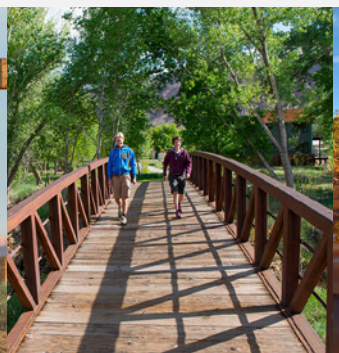
# MOAB – TOMORROW TOGETHER

## THINK-TANK REPORT - UTAH, USA

May 2022



# MOAB – TOMORROW TOGETHER

## THINK-TANK REPORT

### UTAH, USA

May 2022

This report summarizes the outcomes of the 'Moab – Tomorrow Together' Think-Tank held on April 6 and 7, 2022. Over 60 community members participated in the Think-Tank and developed the scenarios presented in this report. This report has been produced as part of the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning project which aims to develop a new community vision that will guide leadership and the community looking out to 2030.

This report and the associated data analysis are available on the project portal:
*https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/*

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future→iQ®
Create **Future Intelligence**®

Think-Tank Hosted by:

CITY OF MOAB UTAH

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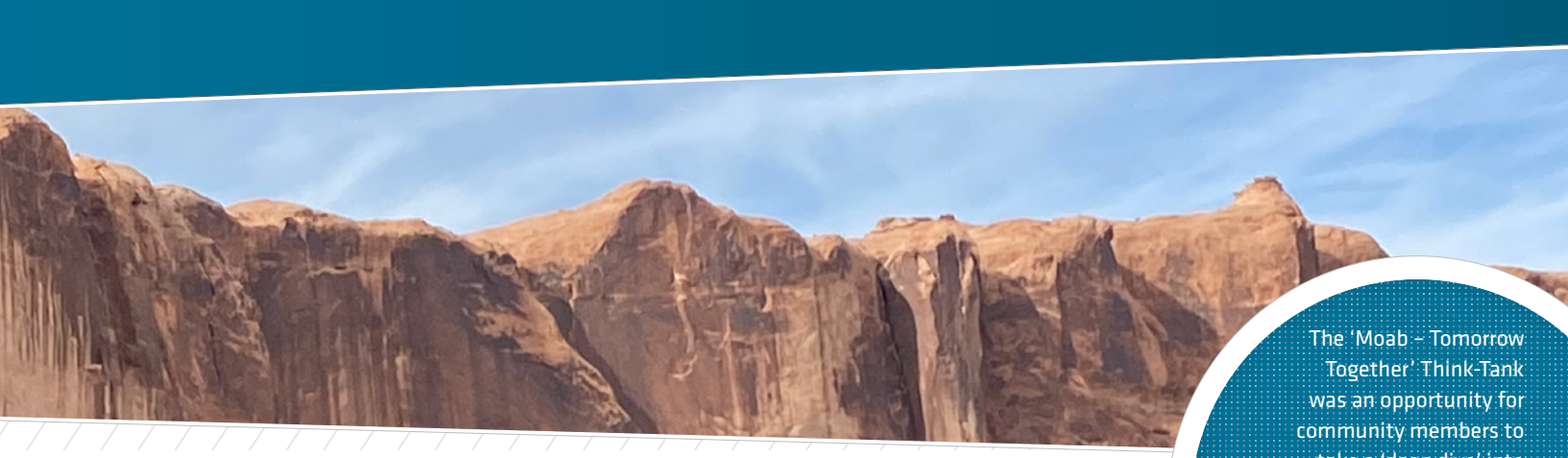


The 'Moab – Tomorrow Together' Think-Tank was an opportunity for community members to take a 'deep dive' into community visioning through an inclusive and transparent scenario-planning process. This was just one step in the extensive visioning process.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Moab is renowned for its unique and dramatic scenery, outdoor recreation opportunities and sense of community and 'small town feel'. Moab's current population of residents stands at approximately 5,000, however Moab has experienced tremendous growth over the last 20 years from tourism. With iconic National Parks, public lands, and world-class outdoor recreation opportunities, Moab attracts between 3-5 million visitors annually.

The City of Moab is running the 'Moab - Tomorrow Together' community-wide visioning and planning process throughout 2022, with the assistance of Future iQ. Through in-depth community engagement the City of Moab aims to assist the community articulate the tangible and intangible elements that, if lost, would fundamentally change the character of Moab. The process will result in a Vision and Strategic Action Plan that will help the City direct its efforts and resources toward a defined vision for the future. This project is looking out to 2030. The process will also guide decision makers to focused growth areas throughout the City, establish community priorities for guiding the current and future business environment and potentially inform the revision of the General Plan.

The Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning process aims to provide a response to the following questions:

- What should Moab become?
- What makes Moab unique and special and how can the city use these characteristics to prepare for the future?
- How will community stakeholder preferences fit into this vision?

This scenario-based Think-Tank report summarizes the Moab - Tomorrow Together Think-Tank workshop that took place on April 6 and 7, 2022. The Think-Tank is a key step in the Moab–Tomorrow Together visioning process. The components of the visioning work to date has comprised of:

- **Background Research:** Extensive background research was conducted prior to the Community Survey and Think-Tank. This also included one on one zoom interviews with City Staff, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Residents and the Multi-Cultural Center. More details of these interviews can be viewed at *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI6rBlmLyHA* and *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3YpSaKbYSI.*
- **Moab – Tomorrow Together Community Survey:** An extensive survey was completed by almost 800 community members. The survey aimed to understand community perspectives on current trends in the city, as well as their aspirations for the future.
- **Scenario-Based Think-Tank Workshop:** The in-person scenario-based Think-Tank workshop held on April 6 and 7, 2022, provided an important opportunity to engage over 60 Moab community members in a critical dialogue about the future and impacts of changing dynamics in the city.
- **Think-Tank Participant Heatmaps:** Think-Tank participants completed heatmaps at the end of the Think-Tank to express their Expected and Preferred future scenarios, looking out to 2030. The results are examined in this report.

Emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of collaboration, equity, and planning for the future have been highlighted as critically important to building resiliency for our communities as we look to the grand challenges ahead.

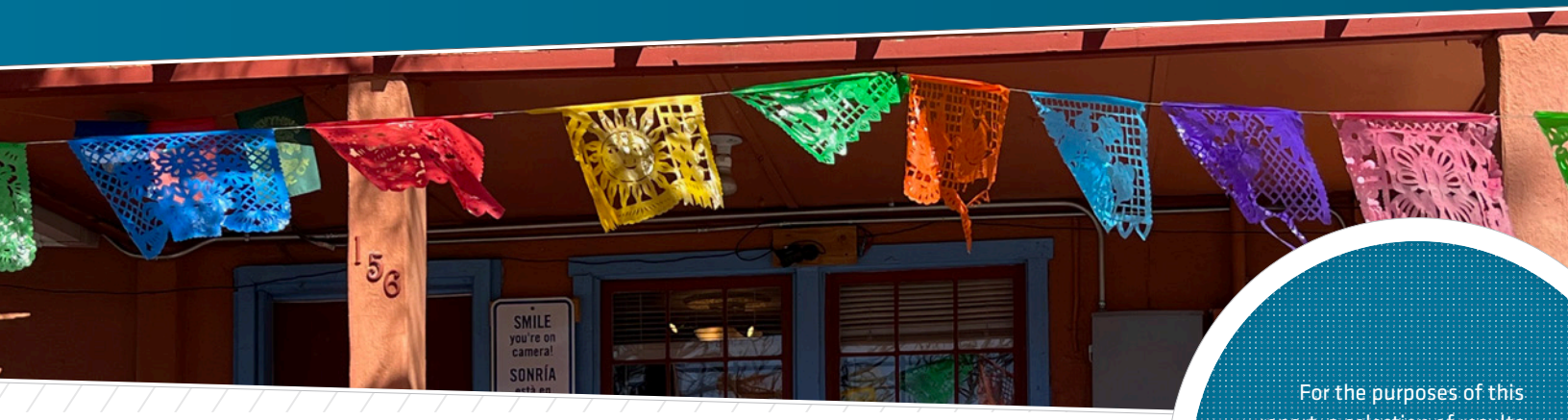
# 2.0 HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

This report lays out the findings from the Think-Tank workshop, however more details about the visioning process can be viewed at the Moab - Tomorrow Together website *https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/*.

The Moab - Tomorrow Together visioning process started with background exploration and analysis, through to building a range of future possible directions for Moab. Individual interviews were important to ascertain the current situation in Moab and why a visioning process is important. This work represents robust 'future thinking' where community stakeholders consider possible directions and the impacts and consequences of those directions. The process until now, and this report, then drills down deeper into what people see as the optimal or preferred future. This understanding helps lay the groundwork for ascertaining 'how we get there'. The final vision for Moab will be delivered in October 2022, after a process of in-depth community engagement sessions, a second survey, in-depth focus groups and the culmination of the strategic pillars which will be necessary for Moab to focus upon.

## MOAB – TOMORROW TOGETHER

| Steps in the process | Sections of the report |
|---|---|
| Information gathered from the Community Survey. | Brief discussion on the Community Survey (Chapter 3) |
| Introduce the Think-Tank process and the goals for the process. | Think-Tank Workshop (Chapter 4) |
| Identify macro trends shaping the future of Moab. | Forces Shaping the Future – Macro Trends (Chapter 5) |
| Identify key drivers and clusters of drivers shaping the future of Moab. | Key Drivers Identification and Identifying Scenario Shaping Clusters of Drivers; Cluster Map Development (Chapters 6 - 8) |
| Create plausible future scenarios for Moab. | Creating the Scenario Framework (Chapter 9) |
| Identify Expected, Least Desired, and Preferred Futures for Moab. Identification of the next steps in the visioning process | Expected, Least Desired, and Preferred Futures (Chapter 10-11) |



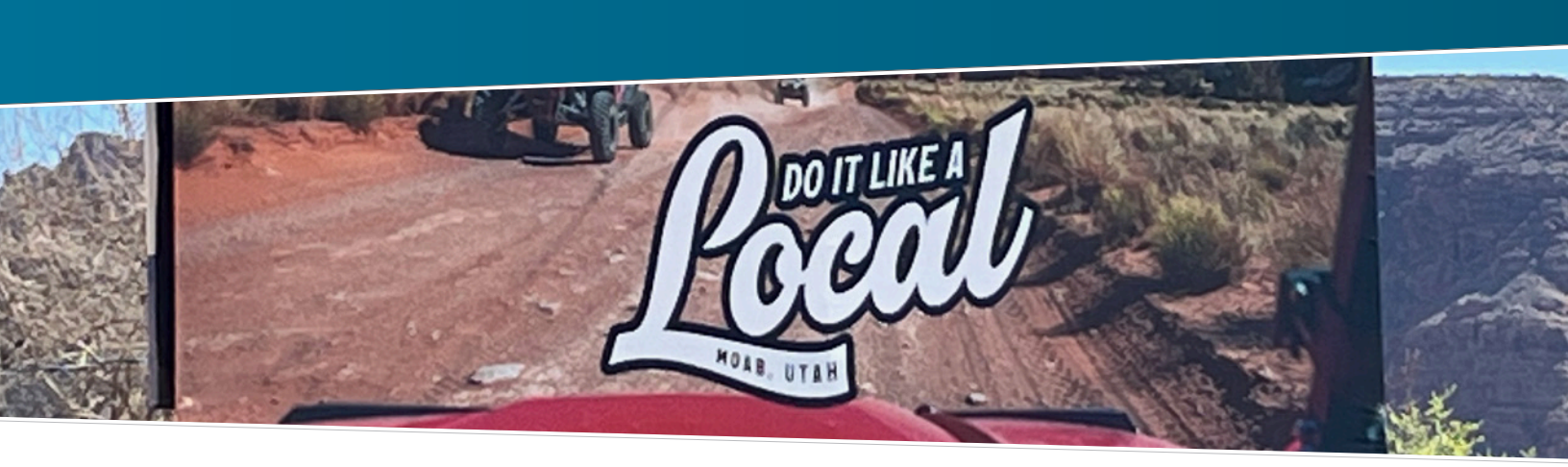

For the purposes of this report, a selection of results will be outlined, however all interactive results can be viewed on the Moab – Tomorrow Together website.

# 3.0 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Prior to the Think-Tank workshop, an extensive community survey was conducted in order to gather insight into the community's perceptions of Moab. The survey was also translated into Spanish for the Spanish speaking members of the community. The participation rate was impressive with almost 800 responses. The community survey ran for the duration of March 2022. Community members were encouraged to fill in the survey via the City of Moab newsletter, social media avenues and direct connection to Moab community members from the City of Moab email listing. The community survey was hosted on the Moab - Tomorrow Together website at *https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/*.

Community members were asked standard profiling questions, however open-ended questions were predominantly used to enable the community members to give their full thoughts on the future of Moab, looking out to 2030. These open-ended questions probed the community about what they liked/didn't like about living in Moab, what divides/unifies the Moab community, which values are most important for the future of community of Moab and finally what changes most excite/cause concern about Moab's direction and future. Further questions were asked about the importance of a shared vision and shared values to the future of Moab as well as the current direction and speed of change in Moab. The community survey responses can be filtered by age, where people live, ethnicity, time spent in Moab per year and how long the individual has lived or worked in Moab.

Responses from the Community Survey were fascinating. All of the almost 800 respondents took time and energy to give their thoughts to the myriad of open-ended questions. This enabled the respondents to give their views in an unhindered manner.




## 3.1 IMPORTANCE OF A SHARED VISION

Survey respondents were asked how important it is to have a shared vision and shared values for the future of Moab. They were asked:

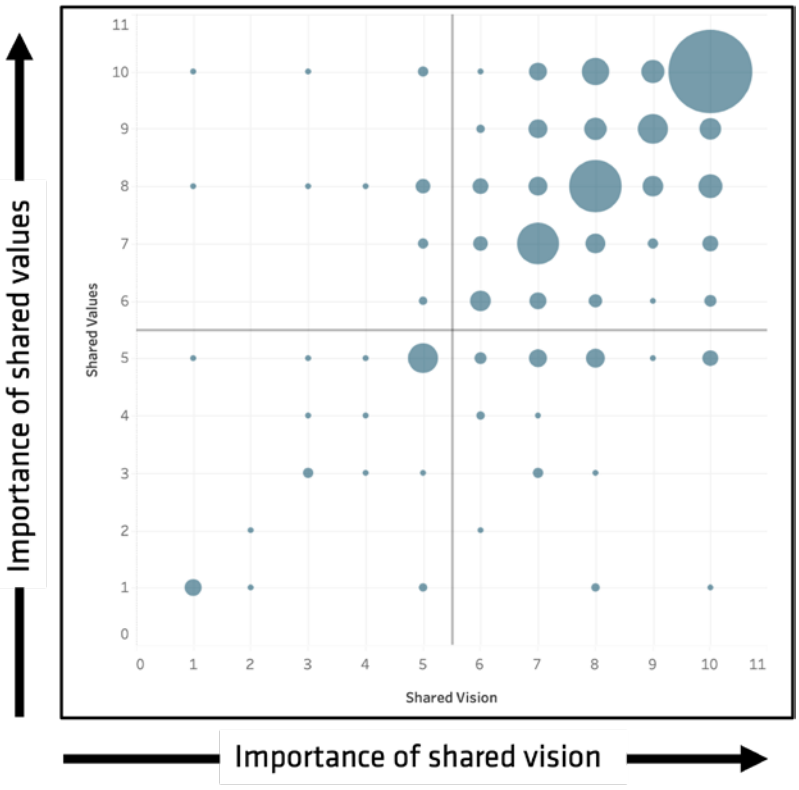
**How important is it to have a SHARED VISION for the future of Moab?**

*Scale: 1=Not Important; 10=Highly Important*

**How important do you think it is to identify SHARED VALUES for the community of Moab?**

*Scale: 1=Not Important; 10=Highly Important*

The results to these questions were combined to produce the following chart:



DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- The size of the bubble reflects the number of responses, with the largest bubble identifying that respondents felt it was highly important (10 on both scales) to have a shared vision and shared values for Moab.
- These results can be filtered on the Moab website according to age, where people live, ethnicity, time spent in Moab per year and how long the individual has lived or worked in Moab

## 3.2 CURRENT DIRECTION AND SPEED OF CHANGE IN MOAB

Survey respondents were asked how happy or concerned they were about the current direction and speed of change in Moab. They were asked:

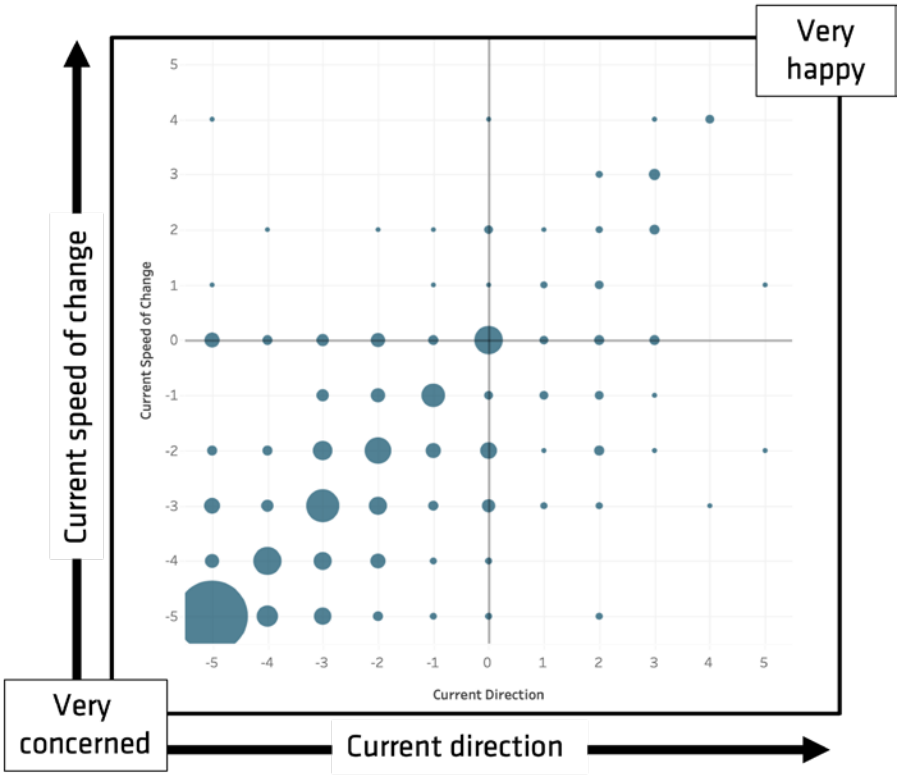
**How happy or concerned are you about the current direction of Moab?**

*Scale: -5=Very Concerned; 0=Neutral; +5=Very Happy*

**How happy or concerned are you about the current speed of change in Moab?**

*Scale: -5=Very Concerned; 0=Neutral; +5=Very Happy*

The results to these questions were combined to produce the following chart:



DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

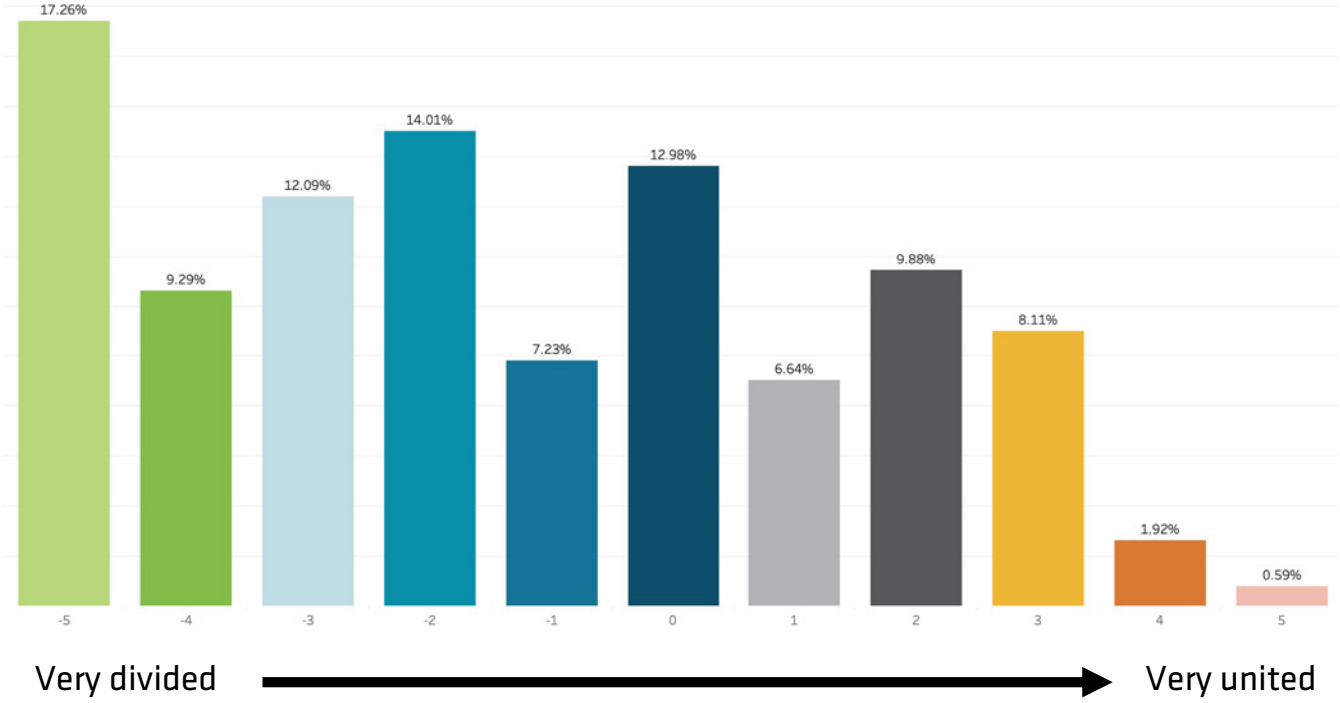
- The size of the bubble reflects the number of responses, with the largest bubble identifying that respondents were very concerned about the current direction and speed of change in Moab.
- These results can be filtered on the Moab website according to age, where people live, ethnicity, time spent in Moab per year and how long the individual has lived or worked in Moab.

## 3.3 CURRENT COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

Survey respondents were asked how they would describe the current community dynamic of Moab. They were asked:

**How would you describe the current community dynamic of Moab?**

*Scale: -5=Very Divided; 0=Neutral; +5=Very Unified*



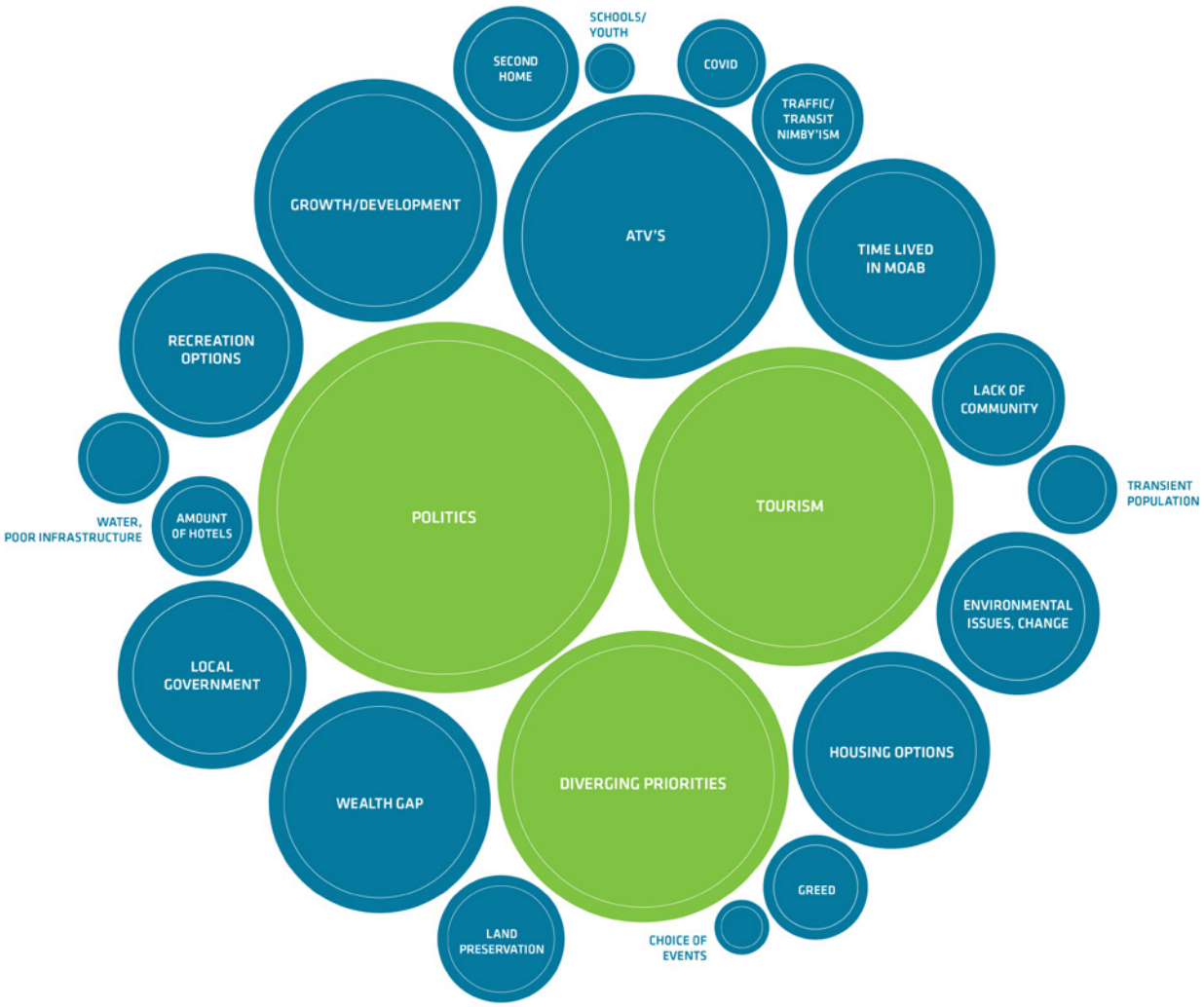

DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- Overall, most respondents felt that the community was very divided. Interestingly, those who had lived in Moab for 20 years or less, felt the community to be balanced between being somewhat divided and somewhat unified.
- These results can be filtered on the Moab website according to age, where people live, ethnicity, time spent in Moab per year and how long the individual has lived or worked in Moab.

## 3.4 WHAT DIVIDES THE MOAB COMMUNITY?

Survey respondents were asked **"What divides the Moab Community?"**. Responses were categorized and produced a bubble map.



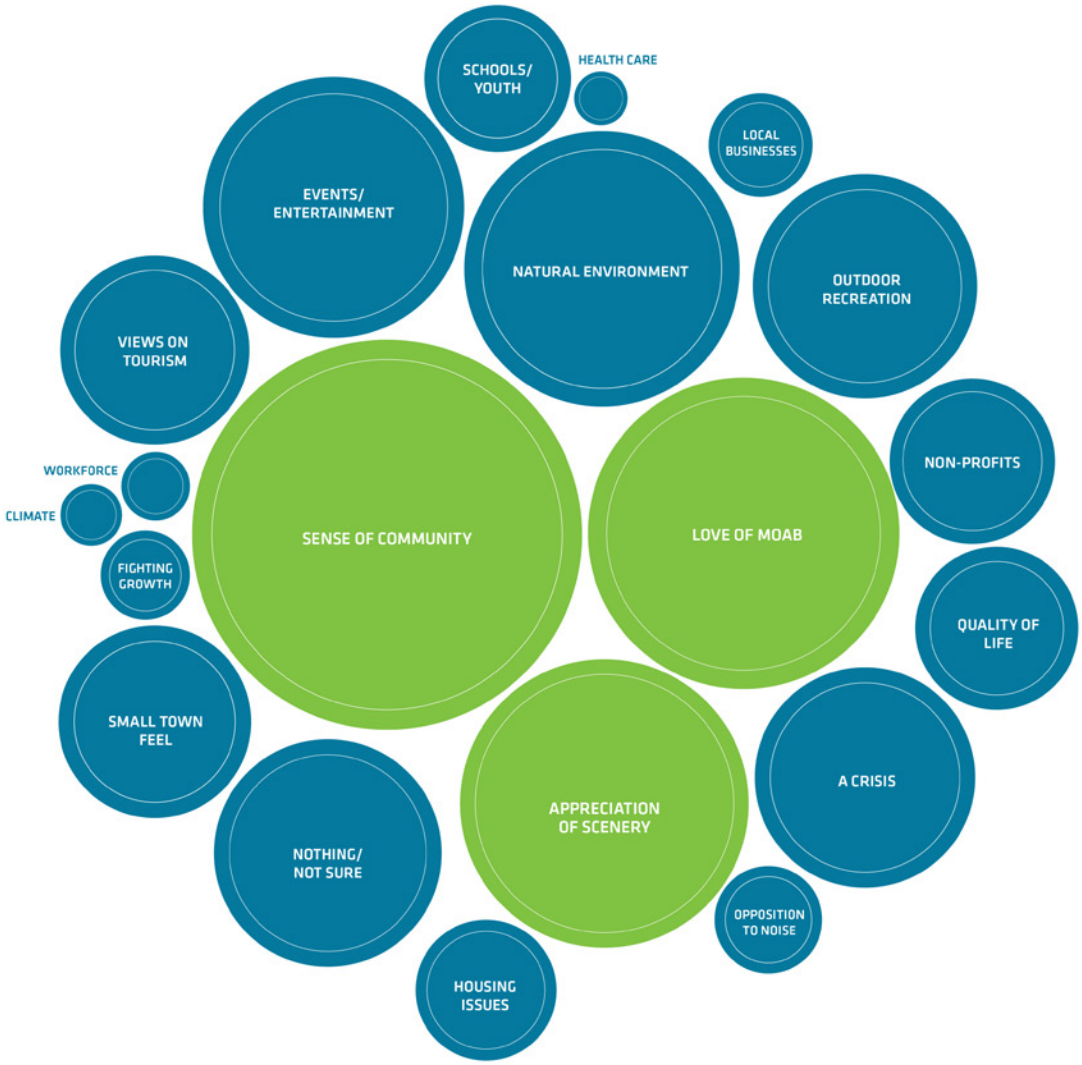

DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- The green bubbles are the three most popular categories, and the size of all bubbles represent popularity per category.
- Politics, Tourism and Diverging Priorities were seen as the issues which divide the Moab community the most. This was followed by ATV's, Growth/Development, Wealth Gap and Time Lived in Moab.

## 3.5 WHAT UNIFIES THE MOAB COMMUNITY?

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question, **"What unifies the Moab Community?"**. Responses were categorized and produced a bubble map.




DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

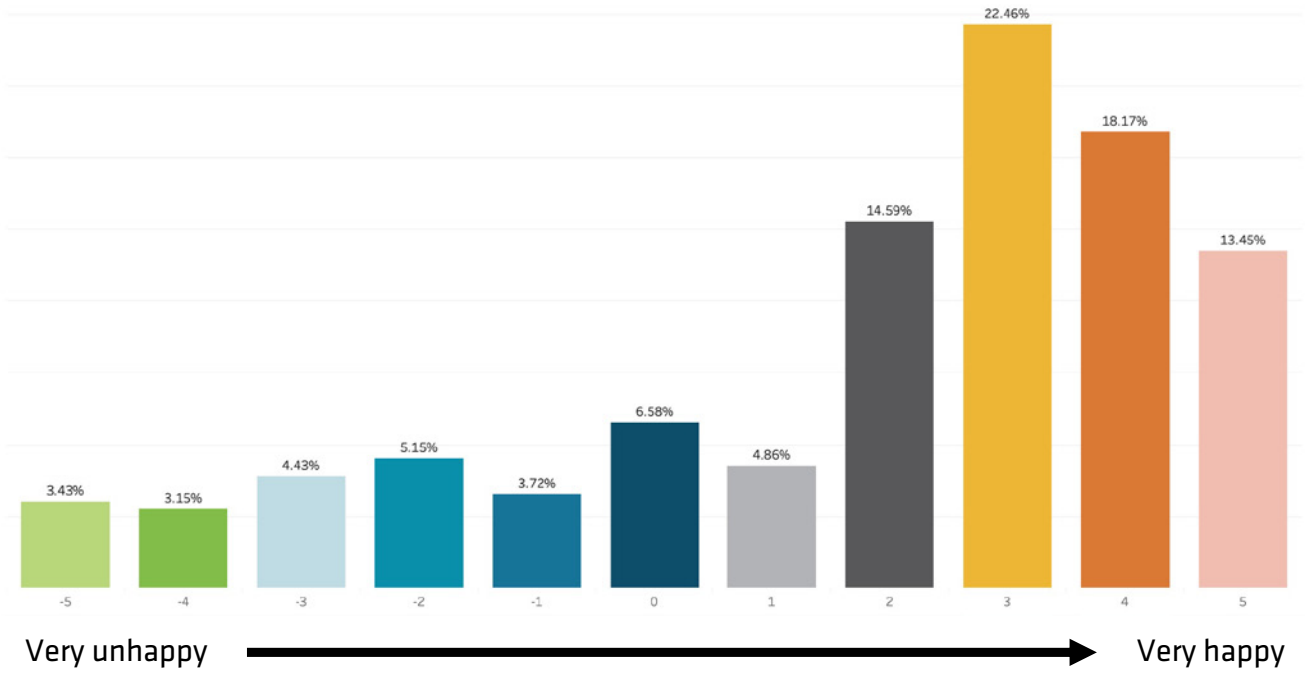
- The green bubbles are the three most popular categories, and the size of all bubbles represent popularity per category.
- Sense of Community, Love of Moab and Appreciation of Scenery were seen as the issues which unify the Moab community the most. This was followed by Natural Environment, Events/Entertainment, Nothing/Not Sure, Outdoor Recreation and A Crisis.

## 3.6 HAPPINESS RELATED TO LIVING IN MOAB

Survey respondents were asked about whether they enjoyed living in Moab. They were asked:

**How happy are you about living in Moab?**

*Scale: -5=Very Unhappy; 0=Neutral; +5=Very Happy*



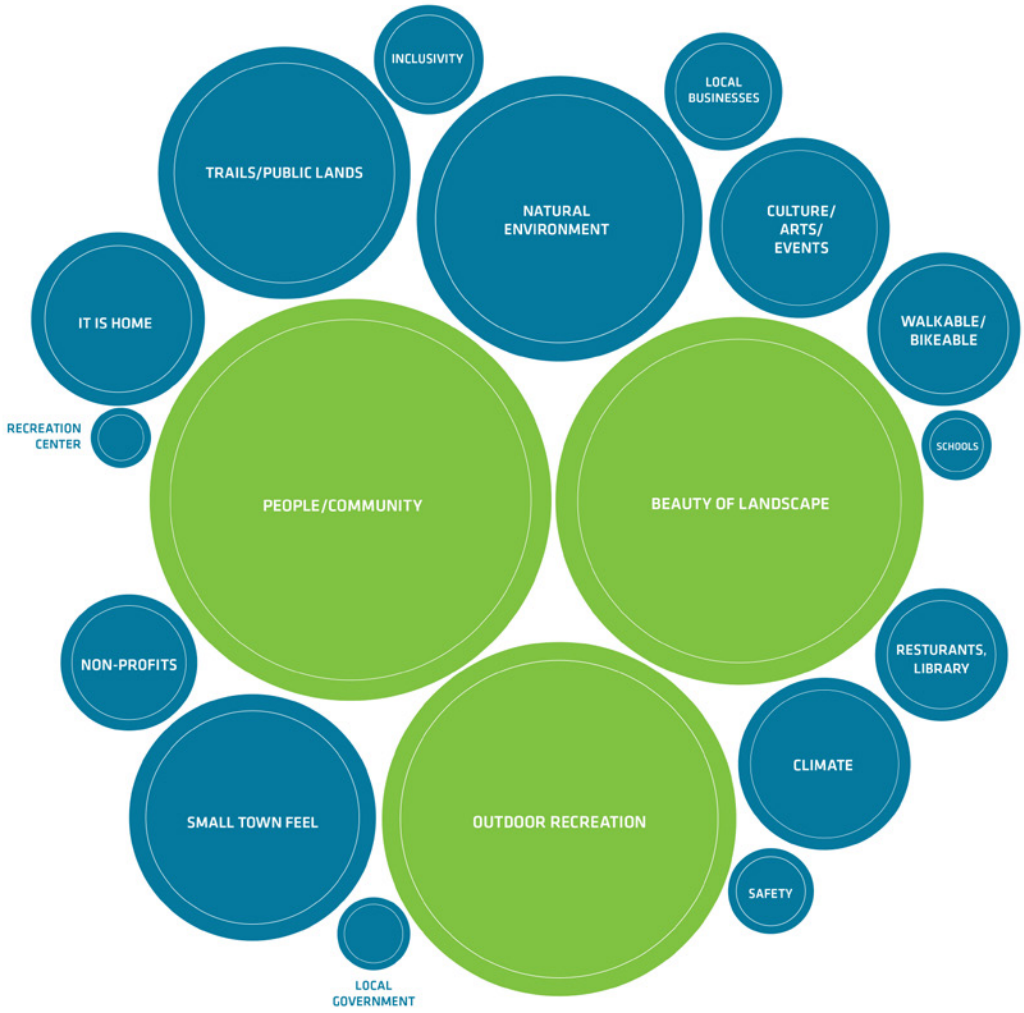

DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- Overall, respondents were on the scale of happy to very happy regarding living in Moab.
- These results can be filtered on the Moab website according to age, where people live, ethnicity, time spent in Moab per year and how long the individual has lived or worked in Moab.

## 3.7 WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT LIVING IN MOAB?

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question, **"What do you like about living in Moab?"**. Responses were categorized and produced a bubble map.



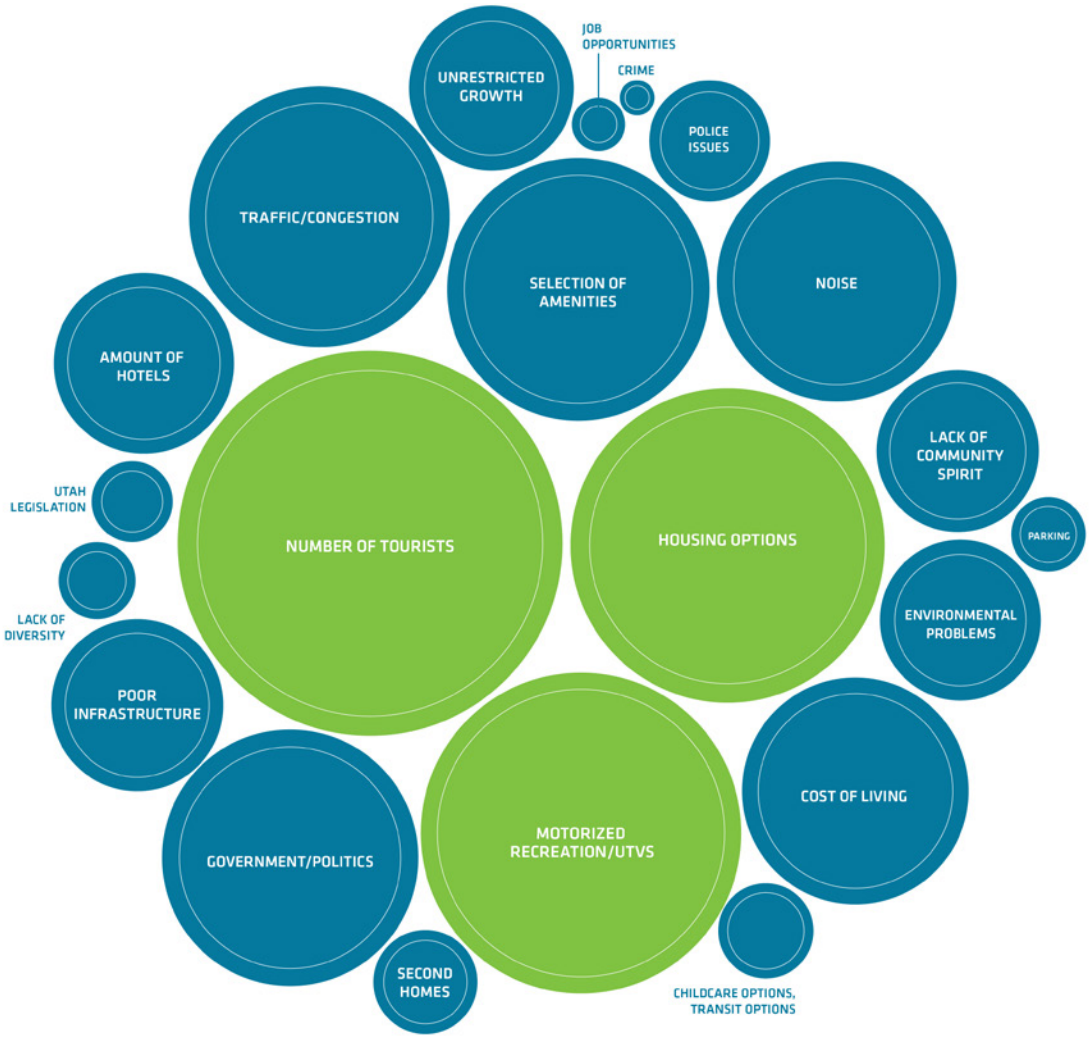

DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- The green bubbles are the three most popular categories and the size of all bubbles
- People/Community, Beauty of Landscape and Outdoor Recreation were the three key reasons why respondents like living in Moab. These were followed by Natural Environment, Trails/Public Lands and Small Town Feel.

## 3.8 WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT LIVING IN MOAB?

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question, **"What don't you like about living in Moab?"**. Responses were categorized and produced a bubble map.




DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

- The green bubbles are the three most popular categories and the size of all bubbles
- Number of Tourists, Motorized Recreation/ATVs and Housing Options were the three key reasons why respondents didn't like living in Moab. These were followed by Selection of Amenities, Traffic/Congestion and Noise.

Further open-ended responses to the survey can be found on the Moab – Tomorrow Together website at *https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/*

Scenario planning provides a way to explore various plausible futures and considers the implications and consequences of different future pathways. This adds a richness and depth to the discussions about the preferred future, and a consideration of the intended and unintended consequences.

# 4.0 THINK-TANK WORKSHOP

The Moab – Tomorrow Together Think-Tank Workshop was held over two evenings on April 6 and 7, 2022, at Grand Center, Moab. The workshop explored how Moab could change by 2030 and consisted of:

- A review of global trends and emergent issues and the connection to Moab
- Identification of the top 20 key drivers shaping the future of Moab
- Ranking of the key drivers (from 1 – 20 in importance to Moab)
- Formulation of the different plausible scenario 'spaces' and development of detailed narratives and descriptions of each scenario
- Identification of the preferred and expected futures via Plausibility Mapping

The Think-Tank began with an in-depth presentation on future trends and global conditions before moving on to conduct scenario planning for Moab. Future iQ's scenario planning process provides a methodology from which to explore plausible futures and takes into consideration the implications of various future scenarios. The process aimed to:

- Deepen the understanding and examination of how external events and local conditions could shape decision-making
- Identify and understand the key influences, trends, and dynamics that will shape the Moab looking out to 2030
- Create and describe four plausible long-term scenarios for Moab
- Begin exploring alignment around a shared future vision

The scenarios developed during the Think-Tank workshop and outlined in this report are important in order to provide a framework to discuss future possible outcomes and implications for Moab. Workshop deliberations can assist in identifying key actions for the city and how various groups might best contribute to future developments.

In the face of accelerating speed of change, the key to the long term resiliency of Moab is the ability to anticipate change and remain agile in response to emerging trends. This includes community input with local government.

# 5.0 FORCES SHAPING THE FUTURE – MACRO TRENDS

At the Think-Tank, participants explored the forces of change shaping the future of Moab, including three key areas of emerging macro trends and forces of change. Perceptions around the nature of impact of these trends, both in terms of size and timing of impact, were examined to ascertain how important the participants consider these trends. Participants discussed the emerging trends on global, regional and local scales, and related them directly to Moab in terms of how well prepared they considered themselves.

Specifically, the key trend areas included:

- Demographics, population and mass urbanization
- Energy, food, water and climate change
- Technology and speed of change

Of particular relevance to the discussion on trends is the speed and scale of change occurring. Within this section of the Think-Tank, there was a particular focus on the trends of water scarcity and sustainable tourism, as these are two areas which directly impact Moab.

FutureInsight

## FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- Moab enjoys its isolated 'sanctuary' feel as an iconic and isolated town, within a desert terrain. This is what makes Moab both appealing to the people who have made Moab their home, and to visitors.
- External global trends may impact Moab by 2030. The challenge will be to provide solutions in advance of these impacts. This is a short time frame, as we look out to 2030. This will involve community participation, collaboration with leadership and a 'future thinking' and evolving mindset.

Drivers are events, trends, developments, catalysts, or forces that actively influence or cause change. The top 24 drivers for Moab are seen to shape the community's future.

# 6.0 KEY DRIVERS IDENTIFICATION

With the background of external trends, the Think-Tank participants produced drivers that they considered most likely to shape the future of Moab. The drivers had been discussed at a group level and then at the wider workshop level. The scope of each driver was clarified, and any similar drivers were grouped, and new drivers added, until a list of twenty-four unique key drivers were identified.

**Key drivers shaping the future of Moab, as identified by Think-Tank participants:**

*Please note that these drivers are not in any particular order.*

1. Changing Public Land Management
2. Popularity of West
3. Climate Change
4. Development of Private Land
5. Sustainable Design and Development
6. Uncertainty of Water Usage and Availability
7. Impact of Outside Corporate Interest
8. Impact of State Control
9. Transportation Management
10. Community Vision of Tourism
11. Effectiveness of Local Government
12. Housing Supply
13. Community Well-Being and Prioritization
14. Access to Essential Services
15. Growing Wealth Gap
16. School Performance
17. Shifting Trends of Visitation
18. Adaptability and Flexibility
19. Increase in Remote Work
20. Economic Diversification
21. Electrification of the World
22. Online Visitation and Reputation
23. Anti-Globalization
24. Inflationary Cycle

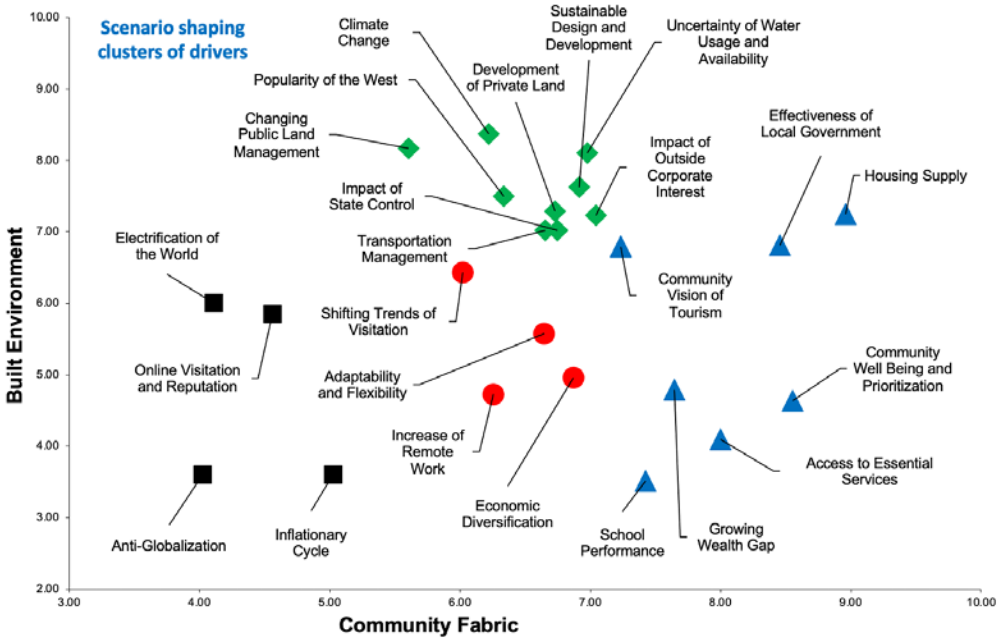
The scatter diagram identifies the clusters of drivers considered most critical in shaping the future of Moab, looking out to 2030.

# 7.0 IDENTIFYING SCENARIO SHAPING CLUSTERS OF DRIVERS

After agreement on the drivers, the Think-Tank participants rated each of the twenty-four key drivers on its size of impact on Moab. The scale used was 1 – 10 (1 = small impact; 10 = very large impact). The size of impact refers to how significant the participant considers the driver will be in shaping the future of Moab. The individual ratings by each participant were pooled and averaged, providing an overall rating for each driver by the entire group of participants.

Then, a scatter diagram of the drivers, based on size of impact was developed. The scatter diagram allows the identification of clusters which are relatively high in impact. This process illustrates the clusters of drivers that were seen as most critical in shaping the future – these clusters are termed 'Scenario Shaping Clusters of Drivers.'

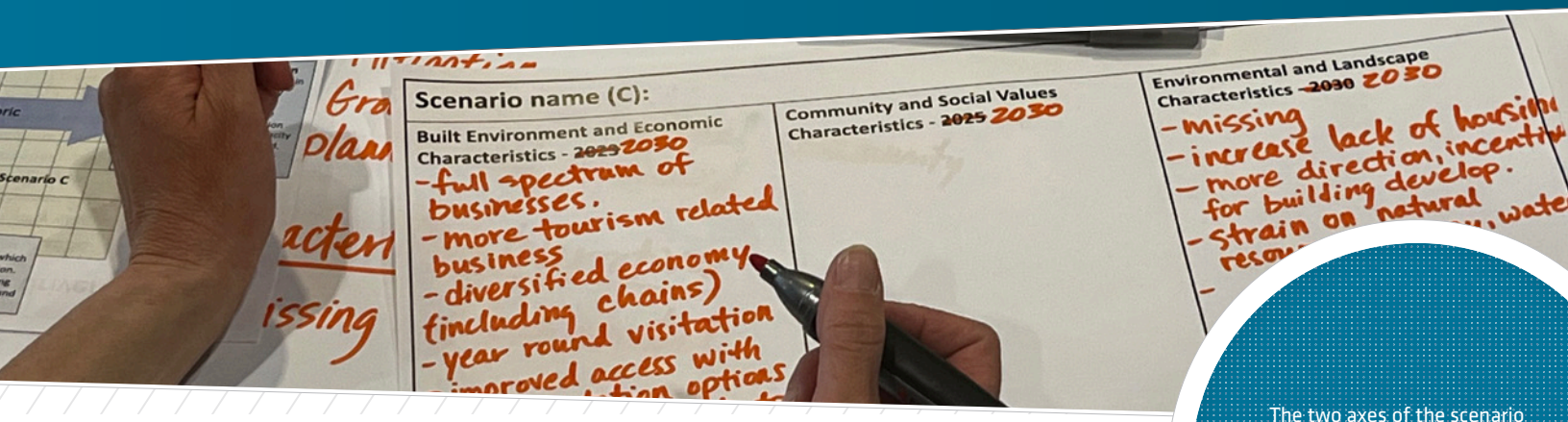
*Please note that the following drivers were seen as being very low in impact to the future of Moab by Think-Tank participants, and so were then disregarded from the final total of 20 drivers. These were: Electrification of the World, Anti-Globalization, Inflationary Cycle and Online Visitation and Reputation.*




DataInsight

## DATA INSIGHTS:

- The identified drivers were clustered around three prominent themes: Built Environment, Community Fabric and Enabling Drivers.
- The driver identified as having the highest impact on the built environment was Uncertainty of Water Usage and Availability; the drivers identified as having the highest impact on community fabric were Housing Supply, Effectiveness of Local Government and Community Well Being and Prioritization.




The two axes of the scenario matrix were developed through the thematic clustering of the key drivers identified by Think-Tank participants.

# 8.0 CLUSTER MAP DEVELOPMENT AND SCENARIO AXIS

Grouping similar drivers into three categories, clusters of drivers were identified by adding a thematic name linking the drivers in the clusters. These themes became the basis for the two axes on the scenario matrix that define the four scenario 'spaces', with quadrants either towards or away for each driver cluster. These quadrants were used to formulate four plausible scenarios. The two axes were defined as 'Economic Trajectory' and 'Evolution of Community Fabric.'

## CLUSTER THEMES

**Development Trajectory**

Changing Public Land Management

Popularity of West

Climate Change

Development of Private Land

Sustainable Design and Development

Uncertainty of Water Usage and Availability

Impact of Outside Corporate Interest

Impact of State Control

Transportation Management

**Community Fabric**

Community Vision of Tourism

Effectiveness of Local Government

Housing Supply

Community Well-Being and Prioritization

Access to Essential Services

Growing Wealth Gap

School Performance

**Enabling drivers**

Shifting Trends of Visitation

Adaptability and Flexibility

Increase in Remote Work

Economic Diversification

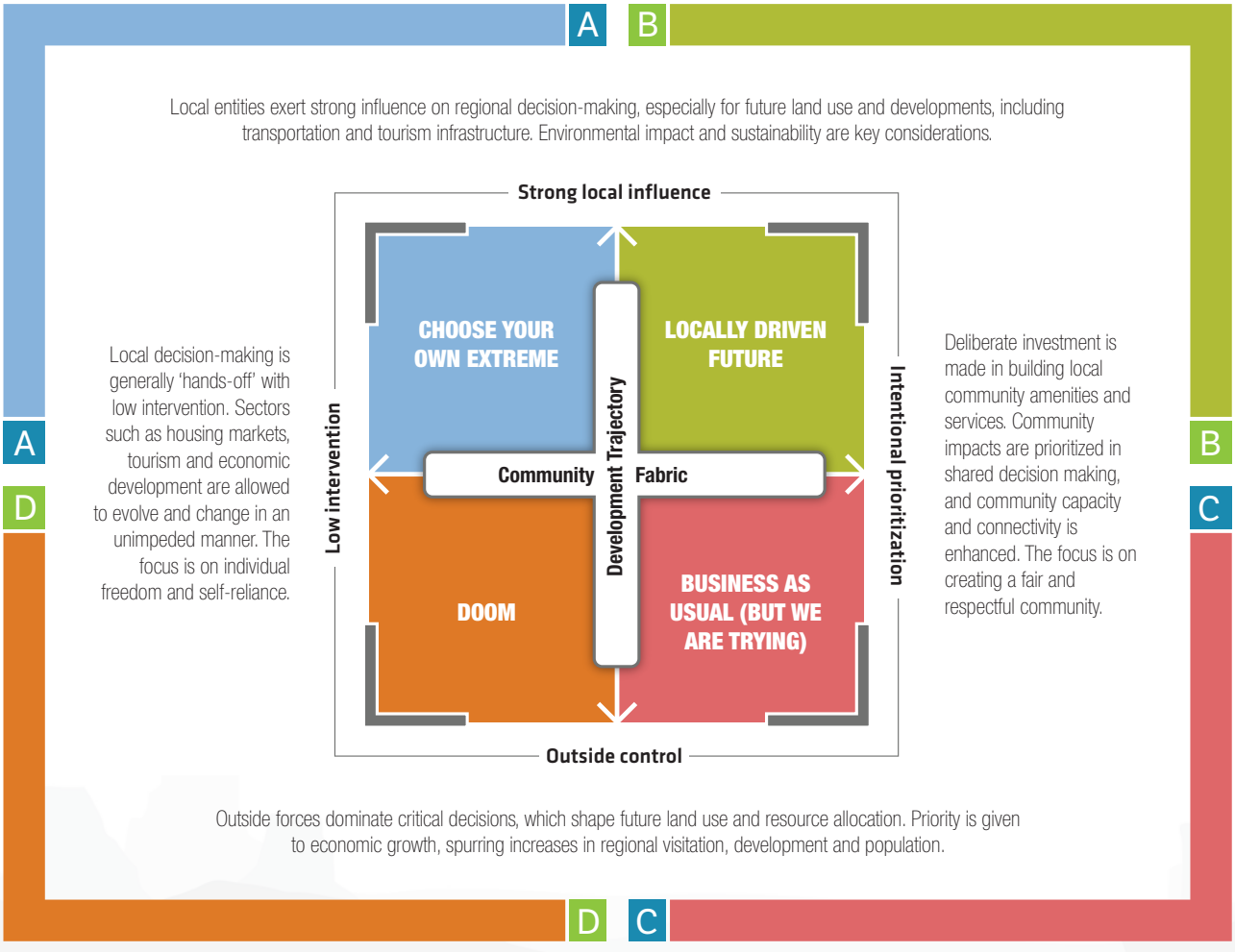
Climate change impacts on infrastructure

FUTURE-SPLITTING QUESTIONS™

This scenario-planning process provided a way to tease out plausible future scenarios and examine them from a speculative standpoint. They represent different possibilities for the future of Moab, looking out to 2030.

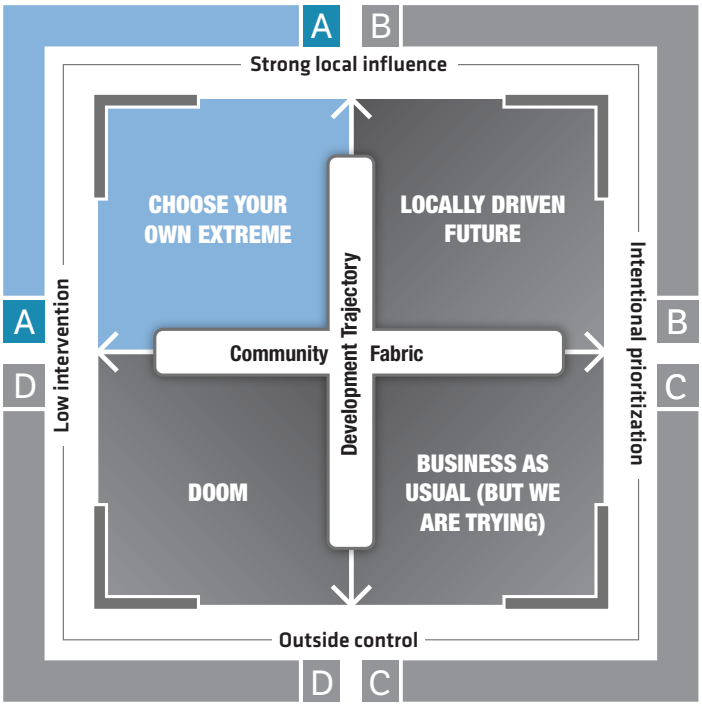
## 9.0 CREATING THE SCENARIO FRAMEWORK

On the second day of the Think-Tank participants were presented with the scenario matrix, defined by the two major axes generated through the cluster development of the key drivers. Brief descriptions were also attached to the end points of each driver axes. Participants were divided into four groups to develop a narrative for each scenario. Each group was asked to describe the characteristics of Moab in 2030 under the conditions of the scenario quadrant that they had been given. After the characteristics were established, Think-Tank participants were asked to devise major events or headlines of how the scenario occurred using the years 2023, 2025, and 2030, and to give their scenario a descriptive name. The name is intended to represent the description of the scenario in the form of a short title. Narratives, descriptions, and names of each scenario as developed by the workshop participants are included in the following sections.



## 9.1 SCENARIO A: CHOOSE YOUR OWN EXTREME

This scenario forecasts a future where strong local entities, including developers, exert their influence on local and regional decision making. While still locals, they do not represent the Moab community but rather their own interests in relation to future land use and tourism. The rest of the Moab community, whether they are long term 'Moabites' or newer additions to the community, focus on their own circumstances and prefer to take a 'hands off' approach in relation to the development of Moab. The reason that many people live in Moab, or move to Moab, is to pursue an individualistic and/or recreation lifestyle while retaining the safe and enjoyable sense of community that Moab has provided up until now. Moab continues to encourage a high level of visitation but in this scenario, this has developed to become somewhat of a parody of what Moab was famous for. This eventually leads to less interest from visitors, who until now have visited Moab for the exceptional outdoor recreation and 'unique and small-town feel'. Most visitors now only visit once and decide to find another 'undiscovered' place as Moab used to be. The 'small town feel' and 'sense of community' is rapidly dwindling for the residents of Moab and many plan to leave. The quality of life, that Moab was known for has been lost, as the health services are taken over by corporations and services are suffering from a workforce who can no longer work in Moab. This is due to lack of housing, rising rents and the appeal to businesses of a seasonal and transient workforce. Overall, Moab is losing its appeal to both visitors and residents.




The 'Choose your own extreme' scenario conveys a future where there is tension between visitors and residents, but ultimately neither want to visit or remain in Moab

## SCENARIO A CHARACTERISTICS: CHOOSE YOUR OWN EXTREME – 2030

The characteristics of this scenario paint a future with a low intervention at a local and individual level and sectors including housing, tourism and economic development are allowed to evolve and change in an unimpeded manner. The focus is 'hands off' at a local level and individuals focus on their own circumstances rather on than the community as a whole. Amenities and accommodation for visitors are encouraged to grow at the expense of the community at large, including residents and workforce. Moab as a destination becomes less appealing to visitors as it becomes more contrived.

In the 'Choose your own extreme' scenario, tourism and visitation is prioritized at the effect of the long-term residents and many move away. The community is more transient and local businesses rely on a more transitory and seasonal workforce. There are no winners.

### Built Environment and Economic Characteristics

**Moab maintains its focus on visitors with unchecked overnight rentals and hotel growth.**

- Local businesses are unable to keep up with the domination of national chains/franchises moving to Moab and go out of business due to competition and lack of workforce.
- The wealth gap grows with the domination of second homeowners and the wealthy, coupled with a laissez-faire and 'hands off' attitude by locals.
- Moab is divisive and fragmented with friction between different interest groups and increased disconnected regulations.

### Community and Social Values Characteristics

**Moab loses many longer term residents and Moab is made up of a more transient community.**

- The workforce that Moab relies upon is replaced by a seasonal and transient workforce, which is less invested in the community. Local businesses go out of business as a result.
- Essential service roles (i.e., Healthcare, Education) cannot be filled due to lack of workforce (caused by lack of housing). Corporation of essential services take money away from the community.
- There is an opportunity for a community uprising however the lack of engagement by the locals who still live in Moab mean that apathy is the dominant attitude.

### Environmental and Landscape Characteristics

**Moab is focused on appealing to visitors and, subsequently, loses its appeal to visitors as it becomes more artificial.**

- Visitors come to Moab, but only once. Moab hasn't lived up to its reputation. A potential change in tourism is necessary in order to restore Moab's natural appeal.
- There is unchecked regulation for housing management and as a result there is more neighborhood density.
- Moab loses its appeal as a world renowned and pristine natural treasure.

**2023 HEADLINE NEWS:**

"Walnut Lane expands to 1000 units"

**2025 HEADLINE NEWS:**

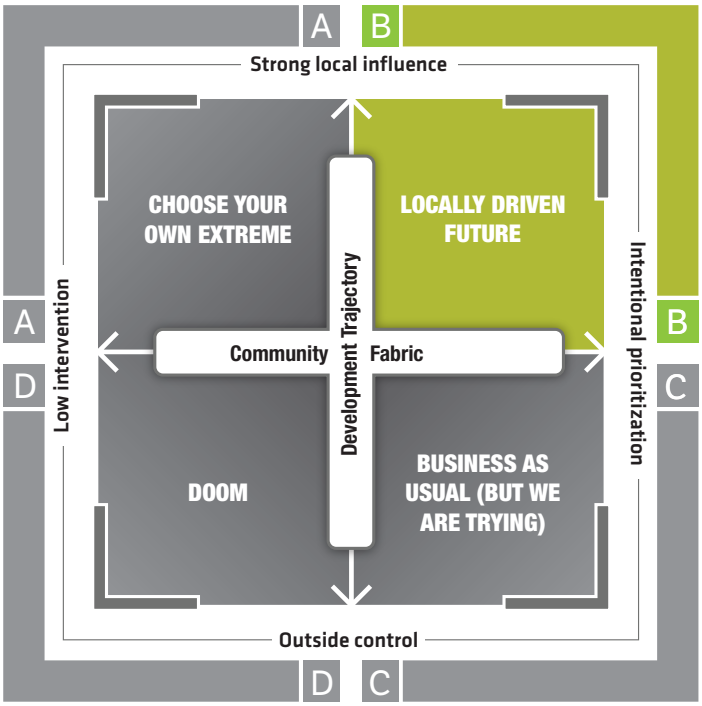
"Boycott of Local Walmart, but Walmart pushes back"

**2030 HEADLINE NEWS:**

"Welcome to Moab, Colorado"

## 9.2 SCENARIO B: LOCALLY DRIVEN FUTURE

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.



The 'Locally Driven Future' scenario presents Moab with a balance between the needs of the residents and the 'why do I want to visit Moab' needs from the visitors.

## SCENARIO B CHARACTERISTICS: LOCALLY DRIVEN FUTURE – 2030

The characteristics of this scenario convey a future where there is a strong local influence on decision-making, with deliberate investment in building local community amenities and services. The community is prioritized by local government, and as a result, is invested in the future of Moab. Visitation issues including motorized recreation are reviewed and sensitively adapted, which alleviates tension between residents and visitors. Housing issues are alleviated which strengthens the workforce and subsequently the tourism experience. This results in strong community cohesion and an improved environment for residents and visitors.

In the 'Locally Driven Future' approach, the needs of the Moab community and visitors are balanced in a sensitive manner.

### Built Environment and Economic Characteristics

**Motorized recreation evolves to electric UTVs with are sensitively based near to the trails rather than town.**

- There is a deliberate focus on diverse and local businesses to meet the needs of locals and visitors.
- A variety of different housing options meets local and workforce needs.
- Economic diversity is appealing to future residents and the retention of youth.

### Community and Social Values Characteristics

**Moab's schools flourish with potential new residents and the retention of existing families. Moab can become home to successive generations.**

- Community cohesion is enhanced with increased walkability and community spaces.
- A diverse and younger community gravitate to Moab with improved schools, the USU campus and more opportunities.
- There is more stability in the Moab community, rather than the perceived prioritization of visitors.

### Environmental and Landscape Characteristics

**The city embraces new technologies and solutions in relation to Xeriscaping.**

- Community orientated spaces are enhanced with more shade.
- There are financial incentives for sustainable development.
- Sensitive adaptations to motorized recreation increases the 'quietness' that residents and visitors desire.

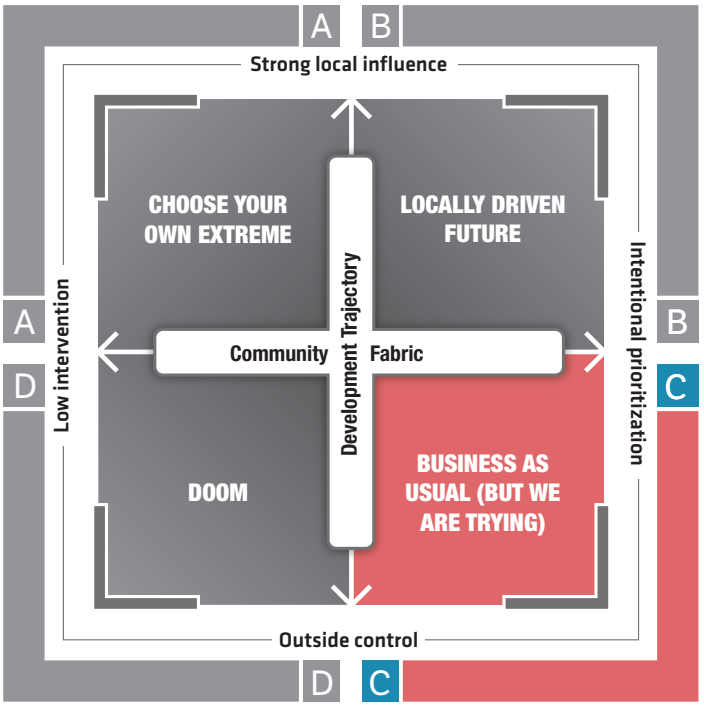
**2023 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"City Council and Local Developer reach agreement to build affordable units"

**2025 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"City and County Governments merge"

**2030 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"Ribbon cutting on Moab Parkway Trail System – from Blue Hills to Brand Trails"

## 9.3 SCENARIO C: BUSINESS AS USUAL (BUT WE ARE TRYING)

This scenario forecasts a future where there is consideration for the local community and so the Moab community feel that they have the ability to build local community amenities and services. The Moab community feels that there is a strong link between community decision making and local government. Life looks fair as now the community members have a say in the future trajectory of Moab. However, outside State forces still continue to dominate critical decision making for the future of Moab. This is frustrating for the Moab community. Economic growth and visitation/tourism is prioritized against local businesses opening up on Main Street. Chains are encouraged to open up on Main Street, which is very challenging to the local businesses, which struggle to compete. The visitors, who are encouraged to visit Moab, are happy with the retail diversity offered by the Chains. There are more job opportunities as a result, however the housing issue has not been addressed for the workforce. The people who work in Moab are still faced with having to travel into work each day and are unable to live in Moab due to the lack of housing and soaring rental rates.




This scenario lacks any emphasis on the environmental protection of Moab. Interestingly, people visit Moab for its natural beauty. There is no protection or investment in keeping Moab safe from potential environmental hazards and the water issue is not addressed.

The 'Business as Usual (But we are trying)' scenario conveys a future where both external investment and retail works alongside the burgeoning of local businesses. However, this is very short term and the long term future of Moab is not considered by the State.

## SCENARIO C CHARACTERISTICS: BUSINESS AS USUAL (BUT WE ARE TRYING) – 2030

The characteristics of this scenario portray a future where Moab enjoys more freedom, but this freedom is somewhat restricted. Local businesses are encouraged but compete with large Chains that dominate Main Street. There is a gentrification of Moab, which comes at a surprise to the long-term residents. The environmental focus is lost as there is a 50/50 balance regarding keeping Moab as a "jewel in the desert" and external forces which wish to maximize its appeal to visitors. The community has a say in the direction of Moab, but not that much of a say.

In the 'Business as Usual scenario, the Moab community realize that Moab needs to move with the times. However, to keep "Moab as Moab" environmental issues cannot be ignored. This is a scenario which is a balance between regarding the future prosperity of Moab and retaining its appeal to both residents and visitors.

### Built Environment and Economic Characteristics

**Moab now enjoys a full spectrum of predominantly tourism related businesses but also encourages local businesses.**

- A diversified economy is welcome with remote workers moving to Moab. Chains are welcomed onto Main Street which discourages local businesses from operating.
- There continues to be year round visitation to Moab. Visitors are attracted by the small town feel of Moab but also the convenience of larger Chains.
- Workforce are attracted to working in Moab but still cannot afford to live in Moab.

### Community and Social Values Characteristics

**Moab has experienced an expanded employment market with opportunities in education, retail and healthcare.**

- More non-profits and community run organizations start up in Moab – albeit against a growing wealth gap between residents, second homeowners and visitors.
- Moab has been the victim of its success. People move to Moab and gentrification occurs. This is happening to the detriment of the long-standing Moab community.
- While Moab retains its appeal, the wealthy who move to Moab are enjoying the benefits. Smaller and more eclectic Moab residents are feeling marginalized.

### Environmental and Landscape Characteristics

**An environmental focus is lacking as there is conflict between local environmental initiatives and outside State control.**

- There is an increased lack of housing which impacts how the Moab workforce can afford to live in Moab. There are many job opportunities, but the lack of housing remains.
- There is a need for more incentives and direction regarding building and environmental incentives. State control means that Moab is unable to make these decisions at a local level.
- There is a strain on natural resources including energy and water.

**2023 HEADLINE NEWS:**

"SITLA breaks ground in Spanish Valley"

**2025 HEADLINE NEWS:**

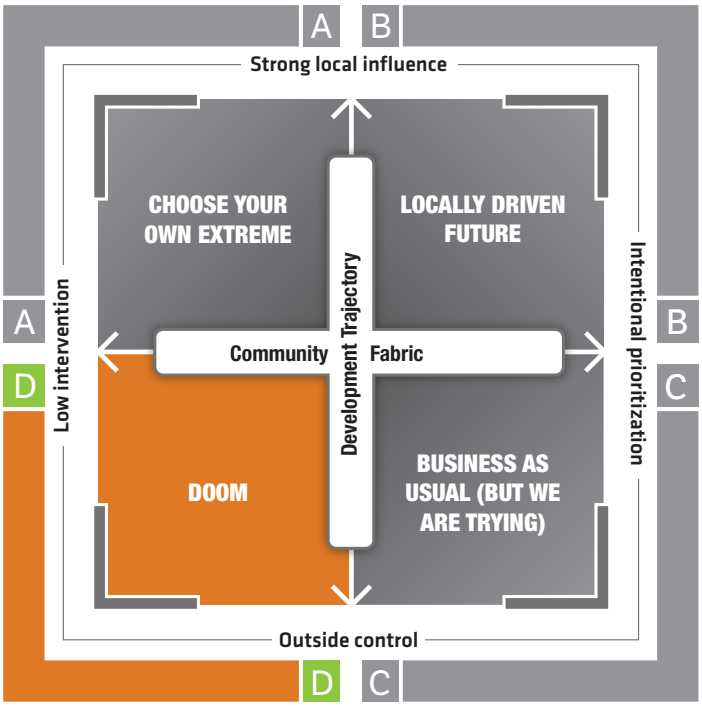
"Ban on lawns – astro turf only!"

**2030 HEADLINE NEWS:**

"Community bands together to fight corporate land takeover"

## 9.4 SCENARIO D: DOOM

This scenario forecasts a scenario where there is outside control, via the State, but the community of Moab have little intervention in their future. Most of the people who moved to Moab decided to move there for a reason. However, the reason for moving to Moab seems to have become unclear in recent years as Moab has lost it's appeal. Over the years, Moab has become unrecognizable and now in 2030 .. it is not the place that they originally wanted to move to or remain to live within. The bohemian feel of the Main Street has been lost to Chains and the long term residents either stay at home or if able, they move away. The community feel of Moab has disappeared. The Moab that people want to move to or visit has been lost. It has become a haven for second home owners and has become gentrified. The visitors, who used to come to Moab, are now seeking a new Moab, somewhere else in the US. They too feel that the spirit of Moab has been lost, although the outstanding beauty of the landscape still captivates everyone.



The 'Doom' scenario paints a future where both residents and visitors no longer see or feel the appeal of Moab.

In the Doom scenario, Moab loses long term residents and visitors. Neither cohorts see the appeal of Moab anymore.

## SCENARIO D CHARACTERISTICS: DOOM– 2030

The characteristics of this scenario portray the case of Moab being a success to visitors, but at the detriment of the residents and visitors. There is the possibility of long-term residents wanting to move away and visitors, no longer wanting to visit. What does this mean for the long-term future of Moab?

### Built Environment and Economic Characteristics

**The long-term residents of Moab decide to leave, with the increase of second homeowners and visitors. They now no longer recognize Moab as their home and question why they originally moved to Moab.**

- With more second homes and increased tourism, Moab is just a vacation destination. Residents feel this encroachment, as do visitors.
- There are increasing pressure on amenities for residents and they stay away from Main Street, which has become even more crowded with visitors and new residents. Interestingly, visitors have decided that Moab isn't the destination for them anymore.
- Transit has become a huge problem. It has become impossible for residents to drive through Moab. Visitors are also experiencing this problem.

### Community and Social Values Characteristics

**With a lack of community, Moab has become more transitory with decreased engagement and a lack of sense of community.**

- Crime escalates as community values decrease. The older demographic either give up or move away if they are able to.
- Community has broken down in Moab – so there is a rise in more liberal politics at a local level.
- People no longer want to work in Moab, and especially travel to Moab.

### Environmental and Landscape Characteristics

**There is an increased pressure on water and on rectifying the Moab infrastructure.**

- The formally treasured trails are now full of waste and there is a lack of respect for the landscape.
- With increased population, there is an increased pressure on resources.
- Overall, there this an ethos of people over planet in the formally loved Moab.

**2023 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"Walmart hosts fundraiser for new racetrack"

**2025 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"Hospital makes space for new tourism – cosmetic amenities"

**2030 HEADLINE NEWS:**
"Billionaire builds Mansion on Moab Rim"

The Expected Future represents the future that is most likely to happen if the community does nothing to change direction or trajectory.

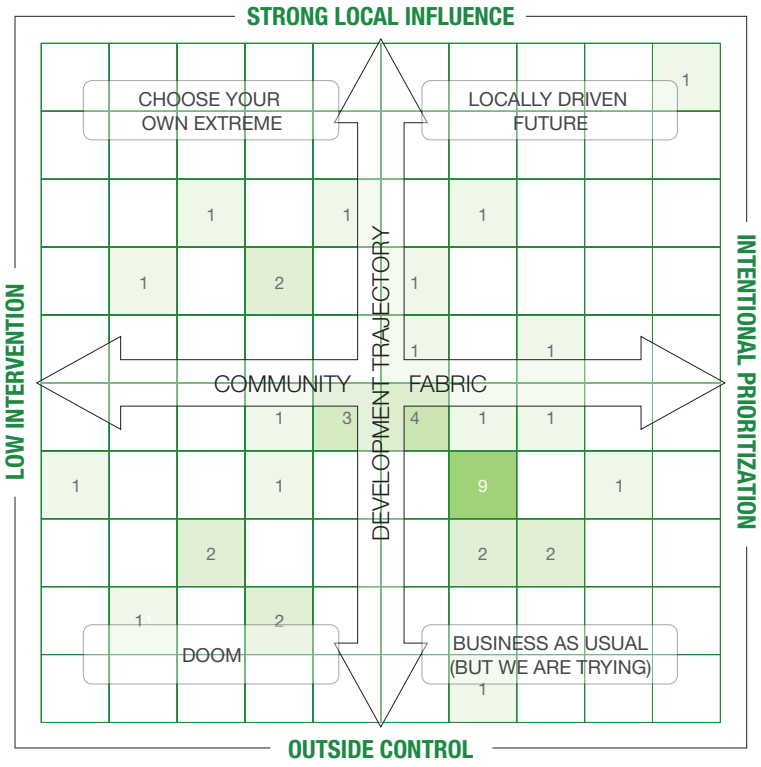
# 10.0 EXPECTED, LEAST DESIRED, AND PREFERRED FUTURES

## 10.1 EXPECTED FUTURE – SCENARIO C –BUSINESS AS USUAL (BUT WE ARE TRYING)

The expected future is one deemed most likely to happen if there is no change in the current trajectory of Moab. Workshop participants generally indicated that Scenario C, "Business as Usual (but we are trying)" is the scenario they believed most represented the expected future for Moab, looking out to 2030. Interestingly, there was representation by some of the Think-Tank participants that the expected future could also be represented to a lesser extent by Scenario D, Scenario A and to a much lesser extent Scenario B.

**THE CITY OF MOAB**

EXPECTED FUTURE – 2030



FutureInsight

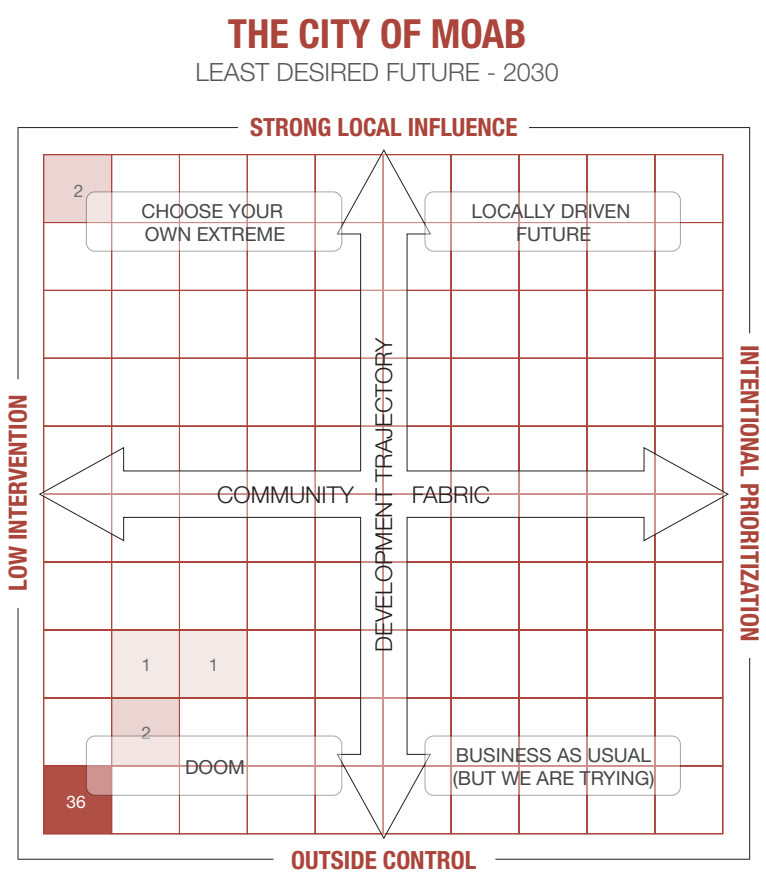
### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- The expected future may be familiar and comfortable, but Think-Tank participants have shown a clear desire to move away from the status quo to the preferred future.
- The expected future as seen by Think-Tank participants does not envisage a significant evolution of community fabric in Moab.

The least desired future is one where community members have said, 'We don't want that.' This provides leadership a mandate to change the trajectory of the community to avoid this avoidable scenario.

## 10.2 LEAST DESIRED FUTURE – SCENARIO D – DOOM

The Least Desirable Future is defined as "the future that you think will be most undesirable (or least optimal or least desired) for the future of Moab in 2030." Think Tank participants most definitely considered Scenario D, 'Doom,' to be the Least Desired Future for Moab.



FutureInsight

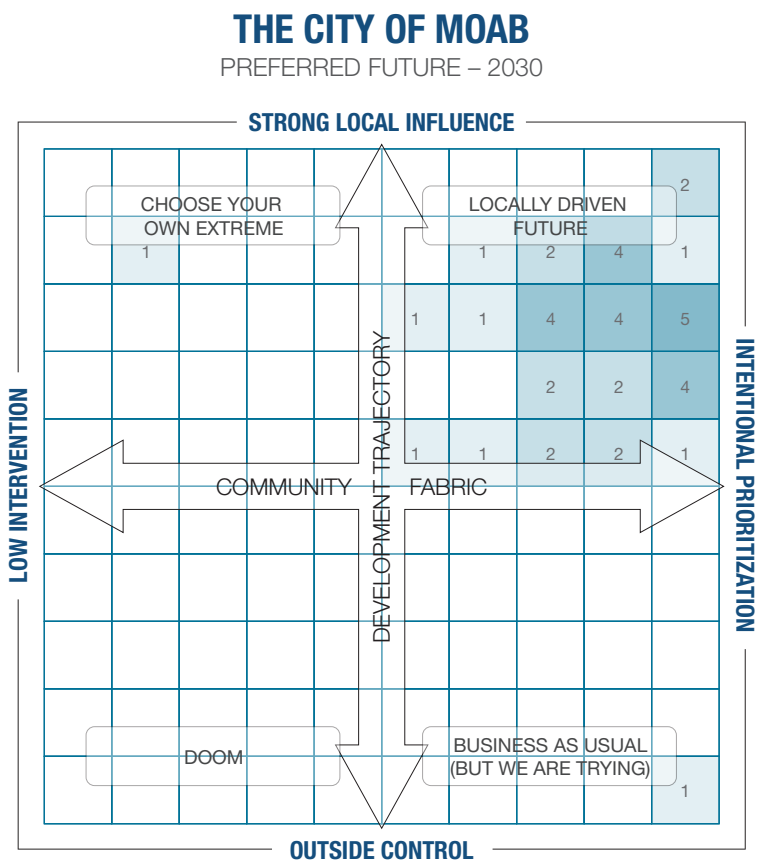
### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- The data of the least desired future shows a strong concentration along the bottom quadrant of Scenario D, 'Doom' This indicates a strong desire to not remain on the same trajectory.
- This least desired future depicts the worst case scenario for Moab, as it loses its appeal to both residents and visitors.

Working towards a sustainable tourism solution will undoubtedly bring Moab to the preferred future in 2030. This will impact the community and visitor experience as well as hopefully provide solutions to the housing and workforce issues that currently are of concern.

## 10.3 PREFERRED FUTURE – SCENARIO B – LOCALLY DRIVEN FUTURE

Think-Tank participants expressed an overwhelming preference for Scenario B, 'Locally Driven Future' as the Preferred Future for Moab in 2030. This future combines a strong local influence on decision making, and the Moab community is prioritized over visitors, to a degree. The impact of 'sustainable tourism' in Moab alleviates the tensions between community members and visitors. There is acknowledgement that economic diversity is key, but that tourism cannot be ignored looking to the future of Moab. Tourism needs to be conducted in a sustainable and sensitive manner, in order to retain the reasons that people choose to live and recreate in Moab.



FutureInsight

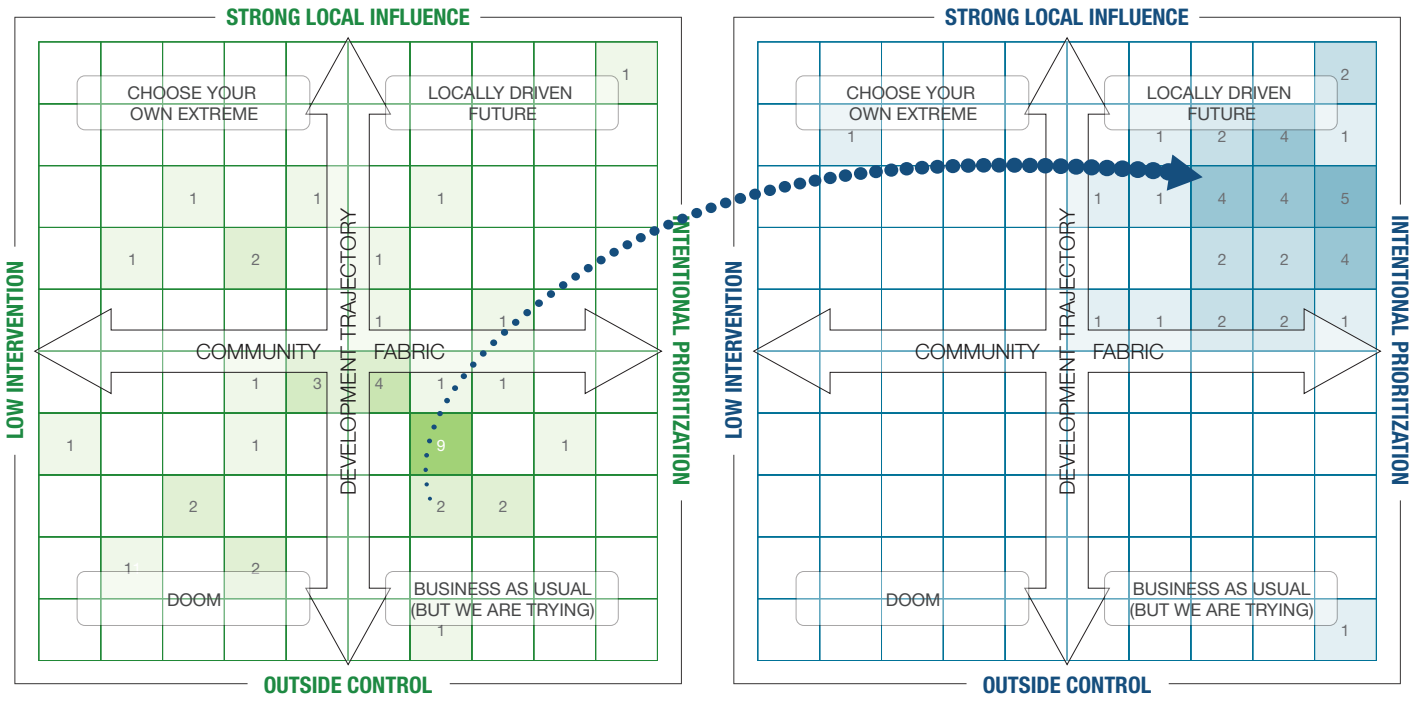
### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- The concentration of color in Scenario B, 'Locally Driven Future,' indicates an overwhelming alignment of thinking among Think-Tank participants.
- The Think-Tank scenario planning is a significant step in the community's transparent process to define collectively how Moab will strategically plan towards the preferred future.

Because of the long-term nature of the Scenario Planning methodology, stakeholders often see the 'distant future vision (2030)' as unattainable and unrealistic. However, this underestimates the progress that can be made during the next 7 years, and the cumulative positive impacts of change.

## 10.4 NEXT STEPS – GETTING TO THE PREFERRED FUTURE

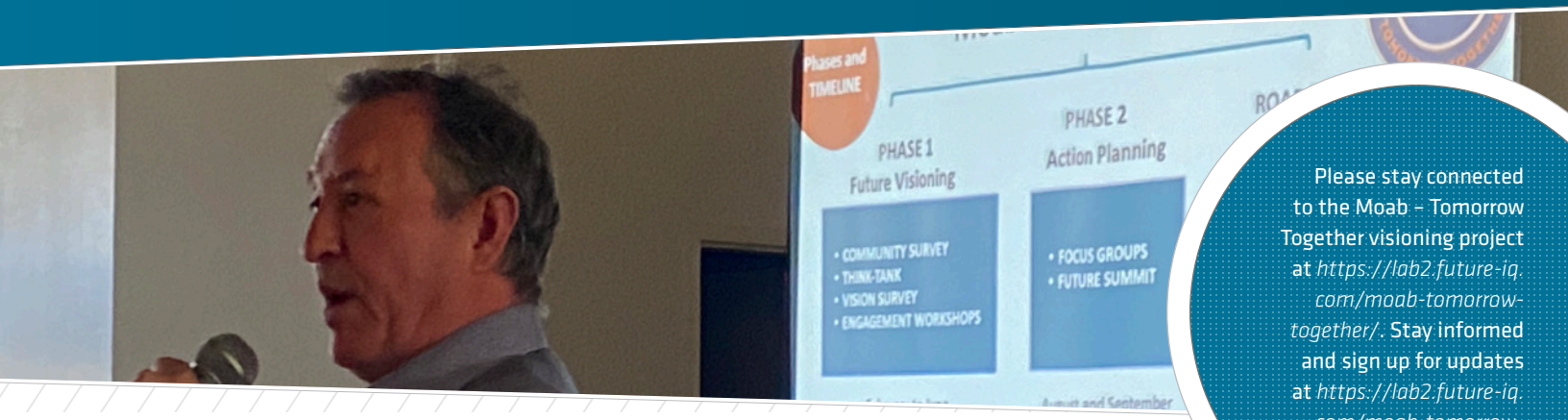
There was overwhelming alignment among participants that Scenario B, 'Locally Driven Future' represented the preferred 2030 future scenario for Moab. Moving from where Moab is now in 2022 towards that preferred future by 2030 will take work from local and state government. The wishes of the Moab community have been heard via the almost 800 responses to the community survey and the two evenings of Think-Tank participation and creative thinking by over 60 individuals. The work over the next few months in this visioning process will be focused on how to get to this preferred future.




FutureInsight

### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- Arriving at a point of consensus amongst community members is very important to the visioning process as it serves to provide a sense of cohesion and balanced solutions going forward.
- A sustainable tourism approach is seen as the way forward in order to meet the needs of the community and even enhance the experience of visitors. Moab is well positioned to achieve this with intentional intervention by local government, state government and those who benefit from tourism (outdoor recreation providers and the hotel industry).




Please stay connected to the Moab – Tomorrow Together visioning project at *https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/*. Stay informed and sign up for updates at *https://lab2.future-iq.com/moab-tomorrow-together/contact-us/*.

# 11.0 NEXT STEPS IN THE MOAB – TOMORROW TOGETHER PROCESS

The Community survey informed the Think-Tank and the results from the Community survey and Think-Tank will continue to inform the next steps in the Moab – Tomorrow Together process.

## MOAB - TOMORROW TOGETHER

**PHASE 1**
**Future Visioning**

- COMMUNITY SURVEY
- THINK-TANK
- VISION SURVEY
- ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

February to June

**PHASE 2**
**Action Planning**

- FOCUS GROUPS
- FUTURE SUMMIT

August and September

**ROAD MAP**

MOAB VISION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

October

- *6 – 9 June 2022* – Community Engagement Workshops will be held within the following sectors: Residents, Arts Community, Recreation Community, Business Community, Spanish Speaking Community, Young Professionals, Seniors and Local Government Staff.
- *1-5 August 2022* - Focus Groups sessions will be held in areas which will inform the ultimate Strategic Pillars for the final report and actions.
- *The week of 12 September 2022* – the Moab - Tomorrow Together Future Summit will be held. This will be a celebration of the process and showcase the results so far in the process and include community members and their thoughts regarding rapid polling.
- *October 2022* – the final Moab – Tomorrow Together Visioning and Strategic Action Plan will be presented to the community and Moab Council.

# 12.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Almost 800 of Moab's community completed the Community Survey. This is an impressive number of respondents. Future iQ would like to acknowledge those community members for their thoughts, commitment and time.

Future iQ acknowledges the substantial work and on the ground support from city staff and council members. This includes the direct one to one work on the project and weekly communications with Carly Castle (*City Manager*) and Lisa Church (*City of Moab Communications and Engagement Manager*).

Future iQ would also like to thank Stephanie Brand (*City of Moab*) for her input into the organization and smooth running of the 'Moab- Tomorrow Together' Think-Tank.

Future iQ also would like to acknowledge the participation over two evenings from over 60 members of the Moab community who took part in the Think-Tank. Taking part in two evening sessions was a commitment regarding time, energy and intellect. Thank you to the following participants.

- Mayor Joette Langinaese
- Rani Derasary
- Luke Wojciechowski
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- Lara Derasary
- Thomas Moreau
- Abigail Marie Taylor
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- Roslynn McCann
- Carolyn Conant
- Travis Nauman
- Daniel Kent
- Adi Leigh Brown
- Wendell Williams
- Burl Bynum
- Joe Kingsley
- Ann Austin
- Judy Powers
- Forest Rodgers
- Bill Winfield
- Sally Jones
- Autumn Ela
- Helene Rohr
- Matt Piper
- Michael Johnson
- Savannah Wilson
- Susie Johnson
- Faith Dickey
- Kathryn Wittenburgh
- Sarah Stock
- Sarah Sorg
- Anthony Charles
- Joshua Surkes
- Samara Rosen
- Kimberly Kelly
- Tawny Knutson – Boyd
- McKay Edwards
- Kim Kirks
- Lauren Booker
- Andy Beerman
- Thea Leonard
- Michele Blackburn
- Sarah Heffron
- Kendra Kurihara
- Rob Dillon
- Matt Hancock
- Charlotte Van Voast
- Gary Hazen
- Charlotte Mates
- Andrew Austin
- Danny La Bant
- Kerry Lange
- Cole How
- Holly Sloan
- Sally Hederstrom
- Doug McMurdo
- Rob Walker
- Dwight Johnston
- Joshua Richardson
- Ian Van Meter
- Michael Blackwill
- Ryan Pohl
- Jack Marston
- Sav Marston

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# 14.0 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* or by email at *info@future-iq.com.*

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## Ryan Mackley

CEO of Align Multimedia and production of Moab - Tomorrow Together portal and reports

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