



Utah Resident Survey Finds Broad Support of Tourism Economy, with Concerns from Highly Impacted Communities

Surveys conducted by Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute aim to better understand statewide perceptions of tourism and tourism-related policies.

SALT LAKE CITY — May 10, 2022 — The Utah Office of Tourism (UOT) released the Utah Resident Perceptions of Tourism research results, a comprehensive statewide and local community analysis conducted by the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute (the Gardner Institute). The UOT contracted with the Gardner Institute to conduct two Utah resident surveys, one to better understand overall statewide perceptions of tourism and one to better understand resident sentiment in specific Utah communities, many known to be highly impacted by tourism.

“Utah residents tend to view tourism favorably, with a majority indicating they view tourism as important to Utah’s economy and reputation, and that the positive effects of tourism outweigh the negative effects. Residents in local areas heavily impacted by tourism express mixed perceptions, both seeing economic benefit and describing concerns about overcrowding and diminishing quality of life,” wrote the survey’s authors, Samantha Ball and Dianne Meppen, of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. “A positive commitment to environmental sustainability and concerns about housing affordability are notable in both statewide survey results and in comments from residents in heavily impacted areas.”

Key research insights include:

75% of Utah residents feel positively about the effect of tourism on Utah’s overall reputation

71% of Utah residents strongly agree that UOT should educate visitors on things like how to minimize their impacts on the natural environment, and how to travel responsibly

66% of residents statewide feel positively about the effect of tourism on job opportunities

59% of residents state tourism’s positive effects outweigh the negative

“These findings are useful as we work to create a perpetual visitor economy that works for both visitors and hosting communities,” said Vicki Varela, managing director of the Utah Office of Tourism. “We are committed to continuing to research and listen, to support community-led tourism economies and to double-down on our Forever Mighty stewardship messaging.”

[Forever Mighty](#)® is the public-facing initiative to accomplish the goals of the UOT’s [Red Emerald Strategic Plan](#). The Forever Mighty® initiative encourages travelers to explore Utah thoughtfully and safely by being well-prepared, aware of Utah’s delicate ecosystems, and engaged with the local communities they are visiting. Forever Mighty also aims to inspire residents, visitors, businesses, and stakeholders to take an active role in preserving and enriching Utah through advocacy, ambassadorship, and stewardship opportunities.



The condensed fact sheet can be found [here](#).

The full statewide survey results and report can be found [here](#).

The local area survey report can be found [here](#).

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About the Utah Office of Tourism

The Utah Office of Tourism (UOT) fulfills its mission to improve the quality of life for Utah residents through revenue and tax relief by attracting quality, well-prepared domestic and international visitation and motivating tourism spending within a sustainable tourism economy. The UOT partners with communities to develop tourism economies and storytelling consistent with their local vision and encourages stewardship and industry support through local engagement and ambassadorship. To advance these goals, the UOT manages year-round strategic marketing, industry research, media relations, cooperative marketing, in-state public relations, website and visitor experience enhancements, and destination management and development programs. Learn more at travel.utah.gov and visitutah.com.