a whole, other metrics were weighted in lieu of these.

† Utah Foundation, The 2011 Utah Foundation Quality of Life Index First Biennial Survey Reveals Strengths, Weaknesses, 2011, www.utahfoundation.org/uploads/rr703.pdf.

‡ Utah Foundation, Utah Foundation Quality of Life Index: Measuring Utahns' Perceptions of their Communities, Personal Lives, 2018, www.utahfoundation.org/uploads/rr756.pdf.



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