



# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Juab, Millard, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier and  
Wayne Counties



**SIX COUNTY**  
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **I. SUMMARY BACKGROUND**

<i>Introduction</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>What have we done?</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Socioeconomic</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>Environmental</i>	<b>6</b>
<i>Statewide and Regional Focus</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Workforce Statistics</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>SOAR Analysis</i>	<b>9</b>

## **II. TARGET AREA: INFRASTRUCTURE**

<i>Result, Aspirations</i>	<b>11</b>
<i>Strengths, Opportunities</i>	<b>12</b>
<i>Action Items</i>	<b>13</b>

## **III. TARGET AREA: WORKFORCE**

<i>Result, Aspirations, Opportunities</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>Strengths</i>	<b>15</b>
<i>Action Items</i>	<b>16</b>

## **IV. TARGET AREA: LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

<i>Result, Strengths, Aspirations</i>	<b>17</b>
<i>Opportunities</i>	<b>18</b>
<i>Action Items</i>	<b>19</b>

## **V. TARGET AREA: DIVERSIFICATION**

<i>Result, Strengths</i>	<b>20</b>
<i>Aspirations, Opportunities</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>Action Items</i>	<b>22</b>

# SUMMARY BACKGROUND

---

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the six-county region of Juab, Millard, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne counties in Utah aims to provide a comprehensive overview and plan for economic development in the area. The CEDS serves as a strategic framework to guide collaborative efforts and promote sustainable economic growth within the region.

The CEDS is developed and implemented by Six County Association of Governments (SCAOG) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in partnership with local governments, businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations. Its purpose is to identify opportunities, leverage existing assets, and address the barriers to economic growth. By fostering collaboration and coordination, the CEDS aims to enhance the region's competitiveness, create job opportunities, and improve the quality of life for its residents.

The six-county region encompasses diverse rural communities with unique economic strengths and challenges. The region is known for its natural beauty, agricultural resources, outdoor recreational opportunities, and a rich cultural heritage. However, it also faces economic diversification challenges, limited access to resources, and infrastructure gaps that need to be addressed.

The CEDS also emphasizes the importance of sustainable and inclusive economic development, ensuring that growth benefits all segments of the population and preserves the region's natural resources. It takes into account social, environmental, and cultural considerations to ensure a holistic approach to economic progress.

Through the implementation of the CEDS, SCAOG aims to build a resilient and diversified economy, reduce economic disparities, and foster an environment conducive to business innovation and expansion. By aligning stakeholders' efforts and resources, the CEDS serves as a roadmap for driving economic prosperity and enhancing the region's overall competitiveness in the years to come.

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

---

Over the past decade, the six-county region of Utah has undertaken a series of strategic economic development efforts aimed at fostering growth, diversification, and resilience in the local economy. These initiatives have focused on various key areas to drive progress and prosperity:

**Business Support and Entrepreneurship:** The region has prioritized supporting existing businesses and fostering entrepreneurship by providing resources, mentoring, and networking opportunities. Business development centers, chambers of commerce, and industry associations have played pivotal roles in nurturing the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

**Infrastructure Investment:** To enhance connectivity and facilitate economic activities, the region has made substantial investments in infrastructure. These efforts include improving transportation networks, expanding access to reliable broadband, and developing industrial parks to attract and accommodate businesses.

**Workforce Development:** Recognizing the critical role of a skilled workforce, the region has concentrated on workforce development programs and partnerships with educational institutions. Collaborations with Snow College and Utah State University extensions have provided tailored training and education to meet the demands of various industries.

**Tourism and Outdoor Recreation:** The region's natural beauty and recreational opportunities have been leveraged to promote tourism and attract visitors. Efforts have been made to enhance recreational facilities, preserve natural landscapes, and support the hospitality industry to boost tourism-related businesses.

**Economic Diversification:** To reduce reliance on a single industry, the region has pursued economic diversification. Focus areas have included expanding manufacturing capabilities, exploring technology-based industries, and promoting agriculture and agribusiness ventures.



**Community Development:** Efforts have been directed towards improving the quality of life and community infrastructure. Enhancing public services, investing in local amenities, and fostering community engagement have been central to creating a desirable environment for residents and businesses alike.

**Partnership and Collaboration:** The region has embraced collaboration with public and private sector entities, community organizations, and state agencies. Collaborative approaches have facilitated shared resources, expertise, and funding to advance economic development goals.

In light of the region's ongoing sustained growth and increasing appeal to individuals seeking a rural lifestyle, it is imperative that our endeavors in this domain escalate to address the evolving needs of our residents. As we embrace this momentum, we are committed to diligently managing this growth and devising robust strategies to ensure long-term prosperity for future generations. Our vision is to proactively plan and adapt, fostering a thriving and sustainable community that preserves its unique rural character while accommodating the aspirations of its residents and stakeholders.

# SOCIOECONOMIC

## POPULATION

In the six-county region of Utah, the areas that have experienced the largest population changes vary based on specific factors such as natural population increase, migration patterns, and economic dynamics.

### Growth Areas:

*Juab County:* Juab County has seen steadily increasing population growth, driven by a combination of natural population increase and in-migration due to employment opportunities and affordable housing options. Overflow from extensive growth in urban counties has started to spread into Juab County.

*Sanpete County:* Sanpete County has witnessed notable population growth over the years. The county's attractive rural lifestyle, educational opportunities provided by Snow College, and diverse economic sectors contribute to its population increase.

*Sevier County:* Sevier County has also experienced significant population growth, although this has slowed down the past couple of years. The population has increased 6.1% since 2010, but as the graph shows, this growth has slowed to 2.6% since 2020. The county's diverse economy, including agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism, has attracted individuals and families, leading to population expansion.

### Stable or Moderate Changes:

*Millard County:* Millard County has generally experienced relatively stable population trends over the years, with slight fluctuations but no significant changes.

*Wayne County:* Wayne County has witnessed significant population growth over the last two years, driven by factors such as natural population increase, in-migration of individuals seeking a rural lifestyle, and the development of tourism and recreational opportunities. However, the population has actually decreased by 4.8% since 2010.

County	2020	2022	Change
Juab	11,778	12,567	6.7%
Millard	12,977	13,330	2.7%
Piute	1,437	1,487	3.5%
Sanpete	28,435	29,724	4.5%
Sevier	21,517	22,069	2.6%
Wayne	2,490	2,645	6.2%
Region	78,634	81,822	4.1%

### Declining Areas:

*Piute County:* Piute County has faced population decline over the years, primarily due to an aging population, limited employment opportunities, and out-migration of younger individuals seeking better educational and employment prospects in larger urban areas. The graph shows an increase of 3.5% in the past two years, but overall there has been a 4.4% decline since 2010.

# SOCIOECONOMIC, CONT

## RACE

The region exhibits limited racial diversity, as approximately 94.7% of the population identifies as white alone. This demographic composition signifies a predominance of individuals belonging to the white racial category. Additionally, the population demonstrates an aging trend, with approximately 54.5% falling within the 18-64 years age bracket. It is noteworthy that this proportion is lower compared to the national average in the United States, which stands at approximately 79% for the same age range. These demographic characteristics provide valuable insights into the region's population dynamics, emphasizing the need for targeted strategies to address the aging population and encourage diversity within the community.

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
White alone	95.3%	93.2%	96.1%	93.4%	95.5%	94.5%	<b>94.7%</b>
Black or African American alone	0.6%	0.7%	0.3%	1.3%	0.6%	70.0%	<b>48.6%</b>
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1.3%	2.2%	1.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.1%	<b>1.5%</b>
Asian alone	0.5%	1.7%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%	1.1%	<b>66.9%</b>
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%	20.0%	0.2%	0.7%	0.3%	20.0%	<b>31.7%</b>
Two or More Races	2.0%	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%	2.5%	<b>2.0%</b>
Hispanic or Latino	5.8%	12.8%	8.0%	9.4%	5.8%	7.0%	<b>8.1%</b>
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	90.6%	82.6%	89.4%	85.8%	90.7%	88.5%	<b>87.9%</b>

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
Persons under 5 years	8.4%	7.3%	5.9%	6.0%	6.4%	6.4%	<b>6.7%</b>
Persons under 18 years	33.2%	30.9%	20.4%	23.5%	27.9%	22.9%	<b>26.5%</b>
Persons 65 and over	12.0%	17.6%	29.3%	14.8%	17.1%	23.1%	<b>19.0%</b>
Female persons	48.1%	48.2%	50.3%	46.8%	48.8%	48.2%	<b>48.4%</b>

# SOCIOECONOMIC, CONT

## HOUSING

Over the period from 2017 to 2022, the owner-occupied percentage of households across the region has averaged approximately 77.9%. However, the landscape has undergone significant disruption due to the Covid Pandemic, which led to an influx of individuals able to work remotely choosing to relocate to our rural areas. This influx, in turn, attracted an unprecedented level of investment in short-term rentals. As a result of these disruptions, we anticipate the owner-occupied percentage to undergo substantial changes in the upcoming rolling cycle of data. Additionally, the disruption has caused a notable deficit of affordable housing, forcing many seasonal and hospitality workers to seek housing outside the area and causing labor shortages in these industries. During the 2017-2022 data cycle, median rent prices accounted for approximately 15.6% of the median household income, while median monthly owner costs (with a mortgage) represented approximately 26.3% of the median household income. However, given the current challenges of affordable housing availability, cash-only home buyers, and supply chain issues arising from the pandemic, we anticipate significant deviations from these data points in the upcoming cycle. The shifts may be partially offset by the influx of higher-earning remote workers moving into the region and potentially elevating the median household income. These complex changes underscore the importance of carefully monitoring and addressing the evolving housing landscape to ensure a balanced and sustainable community environment.

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
Total Housing Units, July 2022	4072	5031	912	10544	8828	1750	<b>31137</b>
Owner-occupied Housing Rate	78.0%	72.7%	89.0%	77.6%	78.9%	71.3%	<b>77.9%</b>
Households, 2017-2021	3500	4204	538	8612	7250	1055	<b>25159</b>
Persons Per Household	3.29	3.01	3.31	2.98	2.92	2.33	<b>2.97</b>
Households with a Computer, 2017-2021	94.9%	96.2%	79.2%	96.1%	95.7%	94.6%	<b>92.8%</b>
Households with Broadband Internet, 2017-2021	87.3%	82.8%	69.7%	85.1%	85.6%	84.2%	<b>82.5%</b>
Building Permits, 2022	122	64	36	202	163	29	<b>616</b>

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
Median Household Income 2017-2021	\$74,741	\$66,304	\$33,611	\$60,186	\$60,262	\$55,605	<b>\$58,452</b>
Median selected monthly owner costs with mortgage	\$1,381	\$1,206	\$1,128	\$1,271	\$1,218	\$1,484	<b>\$1,281</b>
Housing as a % of income - Own	22.2%	21.8%	40.3%	25.3%	24.3%	32.0%	<b>26.3%</b>
Median Gross Rent	\$830	\$802	\$738	\$839	\$702	\$662	<b>\$762</b>
Housing as a % of income - Rent	13.3%	14.5%	26.3%	16.7%	14.0%	14.3%	<b>15.6%</b>

# ENVIRONMENTAL

---

The six-county region of Utah is characterized by a distinct environment that combines natural beauty, rural landscapes, and a strong sense of community.

**Natural Beauty:** The region is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, with picturesque mountains, scenic valleys, and expansive desert landscapes. The presence of national parks, forests, and recreational areas like Fishlake National Forest and Capitol Reef National Park enhances the region's natural appeal.

**Community Oriented:** The six-county region fosters a close-knit community environment. Residents often have strong ties to their communities, participating in local events, festivals, and community organizations. There is a sense of belonging and mutual support among residents, creating a tight community fabric.



**Recreational Opportunities:** The region offers abundant recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. Activities like hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, boating, and off-roading can be enjoyed in the region's vast natural spaces. The proximity to national parks, reservoirs, and mountains provides residents and visitors with a wide range of outdoor experiences.

**Wildlife and Natural Resources:** The region is home to diverse wildlife and natural resources. Wildlife species such as deer, elk, wild turkeys, and various bird species inhabit the region, adding to its ecological significance. Natural resources like water, minerals, and energy contribute to the region's economic activities and potential.

Overall, the six-county region of Utah showcases the beauty of the natural landscape, a rural and close-knit community atmosphere, and an array of outdoor recreational opportunities. The region's unique environment offers residents a balance between natural surroundings, a strong sense of community, and a connection to the region's rich history and heritage.

**Rural Charm:** The six-county region embodies a rural charm and offers a slower-paced lifestyle compared to urban areas. Residents can enjoy the peacefulness and tranquility of rural living, with open spaces, wide vistas, and a closer connection to nature.

**Agriculture and Farming:** The region has a strong agricultural presence, with fertile lands and a history of farming and ranching. Farming activities include the cultivation of crops such as grains, alfalfa, and fruit orchards, as well as livestock production like cattle and sheep.

**Historic Significance:** The region has a rich history with traces of Native American cultures, early pioneers, and historic landmarks. Historic sites and museums, such as Cove Fort Historic Site and the Pioneer Heritage Center, offer glimpses into the region's past and provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors.





# STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL FOCUS

---

In March 2023, the state of Utah unveiled its Coordinated Action Plan for Economic Vision 2030, developed in collaboration with Camoin Associates. Within this framework, Camoin identified six fundamental indicators, referred to as the "6 I's," as the pillars of a robust and resilient economy. These indicators include Infrastructure, Innovation, Intellectual Capital, Interest, Investment, and International. According to the comprehensive assessment based on these indicators, Utah stands in an advantageous economic position, securing the 3rd rank among all 50 states and the District of Columbia. However, it is important to note that this economic advantage is not uniformly distributed across the various regions of the state, as stated by Camoin. The assessment for the Six County Area of Governments (AOG) reveals that its indicators ranked from strongest to weakest are Intellectual Capital/Infrastructure (tied for 1st place), International (3rd place), Interest (4th place), Investment (5th place), and Innovation (6th place). This nuanced analysis highlights the diverse economic landscape within the region and underscores the significance of targeted strategies to promote balanced and inclusive economic development.



## INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

The six-county region of Utah is endowed with a range of infrastructure assets that are crucial for supporting economic development, transportation, communication, and public services. The region benefits from a well-connected transportation infrastructure, encompassing highways and road networks that facilitate efficient travel and connectivity within and beyond the counties. Additionally, regional airports provide essential air transportation services, catering to both passengers and cargo. Rail lines further enhance transportation options, enabling freight movement and potentially accommodating passenger travel. The region is also equipped with reliable utilities, including power transmission and distribution infrastructure, water and wastewater systems, telecommunications networks, and natural gas pipelines, ensuring essential services are readily available to residents, businesses, and industries. Educational institutions such as Snow College and Utah State University extensions provide educational and training opportunities, while healthcare facilities, public services like police and fire stations, public libraries, parks, recreational facilities, and industrial and commercial zones further contribute to the region's overall infrastructure, supporting the well-being, economic growth, and quality of life for its residents.

### SCAOG's Priority Investment Categories according to Camoin Associates:

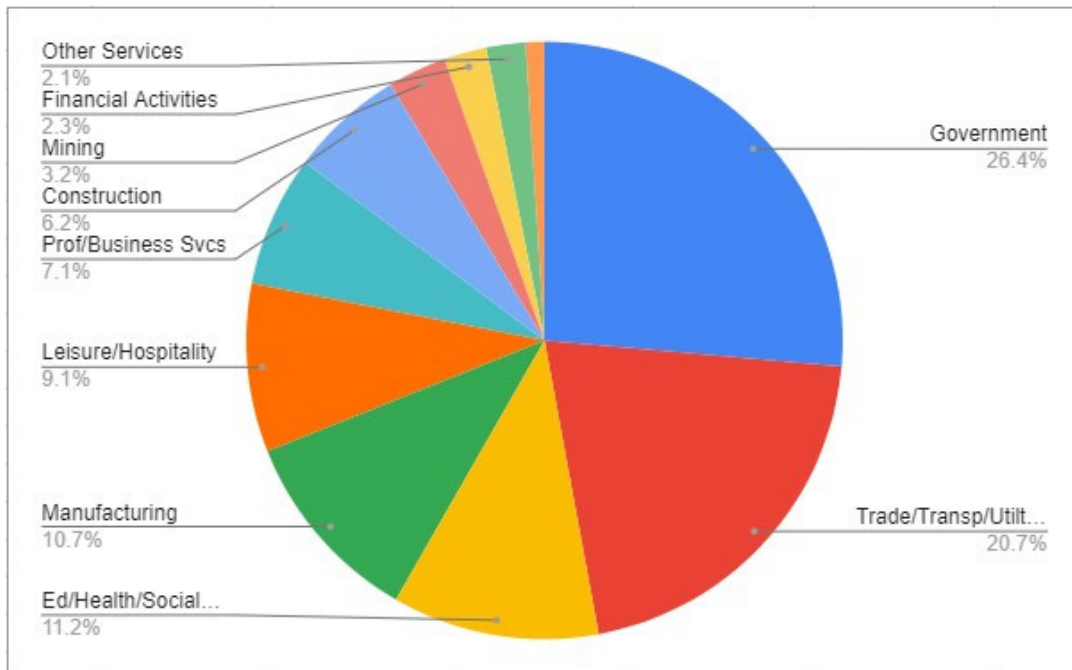
- **Infrastructure**
  - Utilities inside business parks and industrial parks
  - Sewer, water, roads, power systems
- **Agricultural park development**
- **Municipalities purchasing land to expand existing business parks**
- **Workforce development**
- **Labor supply**
- **Affordable housing options**
- **Seed funding for start-up costs and entrepreneurs**

# WORKFORCE STATISTICS

## INDUSTRY

The six-county region boasts a diverse economic landscape, with government jobs emerging as the largest industry, comprising 26.4% of total employment. Following closely is the Trade/Transportation/Utilities sector, accounting for 20.7% of jobs, while Education/Social Services ranks third at 11.2%. Notably, the Construction, Leisure/Hospitality, Healthcare, Professional and Business Services, and Renewable Energy Manufacturing industries are experiencing rapid growth.

Traditionally, the six-county region has had strong ties to agriculture, which has played a significant role in its history. However, the availability of range and farmland has witnessed a decline over the past few decades due to the allure of housing development and other alternative land uses, overshadowing the continuation of family agriculture operations. Presently, efforts are underway to reverse this trend and reestablish agriculture as a more financially viable and sustainable option.



## INCOME

According to the latest data, there has been a notable increase in the average monthly wage within our region. From 2022 to 2023, the average monthly wage experienced a significant rise of 5.4%, reaching a value of \$3,580. Concurrently, the poverty rate across the region is estimated to average at 11%. Piute County exhibits the highest poverty rate at 15.1%, while Juab County demonstrates the lowest poverty rate at 8.8%.

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
Average Monthly Wage	4028	4037	2810	3436	3770	3400	<b>3580</b>
% Change 2022-2023	10.1%	-	10.2%	4.5%	1.9%	0.2%	<b>5.4%</b>
Poverty Rate	8.8%	10.2%	15.1%	11.7%	9.7%	10.2%	<b>11.0%</b>

# SOAR ANALYSIS

A SOAR analysis is a strategic planning tool that identifies and leverages a region's strengths and opportunities to achieve its desired future state. The acronym "SOAR" stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. Unlike traditional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, which also includes examining weaknesses and threats, a SOAR analysis focuses on a region's positive aspects and potential.

Recognizing the prevalent challenges faced by many rural areas, our decision to undertake a SOAR analysis was driven by the intention to strategically focus on the favorable attributes of our region. By leveraging these strengths, we aim to foster economic diversity and resilience within our community. By comprehensively examining our region's inherent advantages, we seek to identify opportunities for growth, innovation, and

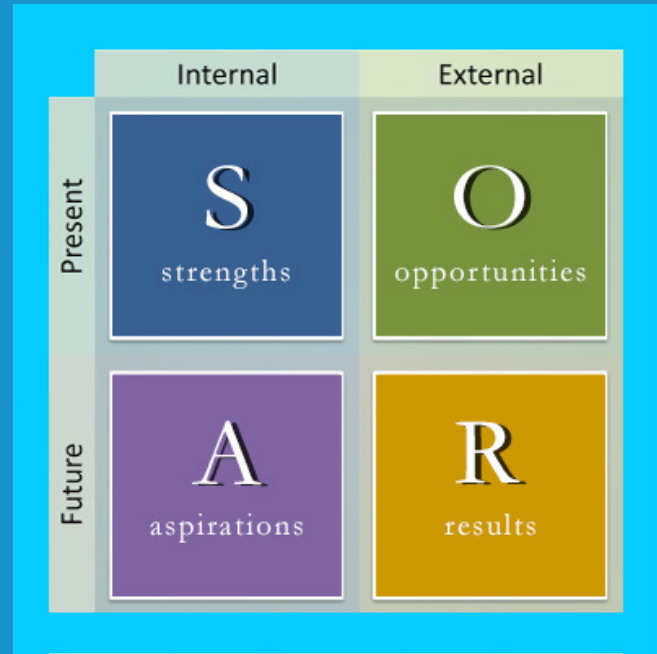
sustainable development. The SOAR analysis enables us to shift the emphasis from the perpetuation of limitations to the exploration of positive potentials, thus enabling us to chart a path toward a prosperous and resilient future.

In a SOAR analysis, the region identifies its core strengths and unique capabilities, which can include internal resources, expertise, skills, and competitive advantages. These strengths serve as a foundation for building future success. The analysis then explores the external opportunities that can be leveraged to further enhance the organization's growth and performance. Opportunities can arise from market trends, emerging technologies, partnerships, changing customer needs, or other external factors.

Aspirations play a crucial role in a SOAR analysis, representing the organization's vision and desired future state. This includes setting ambitious goals, defining the organization's purpose, and envisioning what success looks like in the long term. Aspirations provide a clear direction and serve as a guiding force for decision-making and strategy development.

Lastly, the Results component of a SOAR analysis focuses on identifying the specific outcomes and measurable results that the organization seeks to achieve. It involves setting realistic and actionable objectives, tracking progress, and evaluating the effectiveness of strategies and initiatives.

A SOAR analysis encourages organizations to focus on their strengths and positive attributes, identify opportunities for growth and improvement, align their actions with their aspirations, and measure their progress through tangible results. It helps organizations develop a strategic roadmap that capitalizes on their strengths and opportunities to achieve their desired future outcomes.



## SOAR Analysis/CEDS Committee

Abby Ivory - Executive Director, Nephi Area Chamber of Commerce

Shane Parashonts - Tribal Administrator, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah

Kenley Steck - Economic Development/Continuing Education Coordinator, Snow College

Brent Boswell - Economic Development Director, Juab County

Dave Busk - Director, Central and Southwest Utah Region, Department of Workforce Services

Kimberly Washburn - Operations Manager, Department of Workforce Services

Marilyn Cannon - Regional Economist, Department of Workforce Services

Clint Painter - Commissioner, Juab County

Noreen Johnson - Mayor, Bicknell Town

Roger Brian - Commissioner, Wayne County

Jody Gale - Agriculture Economic Development, Utah State University Extension

Scott Bartholomew - Commissioner, Sanpete County

Greg Jensen - Commissioner, Sevier County

Chuck Bigelow - Mayor, Manti City

Darin Bushman - Commissioner, Piute County

Travis Kyhl - Executive Director, Six County Association of Governments

Jenna Draper - Economic Development, Six County Association of Governments

Throughout the SOAR analysis process, our team systematically categorized strengths, opportunities, and aspirations into four key areas: Infrastructure, Workforce Development, Local Business Development, and Diversification. Each category culminated in one result, representing an overarching goal, which served as a focal point supported by the other elements. Subsequently, we meticulously developed key action items, strategically spanning the duration of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document, to propel us towards achieving each desired result. This comprehensive approach provided us with a crystal-clear vision, enabling all key partners to be on the same page and work collaboratively towards the greater good across the region. By fostering a culture of collaboration and open communication, this framework has equipped each individual county with a distinct understanding of our regional objectives, their role within the broader picture, and how they can actively support the regional efforts while concurrently advancing their unique county-level goals. This collaborative system empowers us to harmoniously unite regional and county-level endeavors, enhancing the likelihood of realizing our collective aspirations and fostering enduring prosperity for our entire region.

# TARGET AREA: INFRASTRUCTURE

---

*Result*

**A comprehensive infrastructure plan that spans the next 50 years.**

## Aspirations

The region aspires to achieve significant milestones in various aspects of infrastructure development. A key focus is on enhancing transportation infrastructure across the entire region, ensuring efficient connectivity and facilitating the movement of goods. Furthermore, there is a strong drive to improve utility infrastructure, including power, water, and gas, to meet growing demands and support sustainable development. Infrastructure planning aims to prioritize connectivity and address essential needs such as power, water, and gas distribution. In line with environmental goals, efforts are underway to phase out septic systems and promote more sustainable waste management practices. Embracing technological advancements, the region envisions the use of drones and air delivery systems for efficient transportation of goods. Additionally, creative and alternative transportation solutions are being explored to cater to evolving needs and ensure a well-rounded infrastructure network.

In addition to the aspirations mentioned earlier, the region is committed to promoting sustainability and embracing emerging technologies. One of the key goals is to establish a robust network of charging stations to support the increasing adoption of electric vehicles and facilitate the transition to cleaner transportation options. Wastewater management is another area of focus, with initiatives centered around wastewater reuse and reclamation. By implementing innovative strategies, the region aims to reduce water waste and maximize the efficient utilization of this vital resource. These endeavors contribute to the overall vision of a forward-thinking and environmentally conscious infrastructure framework.



# CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE

## Strengths

The region's favorable geography, rich natural resources, and robust transportation infrastructure position it as a crucial crossroads of the west and offer ample opportunities for recreational activities and exploration of its public lands. Moreover, the region holds great potential for future growth, with a particular focus on expanding fiber and broadband infrastructure in rural areas. In addition, certain areas within the region boast advanced medical facilities, further contributing to the overall appeal and quality of life for residents and visitors alike.



## Opportunities

There are several infrastructure-related opportunities on the horizon for the region. First, there is a chance to expand medical access in smaller areas, ensuring that residents have adequate healthcare services close to home. Additionally, the region aims to maintain its rural lifestyle while embracing growth and the accompanying tax base, allowing for balanced development. Water conservation and usage will play a pivotal role in determining the region's sustainable growth capacity. Climate considerations are also important, necessitating infrastructure changes to accommodate future needs and address increased utility requirements. Fortunately, proactive measures are being taken to stay ahead of utility supply demands for future growth, with Rocky Mountain Power collaborating with the counties to provide power without significant upfront costs. Strategic infrastructure placement will be instrumental in guiding growth patterns, supported by corresponding planning and zoning measures that promote urban development and density in desired areas. Furthermore, the expansion and optimization of rail lines for business and passenger transportation, as evidenced by the completed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the rail from Juab to Sevier, present promising prospects. Finally, the region's regional airports serve as essential gateways, facilitating travel and bolstering economic opportunities.



# ACTION ITEMS: INFRASTRUCTURE

---

## Assist each individual community and county with their infrastructure plans

- Create or update plans in the following areas:
  - Transportation
  - Wastewater
  - Utilities
  - Broadband
- Develop plans that aim to minimize the use of eminent domain while ensuring that each community is well-informed about the process and its justifications, allowing them to utilize it judiciously when necessary

## Create a cohesive vision for infrastructure development that addresses the collective needs of the communities

- Consolidate the individual plans within the region into a comprehensive master regional infrastructure plan
- Integrate the regional plan with hazard mitigation planning efforts
- Enhance coordination and efficiency in resource allocation
- Promote sustainable growth and resilience across the region

## Regularly update and adapt these plans as communities grow and new, innovative infrastructure is developed

- Conduct annual reviews and perform comprehensive updates on a five-year cycle
- Establish continuous and open communication with each community and county to effectively accomplish the objectives outlined in both the individual plans and the comprehensive regional plan, fostering a collaborative and coordinated approach towards shared goals

# TARGET AREA: WORKFORCE

---

*Result*

**Cultivate a workforce that is adequately trained for the jobs that are available.**

## Aspirations

Our vision is to create an environment where our citizens not only live but also work within our region, fostering a sense of belonging and economic sustainability. We aspire to provide opportunities that enable our younger generation to build their careers locally, ensuring that they stay rooted within our communities. Moreover, recognizing the changing dynamics of the job market, we are committed to offering short-term training programs to individuals who may no longer be able to continue working in construction or transportation roles, empowering them with new skills for alternative employment paths.



**S** SNOW COLLEGE

UtahStateUniversity

## Opportunities

The region presents several promising opportunities for development and growth. With the rise of work-from-home jobs and online occupations, there is a chance to tap into these flexible employment options and create remote work opportunities for residents. By doing so, we can retain the local labor force, preventing them from leaving the region in search of work elsewhere. It is crucial to create an environment that encourages individuals to both live and work within the region, ensuring that our workforce remains rooted in the community. This includes efforts to retain our talented young graduates, providing them with career opportunities and support to build their lives and families locally. The region is experiencing a high demand for labor, making it imperative to train our workforce for the specific jobs available. By equipping our residents with the necessary skills and knowledge, we can fulfill the demands of the job market and promote economic prosperity within the region.



# WORKFORCE

## Strengths

The region boasts several notable strengths that contribute to its overall vitality and potential for growth. First and foremost, the people within the region form a significant asset, known for their strong work ethic and dedication. This diligent labor force is a key driver of productivity and economic success. Additionally, the region offers a high quality of life, with its scenic beauty, access to outdoor recreational activities, and a welcoming community atmosphere. The presence of institutions like Snow College and USU extensions further enhances the region's strengths, providing educational opportunities and resources for skill development. The region's commitment to custom fit training programs and certificate programs tailored to meet the specific needs of regional employers is another standout advantage. This ensures that the workforce is equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in local industries, promoting economic prosperity and fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between employers and employees.

**Education:** The six-county region has an overall labor force participation rate of 70%. Most of these individuals have an Associate's degree or some college education. Of those with a college degree, the most popular first major is Science and Engineering and the second most popular is Education.

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne	Region
No High School Diploma	248	487	22	565	569	61	<b>1,952</b>
High School Graduate	1,335	1,406	118	2,475	2,152	232	<b>7,718</b>
Some College, Associate's Degree	1,515	1,571	169	3,595	2,894	508	<b>10,252</b>
Bachelor's Degree or above	894	1,019	132	2,187	1,769	163	<b>6,164</b>
Labor Force Participation Rate	77%	74%	56%	62%	74%	77%	<b>70%</b>

**Commuting:** The following table presents a comprehensive overview of the commuting habits among workers in each of the six counties within our region. It is important to note that the inflow and outflow figures exclusively pertain to commuting activities within each respective county, with the likelihood that individuals are commuting to or from neighboring counties that still fall within our broader region.

	Juab	Millard	Piute	Sanpete	Sevier	Wayne
Inflow	1491	1225	160	2542	3081	446
Live and Work	1973	3412	160	4808	5479	610
Outflow	2786	1990	276	4866	3834	374
Mean Travel Time	23.9	16.9	19.5	22	17.1	17

# ACTION ITEMS: WORKFORCE

Establish pathways that enable K-12 students to seamlessly progress along their chosen educational path

- Ensure a smooth and accessible transition from K-12 education to higher education opportunities and ultimately into rewarding careers in their chosen fields
- Develop programs that offer stackable skills, allowing students to begin their careers with essential competencies and progressively build additional skills while they work

Create customized training plans for specialized industries and regional employers to meet their specific workforce needs

- Provide microcredentialing opportunities to incentivize workers to enhance their skill sets, thereby becoming more valuable and versatile employees
- Expedite certification processes for individuals seeking career changes, fostering job and industry flexibility and enabling smooth transitions between professions

Cultivate stronger partnerships among higher education institutions, employers, and leaders, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual support

- Optimize underutilized resources, such as classroom space, making them accessible to all partners for their collective benefit
- Establish robust partnerships aimed at effectively sharing assets among stakeholders
- Provide flexibility options to address potential obstacles, such as child care responsibilities and other job commitments

Actively address the issue of affordable housing availability, striving to find viable solutions to meet the housing needs of our growing region

- Conduct in-depth studies and analyze housing policies and population density plans implemented by successful communities to create informed and effective strategies for our region
- Introduce ordinances to accommodate accessory dwelling units and explore other innovative solutions to expand the availability of affordable housing options
- actively seek methods to promote diversity in housing developments and create incentives for the construction of smaller starter homes

# TARGET AREA: LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

---

*Result*

**Create a robust environment for current business expansion.**

## Strengths

With ample room for expansion, the region presents promising opportunities for businesses and industries to flourish. The presence of vibrant Chambers of Commerce further bolsters these strengths, as they serve as catalysts for networking, collaboration, and advocacy on behalf of local businesses. The region also benefits from the support and guidance provided by business mentoring programs, which offer valuable insights, expertise, and mentorship to both emerging entrepreneurs and established businesses. Additionally, the Snow College Small Business Development Center stands as a valuable resource, providing essential guidance, training, and assistance in areas such as business planning, marketing, and financial management. These combined strengths create an environment that nurtures business growth, fosters innovation, and fosters economic advancement throughout the six-county region.



## Aspirations

To bolster local business development, it is important to have a comprehensive approach that encompasses various aspects. This includes fostering a supportive ecosystem that encourages entrepreneurship and provides resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Enhancing access to capital is crucial to provide businesses with the necessary funding and financial resources for growth. Strengthening collaboration and networking among businesses helps create synergies and knowledge-sharing opportunities. Streamlining regulations and bureaucracy can reduce barriers and administrative burdens, creating a more favorable business environment. Supporting sustainable and responsible business practices ensures businesses contribute positively to the environment and society. Collaboration with educational institutions facilitates skill development and bridges the gap between education and industry needs. Engaging with the community and supporting chambers of commerce fosters a sense of belonging, provides resources for growth, and strengthens the business ecosystem. Together, these initiatives can help foster a thriving environment for local business development.

# LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Opportunities

The region presents several promising opportunities for development and growth. With the rise of work-from-home jobs and online occupations, there is a chance to tap into these flexible employment options and create remote work opportunities for residents. By doing so, we can retain the local labor force, preventing them from leaving the region in search of work elsewhere. It is crucial to create an environment that encourages individuals to both live and work within the region, ensuring that our workforce remains rooted in the community. This includes efforts to retain our talented young graduates, providing them with career opportunities and support to build their lives and families locally. The region is experiencing a high demand for labor, making it imperative to train our workforce for the specific jobs available. By equipping our residents with the necessary skills and knowledge, we can fulfill the demands of the job market and promote economic prosperity within the region.

An area within Juab County has been designated to function as an inland port, in collaboration with the Utah Inland Port Authority. Inland ports offer significant economic opportunities by serving as logistical hubs that facilitate the efficient movement of goods, encourage international trade, attract investment, create jobs, enhance supply chain management, and stimulate regional economic growth through increased trade activity and improved



connectivity. This designated area encompasses an industrial park with a specialized focus on agricultural processing, offering a platform for regional agriculture operations to process their products and subsequently access global markets by utilizing the logistical advantages of the inland port. We foresee the evolution of this partnership to extend to other areas within our region, fostering a more robust infrastructure system and an enhanced supply chain network.

We are engaged in close collaboration with essential stakeholders for forthcoming economic development initiatives in our region, notably involving key partners such as the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, Economic Development Administration, Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, Farm Bureau, and various federal, state, and local officials. We expect that the foundational efforts we are undertaking today will yield lasting benefits for future generations.

We acknowledge the potential of yet-unforeseen technological advancements and recognize the importance of adaptability within our plans and forecasts to ensure our success. By working together we will encourage the advancement of technologies, such as agri-tech, and embrace these innovations to the benefit of our development.

# ACTION ITEMS: LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Develop and enact legislative solutions aimed at providing robust support for existing businesses

- Persistently collect data on state programs channeling resources into our counties to ensure an equitable increase in support
- Maintain historical records of state investment funds to ensure their optimal utilization and maximum return on investment

Establish and oversee a Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program, aimed at fostering sustained growth and retention of local businesses

- Conduct thorough research, collaborate with stakeholders, define program goals, allocate resources, design comprehensive services, implement outreach strategies, and continuously evaluate and adapt the program
- Engage in advocacy efforts to secure legislative resources for the implementation of the BEAR program and proactively explore additional funding avenues

Initiate and foster a mentorship program aimed at cultivating professional development and guidance for business leaders within the community

- Establish a well-structured business mentorship program offering valuable guidance, support, and growth opportunities to aspiring business leaders
- Systematically identify mentee and mentor needs, set clear program objectives, facilitate effective mentor-mentee matches, provide orientation and training, encourage regular interactions, offer resource sharing, evaluate progress, and continuously refine the program based on feedback for sustained professional development and growth
- Provide comprehensive support to Snow College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in its pursuit of goals and objectives

Commit to endorsing innovative research and implementing solutions that create opportunities for the advancement of local businesses seeking to expand

- Collaborate with essential stakeholders to drive opportunities for individuals who are eager to pioneer and adopt innovative processes
- Proactively eliminate legislative and operational obstacles to facilitate the growth and establishment of businesses within our region

# TARGET AREA: DIVERSIFICATION

---

*Result*

**Sustainable, diversified, high-paying jobs are available to those who want to live and work in our region.**

## Strengths

Having a welcoming state business environment is a significant strength that drives growth within our region. By fostering a climate that supports businesses, such as through favorable tax policies, streamlined regulations, and access to capital, we attract entrepreneurs, investors, and companies seeking opportunities for expansion or relocation. This influx of businesses brings job opportunities, stimulates economic activity, and encourages innovation. The state's low tax burdens, pro-business policies, and streamlined regulations attract businesses seeking a conducive environment for growth and innovation. Utah's well-educated and skilled workforce, supported by institutions like Snow College and Utah State University, provides a valuable asset for businesses. The state's investment in infrastructure ensures efficient transportation and connectivity. The region's high quality of life, rural charm, and access to outdoor activities contribute to employee satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, a welcoming business environment enhances our region's competitiveness, positioning us as an attractive destination for investments and industry collaborations. It also helps retain and attract talent, creating a skilled workforce that fuels further growth. Economic diversification across sectors reduces dependence on a single industry, enhancing stability. Supportive business networks, including chambers of commerce and economic development agencies, foster collaboration and provide resources for business growth. Ultimately, this supportive environment sets the stage for sustained economic development, creating a virtuous cycle of growth and prosperity in our region.



# DIVERSIFICATION

---

## Opportunities

Our region holds promising opportunities for increasing diversification, with a focus on managing the ongoing growth and expanding into new sectors. Regional airports offer untapped potential as hubs for business expansion and the development of aviation-related businesses, fostering economic growth and improved connectivity. The presence of fiber connectivity positions our region as an ideal destination for the tech industry, attracting businesses that rely on fast and reliable internet infrastructure. Moreover, our region boasts the advantage of low infrastructure and utility costs, making it an attractive location for businesses to establish operations and thrive. Beyond technology, there are additional opportunities for diversification in sectors such as manufacturing, banking, and professional services like business and accounting. By strategically capitalizing on these opportunities, we can further strengthen our regional economy, stimulate job creation, and foster long-term growth and prosperity.

Through persistent innovation and the establishment of supportive institutions, we aim to foster the diversification of existing industries within our region. Notable instances include Snow College's Innovative Agriculture Center, designed to impart cutting-edge agricultural technology to students and cultivate innovative approaches to agricultural operations. Additionally, Snow College hosts the GRIT Center for rural entrepreneurship, providing a platform for nurturing entrepreneurial spirit among students through experiential learning, leadership development, and diverse entrepreneurial programs, including pitch competitions that offer funding for turning ideas into tangible initiatives.

The NACo Counties Futures Lab is an initiative by the National Association of Counties (NACo) that serves as a collaborative platform for county governments to explore emerging trends, share knowledge, and develop innovative solutions to address challenges and opportunities faced by counties across the United States. The lab focuses on researching and analyzing key issues impacting counties, fostering partnerships, and providing resources to help counties navigate complex policy and governance landscapes effectively, using programs such as Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities (BRECC) and Economic Recovery Corps. By engaging in programs and initiatives such as the Counties Futures Lab, we can glean insights from prosperous economic development districts and adopt initiatives that will strategically foster the diversification of our regional economy.

## Aspirations

Our region is positioned to thrive due to several key factors. First, there is a strong emphasis on flexibility, supporting a healthy work/life balance that enhances the overall well-being of residents. Additionally, our region recognizes the importance of adaptability, preparing for future changes in technology to stay ahead of the curve and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Collaborating with UIPA (Utah Inland Port Authority) for the development of inland port project areas further strengthens our economic prospects. Lastly, as the coal operations gradually slow down and eventually cease, our region aims to provide alternative job opportunities for those affected, ensuring that individuals who previously worked in the coal industry can transition into new employment with a sustainable future. By embracing these principles and initiatives, our region is poised to navigate transitions and build a prosperous future for its residents and businesses.

# ACTION ITEMS: DIVERSIFICATION

---

**Persist in collaborating with economic partners to attract novel industries and complementary enterprises to existing operations**

- **Promote business expansion through diversifying educational training options to incentivize the employment of in-house personnel for task completion, rather than relying on external contractors or overseas manufacturing**
- **Sustain efforts to enhance on-the-job training pathways while harnessing the resources offered by the Department of Workforce Services and Snow College to cultivate a skilled labor force**

**Persist in leveraging available resources and acquiring techniques to actively promote diversity within our initiatives**

- **Increase the provision of support and resources to initiatives fostering entrepreneurial endeavors such as the GRIT Center and Snow's Innovative Agriculture Center**
- **Actively participate in collaborative programs such as BRECC and implement learned strategies**

**Promote expansion and empower individuals with innovative ideas to navigate the trajectory toward establishing and achieving success in entrepreneurship**

- **Encourage individuals to leverage their expertise and knowledge to optimize natural resource utilization through appropriate incentives**

**Establish specialized zones with requisite infrastructure to actively incentivize new business ventures to establish their operations within our region**

- **Promote the ongoing pursuit of funding to facilitate infrastructure development and alleviate barriers for companies seeking to establish their presence within our region**
- **Collaborate with communities aiming to diversify and attract fresh business ventures, fostering an environment conducive to development**



## I. ECONOMIC DATA SOURCES

United States Census Bureau. "Population Estimates, July 1, 2020, (V2019)." QuickFacts: Wayne County, Utah; Sevier County, Utah; Piute County, Utah; Juab County, Utah; Millard County, Utah; Sanpete County, Utah. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/waynecountyutah,seviercountyutah,piutecountyutah,juabcountyutah,millardcountyutah,sanpetecountyutah/PST045222>. Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Business Employment Dynamics - Utah." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Mountain-Plains Information Office, [https://www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains/news-release/businessemploymentdynamics\\_utah.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains/news-release/businessemploymentdynamics_utah.htm). Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "News Release Finder - Utah." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/regions/news-release-finder.htm?states=UT>. Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "EJSCREEN." U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.

"Environmental Geospatial Data Portal." Argonne National Laboratory, <https://disgeoportal.egs.anl.gov/>. Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.

"Workforce Services - Utah Department of Workforce Services." Utah Department of Workforce Services, <https://jobs.utah.gov/wi/index.html>. Accessed Jan-Aug 2023.