



# ENVISION UTAH

## HOW WE GROW MATTERS

ANNUAL REPORT | 2023

### 2023 HIGHLIGHTS:

Guiding Our Growth  
Housing Attainability  
Inclusivity in Planning

Disaster Resilience  
Early Learning  
Teacher Vision

Legislative Breakfast  
Spring Breakfast  
Common Good Awards

## | LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Thank you, everyone, for a fantastic 2023. Envision Utah wouldn't work without you. And I don't say that lightly; the core of Envision Utah is Utah's community leaders coming together to solve problems and create a better future. Without the community leaders – without you – we would just be making up solutions on our own and throwing them into the wind. What we do works because we have people who are willing to be a part of the visioning process and shape the future.

During 2023, we put a capstone on several major projects. Guiding Our Growth, a statewide conversation about Utah's future, wrapped up after a couple of years of preparation and 18 months of collaboration with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and communities around the state. The result is a set of strategies for accommodating Utah's growth.

We also published a set of land use strategies that can help bring home prices back within reach for more Utah families. It was heartening to see the public, key stakeholders (including both cities and developers), and national research coalesce around a set of solutions to one of our toughest challenges.

Another toolkit, Welcoming Communities, offers guidance to help cities and towns ensure Utahns of any background feel welcome, can participate in creating strong communities, and have an opportunity to thrive.

We also finished a massive research project looking at the barriers students face when they think about education beyond high school. We conducted focus groups around the state and a survey of thousands of students. Now we have the data we need to find ways to help students bridge those barriers.



Ari Bruening  
Envision Utah President & CEO

## OUR MISSION

Envision Utah engages people to create and sustain communities that are beautiful, prosperous, healthy, and neighborly for current and future residents.

We are a nonpartisan public-private partnership composed of a diverse group of action-oriented community leaders. We are united by a commitment to secure a bright future for all.

From the original Quality Growth Strategy in 1997 to Your Utah, Your Future in 2015 to today's projects, Envision Utah's work has always been focused on the issues that matter most to Utahns and that will have the biggest impact on Utah's future. Over the last year, nearly everything we've done has been centered on 5 priority areas identified by our executive committee: quality communities, housing affordability, water, education, and disaster resilience. In this report, you will find details about the following projects:

- 4 | **Guiding Our Growth** — Utah is among the fastest growing states in the country. We have partnered with the Governor's Office and many others to engage Utahns everywhere in addressing the challenges of that growth.
- 6 | **Land Use Regulation Reform for Attainable Housing** — Housing affordability tops the list of Utahns' concerns. We created a report filled with recommendations for changes to land-use and regulations that would foster more affordable housing options in Utah.
- 8 | **Creating Welcoming Communities** — Land use and transportation impact everyone. We aim to help communities ensure that everyone, regardless of race or income, has the chance to shape and thrive in those communities.
- 10 | **Disaster Resilience** — A major earthquake in Utah could disrupt lives and the economy for decades if we don't take the right steps to become more resilient. We're working to identify and take those steps.
- 12 | **Education** — Utahns have ambitious hopes for the future of education. We aim to ensure we have the best teachers possible and find pathways to help more students continue education beyond high school.
- 14 | **Early Learning** — How a child's brain grows in the first few years of life can have a powerful impact on learning. We empower parents to have meaningful brain-building interactions with their children.
- 16 | **Community Outreach** — From our Spring Breakfast to the Early Learning Breakfast and Common Good Awards celebrations, it was an exciting year at Envision Utah.

# THE PROCESS

The Envision Utah process has been the hallmark of our work—and the reason for our success—since the beginning. It was truly unique and innovative when it was created, and it has been praised and emulated in growing regions across the country for two and a half decades. This bottom-up, nonpartisan, collaborative decision-making process is the best way to create a vision for the future that is not only realistic, but also has support from the public and the decision makers who will need to make that vision a reality.



## VALUES

We start every project by asking Utahns what they want for the future, with an in-depth analysis of what residents most value about life in Utah or the issue we're trying to understand. We learn not only what residents care about and prioritize, but why they care about those things.



## STAKEHOLDERS

Next, we engage local stakeholders and experts with a wide range of experience and opinions. Stakeholders include those with power to implement, experts who understand the issues, and voices who need to be heard.



## SCENARIOS

With the assistance of our stakeholder and expert teams, we identify scenarios for what the future could be like depending on the choices we make. These scenarios include both the actions we could take and the outcomes of those actions.



## PUBLIC INPUT

We present the scenarios to the public to figure out which scenario Utahns want to work towards in the future. This is not just about polling Utahns on their favorite scenario; it's a learning exercise. When residents can compare alternative future outcomes, they learn what it takes to create the future they want. This understanding creates buy-in, support, and engagement.



## VISION

Finally, we take the public's input to create a vision—a roadmap—for the future, and continue to work with officials, residents, businesses, and other organizations to make Utahns' vision a reality.

Utah is a better place today than it would have been without this process, and our future will be brighter because Utah residents and leaders continue to follow this process and work together to leave Utah better for future generations.

# | GUIDING OUR GROWTH

Utah is an attractive place to live with a strong economy, vibrant communities, and an enviable quality of life. So it is no surprise that Utah continues to be one of the fastest growing states in the nation. But, for the first time ever, more Utahns think that growth will make the future worse than think it will make things better. To ensure we have a strategy to accommodate Utah’s growth and align public, local government, and statewide priorities, Envision Utah partnered with the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget to help lead, Guiding Our Growth: A Statewide Conversation about Utah’s Future.

We began by traveling throughout Utah to engage residents and leaders everywhere to understand Utahns’ greatest concerns, priorities, and hopes for how we deal with our growth. Then with our project partners, we launched the Be Heard survey in 2023. The survey asked Utahns to consider different approaches to growth, explore the pros and cons of different approaches, and indicate what they want to see happen in the future. After the survey closed, we traveled throughout the state again, sharing local findings across the far corners of the state. These results introduce a set of ideas for preserving the things Utahns love about Utah and overcome some of our biggest challenges even in the face of rapid growth. The findings helped shape the Governor’s FY 2025 budget and we expect they will shape future state and local policies and programs for years to come.





## GUIDING OUR GROWTH

- **31** Stakeholder workshops
- **23** Community presentations
- **28/29** Counties represented
- **7/7** Associations of Governments
- **20,000+** Online survey responses
- **2,812** Workshop/presentation participants
- **6,000** stakeholders engaged in person

## UTAHNS WANT



A variety of housing options and price points



Proactive water conservation and shared responsibility



The ability to get around safely by car, transit, walking, and biking

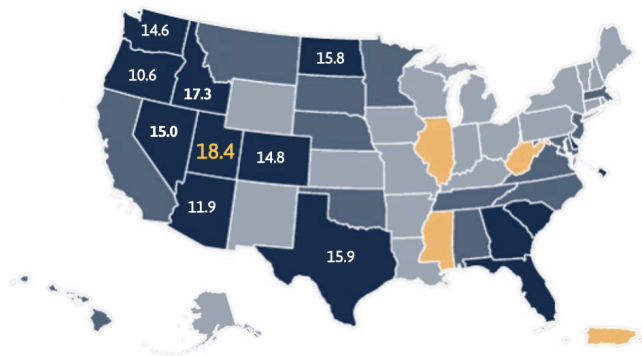


Preservation and expansion of open space and recreation within and around communities

## MANY UTAH FAMILIES STAY FOR GENERATIONS

Others recognize all that Utah has to offer and move here

### FASTEST GROWING STATE IN THE NATION 2010-2020



10.0 or more  
 0.0 to 4.9  
 5.0 to 9.9  
 Less than 0.0

Source: US Census Bureau  
Percent increase in population, 2010-2020

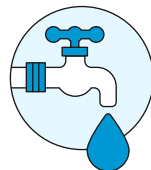
## STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS SUPPORTED BY UTAHNS

Better and expanded:

- Public transit
- Walking and biking trails
- Roads and highways
- Water conservation rebates
- Water infrastructure
- Agricultural water optimization
- Recreational amenities and open space



HOUSING



WATER



TRANSPORTATION



OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

# LAND USE REGULATION REFORM FOR ATTAINABLE HOUSING

Due to a shortage of homes, housing affordability in Utah has eroded in recent years, threatening Utahns' peace of mind and financial security. There are some state and local ordinances, codes, and policies that can impede or promote housing affordability. Throughout 2023 and at the direction of the Utah Department of Workforce Services, Envision Utah reviewed land use and construction regulations and their implications for housing costs, and developed a set of *Land Use Strategies to Bring Housing Back Within Reach*.

To make these recommendations, Envision Utah looked closely at the land use and construction ordinances in 35 Utah municipalities, conducted a thorough literature review of existing research on how regulations affect housing, and considered the effectiveness of national best practices. With partner RCLCO real estate consultants, we also analyzed land and housing development availability in Wasatch Front counties. Additionally, we talked to experts in small groups, had three large stakeholder meetings, and surveyed local officials to understand which policy changes would be acceptable and implementable.

The urgency to address Utah's challenges is underscored by the potential impact on younger generations' opportunities, quality of life, and family sizes. Effective solutions necessitate allowing the market to build more homes with fewer resources. Envision Utah compiled the findings in a report with state, regional, and local recommendations to foster a shared commitment to securing a high quality of life for Utah's future generations.



SCAN OR CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL REPORT

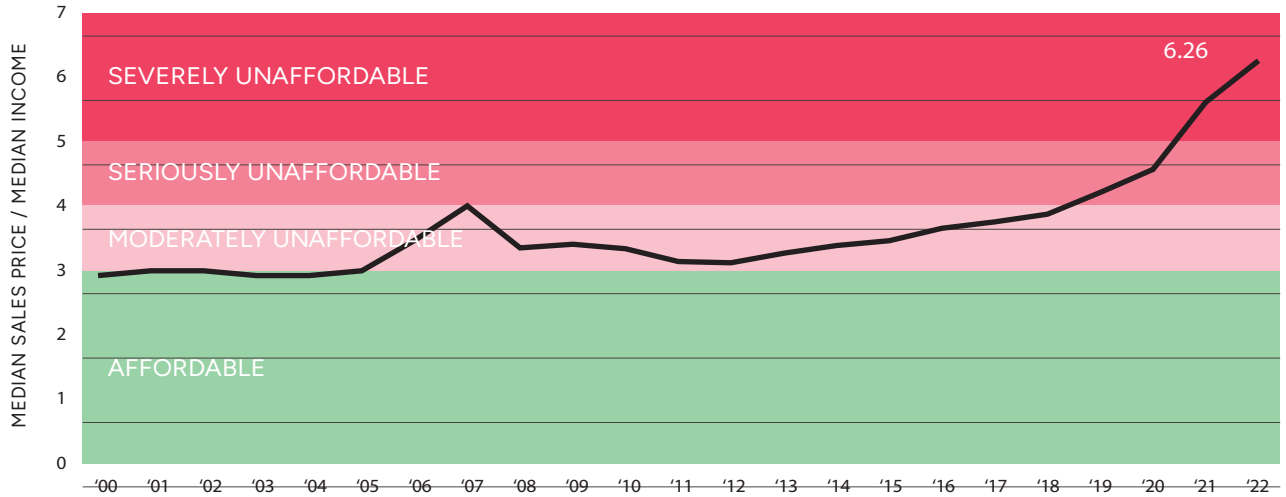


## Land Use Strategies to Bring Housing Back within Reach

PREPARED FOR

WORKFORCE SERVICES HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Utah Median Multiple Affordability Rating, 2000–2022

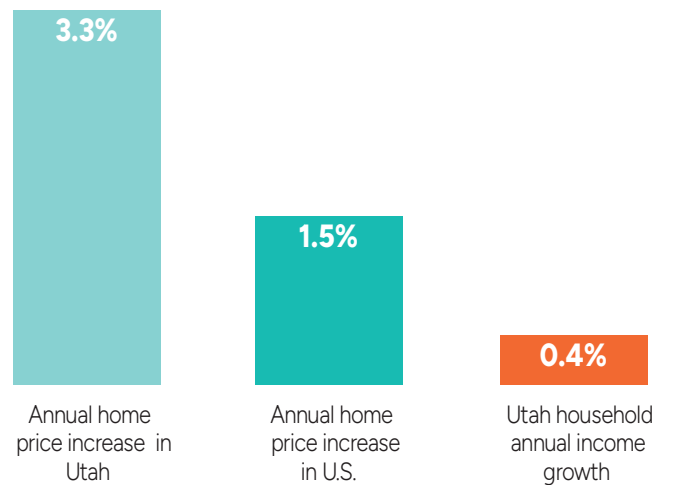


SOURCE: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. ALLOW SMALLER LOTS.
2. ALLOW MORE THAN ONE HOUSING UNIT PER LOT AND PER BUILDING.
3. FACILITATE SMALLER HOMES.
4. PROMOTE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT.
5. REDUCE DEVELOPMENT DELAYS AND COSTS.
6. FACILITATE THE USE OF OFFSITE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES.

Incomes have not kept up with home prices



(Since 1991, adjusted for inflation)

SOURCE: "Building a Better Beehive," Utah Foundation



# | INCLUSIVITY IN PLANNING

Utah has a rich history of being a place where many individuals from various backgrounds have found safety, opportunity, and happiness. Our state consistently excels in economic opportunities, health, and quality of life, showcasing the remarkable achievements of our communities. Yet, these advantages are less readily available to some communities, highlighting persistent barriers to upward mobility. In 2023 Envision Utah, with continued collaboration with stakeholders, looked at opportunities to address inclusivity in the built environment, particularly in land use and transportation planning.

“Welcoming Communities: A Guide to Planning for a Fair and Thriving Utah” is a free resource for planners, government leaders, and community stakeholders. The guide offers actionable strategies to cultivate neighborhoods where all Utahns have the opportunity to thrive, recognizing the profound impact of the built environment on life outcomes. By promoting inclusive communities, planners possess the means to drive positive change, nurturing prosperous and welcoming communities..



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FULL REPORT

WELCOMING  
COMMUNITIES

A Guide to Planning  
for a Fair and  
Thriving Utah

Envision  
Utah How we grow matters.

DECEMBER 2023

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. FACILITATE BROAD AND MEANINGFUL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PLANNING



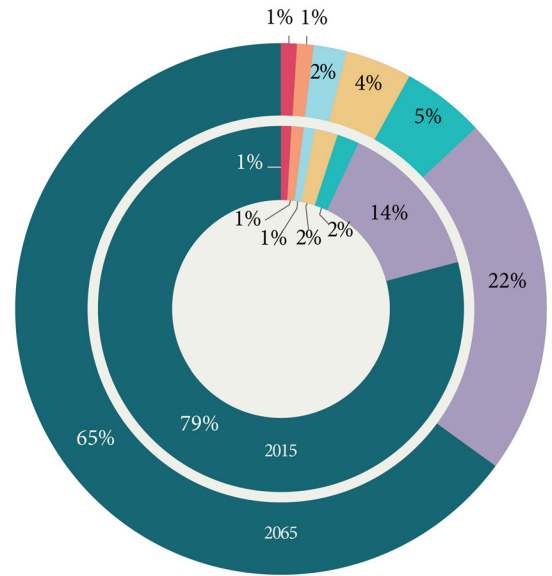
2. FOSTER WELCOMING COMMUNITIES WITH A VARIETY OF HOUSING OPTIONS



3. DESIGN MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

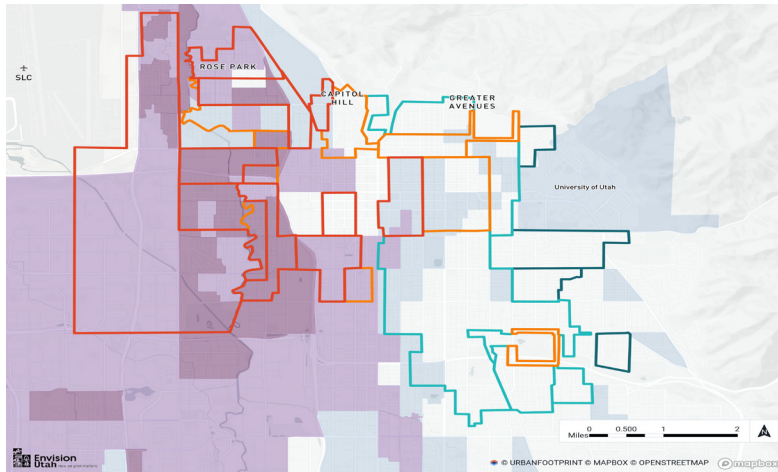


### Demographic Change in Utah 2015-2065



■ Black or African American    ■ American Indian or Alaska  
■ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander    ■ Two or More Races  
■ Asian    ■ Hispanic    ■ White, not Hispanic

### HOME OWNER'S LOAN CORPORATION RATING AND RACIAL DISTRIBUTION – SALT LAKE CITY



Previously redlined neighborhoods are home to higher non-white populations today.

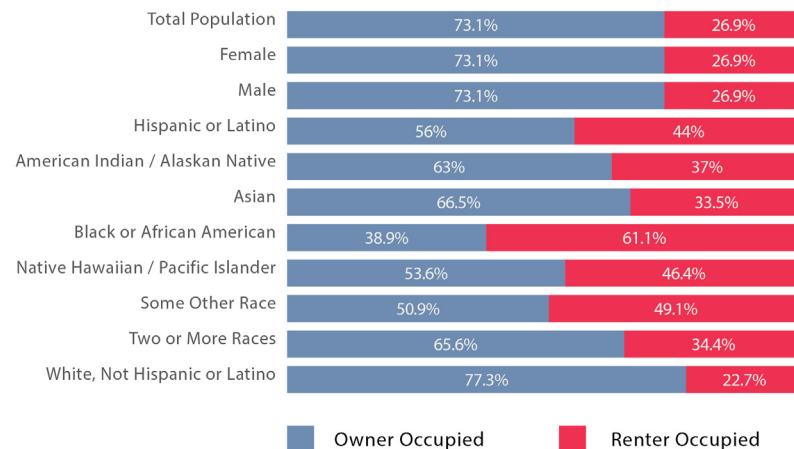
#### HOME OWNER'S LOAN CORPORATION RATING

■ D "Redlined"    ■ C    ■ B    ■ A

#### PERCENT WHITE ALONE, ACS 15-19 Race and Ethnicity - Census Planning Database (2021)

■ Null    ■ 10.4-30    ■ 30-55  
■ 55-75    ■ 75-100

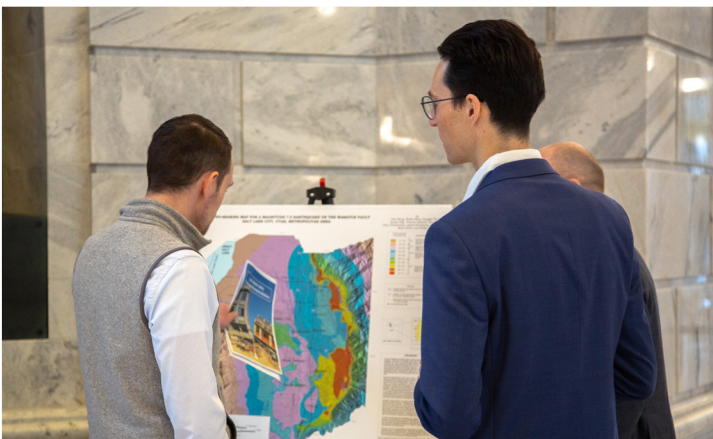
### Utah Housing Tenure by Race, Ethnicity, and Sex, 2015–2019



# | DISASTER RESILIENCE

Envision Utah continues to play a central role in helping our state become more resilient to a major earthquake. In 2023, we began work on an outreach campaign aimed at increasing awareness of Utah's seismic vulnerabilities and arming Utahns with strategies to mitigate those risks. We also continued our work with the Utah Seismic Safety Commission to prioritize policies and strategies that would put Utah in a position to recover from a major earthquake. The following are the 5 recommendations included in our report:

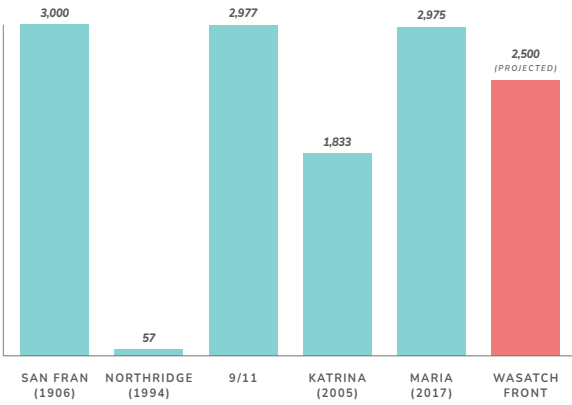
1. Enhance Seismic Resilience of Water Aqueducts: the Utah Legislature allocated \$50 million in 2023 to fortify major water aqueducts supplying the Wasatch Front and the Governor has recommended an additional \$20M this year. This investment ensures a reliable water supply during seismic events.
2. Retrofit Seismically Unsound School Buildings: Efforts persist to mitigate seismic risks in school buildings, safeguarding tens of thousands of Utah children. These initiatives prioritize community safety.
3. Raise Public Awareness of URM Buildings: Progress in 2023 includes a FEMA grant for an outreach campaign, empowering communities with the knowledge needed to prepare for seismic events, particularly in Utah's 140,000 Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings.
4. Strengthen Building Code Enforcement: Ongoing engagement with experts and stakeholders has facilitated crucial dialogue on building code enforcement. Forums like the EERI conference and the URM Summit contribute to fostering a culture of preparedness within our communities.
5. Pursue an earthquake early warning (EEW) system for the Wasatch Front, with approximately \$5 million in capital costs and nearly \$1 million in annual operational expenses that would provide adequate warning time and enable critical actions in areas not immediately proximate to the epicenter.



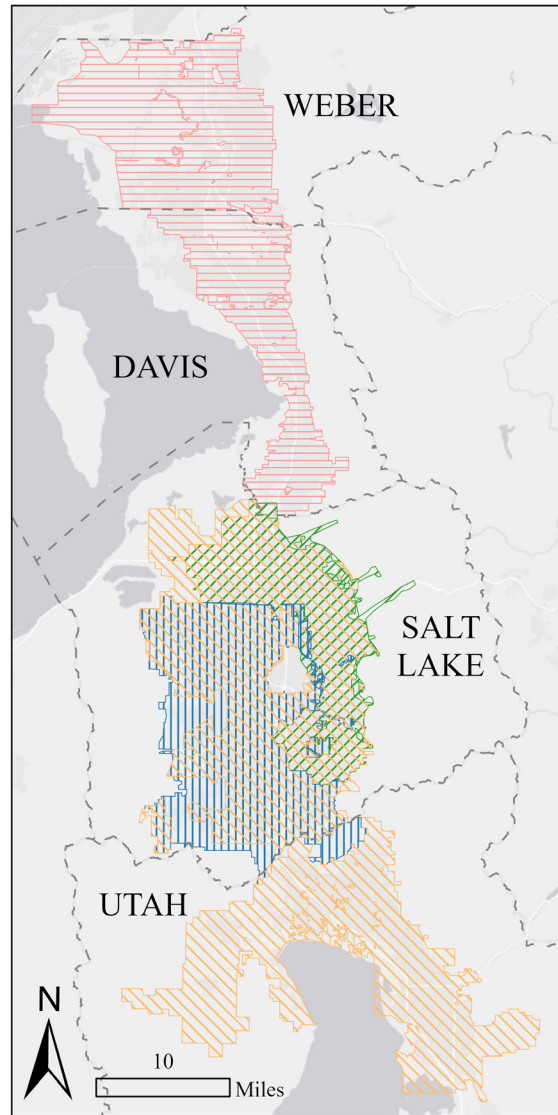
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REPORT



## FATALITIES IN MAJOR U.S. DISASTERS SINCE 1900

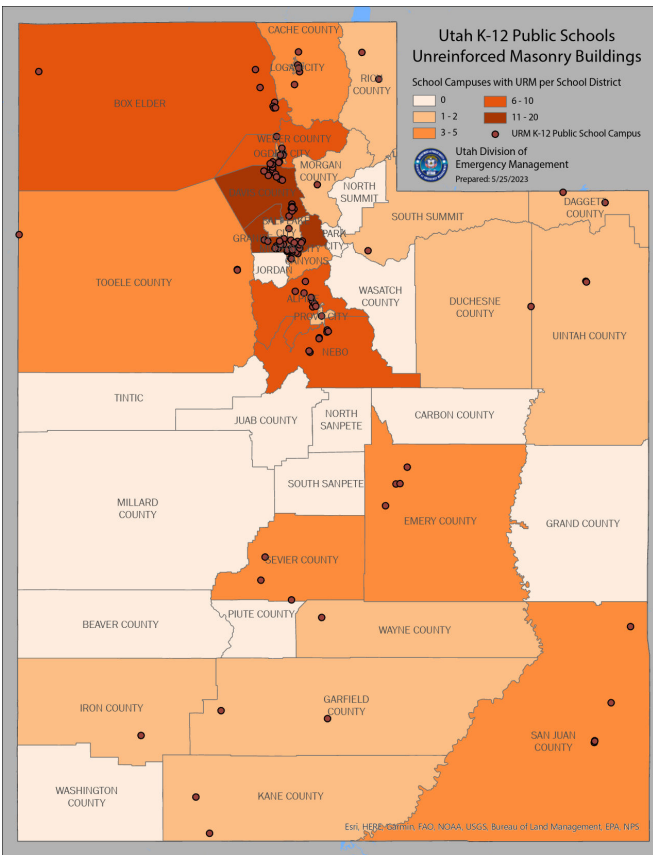


## Areas Served by Aqueduct Projects

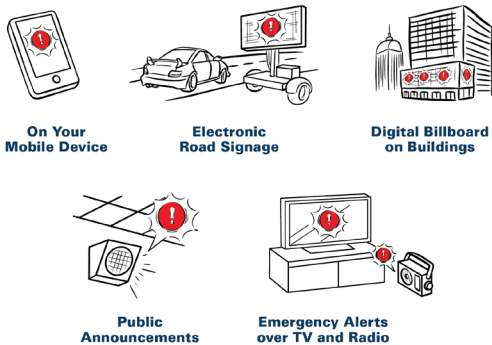


- Jordan Aqueduct Reaches 1-4, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
- Salt Lake Aqueduct, Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy
- Alpine Aqueduct, Central Utah Water Conservancy District
- Davis and Weber Aqueducts, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
- County

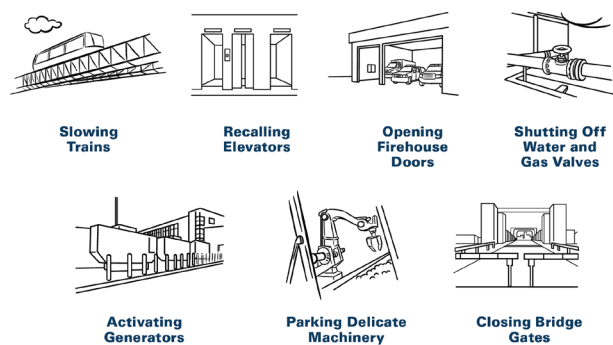
These aqueducts are vulnerable to disruption from a major earthquake.



### Alerts Delivered to People



### "Machine-to-Machine" Actions



Examples of automated actions powered by ShakeAlert®

# EDUCATION

## SUPPORTING GREAT TEACHERS AND EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

One of our biggest priorities is to ensure all Utah students have great teachers by making the teaching profession more attractive and competitive. We worked with our committees to refresh our “Vision for Teacher Excellence,” and we aim to use that vision to ensure the public, education leaders, and policymakers understand the strategies—including both more effective compensation as well as other non-compensation strategies—that are most likely to provide effective educators for Utah students. Our work this year included the following:

- Continued collaboration with USBE to understand Utah’s teacher shortage.
- Deeper collaboration with the Utah teacher preparation programs so that we can understand how current teacher training will affect the teacher shortage and better understand how to improve teacher preparation.
- Collaboration with education stakeholders to begin creating a state-wide college survey to better understand why students are/are not deciding to become teachers. We plan to launch this survey at the beginning of 2024.

## ENCOURAGING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Our efforts in post-secondary education focus specifically on helping students bridge the gap between high school and post-secondary education. This year, we completed deeper and more comprehensive research into why students don’t pursue post-secondary education. This included focus groups, interviews, and a survey, with a special focus on talking to the students who are least likely to pursue education beyond high school. We are sharing our research findings with post-secondary education leaders and institutions as well as all our education partners. We will then collaborate with these education leaders and our committees to identify changes to policies or practices that would overcome the barriers identified in our research.

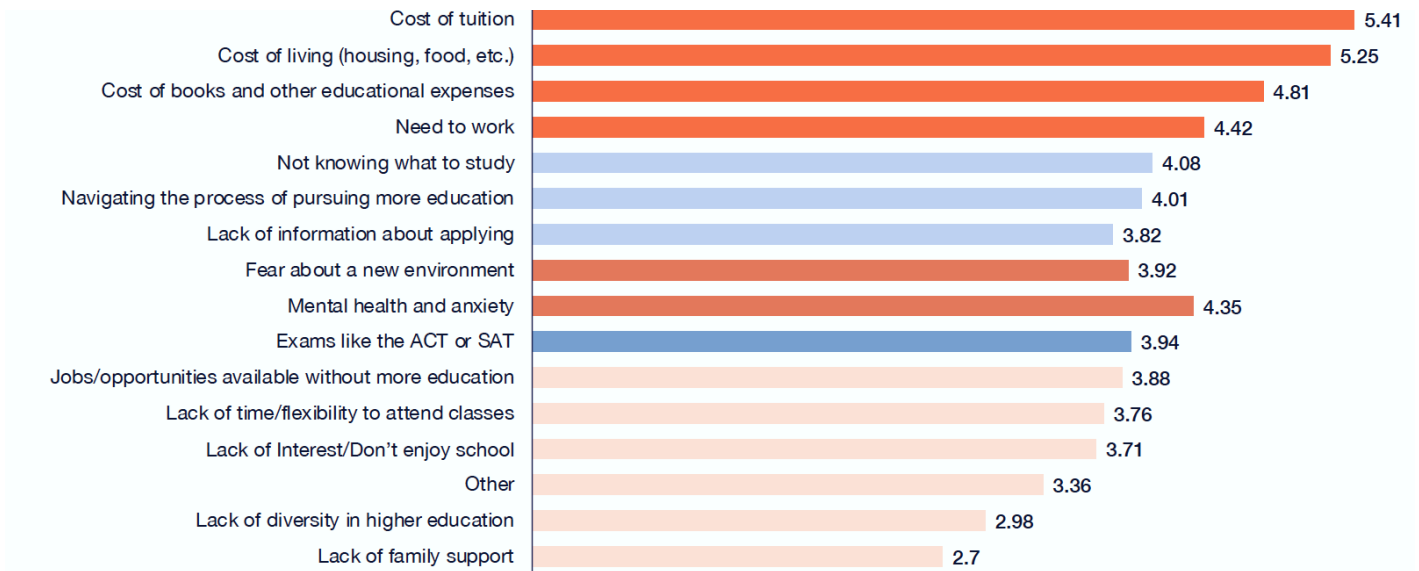


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# HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY RESULTS

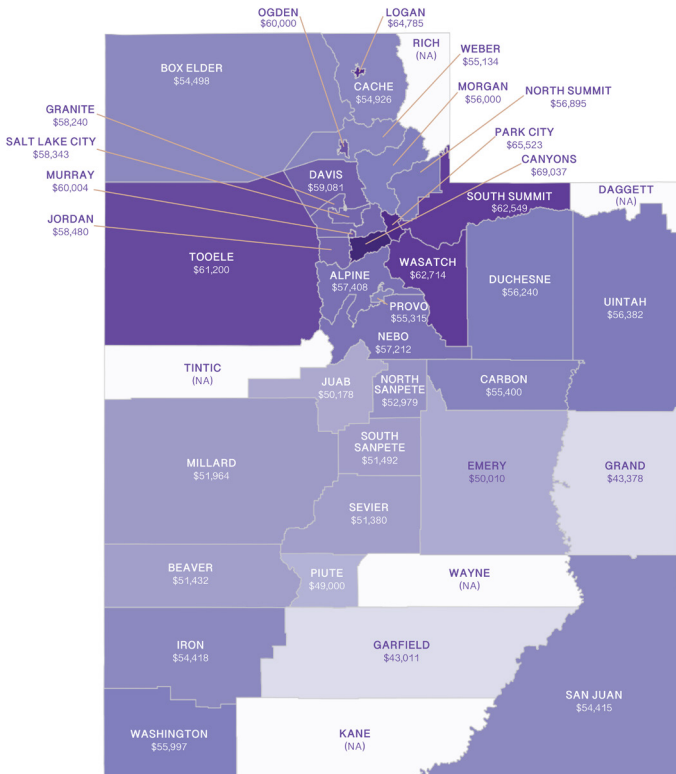
## Largest Barriers to pursuing secondary education



# TEACHER VISION

Utah achieved an impressive educational milestone by increasing starting teachers' salaries. For the 2023-2024 school year, eight school districts now have new teachers earning the recommended starting salary of \$60,000 per year.

## 2023-2024 Utah School District Starting Salary Map



DISTRICT	SALARY	STATUS
Canyons	\$69,037	★
Park City	\$65,523	★
Logan	\$64,785	★
Wasatch	\$62,714	★
South Summit	\$62,549	★
Tooele	\$61,200	★
Murray	\$60,004	★
Ogden	\$60,000	★
Davis	\$59,081	
Jordan	\$58,480	
Salt Lake City	\$58,343	
Granite	\$58,240	
Alpine	\$57,408	
Nebo	\$57,212	
North Summit	\$56,895	
Uintah	\$56,382	
Duchesne	\$56,240	
Morgan	\$56,000	
Washington	\$55,997	
Carbon	\$55,400	
Provo	\$55,315	
Weber	\$55,134	
Cache	\$54,926	
Box Elder	\$54,498	
Iron	\$54,418	
San Juan	\$54,415	
North Sanpete	\$52,979	
Millard	\$51,964	
South Sanpete	\$51,492	
Beaver	\$51,432	
Sevier	\$51,380	
Juab	\$50,178	
Emery	\$50,010	
Piute	\$49,000	
Grand	\$43,378	
Garfield	\$43,011	

Numbers taken from 2023-2024 salary schedules published by each school district. Daggett, Kane, Rich, Tintic, and Wayne districts are not yet included in this list.



## | EARLY LEARNING

Envision Utah continues its efforts to work with partners to share information about brainbuilding with parents and caregivers. In 2023 we expanded our footprint outside Salt Lake Valley, focusing on families in Cache Valley, Ogden, St. George, Vernal and other parts of rural Utah. We added new friends and colleagues in childcare spaces. We ventured further into libraries in 2023 with the help of our friends at the City Library in Salt Lake, who piloted visual transformations to their children's library, which will inform our work with the State Library System in 2024. We added dozens of new partners and provided them with customized materials, in addition to continuing our work with over 100 existing partners and friends in Utah.

We expanded our work with Intermountain Health in meaningful ways this year, moving beyond our audiology pilot, delivering over four hundred posters and thousands of flyers into every Mom and Baby unit across their system. Now, every new family at an Intermountain clinic or hospital should hear about brainbuilding from a trusted nurse. We also secured grant funding from Intermountain's community care foundation, which helps us continue to connect families to healthy brain-building resources for their babies and young children across Utah.

We also established a partnership between Envision Utah, Bezos Family Foundation, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to explore how Vroom's resources can be adapted for international and domestic congregations and implemented alongside the Church's humanitarian efforts around the world.



## STATEWIDE IMPACT ON AGES 0 - 5

OVER **5000** APP DOWNLOADS SINCE WE STARTED TRACKING WITH QR CODES!

INCLUDING:

**435** SPANISH LANGUAGE DOWNLOADS

**1300** INTERMOUNTAIN DOWNLOADS

WE HAD **3,100** REGISTERED VROOM APP USERS IN UTAH IN 2023 ON AVERAGE, FROM 2239 IN JANUARY OF 2023 UP TO **3567** IN DECEMBER.

**TOP THREE** IN THE COUNTRY IN 2023 IN NEW APP USERS BEHIND ONLY CALIFORNIA AND WASHINGTON!

### Your child's brain grows fastest from birth through age 5!

Turn everyday moments into Brain Building Moments® with tips like this:

#### #682: Today We Are

As you leave the house, **talk to your child about the plans for the day.** "We're going to the grocery store to buy some food." Ask questions like, "What do you think we should buy? Why?" Continue the conversation, "When we get home we're going to cook this food for dinner!"

#### Brain-building Science

When you share the plans for the day, it will help both of you know what to expect and to prepare for the events. These conversations with your child are a good way to build routines as they grow older. Routines help them feel secure and in control.

Suggested age:  
0 - 5 years



For more brain-building tips download the free Vroom app or text **VROOM** to **48258**.



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Message and data rates may apply. See [vroom.org/terms](https://vroom.org/terms) for terms and privacy policy. Text STOP to cancel.



Working with Little Lambs in Cache Valley, we distributed brain building tips inside of 250 diaper packs that go directly to families with young children.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Envision Utah team works with the public and numerous stakeholders to maintain strong relationships and collaborate to ensure a high quality of life for current and future generations. The following represent the highlights of those efforts.

## LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Each year, Envision Utah meets with Utah lawmakers over breakfast during the legislative session to ensure they understand and rely on the Envision Utah's work. In 2023, Envision Utah CEO Ari Bruening, Senate President Stuart Adams, and Speaker Brad Wilson spoke about a couple of the top issues impacting Utahns today, including the need to improve **disaster resilience** and **growth** in our state.

## SPRING BREAKFAST

We were excited to have been joined by an expert panel at the 2023 Spring Breakfast who spoke about one of the top issues impacting the future of our state: **water**. That panel included Teresa Wilhelmson, Timothy Hawkes, Tage Flint, and Warren Peterson.

Our four panelists came with diverse knowledge and expertise, with backgrounds that included experience in water development, conservation, optimization, agriculture, the Great Salt Lake, and more. Their shared passion for the future of water in Utah, and knowledge regarding the unique challenges we face in our state when it comes to securing that future, made for an enthralling discussion.

## COMMON GOOD AWARDS

Once a year, Envision Utah recognizes individuals and organizations who are doing great things to help make our communities a better place. This year's Common Good Awards went to the **Utah Woman & Leadership Project, Ivory Innovations, and Giv Group**.

Guiding Our Growth, A Statewide Conversation about Utah's Future has engaged some 29,000 Utahns in shaping a strategy for the future of the state. This year's Common Good Awards featured presentations from experts on the **four Guiding Our Growth topics**: housing, water, transportation, and open space and recreation. Our live audience then voted on which panelist made the most convincing pitch for why their topic stood out. Despite ALL the topics being equally important for the future of our state, the conversation on water, by Brian Steed, took the majority of the audience votes.

## YOUR UTAH, YOUR FUTURE PODCAST

In 2023 we continued the production of the Your Utah, Your Future Podcast—Envision Utah's podcast that focuses on the top issues impacting our state and how we make sure Utah is a great place to live both now and for decades to come.

We sat down with the experts to speak about public **education** in Utah. The two episodes that aired this year informed listeners about our state's **education system** and the impacts it has on our communities, as well as **teacher shortages**.



## DONORS

Envision Utah is grateful for the ongoing support from the **George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation** and many other generous supporters:

### INDIVIDUALS

Parr Brown Gee & Loveless

Ty McCutcheon

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SEUALG SERDA

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Larry H and Gail Miller Family Foundation

The Nature Conservancy

Morgan Stanley

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Rio Tinto Kennecot Utah Copper LLC

Utah Transit Authority

Rocky Mountain Power

Zions Bancorporation

rPlus Energies

## THANK YOU

Envision Utah credits its success to the great public and private partnerships forged over the last two decades.

We sincerely thank you for believing in our mission of helping residents create communities that are rich in opportunity and defined by unparalleled quality of life. As Envision Utah continues to move forward, we are appreciative of the monumental community support for the Envision Utah process that brings people together to find common ground and maintain the exemplary quality of life in this region now and for generations to come.



## STAFF

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**Jason Brown**  
Vice President of Education  
& Communications

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**Travis Allred**  
Early Learning Project  
Manager

**Allegra Sturdevant**  
Communications Specialist

**Amy Upchurch**  
Communications Coordinator

**We are deeply grateful for the support we receive from visionary Utahns across the state. Your friendship, guidance, and generosity makes our work possible—thank you!**

# ENVISION UTAH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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## CHAIR

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Third Cadence

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**Sterling Olander**  
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Kirton McConkie

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**Ari Bruening**  
President & CEO,  
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State Engineer

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## **Chris Wilson**

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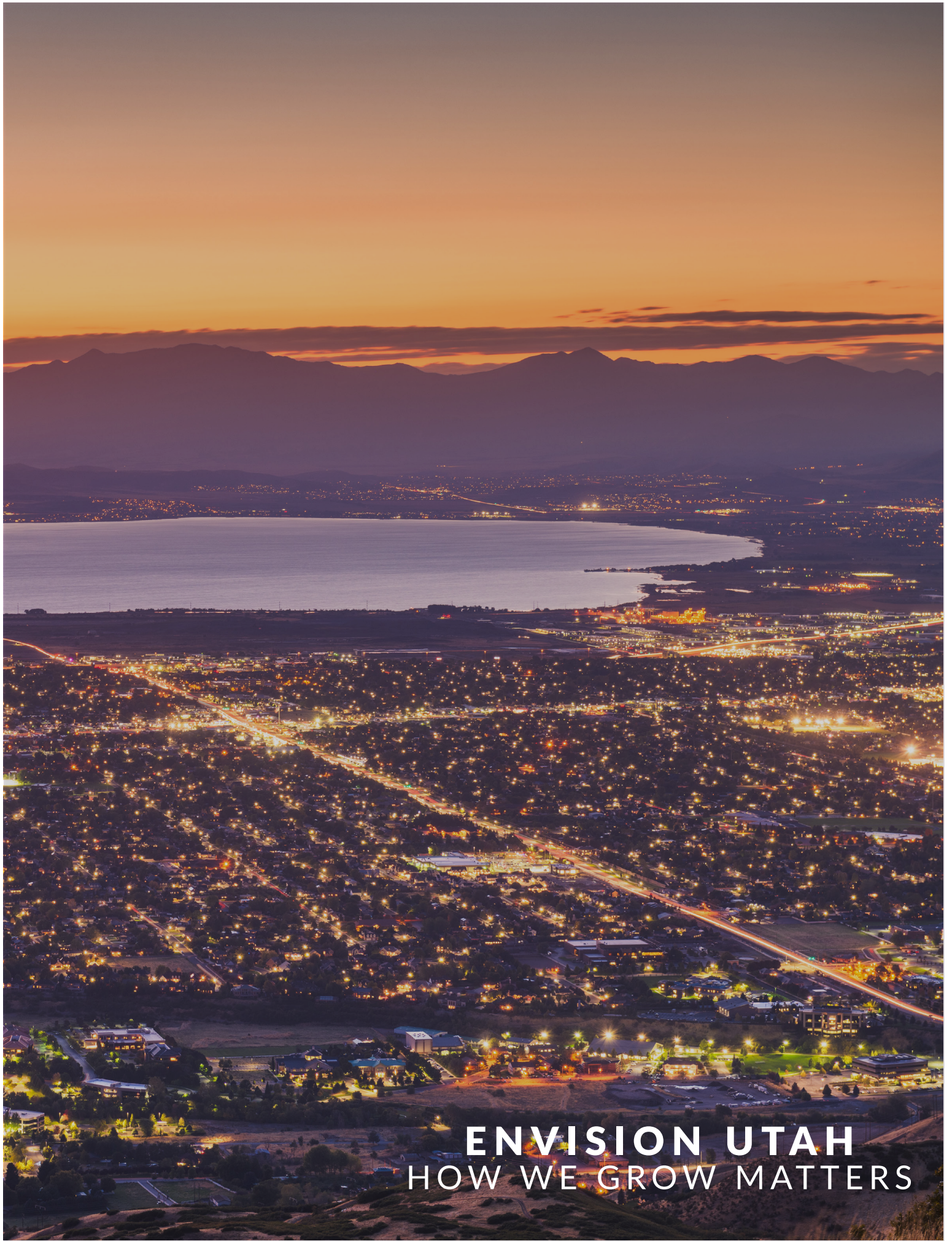
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