



# GUIDING OUR GROWTH

A STATEWIDE CONVERSATION ABOUT UTAH'S FUTURE

## Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement Summary

*Envision Utah*

# What do you love most about your community that you want to preserve?

**Question type:** word cloud

**Response summary:** Utahns throughout the state love being near their families and the culture and character of their communities. They also love the outdoors. Utahns in more urban regions prioritize their recreational access and scenic viewsheds while Utahns in more rural areas generally focus on agriculture in addition to recreation and views.

**Quotes:**

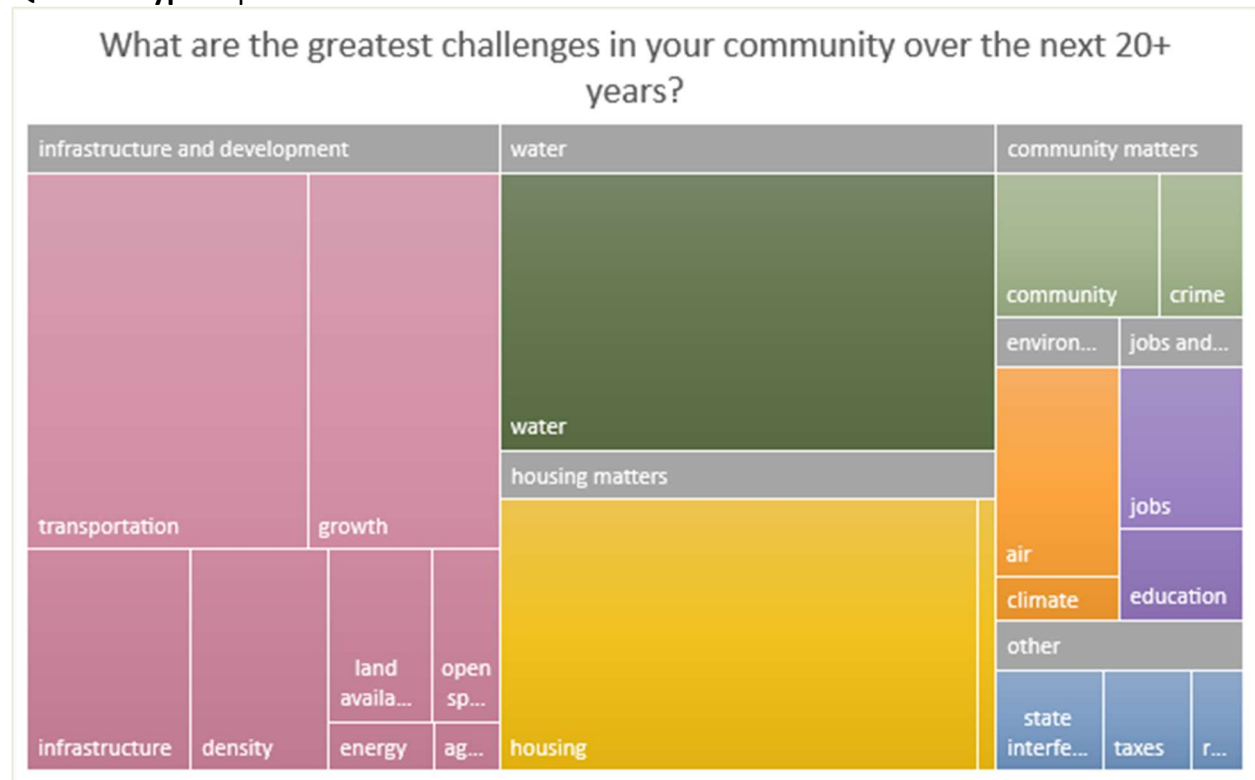
- Wasatch Back - “Quality people; Open space”
- SE Monticello - “Strong sense of community; Beautiful landscape”
- Salt Lake County - “Proximity to the Wasatch mountains and the amazing views”

**Word cloud:**



# What are the greatest challenges in your community over the next 20+ years?

Question type: Open text



**Response summary:** Water, housing, and infrastructure (including transportation) were most likely to be cited as the greatest future challenges throughout the state, consistent with recent public values research.

Water availability concerns are widespread in Utah. Water infrastructure and storage as well as urban water use were commonly discussed during workshops in more rural areas. More urban stakeholders seem more concerned in water use for landscaping and those in the Wasatch region are particularly concerned about water levels in the Great Salt Lake.

Concern about housing affordability and a shortage of housing units was shared statewide. Stakeholders in more urban and quickly growing regions suggested that the mix of housing options currently available also inhibited housing attainability. Stakeholders from more rural and slower growing regions specifically mentioned that short term rentals (STRs) and a scarcity of newly built starter homes were challenges.

Stakeholders in quickly growing regions often cite traffic as a major concern. Several stakeholders in slow or now-growth areas are concerned about government overreach at the state and federal level, including state requirements for local governments.

## Quotes:

### Infrastructure and development (411 comments)

- EU board- "Growth distribution," "possible limits to growth"
- Davis- "Nimbyism," "anti-density mentality"
- Utah County- "Managing growth effectively to discourage sprawl"
- Weber- "Maintaining open space, walkable space, and providing the infrastructure to meet the growth."
- Weber- "Anti-growth and the same ten people."
- Utah Association of Realtors- "Traffic; Congestion; The American Dream"
- UBAOG- "War on energy, lack of transportation, lack of funding for infrastructure.... Losing water to the Wasatch Front Losing rural voices in the legislature"
- Washington- "smart growth, alternative transportation modes"

### Water (230 comments)

- EU board- "Living with less water"
- Davis- "Water; Water water water; Water"
- Utah Association of Realtors- "Salt lake drying up"
- UBAOG- "Loss of agriculture lands; Reprioritizing ag water to M & I;" "Losing water to the Wasatch Front"

### Housing (226 comments)

- EU Board- "Homeless services"
- Davis- "Political will; Mixed income housing"
- Weber- "Lack of affordable housing and the ability to zone for it without having the constant negative backlash."
- Utah County- "Gentrification"
- Utah Association of Realtors- "Aging population and home affordability"
- Cache- "Sufficient employees and housing"
- One Utah Summit- "Overcoming negative perceptions; Affordability"
- Grand + San Juan- "Not exporting our children ; Lack of housing"
- BYU- "problems in affordability will lead to only those in higher-income levels being able to live here"

### Community (67 comments)

- Utah County- "Preserving the unique community feel"
- Washington- "Maintaining small town feel while providing an affordable place for people to live"
- Weber- "inordinate negative effect on lower income and minority communities"
- Utah County- "Providing Public safety"
- Cache- "How do we overcome the concerns about crime and decreasing property values with elevated density?"
- Cache- "Finding smart ways to density that builds a city that honors community, outdoors, family friendliness."

### Environment- (53 comments)

- "air quality" commonly listed statewide

- Utah County- “Burdens on utilities and air quality as climate changes.”

Jobs & Education (53 comments)

- EU board- “Economic resettlement of rural Utah”
- EU Board- “More jobs than people”
- Carbon + Emory- “lack of jobs that pay self- sufficient wages”
- Wasatch Back- “Housing; Growth; Workforce”

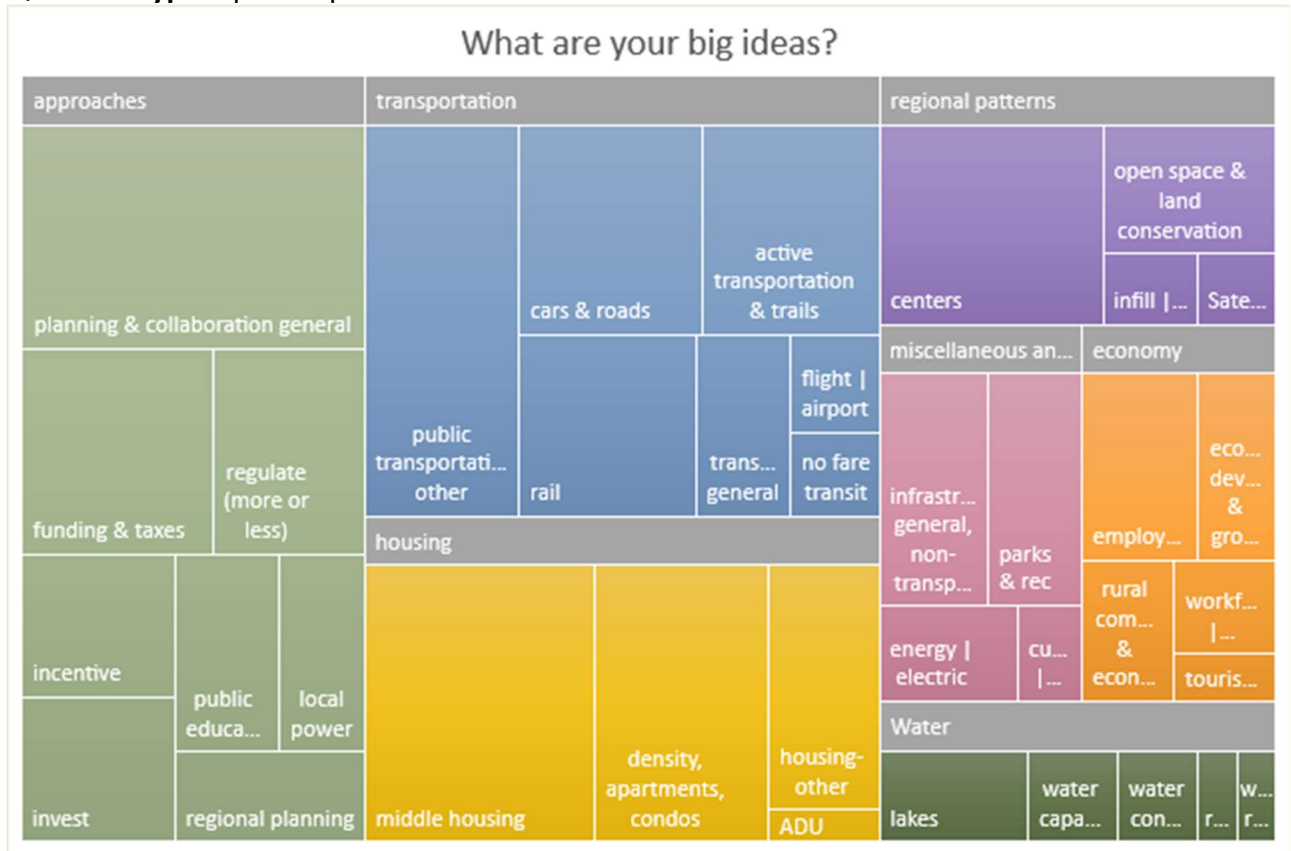
State Interference (23 comments)

- Utah County- “State intrusion that may diminish communities;” “unfunded state mandates”
- UBAOG- “ Federal government ; Over regulation”



# What are your big ideas?

Question Type: open response



## Highlighted “Big Ideas”

### Statewide:

- Regional/countywide visions and collaboration
- Statewide plans and action on open space conservation, trail networks, outdoor access preservation, access
- Regional or statewide rail
- Expanded/enhanced transit
- Water: State purchased water rights, infrastructure development, water reuse programs, drip irrigation, reservoirs
- Housing: cultural shift around neighbor opposition to housing,
- satellite cities, infill, ADUs, short term rental management, permitting processes
- Link economic development spending to housing policy

### Urban or quickly growing:

- Public transportation to Wasatch Front from emerging areas, nearby communities

- Housing- reduce regulatory and financial barriers to smaller SF homes and lots, missing middle, owner-occupied condos

#### **Rural or slowly growing:**

- Highway 6 expansion
- Broadband- mostly a success story, fill in the gaps
- Infrastructure- development to attract growth to rural Utah, grant or funding support for smaller areas
- Housing- short term rental management, modular developments
- Financial tools to take advantage of visitation & support infrastructure and services

## **Approaches**

Planning and collaboration general, funding & taxes, and regulations (change, more, or less) were the approaches most often mentioned by stakeholders, followed by incentive, invest, public education, local power, and regional planning.

**Each substantive topic has a statistically significant relationships with at least one approach**

<b>Parent Topic</b>	<b>Approach</b>
Transportation	Invest
Housing	Incentive; regulate (change, more, less); planning and collaboration (general)
Regional Patterns	Planning & collaboration (general)
Miscellaneous & QOL	Invest; Funding & taxes
Economy	Incentive; funding & taxes; regulate (change, more, less)
Water	Regulate; Funding & taxes

## **Transportation**

Stakeholders throughout the state would like to see more **investment** in transportation infrastructure, technologies, and service.

#### **Quotes:**

##### Public transportation, other (49 comments)

- Utah County- “UTA actually offering service on west side of county.”
- Utah County- “Strong investment in public transportation. Light rail over BRT”
- Utah County- “BRT through State St; Once transportation and transit have been retrofitted for growth, we can preserve neighborhoods”
- Cache- “Improve bus system”
- Cache- “Link to UTA/Front runner for better/faster public transport between urban areas.”
- Cache- “Last mile projects for public transportation; Create bypasses for north to south transit; Eliminate cars for use freshman so they get used to public transit”
- Cache- “15 min bus service”

### Cars and roads (31 comments)

- EU Board- "Build an east-west freeway in south Salt Lake County"
- EU Board- "Widespread EV charging network.; North South freeway on West Side of Utah Lake."
- Washington- "Driverless Cars- how does that change everything?"
- Utah Association of Realtors- "More electric car charging stations"
- Cache- "Plan freeways and beltway routes preserve corridors now."
- Cache- "Narrow the roads; Road diets"
- Carbon + Emory- "Interstate development- 4 Lane highway from Spanish Fork to San Juan County"
- UBAOG- "Improved highway capacity"

### Active transportation and trails (30 comments)

- EU board- "Commit 5% of our road funding to bike trails for commuting and recreation trails."
- EU Board- "Triple the amount we spend on public and active transportation"
- Utah County- "Convert south county canals to trails like in the north of the county"
- Utah County- "Bike commuter trails"
- Cache- "Continued trail connectivity in our cities; More bike lanes and parking"
- Wasatch Back- "Protected mobility (bike, etc) lanes should be connected to and within all developments."

### Rail (26 comments)

- EU Board- "Commuter rail to major population destinations"
- Utah County- "Place light rail by frontrunner to allow frontrunner fewer stops and faster service. Solve the first mile last mile issue with reservations of driverless cars and mini transport vans."
- Cache- "Extending passenger rail through Cache Valley!"
- Carbon + Emory- "Bullet train Green River to Castle Dale."
- EU Board- "Train from SLC to vegas/phoenix/LA"

### Transportation General (14 comments)

- EU board- "Become a leader in electric drone-transportation (real long-term)"
- Weber- "Strategic density planning around transportation corridors."
- Utah County- "Help city elected officials participate as a regional participants in growth and transportation issues; not remain or become isolationist "wall builders"."

### Flight | Airport (7 response)

- Utah County- "Expand Provo airport"
- Cache- "Commercial flights out of the airport"

### No fare transit (6 responses)

- EU Board- "No fare transit w/ increased frequency"

## Housing

Stakeholders have ideas to **plan and collaborate** for updated **incentives** and **regulations** to make housing more attainable for more Utahns.

### **Quotes:**



#### Middle Housing (54 comments)

- Weber- "Allow more housing types in every commercial areas"
- Weber- "Twin homes, one level for the aging population, some multi-family, condos, multi-use."
- Utah County- "Smaller lot sizes ; Impact fees ; Zone for more single family starter homes"
- Utah Association of Realtors- "Zero lot line subdivisions with 1500-2500sf homes"
- Cache- "Smaller single family homes on smaller lots"
- Cache- "Encourage "new urbanism" type development ; Bring back Trolleys"
- Wasatch Back- "Increased density. Allow for duplex, triplex and fourplex housing units as a "use by right" within single family zones. Allow for increased building heights."
- BYU- "more duplexes, townhomes, and midrise apartments"

#### Density, apartments, condos (41 comments)

- EU Board- "Require cities and towns to allow more density and/or hit affordability quotas; Take Daybreak, hit copy and paste; Pay residents to reduce residential lawns by half (or more)"
- ULI- "Density bonus for providing attainable housing and community benefits ( parks etc)"
- Weber- "Strategic density planning around transportation corridors."
- Utah County- "Do the math on housing density necessary to accommodate growth and ask cities and developers to work together to make that happen and provide affordable housing for our children."
- Cache- "Increased density in existing cities; Stop zoning by referendum; Streamline development approval"
- Cache- "Contain new growth in smaller areas; Stop regulating based upon density; Stop requiring parking"
- Wasatch Back- "Visioning and planning ; Mixed use development with increased density in village centers"

#### Housing other (23 comments)

- EU Board- "Housing plus policy"
- EU Board- "Allow more housing in higher-income communities"
- Weber- "Affordable Housing plans that incorporate all aspects of the community."
- Washington- "Create local housing authorities and under Sen. Lee's housing bill acquire federal land, develop median income housing and with deed restrictions retain it in our affordable housing inventory long term. SITLA could do the same thing with teacher housing."
- Cache- "Shared space/multi generational/communal housing"
- Salt Lake County- "Provide incentives for redevelopment that include housing along major arterial streets"

#### ADU (3 comments)

- Weber- "Every new house constructed ADU-ready (basement entrance, kitchen plumbing)"

## Regional Patterns

Stakeholders have ideas about **planning** and **collaborating** to create regional patterns of centers, open space and land conservation, infill and redevelopment, and satellite cities.

### Quotes:

#### Centers (40 comments)

- EU Board- "Add a lot of housing near/in all the job centers along I-15"
- Washington- "Stop building urban sprawl style development sans neighborhood commercial that is financially unsustainable in perpetuity"
- Utah Association of Realtors- "Real mass transit to walkable communities"
- Cache- "More quality mixed use developments that include a "whole neighborhood " concept"
- Wasatch Back- "Connectivity on the wasatch back and keep the rural feel with clustering housing"
- Wasatch Back- "Visioning and planning ; Mixed use development with increased density in village centers"
- Cache- "Planned unit developments for new walkable communities in unincorporated land to test future urban density ideas."
- Salt Lake County- "Design more walkable neighborhoods w/ restaurants, cafes, schools, churches, and affordable homes (non-Euclidean zoning)."

#### Open Space and Land Conservation (20 comments)

- EU Board- "Incentivize landowners to hold land (see Europe) to ensure we can keep growing for 200+ years; More green spaces (worth less now, worth much more in the future)"
- Weber- "Coordinate planning among cities to maximize open space and provide more housing options"
- Weber- "Keep recreational and open space when developing"
- Wasatch Back- "90% open space"

#### Infill and Redevelopment (6 comments)

- Utah County- "Drastically change zoning to allow for mixed uses in existing zones (bodegas and shops in residential neighborhoods along arterial corridors) and infill by increasing density, reducing lot sizes, allowing ADUs, and reducing setbacks and parking requirements."
- Salt Lake County- "Provide incentives for redevelopment that include housing along major arterial streets"
- Wasatch Back- "Redevelopment of outdated suburban commercial areas to integrate needed housing."

#### Satellite Cities (5 comments)

- EU board- "Develop new Daybreak-like connected cities around the fastest growing areas; Invest in outdoor rec and parks within all cities and towns (bike trails, parks, community events, arts, concerts etc.) to alleviate use of state/national parks so we can keep the big parks great and accessible"
- EU Board- "Find a place to build a new city and plan it well with the right infrastructure ; Communities that are transitioning from rural to urban plan forty years ahead"

- Salt Lake County- “New urban centers”

## Miscellaneous and Quality of Life

Stakeholders throughout the state have ideas about **investing** and expanding **funding** for general infrastructure development, parks and recreation, and energy and electric technologies.

### Quotes:

#### Infrastructure general (21 comments)

- EU Board- “Internet access to ALL Utah communities”
- Weber- “We can maintain our quality of life by working to update master plans throughout the communities and showing the value of investing in infrastructure including fiber, transit, etc.”
- Utah Association of Realtors- “Also limit growth by year to 1% to ease burden on infrastructure including schools”
- UBAOG- “Large infrastructure projects like happened in the 50s and 60s”

#### Parks and recreation (18 comments)

- EU board- “Invest in outdoor rec and parks within all cities and towns (bike trails, parks, community events, arts, concerts etc.) to alleviate use of state/national parks so we can keep the big parks great and accessible”
- Box Elder- “Regional outdoor recreation planning”
- Cache- “More ski resorts”

#### Energy and electric (11 comments)

- EU board- “Electrification to improve air quality”
- EU Board- “Buildings have a large carbon footprint...beyond energy. The climate crisis needs an innovative response to materials that reduce not only the carbon footprint of energy, but the a high carbon footprint of materials and methods.”
- Utah Association of Realtors- “Improved public transportation, energy efficient updates/incentives,”
- Grand + San Juan- “Thorium, uranium, helium, Potash.”
- Wasatch Back- “Stop fighting change/ people moving in and instead, invest in those people to allow them to be a productive member of our community. Use our resources to make us even better. For example, let’s train folks to service electric vehicles.”
- UBAOG- “More energy projects - nuclear, gas, hydrogen”

#### Culture, Art, and Restaurants (5 comments)

- EU Board- “Add an arts/culture/entertainment overlay to economic and infrastructure development planning”
- EU Board- “Update antiquated bar/restaurant license quotas to match utah current population”

## Economy

During the Guiding Our Growth phase 1 discussions, stakeholders suggested enhancing the economy using **incentives**, changes to **taxing** and **financing**, and updating **regulations**.

## Quotes:

### Employment (18 comments)

- EU Board- "Incentivize pay equity"
- EU Board- "Teacher pay needs to double."
- Washington- "Support higher paying jobs through technical education"
- Washington- "Computer Science is now in K-12 across the county. UT and Dixie Tech are expanding programs. Higher paying jobs in tech are on the way."

### Economic Development (12 comments)

- EU board- "Develop a comprehensive economic growth model that fully captures true cost of growth and recognizes the dynamic cost of limited resources over time."
- EU Board- "Promote mixed-income development (upzone the east bench, etc.); What is our target economic growth rate?"
- Salt Lake County- "Economic development off the Wasatch Front"
- Salt Lake County- "Economic growth is going to be tied to our investment into transit, housing & jobs. How close are they together"

### Rural Economies (11 comments)

- Cache- "City specific design guides to maintain a sense of place and the rural feel throughout the valley"
- FCAOG- "Personal tax incentives for moving from an urban county to a rural county and bringing your (remote) job with you."
- UBAOG- "State programs or incentives to spread growth more evenly across the state ; Move more state jobs to rural Utah"
- Wasatch Back- "Modular construction of home components in rural Utah and build more in urban."

### Workforce Training and Education (8 comments)

- Carbon + Emory- "Medical Isotopes/Research Facility Growing Airport-Cargo; Create a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem ; Building a training for apprenticeships Bringing high paying training program-aviation mechanics"
- Weber- "Smart growth which includes open space, schools, shopping, eating, and worship"

## Water

Stakeholders shared their ideas about changing regulations, procuring more funding, and updating tax structures to ensure clean water is readily available for productive uses.

## Quotes:

### Lakes (15 comments)

- ULI- "Use the funds necessary to allow The Great Salt Lake to become the lake it once was and needs to be."
- EU board- "Be a leader for net zero emissions and carbon.; Prove that Utah Leaders can manage public lands by restoring water flow to the Great Salt Lake."
- Utah County- "North south and east west causeway across Utah lake"
- Utah County- "Not a Utah Lake bridge; Protect and preserve Utah Lake"

### Water Capacity and Infrastructure (9 comments)

- Utah Association of Realtors- “Additional water reservoirs for water and recreational use”
- Washington- “More water/wastewater infrastructure in rural areas.”
- UBAOG- “Nuclear power; Invest in infrastructure; Reservoirs; hydroelectric”

#### Water Conservation (8 comments)

- EU Board- “Pay residents to reduce residential lawns by half (or more)”
- Washington- “Start by reaching for low hanging fruit: water conservation measures, active and alternative transportation, collaborations that make simple living attainable, community low water use gardening for food security, ADUs (encourage and assist with ideas for financing)”

#### Water Reuse (4 comments)

- EU Board- “Recycling water at the district scale - update to policy.”
- Utah Association of Realtors- “Reusing/water cleaning plants”

#### Water Rights (4 comments)

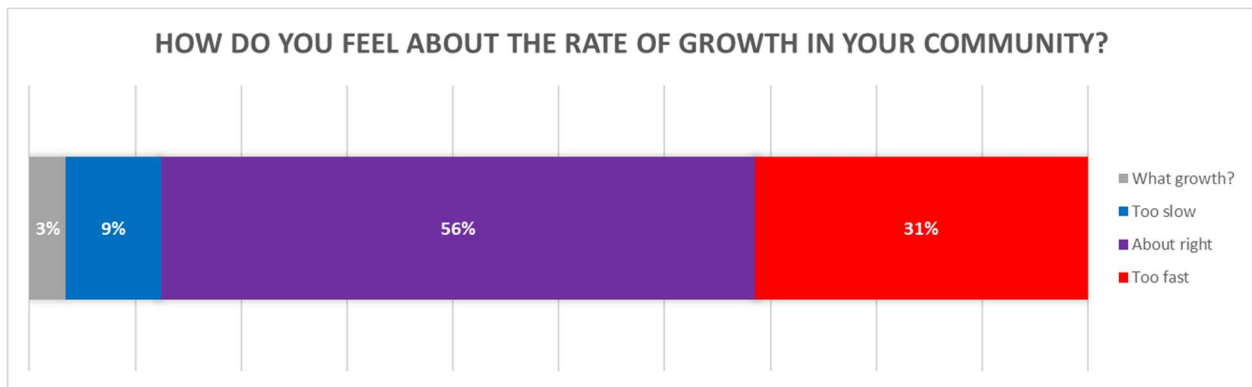
- ULI- “Review water rights/usage policies for improvements”
- EU Board- “Cross watershed water rights”
- Utah County- “Municipal acquisition of water rights”
- Utah Association of Realtors- “Simplify and consolidate water laws”

# How do you feel about the rate of growth in your community?

**Question type:** multiple choice

**Response summary:** Utahns in more urban regions tended to feel that growth might be “too fast” while Utahns in more rural areas often felt that growth in their region was “too slow,” with the majority of stakeholders throughout the state stating that the rate growth is “about right” for their communities.

This is in contrast to the preliminary findings from the public response, which is showing that the majority of the public feels that the rate of growth is “too fast.”

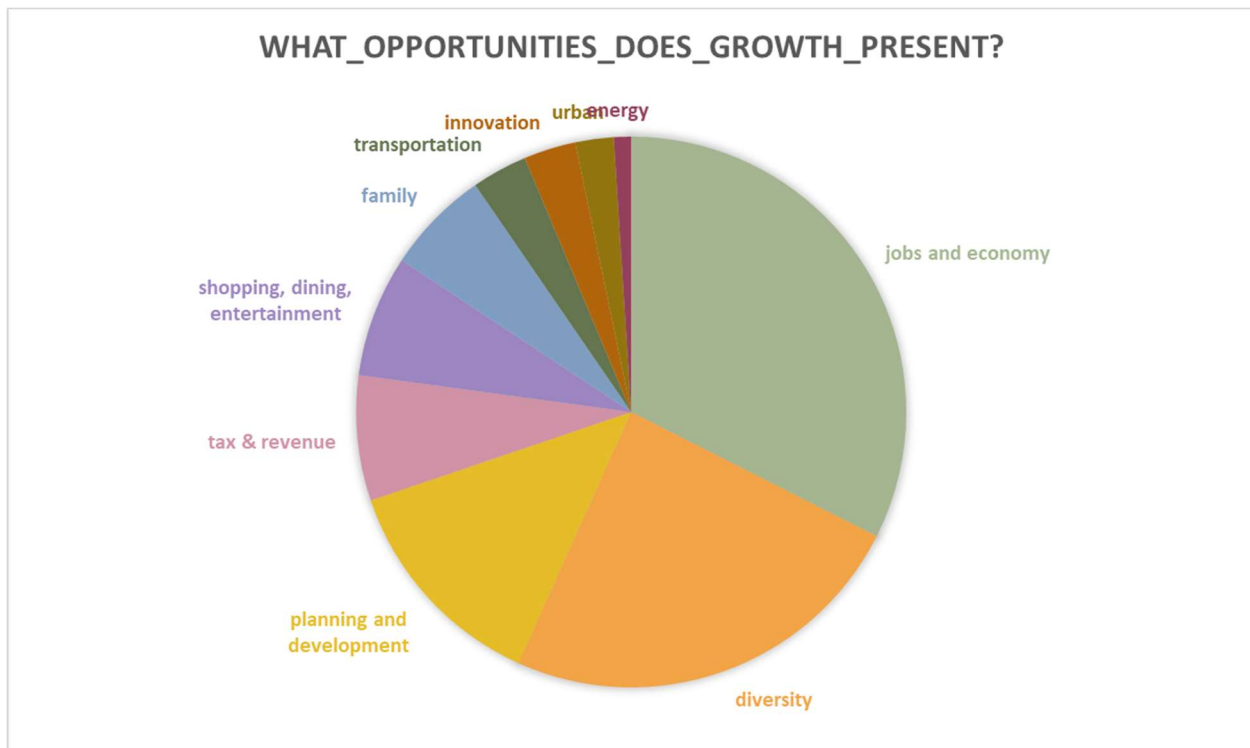




# What opportunities does growth present?

**Question type:** open text

**Response summary:** Across the state, Utahns recognized that growth presented opportunities for jobs and the economy in their communities. In rural areas, there was a theme that growth would bring job diversification, new energy production, and employment opportunities for their family to remain in the community. In more urban areas, there was a focus on the diversification of culture and services available, transportation, cohesive planning, and tax revenue.



## Quotes

- EU Board - "Increased tax funding from growth to invest in our priorities; Ability to reshape our economy and job market to meet global demands."
- UBAOG - "Opportunities for our children to stay in the Basin"
- Cache - "Upward mobility; Ability to afford a family; Local sales tax collections; Not needing to drive to entertainment and shopping options; More restaurant options vs same fast food; My (grand)kids can live near me"
- Salt Lake County - "Better transit; Smarter planning; Wide sidewalks"
- Carbon + Emory - "Replacing the energy sector from historical past with cleaner energy resources but allowing the opportunity for implementation to occur before shutdown"

# How do you think growth in the rest of Utah will affect your community?

**Question type:** Open text

**Question geography:** This question was asked in the FCAOG region (minus Washington County), the SUALG region, and the Uintah Basin region.

**Response summary:** Most of the regional stakeholders provided responses related to conflicts and negative impacts, while some mentioned positive opportunities, especially related to economic development and tourism (although there was some concern about positive impacts making it to local communities).

Impacts to traffic and water resources were the most common concerns related to statewide growth. Views on migration caused by crowding and prices in more urban areas were mixed. Some thought that this would bring more opportunities to their regions, while others had reservations about how newcomers might change local culture and bid up housing prices.

