Economic Insights
Utah and Salt Lake County

Salt Lake County Council
October 17, 2023
"We are navigating by the stars under cloudy skies."

- Jerome Powell, August 2023 FED Statement
“The moderation in price pressures without a material deterioration in economic growth has been remarkable.”

Wells Fargo, Weekly Commentary, October 13, 2023
U.S. Real GDP Growth
Quarter-Over, Seasonally adjusted annual rate

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis
CPI Except Shelter Back on Target

Consumer Price Index, Year-over Change

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Moody’s Analytics
Job Growth

August 2022-2023, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Unemployment Rate
August 2023, Seasonally Adjusted

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Headwinds

- **Commercial real estate** – Property owners face dual headwinds of lower demand and higher financing costs.
- **Housing price appreciation** – Utah’s unaffordable housing creates an economic challenge for residents and new growth.
- **Interest rates** – Relatively high rates chill business growth.
- **Federal government mess** – Leadership failures strain confidence.
- **Geopolitical** – Two major wars. Can they be contained?

Source: Moody’s and Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
Tailwinds

- **Low unemployment** – Labor market provides an economic buffer.
- **Utah’s relative economic standing** – Utah’s economy continues to outperform most other states.
- **Inflation** – Appears to have cooled. Future rate hikes unlikely.
- **State government success** – Large budget reserve accounts.
- **Sentiment** – Recent uptick in consumer sentiment.

Source: Moody’s and Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
A Few Things to Keep an Eye On...
Delinquency Beginning to Improve

Bank credit card, total delinquency rate by month on book, % of $, originated in 1Q of year

Sources: Equifax, Moody’s Analytics

X-axis=loan age in

Source: Equifax, Moody’s Analytics
Cumulative Housing Shortage in Utah

2011-2024(f)

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
Utah Economic Diversity

Hachman Index State Ranking, 1970-2020

Inflection point in Utah’s transition from a goods-producing economy to a diversified economy.

Rank Among States


34 18 26 1 2 3

Source: Compiled by Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
Utah Job Growth by State

Utah’s elite economy

Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics