

**CITY OF MOAB RESOLUTION NO. 34-2022**  
**ADOPTING A COMMUNITY VISION AND STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN**

WHEREAS, the City Council recognized the need for long-term community-led visioning and strategic planning to gain an understanding of community needs and long-term guidance for the community; and,

WHEREAS, in 2021 following a competitive process a contract was awarded to Future IQ to act as a consultant, and facilitator, and to translate the results of community engagement efforts into a document to guide future decision-making; and,

WHEREAS, Future IQ facilitated community workshops, focus groups, surveys, interviews and presentations to and with the community; and,

WHEREAS, the consultants' engagement activities were broadly and frequently advertised through social media, websites, emails, newspaper, and press releases and were well attended by a broad and diverse group of the community, which Future IQ and staff feel represented a full cross-section of the community; and,

WHEREAS, following a data compilation process and thoughtful consideration of the outcomes of the engagement groups, Future IQ created a draft Vision and Strategic Action Plan document; and,

WHEREAS, the draft Moab – Tomorrow Together Vision and Strategic Action Plan was presented for review by the City Council in October 2022; and,

WHEREAS, the final Vision and Strategic Action Plan was presented to the public and City Council on December 13, 2022; and,

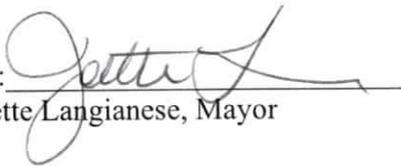
WHEREAS, the Vision and Strategic Action Plan is not considered a prescriptive document, nor does it mandate any action related to public policy or the development of public infrastructure. Rather, the Plan is a tool to be used by staff and elected officials in guiding community priorities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Moab City Council:

- 1. Adoption.** The City Council hereby adopts and approves the Moab – Tomorrow Together Vision and Strategic Action Plan as presented in Attachment A.
- 2. Intended Use.** The City Council commits to using the Plan as a guide and expression of community values in adopting policy that will bring about outcomes as described in the Plan. The City Council desires to maintain flexibility to respond to opportunities and needs as they arise and may deviate or amend the Plan as future priorities and needs dictate.

**3. Direction to Staff.** The City Council directs staff to use and reference the Plan as a guiding document in administration, management, and in making recommendations to the City Council.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a majority of the City Council, this 13<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

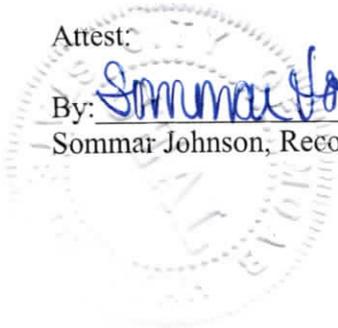
By:   
Joette Langianese, Mayor

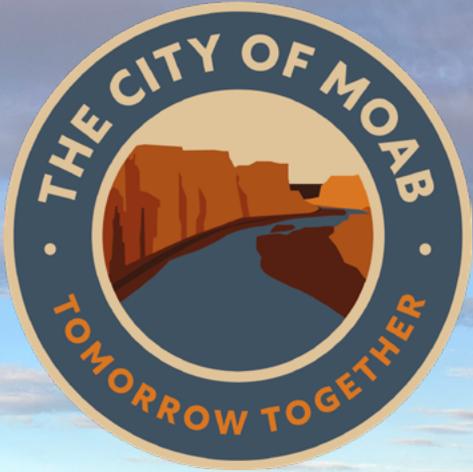
12/13/22  
Date

Attest:

By:   
Sommar Johnson, Recorder

12.13.22  
Date



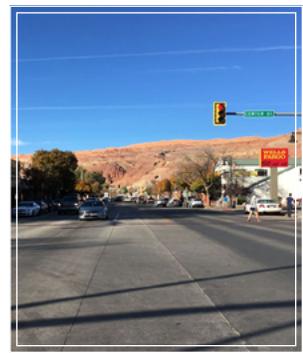


# MOAB - TOMORROW TOGETHER

## VISION & STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

UTAH, USA

SEPTEMBER 2022





# MOAB - TOMORROW TOGETHER

## VISION & STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN UTAH, USA - SEPTEMBER 2022

This report presents the Vision and Strategic Action Plan that has been developed following extensive community engagement undertaken during the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning and planning process.

Beginning in January 2022 through September 2022, the engagement process included two Community Surveys, nine community visioning workshops, six focus group sessions, the Moab – Tomorrow Together Think-Tank workshop, and a Future Summit. This engagement process was designed to provide an open, inclusive, and transparent platform for community members to help create a shared vision looking out to 2030.

This report represents Future IQ's analysis of the engagement outcomes, and how this data has informed the identification of a preferred future and strategic pillars. The recommended Key Strategic Pillars have been developed from the community input gathered during the visioning process.

The reports and associated data analysis are available on the project portal:

<https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/>

REPORT PREPARED BY:

**future→iQ**

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# »»»»» TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction.....	1	4.4   Pillar 4: Environmental Stewardship.....	19
1.1   Project Timeline.....	2	4.4.1   Importance of Environmental Stewardship.....	19
1.2   Importance of Visioning to the Moab Community.....	3	4.4.2   Key Action Areas.....	20
2.0   The Process of identifying the ‘Preferred Future’ .....	4	4.4.3   Ideas from the Community.....	21
2.1   Community Engagement Highlights .....	4	4.5   Pillar 5: Workforce and Housing .....	22
2.2   Community Engagement Metrics.....	5	4.5.1   Importance of Workforce and Housing.....	22
2.3   Scenario-Based Framework for Exploring the Future.....	6	4.5.2   Key Action Areas.....	23
2.4   Identifying the Preferred Future.....	7	4.5.3   Ideas from the Community.....	24
3.0   Community Vision.....	8	4.6   Pillar 6: Community Fabric and Wellbeing .....	25
4.0   Strategic Pillars Framework .....	9	4.6.1   Importance of Community Fabric and Wellbeing .....	25
4.1   Pillar 1: Tourism Trajectory & Economic Diversification .....	10	4.6.2   Key Action Areas.....	26
4.1.1   Importance of the trajectory of Tourism and associated Economic Diversification.....	10	4.6.3   Ideas from the Community.....	27
4.1.2   Key Action Areas .....	11	5.0   Combined Strategic Action Framework .....	28
4.1.3   Ideas from the Community.....	12	5.1   Prioritization of Strategic Actions.....	29
4.2   Pillar 2: Affordability and Equity .....	13	6.0   Dynamic Systems-Thinking Approach .....	30
4.2.1   Importance of Affordability and Equity .....	13	7.0   Next Steps - Roadmap to the Future .....	31
4.2.2   Key Action Areas.....	14	8.0   More Information & Acknowledgments.....	32
4.2.3   Ideas from the Community.....	15	10.0   About Future IQ.....	33
4.3   Pillar 3: Leadership and Decision making .....	16		
4.3.1   Importance of Leadership and Decision Making .....	16		
4.3.2   Key Action Areas.....	17		
4.3.3   Ideas from the Community.....	18		

This report lays out the findings from each step in the visioning process. The process identified key priorities for the future of Moab. Community members imagined and considered possible directions and the impacts and consequences of those directions. The process then drilled down deeper into what people saw as the preferred future for Moab. This understanding helps lay the groundwork for establishing the route to this preferred future and will inform the City of Moab regarding future planning efforts.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THIS REPORT



### APPETITE FOR CHANGE

The initial community survey highlighted a deep concern amongst residents about the current trajectory and speed of change in Moab. This was highlighted during subsequent community discussions. The community has an appetite for significant ‘course correction’ and tackling some of the tough issues surrounding housing, social fabric, and tourism trajectory. The planning process has created a mandate for the City and County to think boldly and take new actions.



### DESIRE TO SHAPE OWN FUTURE

The Think-Tank and Focus Group sessions have revealed a strong desire for the community leadership to shape the future more actively, and to prioritize community desires and impacts more intentionally. There was an underlying sense that residents currently felt a lack of control over their future and are fearful of losing aspects of their community character and lifestyle. They want to regain control and be purposeful about the future direction, especially in terms of development and tourism impact management.



### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FABRIC

Throughout the community discussions residents highlighted the importance of the community fabric. Residents appreciate the way people integrate in Moab and where people from different backgrounds can happily co-exist. The current stress placed on the community, which is undergoing a rapid pace of change, is making it difficult to retain that sense of community character and fabric. People are keenly interested in pursuing deliberate efforts to build the connectivity between locals and to find creative ways to enhance the community fabric.



### CHALLENGE TO ADDRESS INEQUALITIES AND HOUSING

Residents in Moab are concerned about the emerging inequalities in the community and the lack of a full range of affordable housing. These issues were at the center of several of the community discussions. There is a desire to explore creative solutions, and for the City and County to work together on housing ideas. It is well understood that these are complex issues, that require time to resolve. The desire is to find solutions that create a more stable longer-term community and workforce.



### DESIRE FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Environmental sustainability is an underlying value shared by most Moab residents. There is a recognition that climate change is going to drive dramatic change, and require the community to adjust to limitations in water use and adjust to hotter climates. There is a desire for the community to proactively plan and adapt. There is also a desire to see tourism to be developed in a more sustainable and empathetic manner. There is a chance to build industry clusters around sustainable tourism principles and the electrification of recreation vehicle fleets.

The Moab – Tomorrow Together Vision and Strategic Action Plan represents the final element of an extensive nine-month visioning process that started in January 2022. This report represents Future iQ’s analysis of the process, the engagement outcomes and how this data has informed the identification of a preferred future and key focus areas for Moab.



### MOAB IS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY.

Its remote location and aesthetically astounding scenery have attracted residents for a myriad of reasons. Moab’s world-renowned outdoor recreation opportunities appeal to outdoor enthusiasts, its secluded small-town charm and sense of community is desirable for those who have chosen to move away from the hectic pace that typifies the 21st Century lifestyle. Moab is very special to the community, whether these are people who have lived in Moab for decades or those who have chosen to make Moab their home in more recent times. The community are connected by their love of Moab.



### MOAB’S COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE CONNECTED BY A SENSE OF PLACE.

As Moab and its community members are unique, so has been the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning project. As Moab has become so popular with visitors in recent times, there has been an underlying theme throughout the process regarding the balance of tourism, which is needed as an economic necessity, and the ensuing quality of life for residents. This underlying theme connects with issues such as the need for housing for both seasonal and full-time workers who often serve the tourism industry as well as the need for affordable and attainable housing in general. Leadership has been another connecting issue in relation to the need for Moab to have more freedom in decision making, rather than the predominant influence by the State of Utah.



### THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OF MOAB HAS BEEN AN OVERARCHING ISSUE.

With changing weather patterns occurring throughout the world, residents of Moab are increasingly concerned about environmental protections and stewardship. As a remote desert town with concerns about water scarcity and the impact of increased heat, this has been a fundamental concern throughout the process.



The Moab - Tomorrow Together process offers a model for similar desert town communities that are looking ahead to the future and wrestling with challenges associated with changing weather patterns, workforce and associated housing issues and the impact of tourism.

# 1.1 | PROJECT TIMELINE

Community input and transparent, inclusive engagement was center to the visioning process. The comprehensive engagement and data-driven process progressively narrowed and focused the discussion on emerging key themes and community aspirations for the future. The purpose of the process was to arrive, as close as possible, at a “point of consensus” that represented the most widely shared vision for the future, and strategic pillars and action areas that will guide the community towards that future.

## PROJECT ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

### MOAB - TOMORROW TOGETHER



#### PHASE 1 Future Visioning

#### PHASE 2 Action Planning

#### ROAD MAP

Community Survey  
Think-Tank  
Vision Workshops & Survey

Focus Groups  
Future Summit



MARCH - JUNE

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER



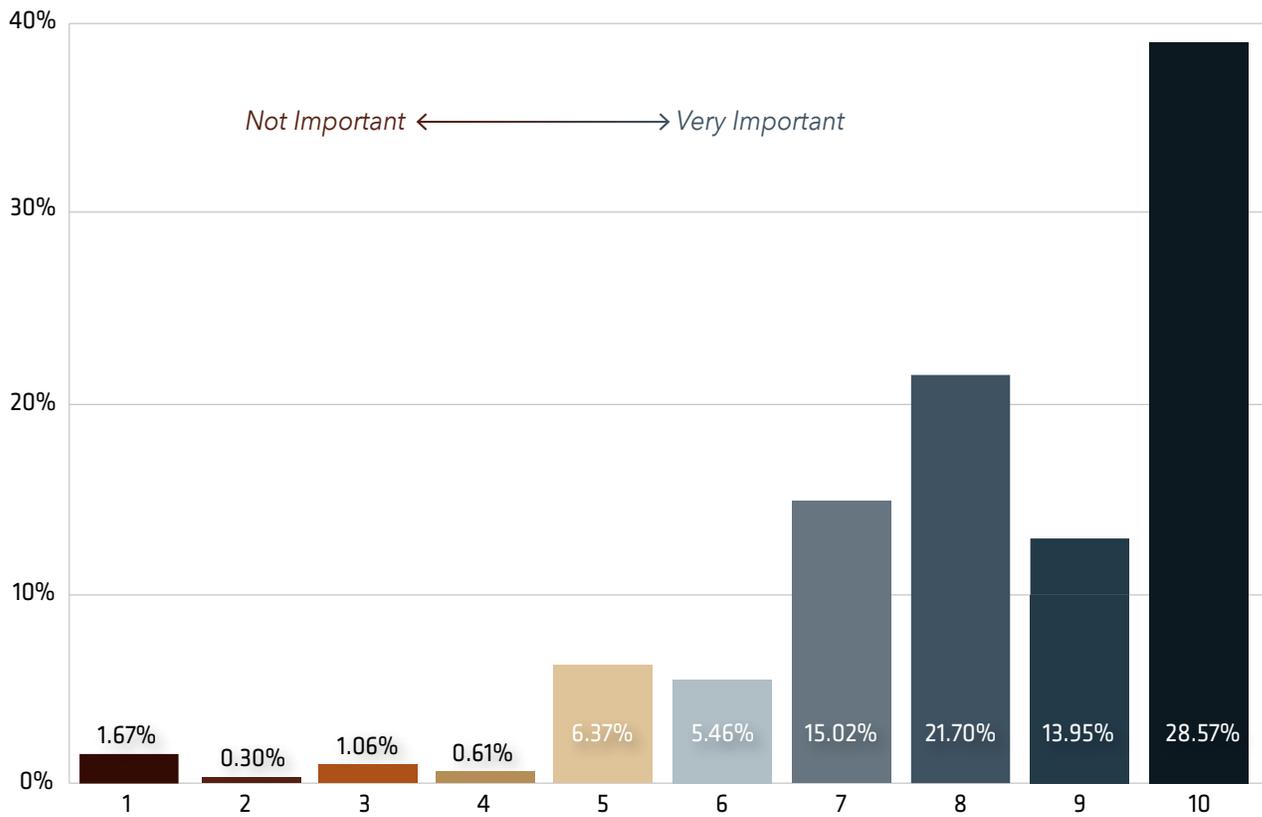


With the majority of community members believing that a shared vision is very important, this process is a foundational building block for the City's planning for the future.

## 1.2 | IMPORTANCE OF VISIONING TO THE MOAB COMMUNITY

The visioning process was an opportunity for the community to come together and shape the future trajectory of Moab, looking out to 2030. As the chart below displays, community members' belief in the importance of a shared vision was reflected in responses to Community Survey #1 which launched the visioning process in 2022.

QUESTION: HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS TO HAVE A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF MOAB?



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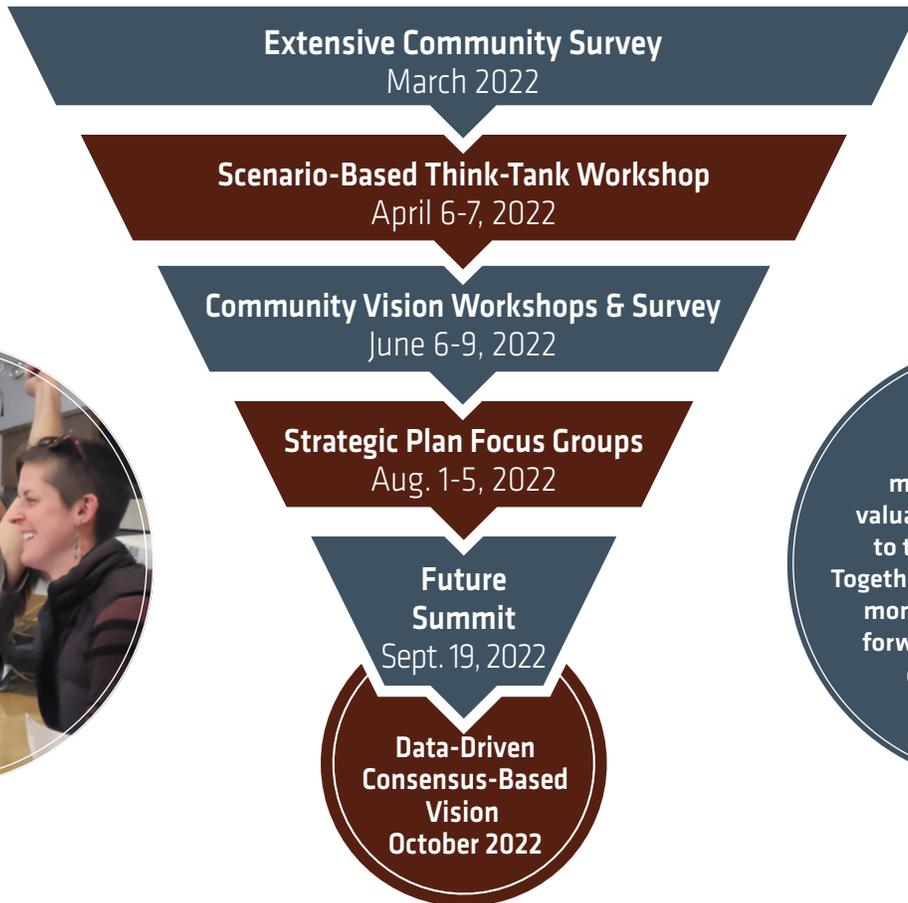
- Maintaining a shared vision for the community will involve clear and consistent communication that reaches all corners of the Moab community, in various forms and formats.
- Applying the shared vision for the community will require regular check-ins by the City's Departments and Council to maintain an aligned approach to decision-making in the future.



## 2.0 | THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING THE 'PREFERRED FUTURE'

### 2.1 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The community of Moab embarked on a participatory engagement process involving **Community Surveys**, a **Think-Tank**, **Community Visioning Workshops**, **Focus Group sessions**, and a Future Summit. This engagement process was intended to create a unified community vision which will serve as the foundational support for future planning efforts.



Moab community members spent many valuable hours contributing to the Moab - Tomorrow Together visioning process. This momentum will be carried forward in future planning efforts by the City.



DataInsight

- A repeated theme throughout the visioning process was the desire of Moab community members to plan for the future in a collaborative, unified manner. Goodwill and excitement for change exists in the community that should be leveraged as the community plans for the future.
- The Moab community is made up of people who have lived in Moab for decades, those who have moved to Moab in more recent times, the seasonal and often transient workforce and Spanish Speaking residents. All have contributed to the visioning process.



The participation rates were very impressive, with nearly 1,000 people participating at some point during the process. This reflects the deep commitment of the community to the future of Moab.

## 2.2 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METRICS

Community engagement was the key feature of the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning project. Efforts were made to ensure it was as easy as possible for residents to participate and provide meaningful input in a variety of formats. This included the translation of the surveys and materials into Spanish and the availability of translators at the Think-Tank, Community Visioning sessions, Focus Groups and Future Summit. This allowed individuals to participate as much as they were able and to focus on topics of importance to them. The engagement was offered via two online (and hard copy) community surveys, Think-Tank, community visioning workshops, focus group sessions and the Future Summit. Online, the project portal provided regular updated information and will continue to serve as a central location where community members can go to view reports on the process.



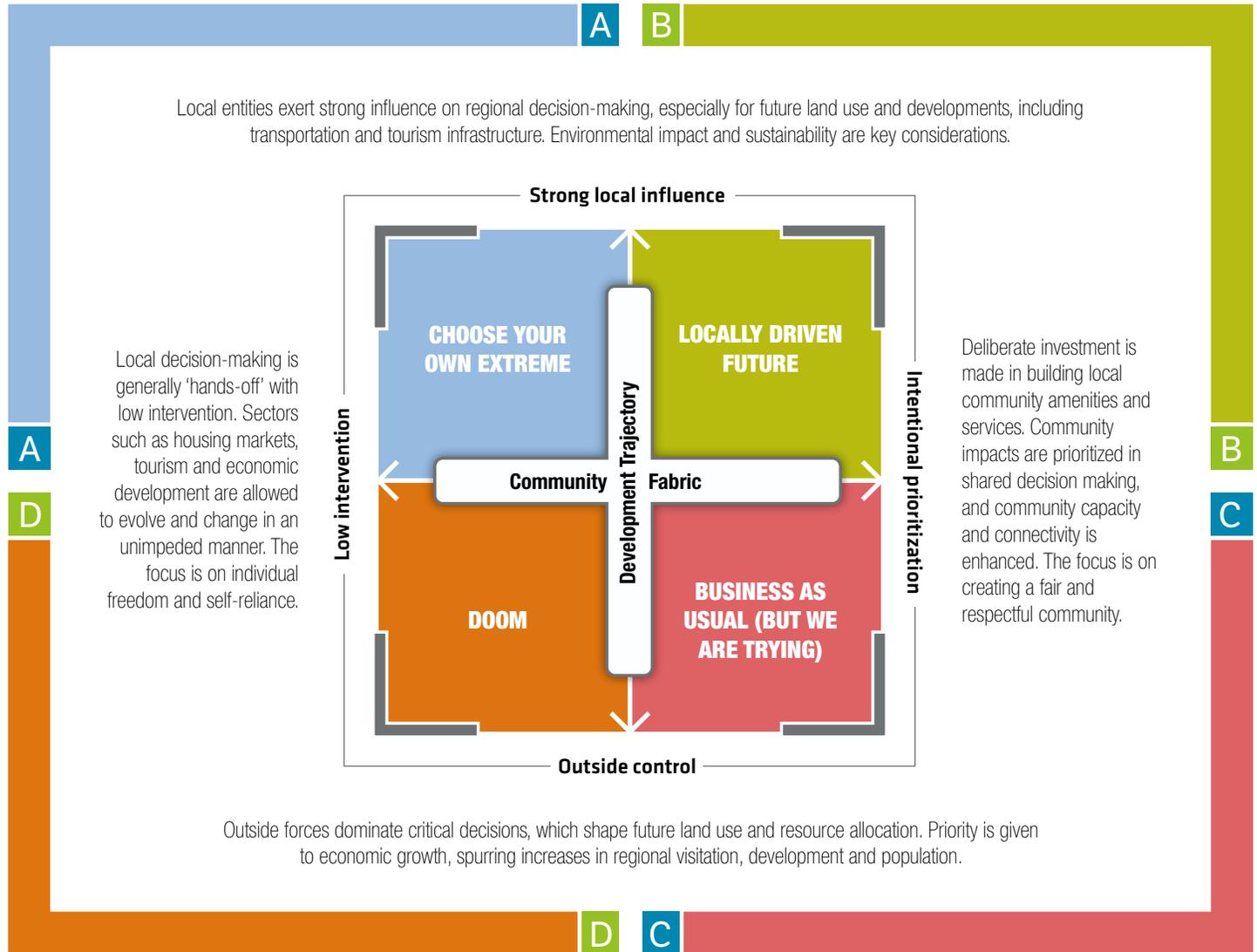
DataInsight

- A standout feature of the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process was the response rate to the **Community Survey #1**, with 793 responses collected.
- One of the key community engagement features for Moab – Tomorrow Together was the **project portal**. The portal served as a central location where community members could go to find updated project information, take surveys, view survey results and data visualization, reports, and register to participate in project events. To explore the project portal, please visit <https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/>.

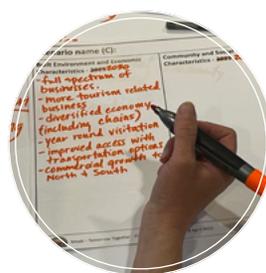
## 2.3 | SCENARIO-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING THE FUTURE

The scenario-based planning methodology is based on two key “Future-Splitting Themes” represented by the axes in the scenario matrix. Each axis represents a continuum with different future directions and outcomes at each end.

The Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process was built on a **scenario-planning methodology**. The Think-Tank held in April 2022, began with examining external and internal trends shaping the future of Moab. More detail on the process is available in the **Moab – Tomorrow Together Think-Tank Report**, April 2022. (For more information, visit <https://lab2.future-iq.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Moab-Think-Tank-Report.pdf>)

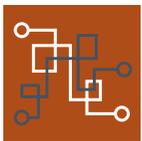
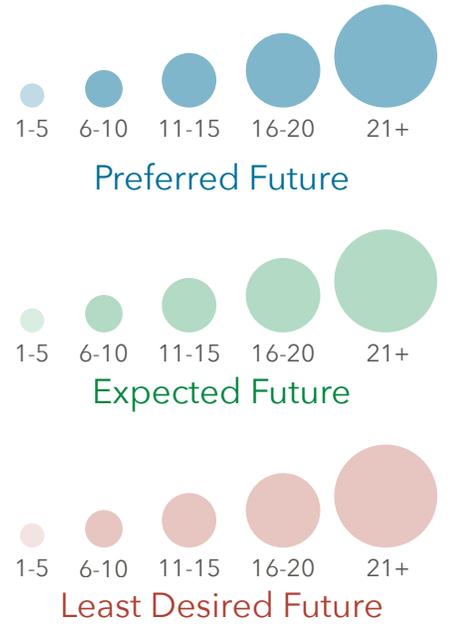
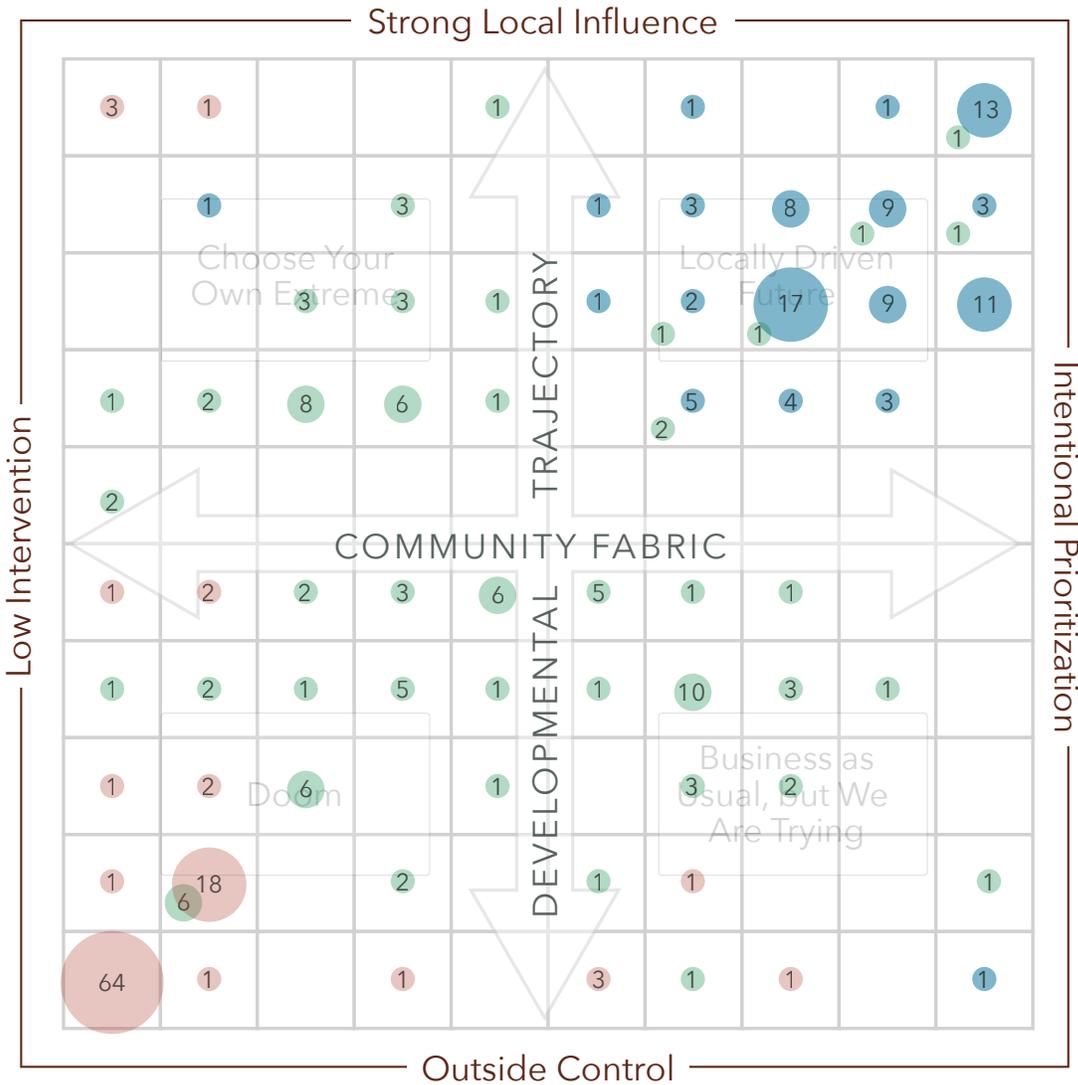


Source: Moab - Tomorrow Together Think-Tank Report



## 2.4 | IDENTIFYING THE PREFERRED FUTURE

During the Think-Tank, participants were asked to consider what they thought was the preferred future for Moab looking out to 2030. This was derived by laying a 10x10 grid over the scenario matrix, creating the option for 100 slightly different versions of the future. The scenario matrix is defined by the main continuums (axes), the end point descriptions and the scenario narratives. The responses from the participants were grouped to create heatmaps, and the following diagram shows the main concentrations of responses.



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- The heatmaps showed significant groupings of responses to the different futures, and these are shown in the above chart. These responses were also validated during the Community Visioning workshops and Focus Group discussions.
- The responses highlight a desire to create the 'Locally Driven Future' scenario, which requires significant movement on the 'Development Trajectory axis, and the 'Community Fabric' axis. This data laid the foundation for the creation of the community vision and Strategic Pillars.



The future of 'Locally Driven Future' reflects the community's desire to plan for a future that is equitable and inclusive of all Moab community members. This Report lays out a series of actions and ideas that can be incorporated into the future planning efforts by the City of Moab.

## 3.0 | COMMUNITY VISION

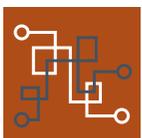
The visioning process allowed community members to explore the future evolution of Moab around the two main themes of 'Development Trajectory' and 'Community Fabric'.

The preferred future identified for Moab is called 'Locally Driven Future'. The preferred future was described as:

*This scenario forecasts a future where there is a strong local influence on decision making, and the Moab community is prioritized over visitors, to a degree. This leads to a move to a 'sustainable tourism' approach which is appealing to both visitors and residents. With the move to electric motorized recreation, as one example in relation to the new Sustainable Tourism approach, the local community welcomes visitors. While there are still many hotels in Moab, there is moratorium on any new hotels/rentals being built. There is an emphasis on local businesses in Moab, and especially on Main Street, which will appeal to both locals and visitors. Through work with sensitive local developers, appropriate housing options will have been developed which include apartments and 'tiny homes.' These appeal to both young professionals and the workforce, who no longer need to travel into Moab to work. Equally, young people from Moab can now stay in Moab. with more job opportunities and places to live and bring up their families. Schools will have improved due to the demand from new families moving to the area and the retention of young families. The natural landscape remains the same, but community spaces are enhanced with walkability and shade. Overall, this is a win for both residents, who love Moab, but also visitors who want to visit Moab for its unique qualities.*

For more information on the Think-Tank and the description of 'Locally Driven Future, please visit:

<https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/>



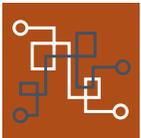
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- Moab is a unique desert town in Utah, almost 240 miles from Salt Lake City. Moab's community members wish to retain everything that makes Moab unique.
- However, with the increase of tourism and particularly motorized tourism, community members wish to acknowledge and appreciate tourism but not to the detriment of how Moab will continue to develop and evolve and retain its appeal as the place that they chose to call home.

## 4.0 | STRATEGIC PILLARS FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Pillars of the Moab -Tomorrow Together visioning process were developed from the community input and data which was gathered over the course of the entire engagement process. The 'pillars' represent the major themes or topic areas that underpin the preferred future for Moab. The key action areas listed under each pillar are the building blocks to achieve the preferred community future and were generated by each Focus Group session which was held for each pillar. Interestingly, the actions for each pillar mirrored all of the aspects of the preferred scenario, 'Locally Driven Future'. The follow-on community ideas are suggested steps by community members that could be taken to put the community on the path to this preferred future.

The strategic pillars help to organize future thinking into six important elements for Moab. These are intended to be the foundational building blocks that support and guide the community towards its preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'.



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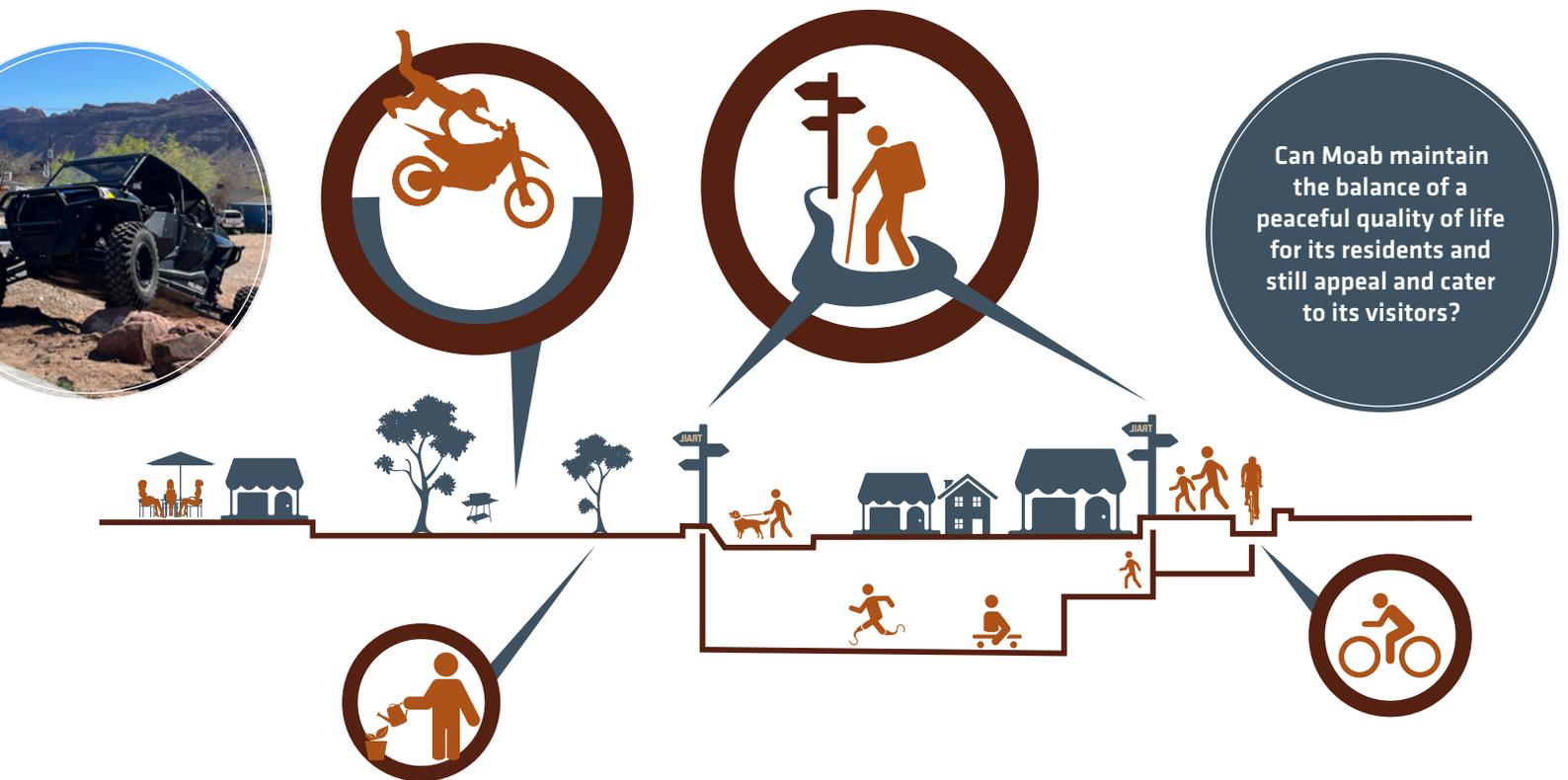
- The Strategic Pillars create a framework that draws together important elements identified by community members as being most critical in terms of the future.
- The Strategic Pillars are not intended to solve all of the community's challenges in the short or medium term. Rather, they represent a series of key focus areas that can guide future planning for Moab.

# 4.1 | PILLAR 1: TOURISM TRAJECTORY & ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

## Balancing quality of life with the tourism economy and opportunities to economically diversify.

### 4.1.1 | IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAJECTORY OF TOURISM AND ASSOCIATED ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Moab has become a renowned tourism destination due to its exceptional outdoor recreational offerings and unique scenery. However, throughout the visioning process, many residents have stated that the balance has reached a tipping point in relation to the city seeming to cater to visitors, rather than residents. While appreciating the need for tourism as a key economic driver for Moab, the community has expressed a need for economic diversification away from a sole reliance on tourism. The community has also expressed a desire to manage the aspects of tourism which negatively impact their lives as residents of Moab. Over-tourism has reached Moab, and this is reflected in the huge numbers of visitors who are ‘loving Moab to death’ and the accompanying noise pollution by the motorized recreation industry and the escalating number of hotels. The challenge is in finding the right balance between a vibrant tourism industry that delivers economic benefit, while ensuring Moab remains a functioning and connected community. Focusing on a sustainable tourism approach will help find new solutions for Moab.



#### Value to Residents

- Recreational tourists will continue to visit Moab. However, promotion of sustainable tourism as a practice and ideology in Moab will help mitigate the potentially negative impacts of over-tourism.
- The retention of the unique desert town and small-town feel will enhance the experience for both residents and visitors. This could be achieved by eliminating noise from recreational motorized vehicles and a more sympathetic sustainable tourism approach.

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process in relation to Tourism Trajectory and Economic Diversification.

## Embrace a Sustainable Tourism Approach

While it is widely recognized that tourism is a key economic driver for Moab, the theme of sustainable tourism has recurred throughout the visioning process and is seen as critical for the future of Moab. For Moab to adopt an intentional sustainable approach, this will mean reducing some of the negative impacts caused by tourism and move from a destination marketing approach to destination impact management. The move to destination management will include sustainability of the environment, mitigation of climate impact, protecting Moab’s natural resources and conserving the culture and community of Moab. It will also contribute to creating more authentic tourist experiences which includes a more sensitive appreciation of what Moab has to offer. However, this sustainable approach must also be economically sustainable for the future of Moab. There is also a need for leadership at city, county and state level to look at other desert towns such as Sedona, Arizona, for their sustainable tourism ideas ([https://visit-sedona.s3.amazonaws.com/CMS/9719/sed-stp\\_4-17-19\\_hr-update.pdf](https://visit-sedona.s3.amazonaws.com/CMS/9719/sed-stp_4-17-19_hr-update.pdf)) Other towns to refer to are Boulder (Nevada), Joshua Tree (California), Silver City (New Mexico) and Cottonwood (Arizona).



## Encourage an Industry Cluster Leveraging the Recreation Industry

During the Community Surveys and Focus Group sessions, there was a clear desire to see more entrepreneurship and small local businesses contributing to a recreational industry cluster within Moab. This recreational industry cluster would help Moab economically diversify away from a sole reliance on tourism, while creating local jobs and businesses from Moab’s recreational offerings. This local recreational industry cluster could co-exist and work with outdoor recreation offerings and would appeal to Moab’s tourists due to strong brand awareness. The creation of this cluster would also require the city and county to incentivize small industries to locate to and develop in Moab. Collaboration with University of Utah could provide an industry incubator to assist in the creation of this local industry cluster.

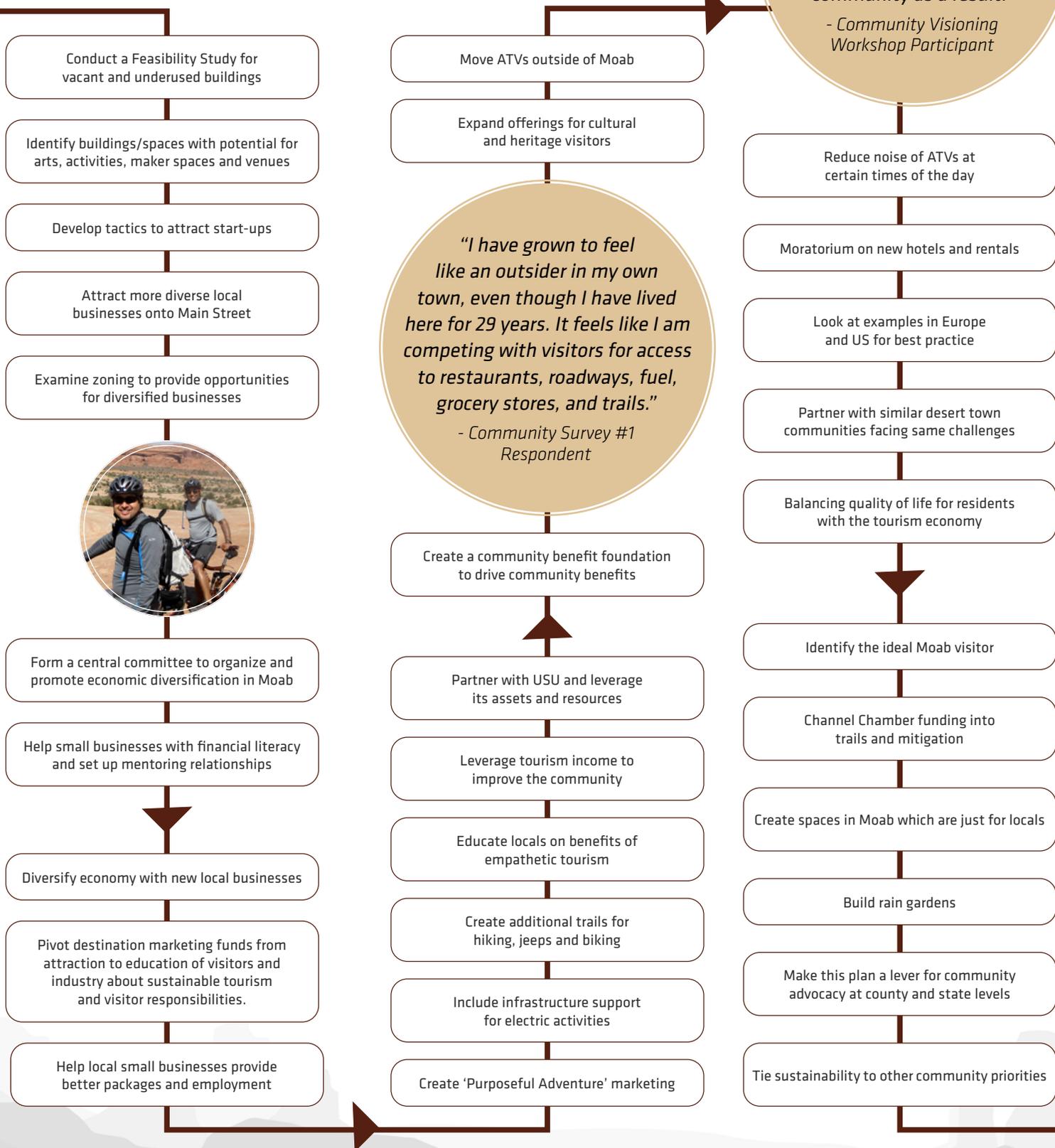
## Promote Electrification and Quieter Recreation Vehicles

The noise from motorized recreation vehicles (ATVs) in Moab has been a predominant theme in relation to the negative impact of tourism, due to the noise of these vehicles driving throughout Moab. In community survey #1, the noise from motorized recreation vehicles was the third highest reason why people did not like living in Moab. The noise from these vehicles was also one of the highest responses to the community survey #1 question relating to ‘what are the biggest concerns about the future of Moab’. The electrification of motorized recreation vehicles in Moab would lessen the impact of these vehicles on the experience of residents and visitors. Improved aftermarket exhaust equipment also has noise reducing potential. Public/private coordination to increase trailer parking at trailheads could facilitate reduced use in town. While motorized recreation vehicles would still be a significant part of Moab recreation, there are multiple strategies which could lead to their noise being reduced. Indeed, the creation of electric motorized recreation vehicles or improved exhausts could be a business opportunity for Moab and part of the industry cluster leveraging the recreation sector.



## 4.1.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'. Below are their original ideas.



## Cultivating and engaging an inclusive and diverse community, while working to address disparities.

### 4.2.1 | IMPORTANCE OF AFFORDABILITY AND EQUITY

Moab has a diverse population of residents and subcultures which co-exist together, due to their shared love of Moab. In community survey #1 when asked what unites the Moab community, 'love of Moab' was the second most popular response. Throughout the visioning process, participants have noted that it isn't practically easy to live in Moab and people who live in Moab have to have a strong and often personal reason for living in Moab. Cultural, ethnic and socio-economic diversity exists in Moab, as does inequality which is impacted by a lack of affordability in housing and the overall cost of living. Participants in the visioning process have repeatedly called for a solution to the affordability issue and the ability for people to maintain an affordable, equitable and dignified quality of life.

How can Moab's diverse community enjoy an affordable, equitable and enjoyable quality of life?



#### Value to Residents

- Affordability and equity measures will benefit the diverse population of Moab through alleviating the financial and livability downside of living in Moab.
- Addressing these concerns will also attract new residents and workers to Moab and will bolster the local economy and build a longer more stable community population.

The following key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab – Tomorrow Together Process in relation to Affordability and Equity.

## Focus on a Social Equity Approach

The goal of social equity is to eliminate inequalities of all kinds. To work towards this aspirational goal requires a clear commitment from city, county and state leadership, nonprofits and community groups. There is a need in Moab for an approach and action plan to intentionally support the needs of underserved groups including the Spanish-speaking population, transient workers, low-income families and seniors. A shared value of being a community member of Moab is at the core of this social equity approach as well as the potential for each community member to define their own future. This approach will include affordable childcare, age-in-place communities, affordable/attainable housing and the necessary services to support the underserved members of the community.



## Invest in Youth and Senior Enrichment

There is a need for enrichment opportunities for both the youth and senior sectors of the community. This includes activities, programs and intentional efforts to enhance the experience of both ends of the age spectrum. Intended outcomes will include retention and attraction of youth, through improvement of the current education system, attraction of quality teachers and investment in higher education options. The retention and attraction of youth will further be enhanced by future job opportunities resulting from economic diversification away from the tourism industry and a local industry cluster related to the recreation industry.

Relating to the senior population, this cohort will include the existing senior population as well as the increasing number of retirees who live in Moab or who are moving to Moab. In order to serve the senior population, there will need to be age-in-place residential offerings, improvement in healthcare and increased transportation options along with activities and programs to enhance livability for the senior population.



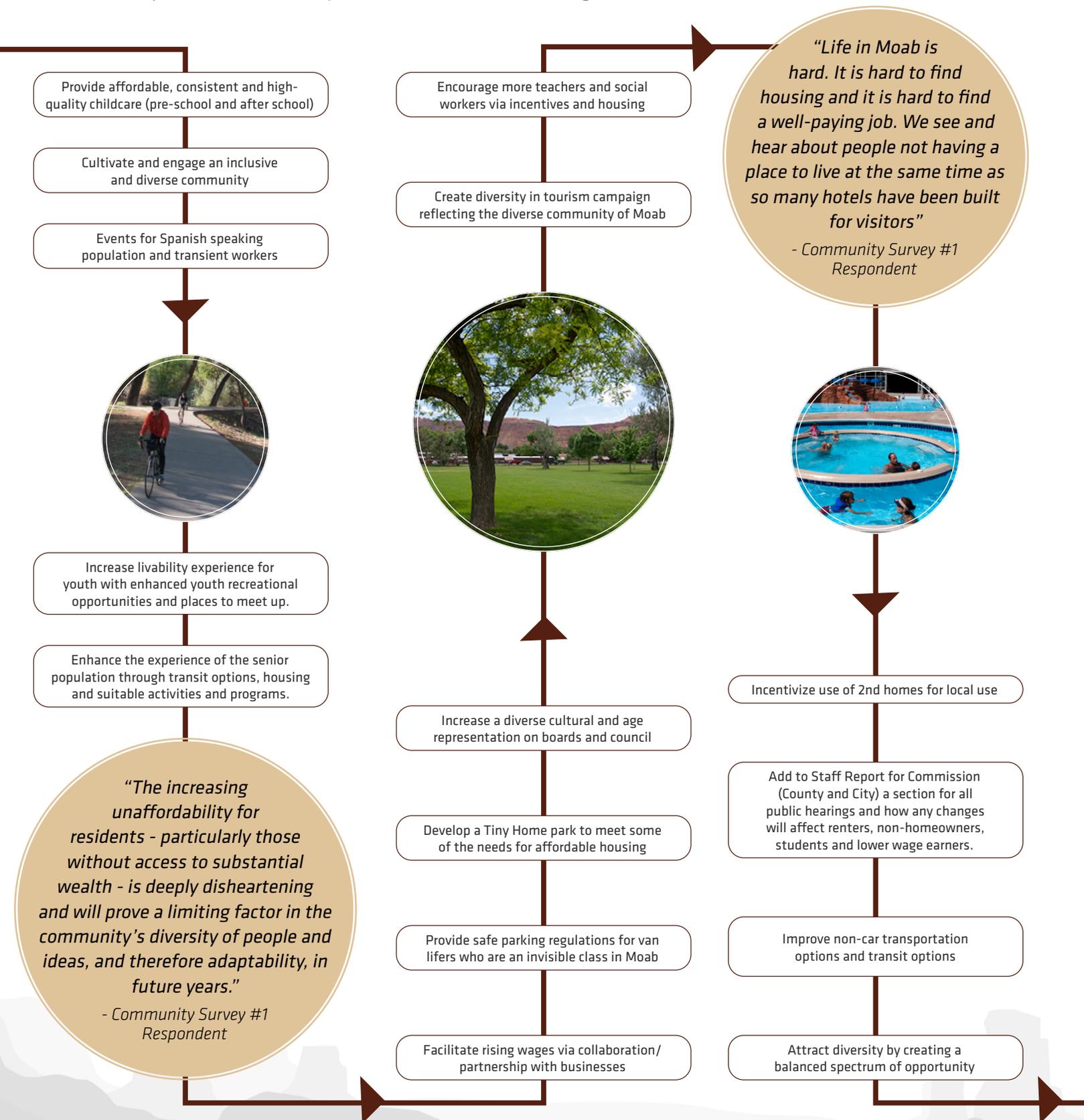
## Expand Diversity and Inclusivity Efforts

To expand diversity and inclusivity within Moab will require the deepening of existing efforts to reach all groups in the community and build high-trust connections within and between these groups. There is a need for leadership to promote the overarching ethos of respect and dignity within Moab to all disparate groups. To achieve this, there needs to be clear encouragement for members from different groups to participate in community events, programs and non-profits. This includes working families, the Spanish-speaking population, transient workers, low-income families, youth and seniors. Non-car transit options and attainable/affordable housing are also key to ensuring an inclusive quality of life amongst the diverse Moab population.



## 4.2.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet-points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'. Below are their original ideas.

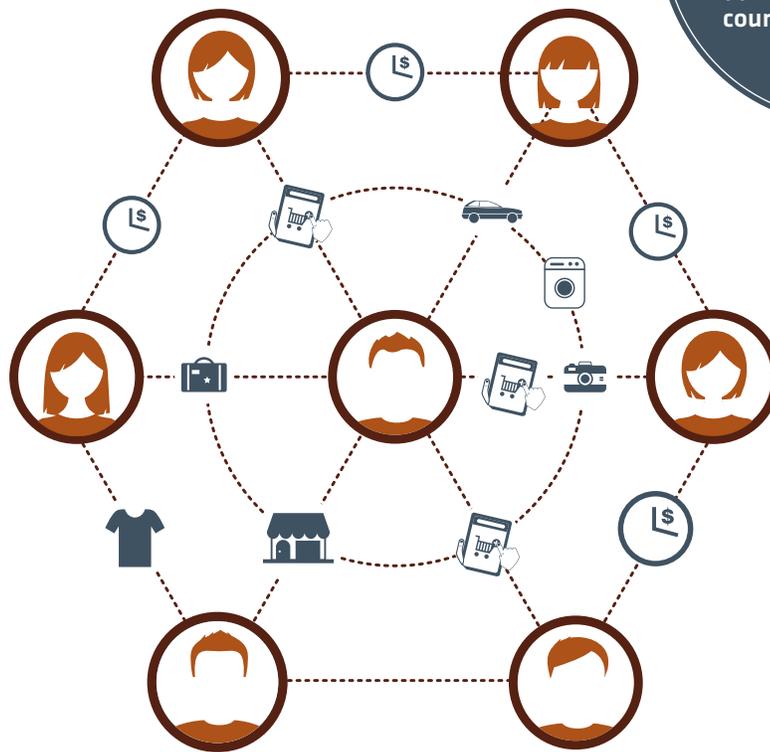


## Transparent and inclusive local leadership and decision making, to benefit Moab within a State context.

### 4.3.1 | IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING

Throughout the visioning process, participants have reiterated how they feel that change is ‘happening to them’ and that local control is out of their hands and possibly out of the hands of local government. Leadership and decision making have been key issues in the visioning process in relation to the need for Moab to have more autonomy, rather than the predominant influence by the State Legislature. There has been a call for developing better relationships with the State and for Moab to have a bigger seat at the table with regards to decision making. Participants have also called on local government to respond to the community in a more effective manner and to improve communications beyond social media.

How can the residents of Moab feel more ownership over decision making in the context of a regional approach including city, county and the State?



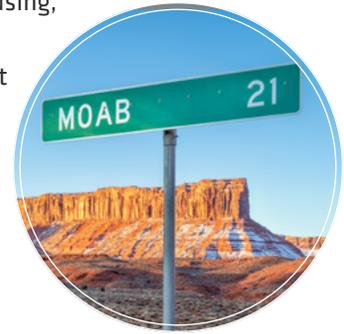
#### Value to Residents

- Residents need to be informed regarding how much local government can progress certain issues independently, outside of State Leadership.
- An improvement in communication from local government to the community beyond social media would be welcome. These communications could take the form of forums, committees and door to door interactions.

The following key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab - Tomorrow Together process in relation to Leadership and Decision Making.

## Encourage Closer Collaboration Between City and County

There has been agreement within the visioning process that there needs to be closer collaboration between the City and County and that decision making needs to be more transparent. This will leverage strengths and expertise within the city and county and increase efficiency in areas such as water management, tourism, economic diversification, affordable housing, amongst other important issues relating to Moab. It has also been noted that there needs to be more 'community-centric' action within the city and county collaboration. Participants from the Future Summit discussed that collaboration between city and county is happening relatively well, however there is need for improvement which could occur through more joint meetings between city and county and further communications to the residents of Moab. Participants suggested that there needs to be additional focus on partnerships with other communities within the State to support Moab as it looks forward to 2030. Other communities have been noted to include Green River, Springdale, Park City and St George.



## Boost Local Participation in Community Decision Making

The visioning process has shown that there is a call for more local and diverse participation in local and community decision making. When local people are involved in community decision making, they have more ownership of the process and as a result they will have more 'buy in' and interest in the decision-making process. The inclusion of underrepresented groups (i.e., the Spanish speaking population, low income and working families, youth and seniors) in local decision making has been identified as a beneficial next step for Moab. In order to remove barriers to participation in local and community decision making, incentives should be provided to encourage this participation. Examples of incentives include free transportation to meetings and free childcare during the meetings. Participants also noted that a lobby group of local industry and recreation representatives should be involved in local decision making as Moab looks to expand its economy beyond tourism.

## Intentionally Enhance Influence and Leverage at State Level

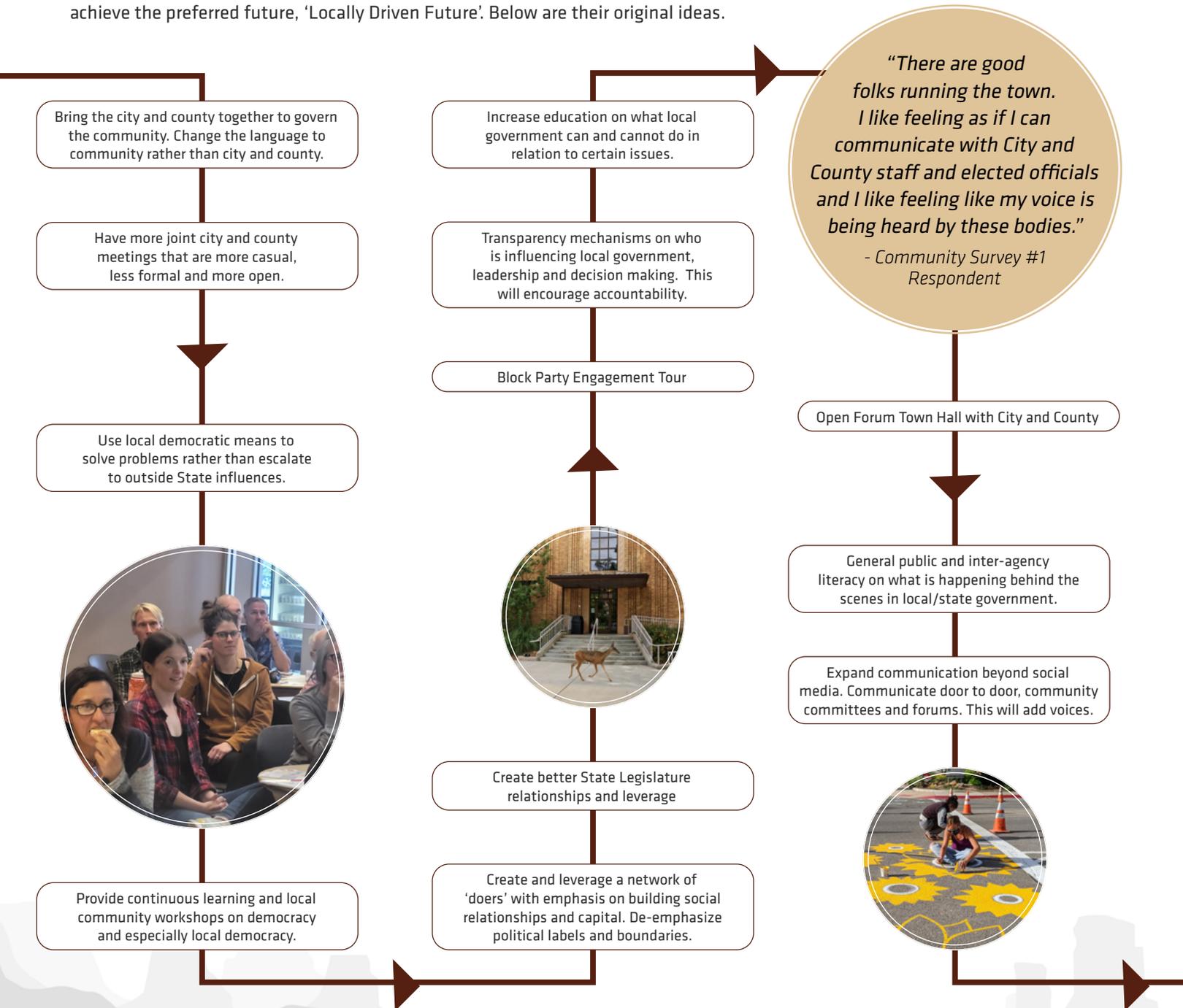
While it has been acknowledged during the visioning process that local government decision making is made within a State context, there has been a call for local government to 'get the State's attention'. This can be achieved by a more local and diverse participation at the local decision-making level as well as an intentional and focused attempt to highlight issues which will impact Moab but also the county and State. This includes environmental, economic development and affordability issues.





### 4.3.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'. Below are their original ideas.

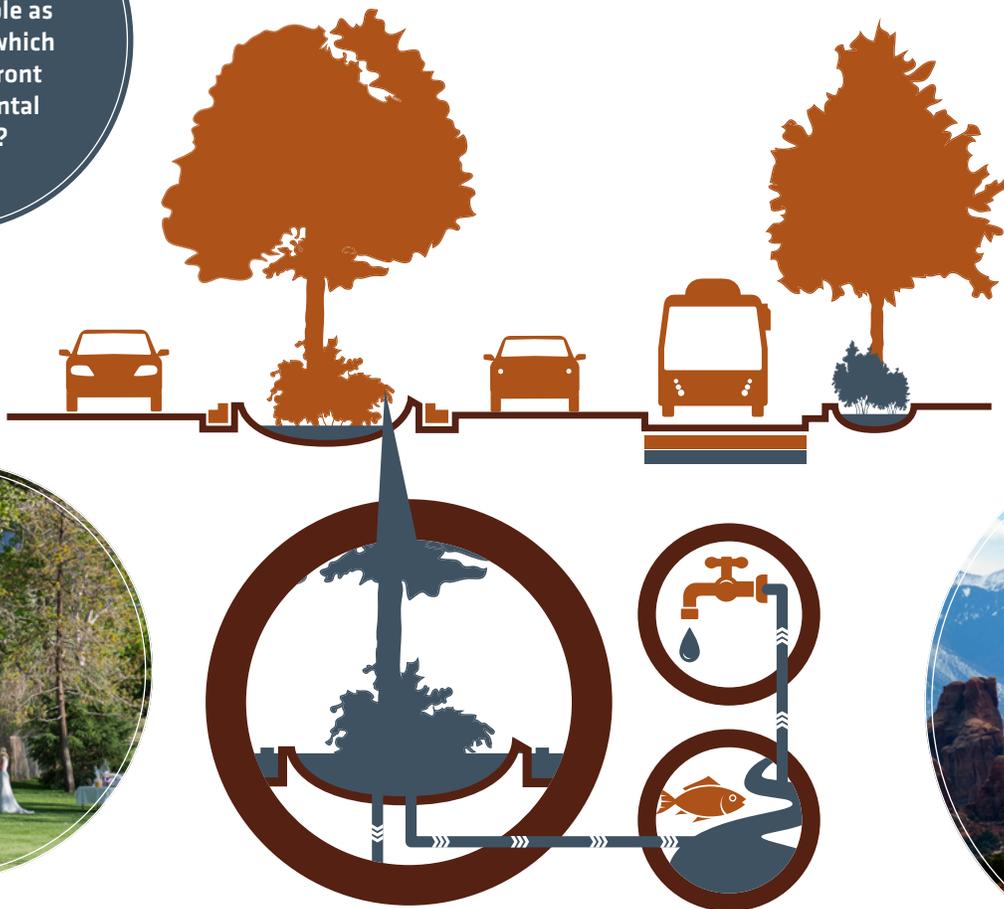


## Preparing to lead as a desert town example on environmental solutions.

### 4.4.1 | IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

There is a clear desire in the community to pursue environmental and sustainability practices. Adjustment to climate change, and the mitigating impacts of extreme weather events, such as extreme heat, fires and floods, are seen as urgent issues to address. Due to its unique location, Moab is under increased pressure regarding the challenges of water scarcity and climate change. Moab should be at the forefront of environmental leadership as a result of these enhanced challenges, but it is not as progressive as other similar places in the US. Throughout the visioning process, participants highlighted that Moab could be doing more regarding simple measures such as water conservation, banning single use plastic, recycling and composting. Participants called for ambitious and accountable goals looking forward to 2030.

How can Moab become a best practice example as a desert town which is at the forefront of environmental leadership?



#### Value to Residents

- Climate change is clearly here, and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent. It is critical that Moab incrementally tackles these grand challenges to enable this and the next generation of residents to successfully live in Moab.
- Many people in Moab share a deep connection to the landscape and nature, and efforts to support and sustain the broader ecosystem should gather strong local support.



## 4.4.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The following key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab – Tomorrow Together process in relation to environmental stewardship.

### Incentivize Desert Compatible Landscaping

Moab is located in a harsh desert landscape and is facing water limitations. Climate change has exacerbated weather conditions in Moab. As recently as August this year, Moab endured extreme heat which was followed by serious flooding. Generally, Moab must confront water scarcity issues, and the need for incentivizing drought tolerant plantings (xeriscaping) and resource conservation has been reiterated throughout the visioning process. This was recognized as a key priority in the focus group discussions.



### Embrace Renewable Energy and Zero Waste Approach

The world is rapidly moving to address the macro causes of climate change and move to de-carbonize the economy. In addition, there is considerable attention on reducing waste, pollutants (such as plastics) and shifting the focus to a reduce, reuse, and recycle approach. Moab attracts many younger people, and people who share an environmental stewardship ethos. Embracing a range of initiatives that reduce emissions and waste would be a positive step and would be consistent with the move to a more sustainable approach to tourism and community impact.

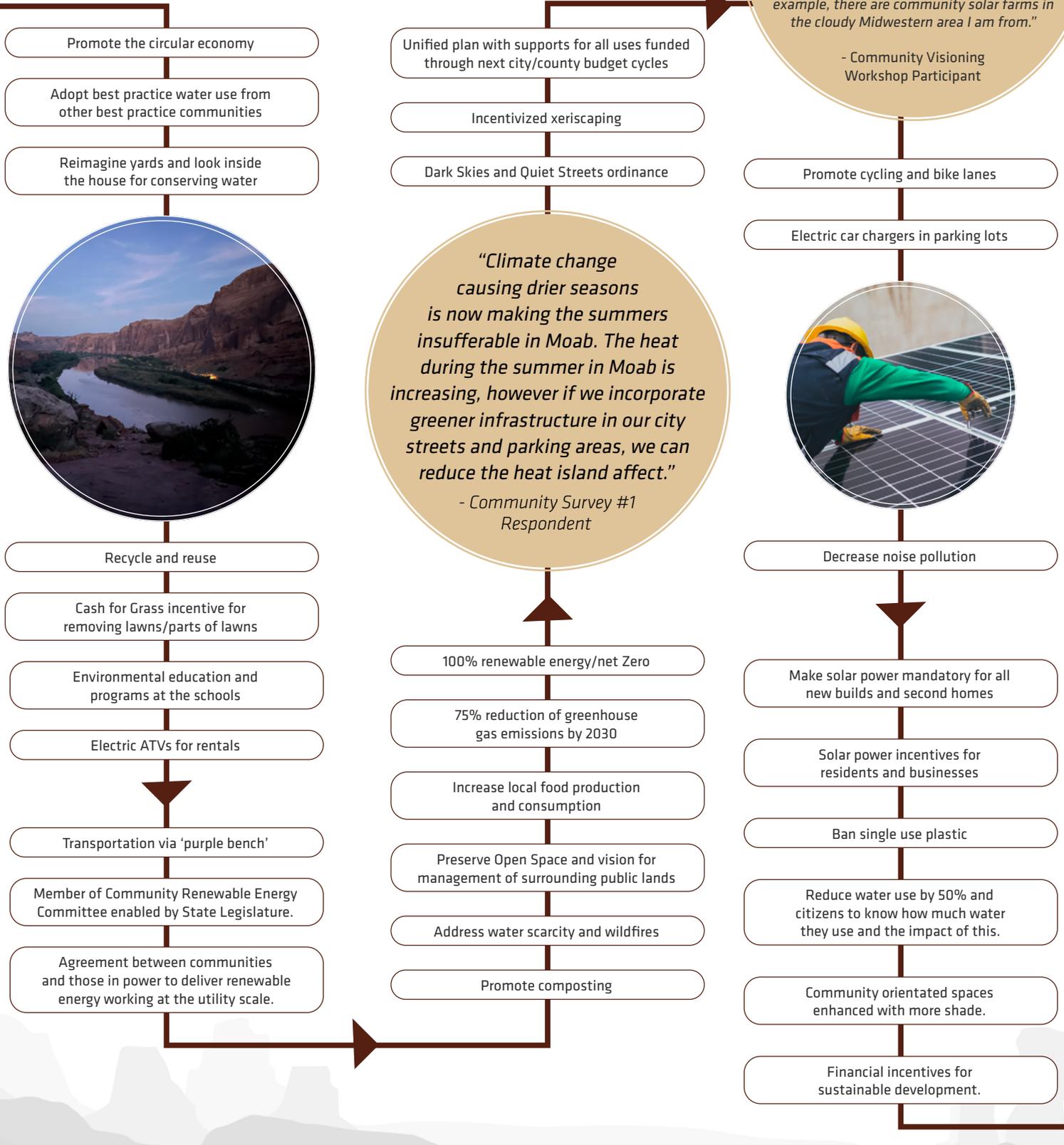
### Invest in Creating Climate Resilient City Landscapes

The desert environment in Moab has supported the development of housing and streetscapes that are suitable in a desert setting. However, the climate change forecasts are for increasingly hot and arid conditions, coupled with more extreme weather events. Creating more climate resilient city landscapes in Moab will help improve the ability to be able to endure these changes conditions. This may require new approaches to tree cover, building design and water recycling initiatives.



## 4.4.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future.' Below are their original ideas.



## Ensuring that Moab residents have equitable work conditions and affordable housing options.

### 4.5.1 | IMPORTANCE OF WORKFORCE AND HOUSING

Housing is a consistent challenge in Moab in relation to both home ownership and renting, due to escalating property prices. Second home ownership is also seen as contributing to the issue of lack of housing for locals. Workers who service the community including teachers, police and city workers are unable to live where they work. With the increasing numbers of hotels, there is an increasing need for workers however there isn't the affordable housing available for these workers. They often resort to living in very cramped conditions and sometimes in their vehicles. Throughout the visioning process both workforce and housing were seen as key issues that Moab needs to address urgently. Participants felt that every member of the diverse Moab community should have access to safe, attainable and affordable housing. To address the workforce issue, there is a need for affordability, a high-quality school system, reduction in competition in wages and housing in order to attract and retain workers.

The visioning process emphasized consistently workforce and housing, while separate issues were interrelated in Moab.



#### Value to Residents

- Underserved members of the Moab community need to benefit from affordable housing and childcare facilities.
- Workers who are integral to the Moab community (teachers, police, etc.) and those who support the tourism economy (hotel workers, etc.) should be able to live where they work. This would create a more diverse and inclusive community.

The following key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process in relation to Workforce and Housing.

## Facilitate More Affordable Housing Options

In order to maintain the diverse population that makes up Moab, there is an urgent need for attainable and affordable housing options and that community members have a ‘real’ access to this housing. For this to be a reality, creative ideas are critically needed in order to provide options other than standard housing and for local community-orientated developers to meet this need. Indeed, this is an opportunity as well as a need for a new way of thinking about what is a home and what affordable options are available or could be created. In the Focus Group on this topic, participants outlined that success would be residents spending less than 30% of their income on housing. Furthermore, there is a need to ascertain now what are the phases of meeting the affordable housing crisis in a succinct manner. This could be broken down to address Immediate, Temporary and then Permanent housing options in the short term. One of the key issues is that there is a lack of affordable housing and that the workers who support the tourism economy (i.e., hotel workers) need to have access to this housing in order for the tourism economy to survive. Participants in the visioning process noted creative affordable housing options including Studios, Tiny Homes, Tiny Homes on Wheels, Modular manufactured housing and 3D housing as well as more traditional houses and apartments. Incentives for local developers are needed so that builders are encouraged to build affordable housing communities and emphasis placed on localization of construction support and supply. It will also be necessary to address the NIMBYism impediment to affordable housing, so that the current homeowners in Moab also embrace affordable housing as a critical issue and welcome these options in their own neighborhoods. There is also a direct need for clear communication between the City, Housing Authority and the community regarding what is possible and the past solutions that have been successful. Finally, there is a need for a fostering of better developer/investor relationships with Grand County.



## Incentivize Long Term Rental Market

Second home ownership and nightly rentals have been seen as contributing to the issue of lack of housing for the local community. Participants in the Workforce and Housing Focus Group noted the need for disincentivizing second homes which are often left empty throughout the year. Programs to incentivize the conversion of second homes and short-term rentals via taxation, into long-term rental properties are seen to be needed. Participants in the Future Summit felt that the affordable housing issue is achievable but will need some profound policy making and investment by the local government. A recent vacation home tax initiative in Wales, UK, was noted by a Future Summit participant as a potential next step. This model outlines that the maximum level at which local authorities can set tax premiums on second homes and long-term empty properties will be increased to 300%, which will be effective from April 2023. <https://gov.wales/new-tax-rules-second-homes>.

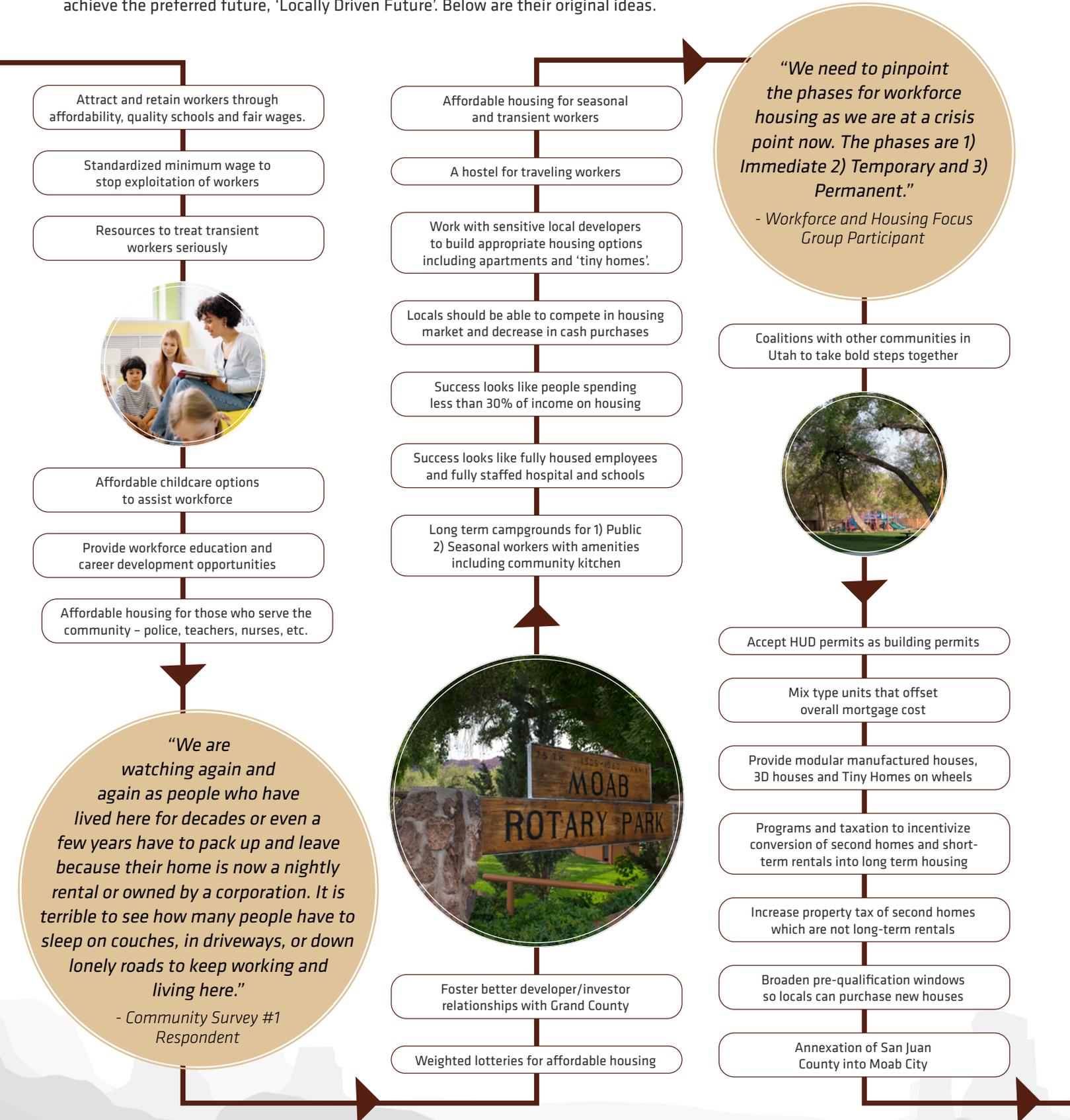
## Attract and Retain Diverse Workforce

Housing and Workforce are interrelated, however there is also a need to attract and retain a diverse workforce. Affordable childcare options are vital for working families and individuals not only to support and retain the current workforce, but also to attract the much-needed workforce. An excellent education system and career development options are also needed to retain and attract the workforce, for the workforce members and their children. There is also a need to reduce the competition in wages and housing that currently exists in Moab and provide transit options with regard to tourism economy workers.



## 4.5.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'. Below are their original ideas.

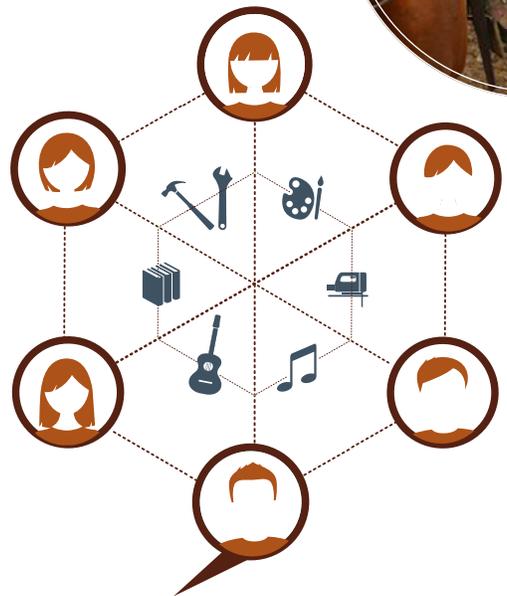


## Maintaining the small town feel and cohesive sense of community which Moab prides itself upon.

### 4.6.1 | IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FABRIC AND WELLBEING

From the very initial surveys, through until the final Future Summit, the community residents have expressed their deep attachment to the community and the unique social fabric that has existed. There is a very strong sense of a shared experience in this community, where people from many backgrounds are drawn together by a common appreciation of the community, its location and history. This ability for a broad and diverse cross section to co-exist is a key part of the community appeal. In short, people have consistently expressed a very deep affinity for the community. However, there is an emerging fear that the community fabric is changing, for the worse. There are greater divisions, tension, disconnects and inequalities. Residents seek a return to a community where people are more connected, and care for one another.

The diverse Moab community has been attracted to this unique desert town, due to a very unusual and compelling 'sense of place'.



#### Value to Residents

- Moab is a unique place and people move to and remain in Moab due to their new or enduring love of the Moab landscape, and community character.
- While it is not as easy to live in Moab, due to its geographical location, environmental concerns and affordability issues, the retention and enhancement of the community fabric and well-being is essential to retain and attract the current and future loyal residents.



## 4.6.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The following key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Moab – Tomorrow Together process.

### Measure Community Metrics such as Happiness, Well-Being, and Sense of Belonging

At each stage and throughout the entire visioning process, participants have spoken about their love of Moab. It is that ‘Sense of Place’ that resonates with individuals who may have lived in Moab for decades or have moved to Moab in more recent times. A sense of place is that unique collection of qualities and characteristics – visual, cultural, social, and environmental – that provides meaning to a location. This sense of place is what makes a place like Moab different from others. Throughout the visioning process these qualities have included the appreciation of the spectacular scenery that surrounds Moab, the ability to partake in the renowned outdoor recreational opportunities and the current sense of community that Moab provides. To maintain Moab’s appeal, it will be necessary to measure the community metrics that meet happiness, well-being and sense of belonging. An example of how to measure this can be viewed at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42413-019-00036-8> . This template could be used with current community members to view successes that Moab enjoys and the gaps that need to be met.



### Develop Dedicated Community Infrastructure for Locals

While community members have spoken about their affection for Moab, the issue of local versus visitor has been a consistent theme throughout the visioning process. The Senior Community Visioning workshop participants noted that there was divide in the community dynamic between ‘natives’ and those who have recently moved to Moab and those who visit Moab. Many participants have spoken about feeling excluded, over-run and left behind as community members, in relation to the focus on visitors. There is a need to create more spaces within Moab, for locals. This is challenging to imagine, but participants have suggested that there could be walkable local spaces where locals can meet each other, connect with friends and enjoy the sense of being a community member amongst the visitors. More community wide events and intentional local experiences have also been noted as integral to bringing the community together year-round including events centered on music and food in the parks and streets. This will foster a sense of community and connectivity.



### Invest in Creating Strong Inclusive Social Fabric

In order to maintain and/or create a strong and inclusive social fabric will mean increasing the sense of community across the diverse Moab population. Moab is unique in that it has very different groups or cohorts of people that have learned to live in a harmonious relationship. This important dimension of the social fabric has become stretched and challenged. There will be a need for broad appeal activities and events that bring the entire Moab community back together and make the community more cohesive. This will boost the sense of community that participants are concerned may be lost going forward.

## 4.6.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Locally Driven Future'. Below are their original ideas.

- Increase access to/availability of supportive services across the community
- Identify gaps in services and collaborate with local organizations to address these gaps
- Cultivate the parts of Moab that the community loves



- Increase sense of community and cohesiveness
- Do people have community to turn to for help? Watching pets? Last minute childcare? Needing a ride?
- Need more community participation at events
- Need walkable public spaces where locals can meet new people and connect with friends.
- Increase collaboration among non-profits and local government and community
- More social infrastructure where locals can get involved with local decision making and volunteering
- More local resources for information and information sharing

- Central places for communication
- Define 'What is a Moabite' and identify things around which Moabites can find a shared identity and develop events to bring Moabites together
- Attract and sustain people who want to commit and invest in Moab's essential structures



*"The best thing about Moab is the sense of community. We all care deeply about each other. When anyone experiences tragedy or triumph we help them or hold them up. It's a pleasure to know the people who make up this wild little melting pot in the desert- the old timers, long-timers and the newcomers."*  
 - Community Survey #1 Respondent

- Long term residents are increasingly leaving Moab
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment within community to identify the gaps in services

*"We are a town that feels overrun by 'others. With the perceptions of divide and disconnection within the community, we 'other-ize' half of our community leading to our sense of community feeling further diluted"*  
 - Community Fabric and Wellbeing Focus Group Participant

- Create low/no cost events that celebrate the different groups in Moab, but are accessible to the whole community
- Dirtbag Olympics
- Encourage corporate and student volunteerism (paid hours and class credits)
- Encourage neighborhood block parties and art groups
- Develop awareness of what is happening in the community
- Encourage youth to participate in community and run student led initiatives



- Community Election and Thanksgiving dinners - a chance for community to meet and dine

# 5.0 | COMBINED STRATEGIC ACTION FRAMEWORK

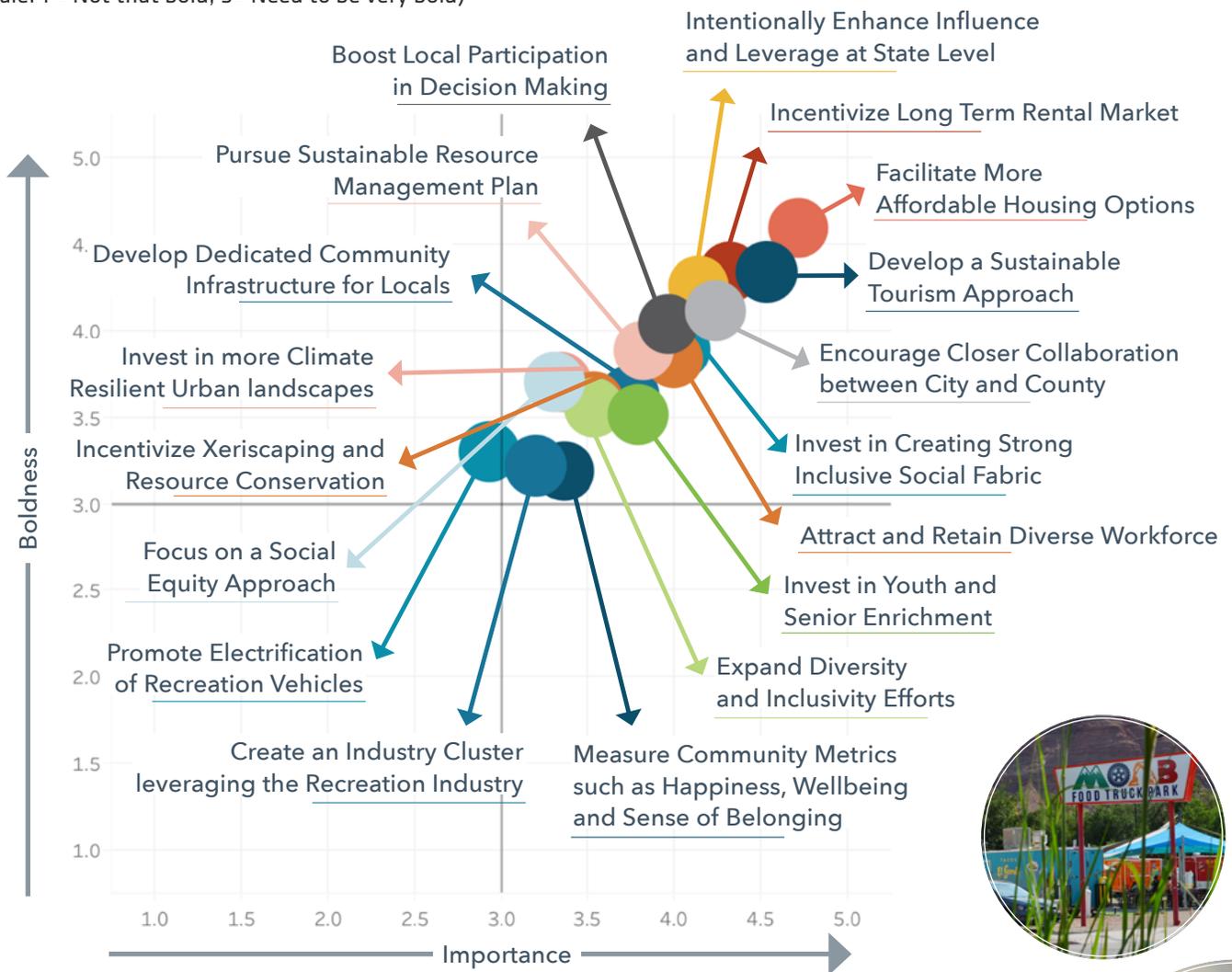
The framework for action developed through the visioning and planning process has identified a set of key actions that will help Moab pivot its trajectory towards the 'Locally Driven Future'. This framework is the culmination of community input, surveys and deliberation by the focus groups. The resulting overall framework creates the basis of the roadmap to the future and the guiding vision that will inform future planning efforts by the City of Moab.



# 5.1 | PRIORITIZATION OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

There were a total of 18 Strategic Actions identified, that support the six Strategic Pillars. As a final step in the planning work, a prioritization survey was conducted. This survey was aimed to be a 'decision making tool' to identify high priority actions. The survey was taken by participants in the Future Summit, and by the Moab City Councillors. This group was considered to be well informed about the process and the issue embedded in the Strategic Actions. So while a relatively small number of responses, it provides some good guidance about immediate priorities. The survey asked participants to score each action based on two key questions:

- **IMPORTANCE:** How important is it to tackle these Strategic Actions to fulfill on the future vision?  
(Scale: 1= Not that important; 5= Critically Important)
- **BOLDNESS:** How Bold does Moab need to be in fulfilling on the Strategic Actions?  
(Scale: 1 = Not that bold; 5= Need to be very bold)



DataInsight

- All the actions were scored relatively high on both dimensions. The highest scored actions included Facilitate more Affordable Housing Options, Incentivize Long Term Rental Market, and Develop a Sustainable Tourism Approach.
- The lowest scored ones included Promote Electrification of Recreation Vehicles, Create an Industry Cluster leveraging the Recreation Industry, and Measure Community Metrics such as Happiness, Wellbeing and Sense of Belonging.
- Refer to the project portal for more detailed charts.



## 6.0 | DYNAMIC SYSTEMS-THINKING APPROACH

The framework for action developed through the visioning and planning process has identified a set of 18 key actions that will help Moab pivot its trajectory towards the ‘Locally Driven Future’ scenario. This framework is the culmination of community input, surveys and deliberation by the focus groups. The resulting overall framework creates the basis of the roadmap to the future and the guiding vision that will inform upcoming planning efforts for Moab.

Communities function as ecosystems, where action in one area can impact other areas. The recommended strategic pillars and actions for Moab will be most effective if they operate in concert.





## 7.0 | NEXT STEPS - ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

The City of Moab has undertaken an extensive community visioning process that has produced the following outcomes:

- Documented a detailed understanding of the community's views across a range of important topics and future shaping factors.
- Allowed detailed examination of plausible future scenarios, explored expected, least desired, and preferred futures, and built an understanding of the implications of these future options.
- Identified a vision for the future, acknowledging that there are a variety of viewpoints, with the majority in a central range.
- Identified key strategic pillars, action areas, and community ideas.

The community of Moab has shown a healthy appetite for change going forward. This is the first step toward the preferred future 'Locally Driven Future,' that will guide the City's future planning efforts.

This work has been built on extensive public participation and open and transparent dialogue. The vision looks out to 2030.

Now, the next phase of work needs to begin. The following immediate next steps are recommended:

- Consideration and acceptance of the **Moab – Tomorrow Together Vision and Strategic Action Plan** by the City Council.
- Incorporation of the key elements of the community vision into the City's future planning efforts





## 8.0 | MORE INFORMATION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For more information on the Moab - Tomorrow Together project, please contact:

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An outstanding highlight of this project was the participation of nearly 1,000 people in the project. Their insights, perspectives and thoughts have made this a rich and valuable process.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

City staff, City Council and community members have engaged in the visioning process with great enthusiasm. Their passion and interest ensured the discussions were thoughtful, and the outcomes reflective of the myriad of perspectives that exist within Moab. This dedication is reflective of the deep commitment participants have to the future of Moab.

Future iQ particularly wishes to acknowledge the substantial background support from Carly Castle, City Manager and Lisa Church, Communications and Engagement Manager.





## 10.0 | ABOUT FUTURE IQ

Future IQ specializes in applying innovative tools and approaches to assist municipalities, organizations, regions and industries shape their economic and community futures. With nearly two decades of experience, the company has a global clientele spanning three continents. To learn more about Future IQ, and our recent projects visit [www.future-iq.com](http://www.future-iq.com) or by email at [info@future-iq.com](mailto:info@future-iq.com).

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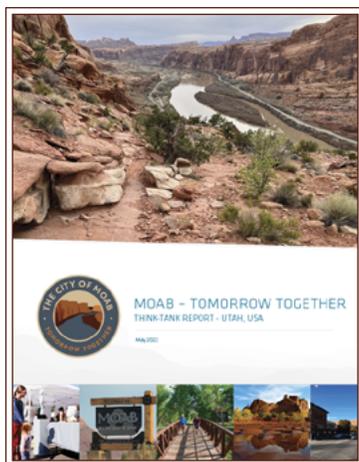
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Walter R.  
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Data Engineer

To read all reports and to explore Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process, please visit the project portal:

<https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/>



Moab – Think-Tank Report  
May 2022



Moab – Vision & Strategic Action Plan  
September 2022



# MOAB - TOMORROW TOGETHER

## VISION & STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

UTAH, USA

SEPTEMBER 2022