Regional Decision Making: The Envision Utah Experience

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Rail-Volution Building Livable Communities with Transit
Regional Visioning

- A national revolution in “scale appropriate” problem solving (air sheds, water sheds, commuter sheds, housing markets, etc.)
- Demonstrates the benefits of quality growth (cleaner air, walkable neighborhoods, riders for transit, preserving open space, increasing housing opportunity, lessening congestion, etc.)
- Requires new or revised tools, techniques, and communication strategies
Regional Visioning is the Natural Evolution of “Place Making” to a Larger Scale
History of Planning in Utah
Utah Faced Serious Challenges in 1997

- A million new residents by 2020
- Air quality at risk
- Urbanization would use 87% more land by 2020
- New water sources needed by 2010
- Crowding and congestion increasing
- Business and personal costs rising
- Infrastructure needs outstripping resources
5 million people by 2050
Formed by the Coalition for Utah’s Future ("CUF") in 1997 to evaluate and address growth

- CUF is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization
- 85% of funding has come from private sources
OH GOOD, I GET A CHOICE HERE.

CITIES

ENVISION UTAH
Broad Scope of Community Interests Represented

- Business Leaders
- Developers
- Utility Companies
- Local Government
- State Government
- Conservation and Citizen Groups
- Religious Leaders
- Education
- Media
The Premise of Envision Utah

- The “public” has the right to choose its future—public officials should serve that vision.
- The “public” will make good choices if presented with real options.
- Growth issues have natural boundaries that are not aligned with existing political boundaries.
Traditional Process

PLAN
FUND
BUILD
Improved Process

VALUES  (What do people want?)

VISION  (How will our Region provide it?)

STRATEGY (How do we implement?)

PLAN

FUND

BUILD
Traditional Planning Approach

- **Decide** – through analysis and research
- **Educate** – the public about the solution
- **Announce** – the plan
- **Defend** – the plan and yourself
Traditional Planning Approach
Objective of the Values Analysis:

Determine and prioritize the attributes of future urban environments that will best satisfy fundamental human needs, serve enduring human values, and drive long-term market demand.
Starting With Values

- Values are stable and enduring; life’s “tides” as opposed to the “waves.”
- Values are widely shared and create consensus among diverse groups.
- The desire to satisfy ones’ values is the foundation of personal decision making.
Public Workshops

Hundreds of meetings with thousands of participants
Communicating Choices for Regional Growth using VISTA™
(Values In Strategy Assessment)

Wirthlin WORLDWIDE
Building Measurable Value
The Tale of Two Houses

Karl & Lisa
$600,000

Matt & Alyssa
$87,000
Visioning Process Inputs

VALUES ANALYSIS

Priority of Desirable Attributes of Future Human Environment

CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Limiting Constraints on Future Development

Visioning Scenarios
Key Constraints

- **Physical Constraints** of the Region
  (natural resources, critical lands, slopes, soils, mountains, lakes and rivers, *and* man-made infrastructure and facilities).

- **Legal Constraints** concerning intensity of use, infrastructure, and environment.

- **Market Constraints** driven by regional demand for jobs, housing, recreation, etc.
Scenario Approach:
Contrasts today’s choices by showing long-term consequences
Scenario A
New and Existing Development

- Continuation of Recent Trends
- Larger lot sizes
- More auto-oriented development will occur.
Scenario B
New and Existing Development

- Baseline - implement adopted plans
- Dispersed development pattern common in last 20-30 years
Scenario C
New and Existing Development

• More infill and redevelopment
• Growth on new land focused into walkable, transit-oriented communities
Scenario D
New and Existing Development

- Significant increase in densities
- Extensive infill and redevelopment
- Extensive transit system
Regional Choices and Outcomes

Our Region’s Future

Transportation

Energy Use

Job Creation

Air Quality

Land Consumption

Water Use

Traffic

Miles of Driving

Land Use

Housing Opportunities

Open Space
PUBLIC AWARENESS EFFORTS
Television, Radio and Newspaper
Choosing a Scenario
(Weighted vs. Unweighted Results)

Unweighted results (as represented by the black dashed line) are nearly identical to weighted results.
QUALITY GROWTH STRATEGY: Six Goals, 42 Strategies

- Enhance Air Quality
- Increase Mobility & Transportation Choices
- Preserve Critical Lands
- Conserve Water Resources
- Provide Housing Opportunities
- Maximize Efficiency in Public Infrastructure Investments

Development Types

- Non-Walkable
  - Low Density Residential
  - Industrial, Office Activity Center

- Walkable
  - Town and Village
  - Downtown

- Open Space
  - Rural Cluster

- Rail Transit
The Long Range Plan is an Integrated Road and Transit Plan

A Complete Mobility System

We Need Both
Mountain View
Transportation Corridor
Growth Choices
Wasatch Choices 2040

A Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Visioning Process

[Logos of various organizations]
Communicating a Vision to the Public
Layton, UT:
Main Street
Layton, UT:
Main Street
Layton, UT:
Main Street
Estimated Statistics between Salt Lake, Davis and Weber Counties:

acres within ½ mile of transit nodes:

80,000

Housing units within ½ mile transit nodes @ 8 DU/acre on half of the acres:

320,000 units

Population estimate @ 3 persons per household:

960,000

80,000 Acres = 125 Square Miles
Transit Increases Capacity in Corridors
Regional Visioning

- Builds consensus for a common future founded upon widely-held, deeply-felt, values, desires, hopes and aspirations
- Creates civic capacity in both the public and the regional leaders to implement strategies for a better future
- Negates NIMBY’ism
Growth in Utah will Continue

Envision Utah is Working to Keep Utah Beautiful, Prosperous and Neighborly for Future Generations